

BATTLE BLUE TONGUE

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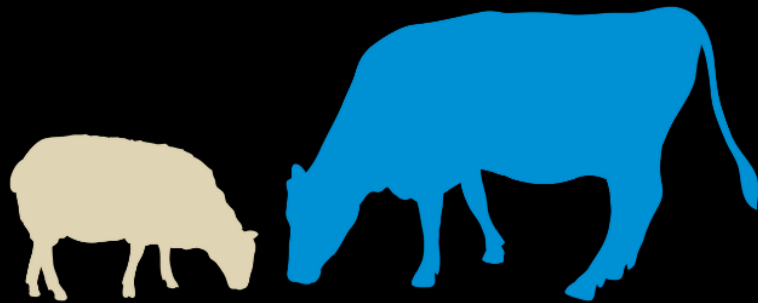
BATTLE BLUETONGUE FACT CHECK

MYTH

If I live in England, my farm will face restrictions if I have a positive case of BTV-3.

FACT

If you receive confirmation of a BTV-3 positive case on your farm in England, you will NOT have any further animal or premises restrictions imposed that are not already in place within the England Restricted Zone.



Get trusted, up-to-date information on bluetongue:
ruminanthw.org.uk/bluetongue-virus-hub

If you suspect bluetongue, you must report it immediately by calling:

- 03000 200 301 in England
- 03003 038 268 in Wales
- your local [Field Services Office](#) in Scotland

Bluetongue is a [notifiable disease](#). This means if you do not report it, you're breaking the law.

If you are in England & no other notifiable diseases are suspected, then APHA will give you an authorisation code to allow your private vet to submit samples for free testing for up to 3 affected animals.

It is really important that people report cases!

BATTLE **BLUETONGUE** FACT CHECK

MYTH

Bluetongue isn't serious, there's no need to vaccinate.

FACT

Bluetongue is deadly and vaccination is vital.

In the Netherlands, 10% of the flock died in 2023 and a further 10% in 2024 due to BTV-3. Some flocks lost up to 80% of their animals.

Affected cattle herds had increased deaths, abortions, stillbirths, premature births, and calf deformities. In some UK herds, this was as high as 50%.

Vaccination helps protect animal health, welfare, and your livelihood.

Very sick sheep
High mortality
Cows not in calf
Premature births
Dummy calves
Calf deformities



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BATTLE **BLUETONGUE** FACT CHECK

MYTH

Bluetongue isn't really affecting farms this year.

FACT

The impact is real and serious.

In the 2024-25 vector season, there were 262 confirmed cases of BTV-3 and 1 case of BTV-12 in GB.

Some of these farms were severely affected by dummy calves, deformities and stillbirths caused by BTV-3.

We are now seeing confirmed cases in the 2025-26 vector season.

We fully expect there to be a low number of cases at the beginning of an outbreak with a huge increase in numbers a month or two later, as the pressure of midges & virus increase.

This increase is more dramatic in a summer when:

- the weather is warmer &/or
- rates of vaccination are lower.

BATTLE **BLUETONGUE** FACT CHECK

MYTH

It's too late to vaccinate against Bluetongue.

FACT

It isn't too late to vaccinate against Bluetongue.

