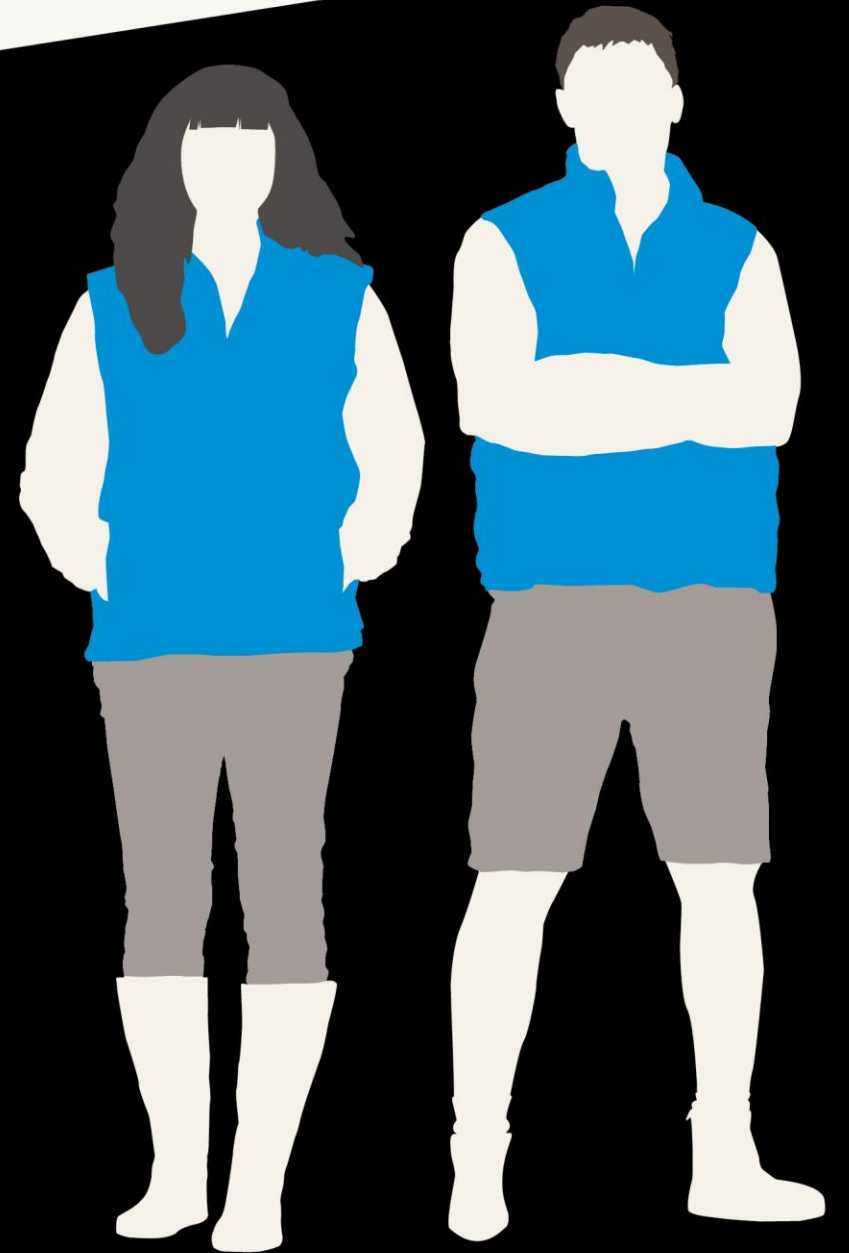


# BATTLE BLUETONGUE

## VACCINE DECISION MAKER TOOL

Updated April 2026



# VACCINE DECISION MAKER TOOL

Questions for vets to ask clients to help decide whether to vaccinate against Bluetongue	Answers					BTV-3 comments	BTV-8 comments
	5	4	3	2	1	0	
	More answers in this column indicates there are more reasons to vaccinate				More answers in this column suggests there are fewer reasons to vaccinate		
1. Do you have cattle, sheep and/or other ruminants or camelids?	Yes				No	<b>Bluetongue virus will cause disease in all ruminants and camelids</b>	
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			In Europe, the clinical signs and severe disease due to BTV-3 were much more likely in sheep than other ruminants but in the UK the greatest impact so far has been with respect to cattle fertility with dummy calves born to mothers affected in pregnancy.	The current BTV-8 that is circulating in northern France of which there were cases in SW England in 2025 appears to be more severe than the BTV-8 we saw in 2007.
3. Where are you in the UK?	Closer to the south west				Further north	There have been cases of BTV-3 throughout England and across the border into Wales. There have also been cases in Northern Ireland. So far, there have been no cases reported in Scotland.	There were several BTV-8 cases found in the south west of England in 2025.
4. What is the density of ruminants in your immediate location?	There are lots of cattle and sheep farms in this area				My farm is remote from other cattle and sheep farms	Bear in mind that Bluetongue is spread by midges which can fly several miles (~20 miles over land and much further over water).	

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5. What is the uptake of vaccination locally?	If fewer people have vaccinated against a particular strain locally then arguably your livestock are at a higher risk				If more people have vaccinated against a particular strain locally then arguably your livestock are at lower risk			
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 back 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 Bluetongue virus can be spread through movement of infected animals. Note there is a lag period between animals becoming infected but before clinical signs are apparent.	
7. Do you plan to sell or export animals to countries that require vaccination or take them to shows in countries or areas where vaccination is required?	I want to take my cattle into Scotland for a show				I am not planning on taking my animals to an area where vaccination is required		For restrictions on moving live animals into Scotland see: <a href="#">Bluetongue movement restrictions for animals - Bluetongue: how to spot and report the disease - gov.scot</a>	
8. 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		Note that housing ruminants in poorly ventilated buildings may increase their risk of midge bites and have implications for animal welfare.	

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9. How does the vaccination regimen fit in with your 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		Note that in the low-risk Bluetongue period, the risks of using the same needle for more than one animal is the same as for any other product. However, if you end up vaccinating at a high-risk time for disease, it is important to change the needle between every animal to avoid iatrogenic spread of Bluetongue.	
