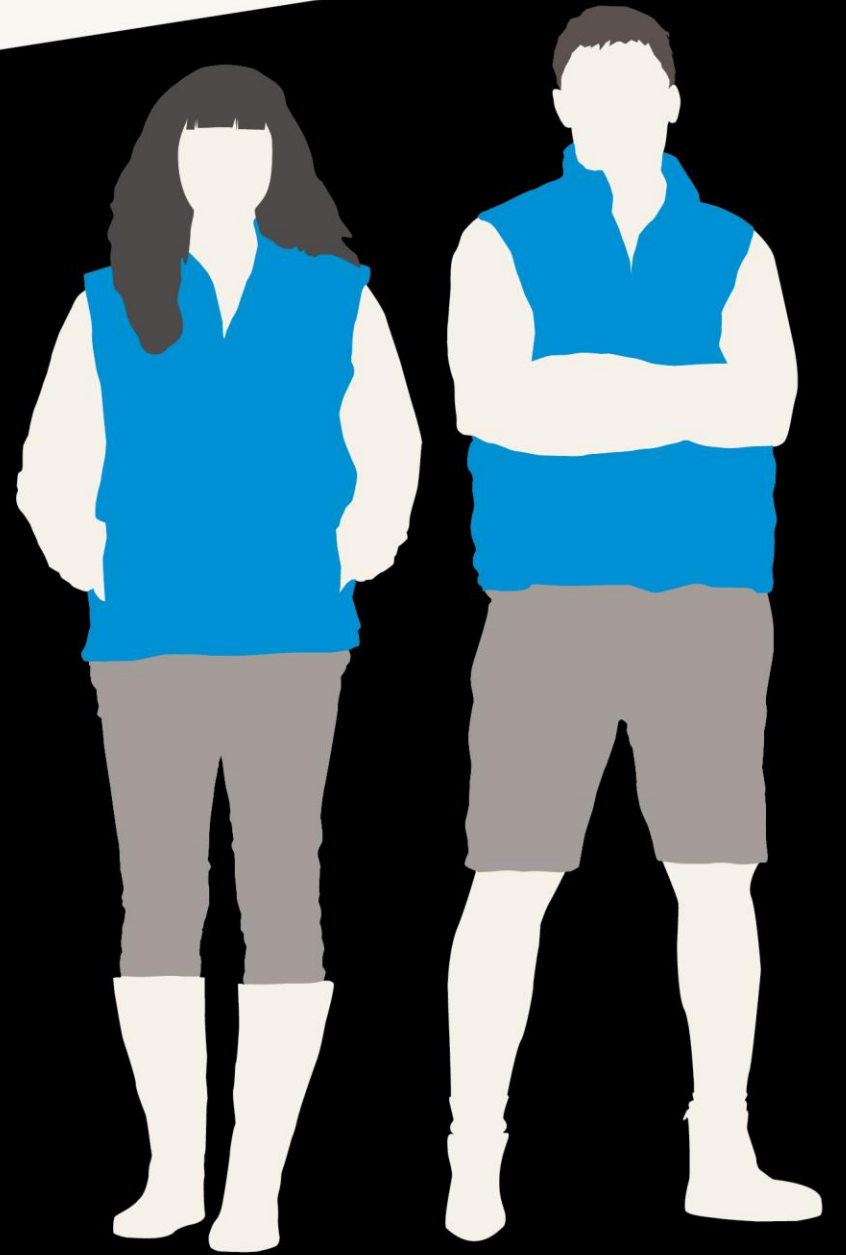


BATTLE BLUETONGUE

VACCINE DECISION
MAKER TOOL



VACCINE DECISION MAKER TOOL

Questions for vets to ask clients to help decide whether to vaccinate against BTV-3	Answers						Comments
	5	4	3	2	1	0	
	More answers in this column indicates there are more reasons to vaccinate					More answers in this column indicates there are fewer reasons to vaccinate	
1. Do you have cattle, sheep and/or other ruminants or camelids?	Yes					No	Clinical signs and severe symptoms are much more likely in sheep than other ruminants.
2. What is the expected value of the lambs/calves/ kids/cria of this flock/ herd?	High-value breeding animals, rare breed, pedigree		Average-value stock, commercial finishing animals				Vaccinating cattle is still worthwhile to reduce the spread of disease.
3. Where are you in the UK?	High-risk, coastal area in south/east England				Remote peninsula off the northwest coast of England, no other ruminants on the peninsula and no imports		If you are not currently vaccinating livestock due to your location, e.g. you are in a low-risk region, keep a close eye on the location of BTV-3 cases throughout the 2025 season.
4. What was the prevalence of disease in 2024 in your region?	There were cases of BTV3 in farms local to me in 2024		There were no cases of BTV3 in our area in 2024				It is expected that BTV3 will be more widespread in the UK in 2025 than in 2024.