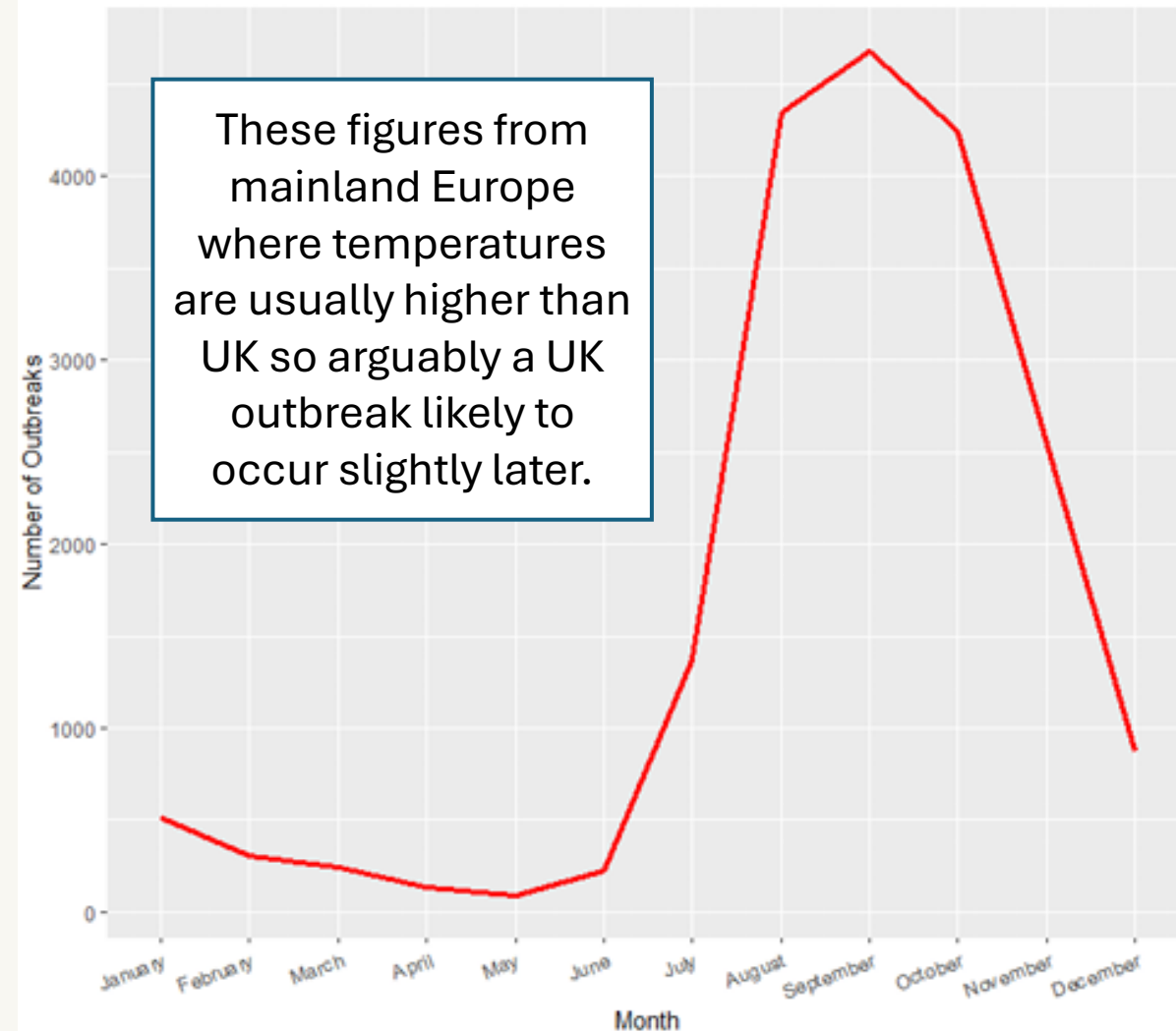
Vaccinating now gives your animals time to build immunity before the virus spreads and protects your stock against the virus.

Talk to your vet about the best plan and protect your stock.



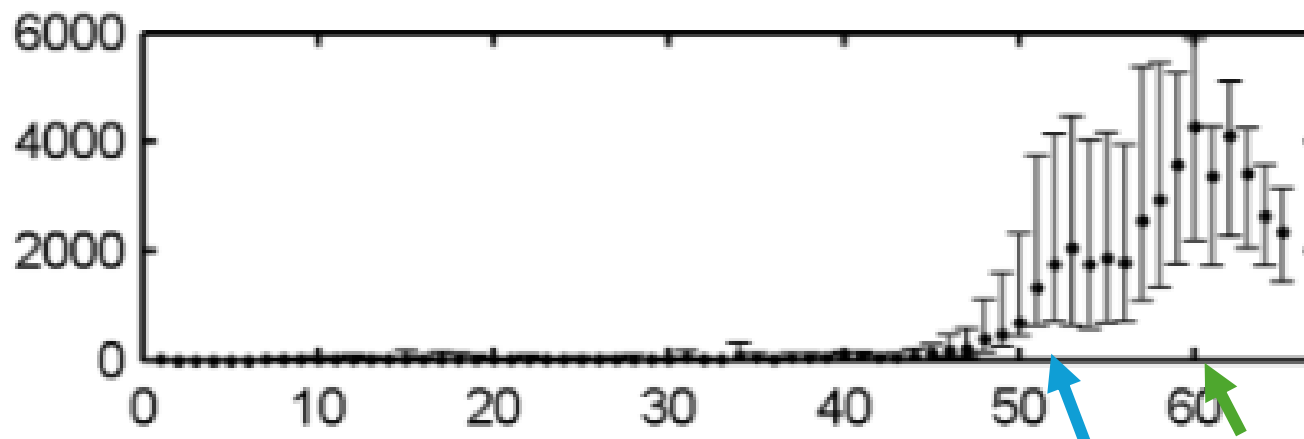
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BTV Outbreaks reported to WOAH by Month summed over the past years based on Start date of the outbreak



