

# [Defra](#)

- [Home](#)
- [About Defra](#)
- [The Environment](#)
- [Food and Farming](#)
- [Rural and Countryside](#)
- [Wildlife and Pets](#)

You are here: [Home](#) > [Animal diseases](#) > [A-Z of diseases](#) > Bovine TB (tuberculosis)

- [A-Z of diseases](#)
- [Bovine TB \(tuberculosis\)](#)
- [About bovine TB](#)
- [Advice to animal keepers](#)
- [Information for the public](#)
- [Badgers and bovine TB](#)
- [Controlling the disease – the Government’s approach](#)
- [Research into Bovine TB](#)
- [Vaccination](#)
- [Legislation](#)
- [Publications](#)

## Bovine TB (tuberculosis)



Bovine tuberculosis (TB) is an infectious disease of cattle and one of the biggest challenges facing the cattle farming industry today, particularly in the west and south west of England. It is caused by the bacterium *Mycobacterium bovis* (*M. bovis*), which can also infect and cause TB in badgers, deer, goats, pigs, camelids (llamas and alpacas), dogs and cats, as well as many other mammals.

## Latest news

- 13 March 2013: [Bovine National, Country, Regional and County TB Statistics to the end of December 2012](#)
- 27 February 2013: [Badger cull to proceed this summer](#)
- 18 January 2013: The Animal Health and Welfare Board for England (AHWBE) held an informal

stakeholder engagement on bovine TB strategic issues. A summary of responses is now available, along with reports from a series of regional workshops: [Call for views on future bovine TB strategy and how to meet the challenges ahead](#)

- 1 January 2013: Changes implemented to cattle movement controls and surveillance testing regime (as announced in October 2012). Information notes are available:
  - [Changes to TB Cattle Movement Controls](#) (PDF)
  - [Changes to Bovine TB Surveillance](#) (PDF)
- 23 October 2012: [Badger cull to proceed next year](#) (news release)
- 18 October 2012: [Cattle movement controls and surveillance strengthened to tackle bovine TB](#). Information notes are available:
  - [Changes to TB Cattle Movement Controls](#) (PDF)
  - [Changes to Bovine TB Surveillance](#) (PDF)
- 17 October 2012: [Badger control – culling of badgers](#) (expanded information)
- 17 October 2012: Our live [Twitter Q&A on the badger cull](#) has been collated on Storify

## The Government's approach to tackling Bovine TB

The Government is committed to a comprehensive and balanced approach to tackling TB, with eradication as the long-term goal.

- [Controlling the disease – the government's approach](#)

Cattle measures will remain central to the Government's approach, which needs to be comprehensive, risk-based and staged.

Controlled culling of badgers confirmed as part of the package of measures to tackle bovine TB (14 December 2011). The approach will be piloted in two areas.

- [News release](#)
- Policy document: [The Government's policy on bovine TB and badger control in England](#)
- Guidance to Natural England: [Licences to kill or take badgers for the purpose of preventing the spread of bovine TB](#)
- [Government Bovine TB Eradication Programme for England](#) sets out a comprehensive and balanced package of measures to tackle bovine TB
- Further information including [responses to consultation and impact assessments](#)

## Key publications, documents and media

- [Key conclusions from a meeting held between Professor Bob Watson and scientific experts on 4th April 2011](#) (PDF 30KB)
- [Bovine TB in badgers – Improving farm biosecurity](#) – Training video demonstrating practical on-farm biosecurity measures to reduce TB risks to cattle from wildlife.

## Key facts and figures

- **5.5 Million** – total number of TB tests on cattle in England in 2011.
- **28,000** – approximate number of cattle slaughtered for TB control in England in 2012.
- **3,900** – approximate number of new TB incidents in 2012 (herds where at least one animal tests positive for bovine TB, when the herd had previously been TB free).

- **11.5%** of cattle herds in England were under cattle movement restrictions at some point in 2011 (the 2012 statistics will be published once additional quality assurance checks have been completed).
- **23.6%** of cattle herds in the South-West were under cattle movement restrictions at some point in 2011 (the 2012 statistics will be published once additional quality assurance checks have been completed).
- **£500 million** – the amount it has cost the taxpayer to control the disease in England in the last 10 years.
- **£1 billion – estimated cost** of TB control in England over the next decade without taking further action.
- **£34,000** – the average cost of a TB breakdown on a farm, of which around **£12,000** falls to the farmer.

Further information – see [Bovine TB statistics](#)

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## You may also be interested in:

- [AHVLA's Dealing With TB In Your Herd publications](#)
- [Bovine TB statistics](#)

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