**BOVINE VIRAL DIARRHOEA ERADICATION SCHEME FOR WALES**

**Consultation response form**

**Name:**

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**Organisation (if applicable):** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone No.:**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail address:**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Are you involved with cattle keeping?**

* Yes
* No

**If Yes, in what capacity? Please tick multiple options if relevant**

* Beef cattle keeper
* Dairy cattle keeper
* Industry representative (e.g. Farming union)
* Other

**Please specify if the relevant category is not included above**

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**Questions**

**Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD) eradication**

*The Welsh Government believes eradicating BVD will bring significant animal welfare and economic benefits to keepers and their animals, as well as trade for Wales within the UK and with Third Countries. There are also wider benefits to achieving BVD freedom, including the increased efficiency and reduced carbon footprint of Welsh farms and supporting the campaign against anti-microbial resistance (AMR).*

*The introduction of BVD legislation would be consistent with efforts in England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, and the Republic of Ireland, which either have or are planning to introduce their own compulsory schemes. The introduction of successful eradication schemes by individual administrations will help eradicate the disease from the UK more effectively, with consistent measures and aims.*

1. Do you agree that BVD presents a problem for the farming industry in Wales?
* Yes
* No

Please give your reasons why

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1. Do you agree that BVD eradication will improve the health and welfare of Welsh cattle?

 Yes

 No

Please give your reasons why

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1. Do you agree that eradication of Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD) will benefit Welsh cattle keepers?

 Yes

 No

Please give your reasons why

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1. Do you agree with the introduction of legislation to support the eradication of BVD from Wales?

 Yes

 No

Please give your reasons why

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***BVD Screening***

*All herds will be required to have an annual screen for BVD (as detailed in the description of the voluntary phase) completed no later than 12 months after any previous screen.*

*The screening will take the form of a blood test sample taken from the animal(s)by an approved private veterinary surgeon and sent to an approved laboratory for testing.*

*This will give a “Herd status” that will be shared with the keeper by the private vet and renewed annually.*

 *In Herds with negative BVD status, cattle will not be subject to BVD movement restrictions or individual testing.*

*In Herds with positive BVD status, all animals will be individually tested, including those born in the 12 months after the positive screening test. Animals that return a positive BVD antigen test will require an additional test after 21 days have passed, to determine whether the animal has developed immunity.*

*Furthermore, all animals in a BVD positive herd will be subject to the following movement restrictions:*

* *Antigen positive (PI) animals will only by allowed to move to slaughter.*
* *Antigen negative animals (animals which test negative at screening or following additional testing) will only be allowed to move from the holding where they are based if they have received a negative antigen test 21 days prior to movement. The 21 day period of testing before movement is based on scientific and veterinary advice.*

*Herds, which fail to test within the 12 months will be treated as if they have tested positive and will be subject to the movement restrictions above.*

1. Do you agree that legislation imposing requirements for mandatory regular BVD screening is necessary to eradicate the disease?

 Yes

 No

Please give your reasons why

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1. Do you agree that cattle from a herd with positive BVD status, that test positive, should have their movement restricted, unless that movement is to slaughter?

 Yes

 No

Please give your reasons why

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1. Do you agree that cattle from a herd with positive BVD status, that test negative for BVD via antigen test, should not be permitted to leave the holding where they are based unless they obtain a pre-movement negative antigen test within 21 days of the move?