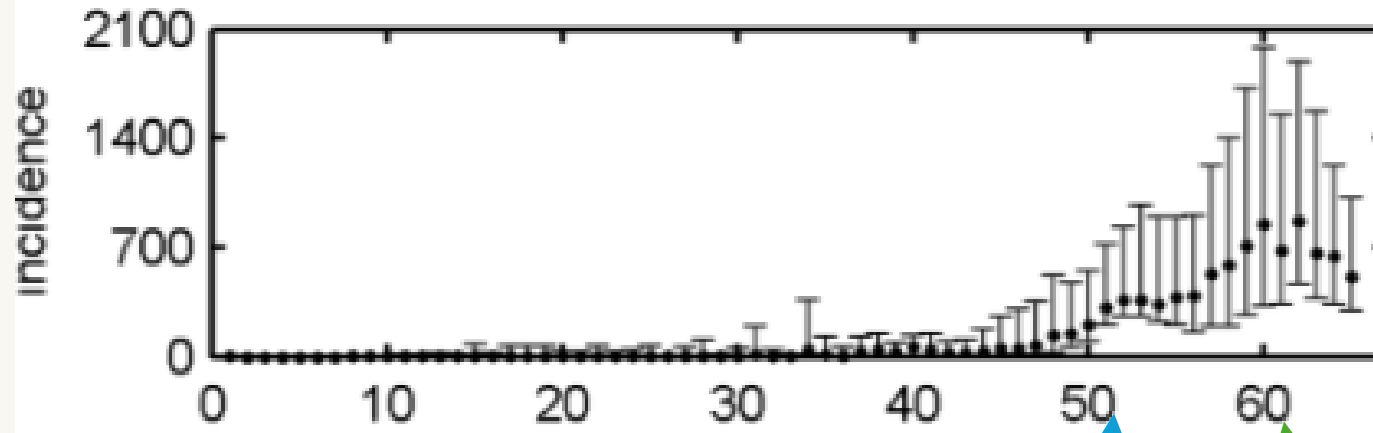
Number of
flocks/herds
per week

incidence



UK in a hot summer

NO VACCINATION



**50% VACCINATION
COVERAGE**


Number of weeks since 4th August

Early
August

Early
October

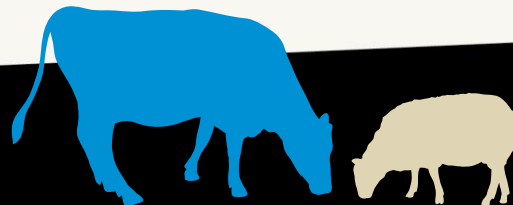


**The Spread of Bluetongue Virus Serotype 8 in Great Britain
and Its Control by Vaccination**

Camille Szmargd , Anthony J. Wilson, Simon Carpenter, James L. N. Wood, Philip S. Mellor, Simon Gubbins

Published: February 22, 2010 • <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0009353>

BATTLE 
BLUETONGUE



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HEALTH & WELFARE

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BATTLE BLUETONGUE FACT CHECK

MYTH

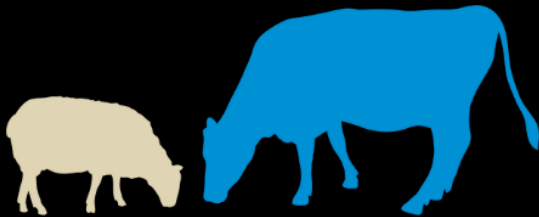
Vaccinating bulls and rams makes them infertile.

FACT

There is no evidence to suggest that bluetongue vaccines have a negative effect on fertility.

If possible, vaccinate breeding males outside the breeding period.

The real risk is bluetongue itself, which can severely impact fertility in bulls and rams and can cause long-term infertility.



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There is no evidence to suggest that the Bluetongue vaccines have a negative effect on fertility.

