

14 November 2024

Animal Health: Bluetongue in livestock

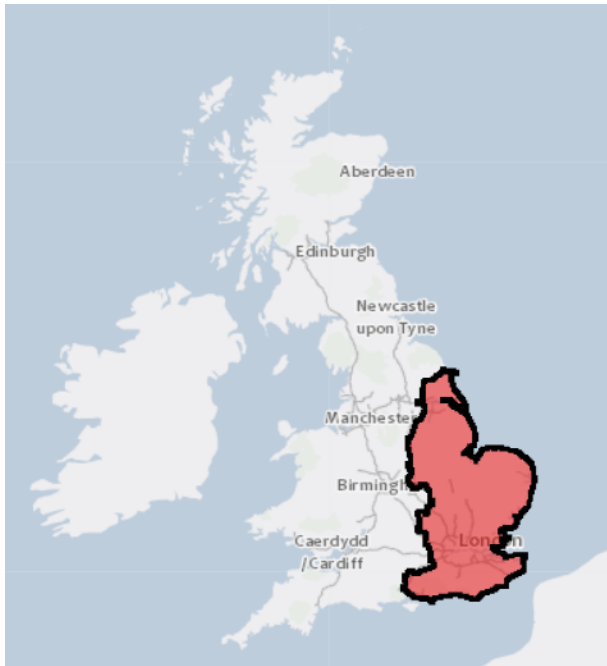
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Purpose of the report

To inform Members on the current bluetongue outbreak in livestock animals



1. This year has seen an increase in the number of livestock affected by the bluetongue virus.
2. Bluetongue is a notifiable disease caused by infection with the Bluetongue virus which is mainly spread by biting midges.
3. The Bluetongue virus affects:
 - Sheep
 - Cattle
 - Other ruminants such as deer and goats
 - Camelids such as llamas and alpacas
4. Bluetongue restriction zones are currently in place in large parts of the country as represented in the following map-



5. The control of Bluetongue is legislated for under the Bluetongue Regulations 2008 (as amended). In May 2024, the Government issued a specific disease control framework for bluetongue virus serotype 3 in England based on the existing GB Control Strategy for Bluetongue. It is focused on the following principles -
 - Any potential culling will only small scale at the outset to prevent disease becoming established.
 - Disease control efforts in 2024 will centre on movement controls on susceptible livestock and their germinal products (semen, ova and embryos).
 - A 10km temporary control zone (TCZ) is put in place around the affected farms which will restrict all movements of susceptible animals except under veterinary licence.
6. As far as the outbreak this year is concerned, the role of local authorities has not been resource intensive. The focus of the local authority role in any TCZ or Restricted Zone (RZ) has been communicating with industry to raise awareness of the disease risk and clinical signs and to provide advice on controls when approached.
7. The Committee is asked to note the information.

Further information can be found at: [Bluetongue: news, information and guidance for livestock keepers - GOV.UK](#)

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