 Yes

 No

Please give your reasons why

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1. Cattle keepers may be required to pay for their herd screenings, PI hunts and pre-movement testing to move cattle from a BVD positive herd. Do you agree that, in principle this is a fair expectation?
* Yes
* No

Please give your reasons why

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**PI Management and Isolation**

*BVD in herds is maintained by a small population of animals that become “Persistently Infected” (PI) with the virus. PI animals become infected with the virus in the uterus during early pregnancy. A PI may appear healthy but will remain infected for its entire life and infect other animals in the herd.*

*By identifying a PI animal and isolating it from other animals for its lifetime, the potential for animals in the herd and neighbouring herds becoming infected will be greatly reduced.*

*The keeper may either maintain the PI animal in isolation until it dies naturally or send the animal to slaughter. Once all identified PIs in a herd have either died naturally or have been slaughtered and effective movement restrictions prevent BVD being reintroduced, the herd will achieve “BVD freedom”.*

*If keepers choose to keep a PI animal, they will be advised to agree an Animal Health Plan with their private vet, which includes specific considerations for effective PI isolation on their holding, in line with Government guidance, which would be issued alongside legislation.*

*This may include keeping single PI animals in isolation together with a minimum of two non-PI companion animals from the herd to ensure their welfare (to note, companion animals should not be intended for breeding, in order to reduce the risk of BVD spread).*

*It has not been possible to ensure effective management of PI animals through a voluntary scheme. However, the Welsh Government believes progress towards BVD freedom can be achieved in Wales through legislation to ensure effective isolation and removal of PI animals from herds.*

1. Do you agree that legislation imposing requirements for mandatory PI isolation is necessary to eradicate the disease?

 Yes

 No

Please give your reasons why

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***BVD Data Management***

*The following data may be collected by or on behalf of Welsh Government in relation to BVD screening and testing:*

* *Name and contact details of the keeper*
* *The address, name and type of business (e.g. cattle/dairy farm)*
* *BVD antibody herd status and dates of previous screenings*
* *BVD antigen test results for individual animals*
* *Animals identified as persistently infected (PI) within the herd*
* *Information regarding instances of non-compliance with scheme requirements*

*It is proposed, that herd BVD status and antigen results of individual animals will be made accessible to other cattle keepers via their EIDCymru login on the online Welsh Government Multi Species Wales portal.*

*This will enable keepers buying cattle to view the BVD status of a herd they are buying from (i.e., whether animals in that herd have returned positive results for BVD antibodies at the screening stage). This will ensure keepers are aware if they are buying from a BVD positive herd. They will also be able to view the individual antigen status of the animal they are purchasing.*

*The level of BVD information displayed to keepers will be kept at a minimum to allow the practice of informed purchasing to operate. No personal or sensitive information, or information related to non-compliance with the scheme will be shared.*

*By ensuring relevant BVD information is available for keepers, awareness and responsible purchasing will reduce the spread of the virus and movement of infected animals will also be greatly reduced. This will allow keepers to protect their herds and their farm revenues by ensuring only healthy animals are brought into their herds and the risk to their businesses is lower.*

*All information will be stored and accessed securely to protect the data usage rights of keepers.*

1. Do you agree that farms should have the BVD status of their herds and individual animals (where their herd status is BVD positive) made securely available to other keepers via the Multi Species Wales online portal at the time of purchasing cattle?

 Yes

 No

Please give your reasons why

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***Enforcement***

*It is intended that failure to comply with the compulsory scheme will be an offence under the Animal Health Act 1981.This is to ensure Welsh cattle herds are appropriately and regularly screened for BVD and that untested or BVD positive animals are not moved for sale. The intention is that cattle keepers will be expected to maintain compliance with the compulsory scheme requirements and to manage the BVD risks on their farms effectively. The proposed offences would include:*

1. ***Not antibody screening young stock within the permitted timescale***
2. ***Moving stock from a positive herd without an antigen test***
3. ***Not isolating an animal that has tested positive at antigen test***

It is proposed that Local Authorities will be empowered to enforce all parts of the legislation including powers of entry (i.e. visiting farms), and we would expect them to act proportionately in accordance with their normal enforcement policy.

It is proposed that penalties would be applied in accordance with the Animal Health Act 1981 and could include an unlimited fine or imprisonment.

1. Do you agree keepers that breach the requirements of the proposed compulsory scheme should be liable to penalties?

 Yes

 No

Please give your reasons why

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**Additional comments**

1. We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues, which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them.

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