However, Bluetongue disease itself has a very serious effect on male fertility.

It is very important to undertake vaccination before the virus arrives on farm and ideally before the start of the breeding season.

BATTLE BLUETONGUE FACT CHECK

MYTH

Bluetongue vaccines cause infertility in cattle and sheep.

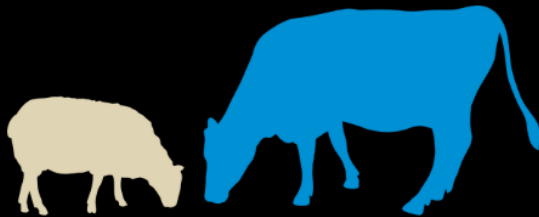
FACT

The disease itself is the real threat. BTV can cause abortions, foetal deformities and stillbirths.

Vaccination is safe.

There's no evidence linking bluetongue vaccines to fertility problems in cattle or sheep.

Don't wait for it to hit your farm. Protect now.



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There is no evidence to suggest that the Bluetongue vaccines have a negative effect on fertility.

However, Bluetongue disease itself has a very serious effect on fertility.

It is very important to undertake vaccination before the virus arrives on farm and ideally before the start of the breeding season.

BATTLE **BLUETONGUE** FACT CHECK

MYTH

You can't vaccinate pregnant animals against bluetongue.

FACT

The BTV–3 vaccines can be used during pregnancy.

There is no evidence that bluetongue vaccines increase the risk of abortion any more than other vaccines given during pregnancy. The disease itself is the real risk as it can cause abortions and deformities if pregnant animals become infected.

Speak to your vet to plan the best time to vaccinate.

It is OK to give Bluetongue vaccination to pregnant animals.

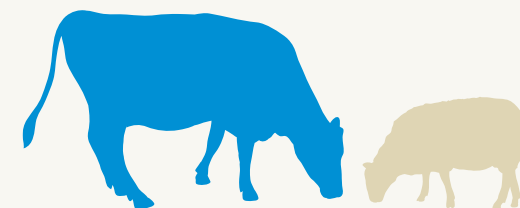
However, it is always sensible to avoid administering medicines or handling stock too much in the period up to six weeks after the start of breeding to minimise stress during the implantation of embryos.

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BATTLE BLUETONGUE

Is it too late to vaccinate against Bluetongue with respect to breeding?

| | | |
|---|-------------------|--|
| What is the date that the ram goes into the ewes? | 10 October 2025 | Insert your date as day-month |
| The last date to vaccinate ewes & rams for best breeding protection against Bluetongue on this farm is: | 19 September 2025 | It takes 21 days for good immunity to develop |
| The last date to vaccinate ewes & rams to ensure the stress of handling doesn't disrupt embryonic implantation: | 09 October 2025 | The vaccine is safe to give in breeding animals |
| However, for best protection, vaccination should be undertaken as early in the summer as possible. | | Note that for a vaccine that requires two doses in sheep, the dates relate to the second dose. |
| Ideally, vaccination should be completed at least 2 weeks before Bluetongue virus first arrives on farm. | | |
| Bluetongue is likely to arrive from July onwards and the risk hugely increases from September though to November. | | |



BATTLE BLUETONGUE

Is it too late to vaccinate against Bluetongue with respect to breeding?

| | | |
|--|-------------------|---|
| What is the date that the bull goes into the cows? | 03 October 2025 | Insert your date as day-month |
| The last date for first Bluetongue cattle dose for best breeding protection on this farm is: | 22 August 2025 | Ideally vaccination starts 6 weeks before breeding |
| The last date for second Bluetongue cattle dose for best breeding protection on this farm is: | 12 September 2025 | Immunity is secure 21 days after 2nd vaccination |
| The last date for first Bluetongue cattle dose to ensure the stress of handling doesn't disrupt embryonic implantation: | 11 September 2025 | The vaccine is safe for breeding so the second dose could be the day before breeding starts |
| The last date for second Bluetongue cattle dose to ensure the stress of handling doesn't disrupt embryonic implantation: | 02 October 2025 | |
| However, for best protection, vaccination should be undertaken as early in the summer as possible. | | |
| Ideally, vaccination should be completed at least 2 weeks before Bluetongue virus first arrives on farm. | | |
| Bluetongue is likely to arrive from July onwards and the risk hugely increases from September though to November. | | |