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5. What is the density of ruminants in your immediate location e.g. within a 20 mile radius?	There are lots of ruminant farms in this area				My farm is remote from other ruminant farms	Bear in mind that BTV3 is spread by midges which can fly several miles (~20 miles over land and further over water).
6. Do you plan to move animals from other parts of the country into your flock/herd?	I want to buy in animals and/or I plan to transport animals home from distant sales or shows				I will not be moving animals back to my holding from elsewhere in the country	Midges can be carried in vehicles and BTV-3 can be spread through movement of infected animals. There is a lag period between animals becoming infected and clinical signs becoming apparent.
7. What is the topography of your farm?	There is a restricted area for ruminants on my farm and I don't have options of low-midge areas to move them to				Either I have an area of the farm which is windy and exposed, or I have buildings with midge-proof netting and ventilation, and it is realistic for me to keep my ruminants there all summer	Housing ruminants in poorly ventilated buildings may increase their risk of midge bites.
8. How does the vaccination regimen fit in with your existing handling and management calendars?	Easy to vaccinate and it fits well with existing management				Difficult to vaccinate due to lack of facilities or ability to handle stock	During low-risk BTV-3 periods, the risks of using the same needle for more than one animal is the same as for any other product.

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9. What stage of pregnancy are your female animals in?	The animals are not pregnant or are in mid pregnancy				The animals are in very early pregnancy or near to giving birth	In early pregnancy, vaccination stress could negatively impact implantation of the early foetus. Near to birth, the immune response may also be compromised.
10. How many breeding males do you have on your holding?	I only have a few breeding males and I expect them each to serve lots of females				I have lots of male animals that would be capable of breeding, even if some became too ill to work	Each breeding male is valuable and should be a priority to protect.
11. What stage of the breeding cycle are your males at?	The reproductive cycle is at a stage where males are not required for at least two months				The males are to be used for breeding within the next two months	BTV-3 disease will negatively impact breeding success and semen quality (more than vaccination will). Breeding animals can also transmit the virus.
12. What are your herd/flock objectives and future plans to export?	I do not intend selling either animals or germplasm for export out of the UK				I would like to sell breeding stock and germplasm to other countries	There may be ongoing impacts of having seropositive animals on the future export of live animals and germplasm.

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13. Have you considered the effectiveness of each vaccine and the claims they each make?	I am keen to reduce the severity of BTV3 disease in my animals				I will only vaccinate if it guarantees prevention of infection	The vaccines currently available are different from each other, although there is limited information about them currently available.
14. What have the weather conditions been during the last month?	It has been unseasonably warm		It has been unseasonably cold and windy			The ambient temperature must be above 12°C for the virus to multiply in midges. When the temperatures fall below this, it is classed as a transmission-free period, although there is a lag after the temperature drops when infected midges are still flying and can still transmit disease.

Other considerations:

Good farm biosecurity practices can reduce the risk of disease outbreaks

- In relation to BTV-3, this means taking care when moving animals over large distances
- Moving an infected animal into a BTV3-free area will risk infecting the local midge population and starting a new outbreak

BTV3 is spread by midges, so all farms are at risk

- Housed animals may be at a reduced risk of BTV-3 infection, especially if ventilation rates in the buildings are high
- Ensure that ventilation does not compromise welfare
- Midge activity varies during the day and is high at dusk

Concurrent disease in a flock or herd, e.g. BVDv and parasitism, as well as poor nutrition, may have an impact on the immune status of the animals and their ability to respond to vaccination

BTV can be spread by needles at injection

- When vaccinating animals, consider the frequency of needle changes – ideally this should be between every animal
- This is particularly important to consider if vaccinating during the vector high risk period and within an area where there is active disease present

There are currently three unauthorised vaccines available in the UK:

- BLUEVAC-3, distributed by Ceva Animal Health
- Syvazul BTV, distributed by Virbac UK
- Bultavo-3, distributed by Boehringer Ingelheim

All three vaccines have been used in goats and camelids in Europe

- Each of the companies may have more information that they can share with individual veterinary surgeons on a one-to-one basis
- The British Veterinary Camelid Society and the Goat Veterinary Society have issued specific recommendations for their members



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With thanks



This vaccination decision maker was originally compiled in December 2024 with input from these organisations:

