

Bovine TB Information Note 04/16

Optional additional private TB blood testing¹ of cattle from unrestricted (Officially TB free) herds

10 March 2016

From 1 April 2016, farmers in England will be able, via a private veterinarian and with prior APHA approval, to submit blood samples for TB testing to an APHA laboratory at their own expense.

The private blood test will be available in a limited number of scenarios outside of the government-funded testing programme, where farmers seek additional assurances as to the TB-free status of animals over and above those afforded by statutory testing.

This will provide additional TB test options to farmers wanting to check and monitor the health of their cattle or those they are planning to purchase.

Cattle NOT eligible for private IFNG testing include the following:

- Cattle from herds under restriction (OTFW) undergoing government IFNG testing,
- Skin test-positive (reactor) and other cattle awaiting slaughter for TB control purposes,
- Animals in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland at the time of testing.

Please also note that the IFNG blood test cannot be used on its own to maintain or regain OTF status for a particular cattle herd.

Private vets should contact the laboratory to book their IFNG test, after obtaining prior authorisation from the regional APHA office.

¹ interferon-gamma (IFNG) blood test

IFNG Test Cost (further information on the types of tests available, and the circumstances in which they can be used, can be found on GOV.UK from 1 April 2016):

Cost per test for:	Single test	5+ tests	10+ tests
High Specificity Test	£30.00	£24.70	£22.30
High Sensitivity Test	£22.00	£18.00	£16.25

All results will be sent directly to the submitting veterinary practice and copied to the appropriate regional APHA Office. Farmers should be made aware that animals giving a positive result are likely to be compulsory slaughtered with statutory compensation and the herd put under official restrictions. Some low-risk animals giving a positive result may be retested at government discretion and expense.

Further information

Please contact your local APHA office for further information. From the 1 April 2016 further information will also be available on GOV.UK along with application and submission forms.