

# Bluetongue virus serotype 3 (BTV-3)



**Bluetongue virus (BTV) is a notifiable disease. If you suspect signs of any notifiable animal diseases, including bluetongue, you MUST immediately notify your Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) Scotland field services local office. Failure to do so is an offence.**

## **Which species are affected?**

Bluetongue virus (BTV) is a notifiable disease affecting ruminants such as sheep, cattle, goats, deer, and camelids such as alpacas and llamas.

## **How is BTV-3 spread?**

Midge bites are the most common way for the virus to spread to livestock, but bluetongue can also spread through the import or movement of infected animals, their germinal products (semen and ova), embryos and fetuses.

Bluetongue does not affect people or food safety. Meat and milk from infected animals is safe to eat and drink. However, bluetongue can cause significant damage to livestock populations and is considered a risk to the agricultural sector, including causing international trade restrictions.

**Remain vigilant for clinical signs of BTV: [www.gov.scot/bluetongue](http://www.gov.scot/bluetongue)**

## **Cases of BTV-3 in England**

In August/September 2024, a number of BTV-3 cases were confirmed in England. Further positive cases are expected. The most likely cause of the current outbreak in England is BTV-3 infected midges blown across from continental Europe. For more information on the situation in England, visit [www.gov.uk/bluetongue](http://www.gov.uk/bluetongue)

**Since the BTV-3 cases in England in November 2023, Great Britain has lost its disease-free status. Therefore, trade in live ruminant animals with the EU and movements to Northern Ireland (NI) are suspended for the foreseeable future.**

The Ruminant Health & Welfare website is updated regularly with BTV-3 information and resources:

**[www.ruminanthw.org.uk/bluetongue-virus](http://www.ruminanthw.org.uk/bluetongue-virus)**

**Bluetongue hotline: 024 7771 0386 9am-5pm Mon - Fri**

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## What can you do?

- Remain vigilant and know the signs of bluetongue in your animals
- Exercise caution before buying livestock
- Source animals and germinal products responsibly and be aware of the disease status of exporting counties, collection centres and countries transited through on-route
- Be aware of the disease risks

If exporting germinal products out of GB, discuss with your vet to ensure you meet the Export Health Certificate (EHC) requirements and any additional safeguarding measures (such as testing donor animals before and after collection of semen, before it is released for use).

## Can I vaccinate my animals?

Following a veterinary risk assessment and discussion with key industry stakeholders, BTV serotype 3 vaccines cannot currently be used in Scotland – see [further information about BTV-3 vaccination in England](#). This position will be kept under continual review. You can vaccinate against BTV serotypes 1, 2, 4 and 8, but these vaccines do not protect against BTV-3.

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The Scottish  
Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

To find out more about bluetongue and the  
latest situation visit:  
[www.gov.scot/bluetongue](http://www.gov.scot/bluetongue)



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