10. 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, the stress of giving any vaccine could impact implantation of the early foetus. Near to birth, the immune response may be compromised.	
11. 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 by vaccination.	
12. What stage of the breeding cycle are your males in? – see the <a href="#">‘Is it too late to vaccinate?’</a> tool	Vaccination completed well before breeding will protect the pregnancy						None of the Bluetongue vaccines have been officially tested in breeding males. However, millions of doses have been given throughout Europe and there have been no reports of the vaccines affecting fertility (note that the virus itself has very severe effects on fertility).	

**ASSESS YOUR RISK** | **PROTECT YOUR BUSINESS** | **DEFEND YOUR STOCK**

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13. What are your herd/flock objectives and future plans to export?	<p><b>I do not intend selling either animals or germplasm for export out of the UK</b></p>				<p><b>I would like to sell breeding stock and germplasm to other countries.</b></p>		<p>There may be ongoing impacts of having seropositive animals on the future export of live animals and germplasm.</p>
14. Have you considered the effectiveness of each vaccine and the claims they each make?	<p><b>I am keen to reduce the severity of Bluetongue disease in my animals</b></p>				<p><b>I will only vaccinate if it guarantees prevention of infection</b></p>		<p>The available vaccines differ from each other in their claims – see the Vaccine Comparison Tables on the Ruminant Health &amp; Welfare website for more information.</p>
15. What have the weather conditions been?	<p><b>It has been unseasonably warm</b></p>		<p><b>It has been very cold and windy</b></p>				<p>The 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.</p>

## Vaccine considerations:

There are currently three BTV-3 vaccines available in the UK:

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

[Click here](#) for the BTV-3 Vaccine Comparison Tables

There are currently two BTV-8 vaccines:

- BTVPUR, distributed by Boehringer Ingelheim
- Syvazul BTV, distributed by Virbac UK

All Bluetongue 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

[Click here](#) to find Bluetongue information and guidance for vets

## Other considerations:

Good farm biosecurity practices can reduce the risk of disease outbreaks. Specifically, with BTV, this means taking care when moving animals over large distances. Moving an infected animal into a BTV-free area will risk infecting the local midge population and starting a new outbreak.

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

- Housed animals may be at a reduced risk of BTV 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, parasitism and poor nutrition) may influence 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 and ideally this should be between every animal
- This is particularly important to consider if vaccinating within an area where there is active disease present and during the high vector period

# BATTLE BLUETONGUE

With thanks



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

