

## **Bluetongue – Don't hesitate, vaccinate!**

### **Frequently Asked Questions about booster vaccination**

#### **When should booster vaccinations be administered?**

The timing for administering booster vaccinations has not yet been established but it is recommended that animals are revaccinated at least 2 weeks before each risk period. This will be the end of the vector-free period, which is likely to be in March 2009.

#### **Are there any differences between sheep and cattle?**

The timing for administering booster vaccines is the same for sheep and cattle.

#### **Are there any differences between the available vaccines?**

The timing for administering booster vaccines is the same for the Intervet (Bovilis BTV8), Merial (BTVPUR AISap 8) and Fort Dodge (Zulvac 8 Bovis) vaccines.

#### **Can I use a different brand to booster vaccinate?**

Yes, while there has not been a trial on revaccinating using a different vaccine brand, there is no evidence to suggest that it would not work.

#### **When will supplies of booster vaccine be available?**

Vaccine is likely to be available throughout the vector-free period. You should speak to your medicines wholesaler about vaccine availability.

#### **What about adverse reactions?**

All products licensed for use in the UK are tested for quality, safety and efficacy. The use of any vaccine, including the gathering and handling of animals for the purpose of administering vaccine, carries an inherent risk. This risk is never zero, but it is less than the risk should the disease be encountered.

The side effects from the use of BTV8 vaccines have been monitored through reports of adverse reactions to the Veterinary Medicines Directorate and vaccine manufacturers. The VMD has received a relatively small number of reports of suspected adverse reactions to BTV8 vaccines. The incidence of suspected adverse reactions is very low, particularly taking into account the number of animals vaccinated so far, and they remain satisfied that the benefits of this vaccine outweigh the risks.

As with the initial vaccination, administering the booster requires clear communication with your farming clients about any suspected lack of efficacy or other suspected adverse reactions.

The Intervet (Bovilis BTV8) and Merial (BTVPUR AISap 8) vaccines have been tested for safety in sheep and cattle. The Fort Dodge (Zulvac 8 Bovis) vaccine has been tested for safety in cattle. If the vaccines are used in other ruminant species this should be undertaken with care, it is advised to test the vaccine on a small number of animals prior to mass vaccination. Only healthy animals should be vaccinated.

#### **What if animals were not vaccinated in 2008?**

Vaccination is the only effective protection against bluetongue.

Animals should be vaccinated earlier enough to establish immunity in advance of the end of the vector-free period, likely to be March 2009. For the Intervet (Bovilis BTV8) and Merial (BTVPUR AISap 8) vaccines the onset of immunity is 3 weeks after vaccination. The Fort Dodge (Zulvac 8 Bovis) vaccine the onset of immunity is 25 days after the second dose.

#### **How do I administer the booster vaccination?**

The Intervet (Bovilis BTV8) and Merial (BTVPUR AISap 8) vaccines should be administered by subcutaneous injection and Fort Dodge (Zulvac 8 Bovis) vaccine by intramuscular injection.