DEPARTMENT OF
PRIMARY INDUSTRY AND RESOURCES

Information Sheet No 6.

Johne's Disease (JD)

Information for NT veterinarians

Veterinarians are an important part of Johne's disease (JD) management and **Johne's Beef Assurance Score (J-BAS)**. For NT producers seeking a higher level of JD assurance at **J-BAS Score 7** or **8**, a veterinarian is required to oversee the development of a **property biosecurity plan** and undertake **JD testing** of the herd (check-test or sample test).

Johne's Beef Assurance Score (J-BAS)

- **J-BAS** is a risk profiling tool developed to guide cattle producers on the risk of JD occurring on a beef cattle property. The J-BAS score is a number from 0 to 8, the higher the J-BAS score, the lower the risk of the property having JD.
- J-BAS will require a property biosecurity plan for all scores.
- J-BAS requires JD testing in herds seeking a J-BAS 7 or 8.

See **J-BAS FAQ's** and **J-BAS Flowchart** (Information Sheet No. 2 and 3) for more information on J-BAS.

Property biosecurity plans for J-BAS

- **J-BAS 7 or 8** must have a property biosecurity plan **overseen by a veterinarian.** This property biosecurity plan must be reviewed annually by a veterinarian for the property to maintain the higher J-BAS.
- **J-BAS 6 or below** will also require a property biosecurity plan**.** Veterinary oversight is not required.

A property biosecurity plan will be a requirement for the Livestock Production Assurance (LPA) program. Veterinary oversight is not required for property biosecurity plans under the LPA program. All producers who use National Vendor Declarations (NVD) are part of the LPA program.

Property biosecurity plan templates consistent with the national industry minimum standards of the National Farm Biosecurity Reference Manual – Grazing Livestock Production include:

- Australian Cattle Veterinarians (ACV) Biocheck
- Livestock Biosecurity Network (LBN) On Farm Biosecurity Plan (including Johne's disease)
- Animal Health Australia (AHA) On Farm Biosecurity Plan

What do veterinarians do with the property biosecurity plan?

- Producers should keep the property biosecurity plan on file for reference and review.
- The plan will also be auditable under LPA.
- Veterinarians who sign property biosecurity plans should also keep a copy on file.
- For properties with a J-BAS 7 or 8, veterinarians will need to review the property biosecurity plan annually with the producer.

See **Property Biosecurity Plan** (Information Sheet No. 5) for more information on Biosecurity planning.

For more information contact your regional Animal Biosecurity Office

Darwin 8999 2035 Katherine 8973 9716 Tennant Creek 8962 4458 Alice Springs 8951 8181

Last updated 26/06/2017

For more information visit **www.nt.gov.au**

NORTHERN TERRITORY GOVERNMENT

JD sampling and testing

The **Johne's Disease in Cattle Definitions and Guidelines** provides guidelines on JD testing including;

- approved tests for JD
- screening and definitive laboratory testing
- investigation and re-testing of reactors and reporting of test results

The **Australian and New Zealand standard diagnostic procedures (ANZSDPs**) for JD describes laboratory methods including sampling guidelines.

- Approved herd screening tests for JD include ELISA, (pooled) faecal culture or (pooled) HT-J faecal PCR
- Reactors must be further investigated using a definitive test (faecal culture or tissue culture and histopathology) to establish the infection status of the herd
- A Check Test or Sample Test is positive only if infection is confirmed in the herd.

Check Test

A Check Test is required for NT properties wanting to maintain a J-BAS 7 and is required for properties moving cattle to WA.

- 50 adult animals in the herd biased to increase the probability of detecting infection
- Test required is HT-J PCR or Faecal culture

Sample Test

A sample test is required for NT properties wanting to move to a J-BAS 8. Appendix 2 of the Johne's Disease in Cattle Definitions and Guidelines outlines the sample testing protocol.

- For herds with 10,000 head or more, 300 adult animals in the herd (cattle over 2 years of age, introduced bulls over 2 years of age and breeding cattle introduced from herds of lower assurance) biased to increase the probability of detecting infection.
- Test required is HT-J PCR or Faecal culture

Collection of samples for HT-J PCR

- HT-J faecal PCR testing is currently conducted at Berrimah Veterinary Laboratories
- Faecal samples (hand full faeces – min 10g) should be collected from each individual animal with a clean glove into a separate sterile, leak proof plastic container (small yellow top specimen jar) and labelled with each animals individual identifier (for follow up if required)
- Samples should be refrigerated and transported chilled to laboratory within 48 hours of collection; otherwise samples should be frozen until they can be transported to the laboratory
- Samples are pooled at the laboratory

Laboratory costs

- Veterinary costs for biosecurity planning, JD sampling and submission to be determined by the veterinarian
- Laboratory costs are dependent on the test (ELISA on blood, faecal culture, faecal HT-J PCR)
- HTJ-PCR is the recommended screening test for rapid results (1 week compared to 12 weeks for faecal culture)
- HTJ-PCR laboratory costs at BVL are approximately $1000 for 50 samples (Check-test) or $6000 for 300 samples (Sample test)

Training for Biosecurity planning and JD testing

- Currently, there is no requirement for a registered veterinarian to have specific training or accreditation for JD under J-BAS
- An online JD Market Assurance Program (MAP) training module for veterinarians is available on the Animal Health Australia website

- This training must be completed together with Accreditation Program for Australian Veterinarians (APAV). APAV aims to have an internationally recognised process for accrediting non-government veterinarians for involvement in government and industry animal disease programs.

Further Information

JD in Cattle Definitions and Guidelines www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/jd-cattle-tools/

JD Diagnostic Procedures http://www.agriculture.gov.au/animal/health/laboratories/procedures/anzsdp/johnes-disease-july-2015

JD Training for Vets https://www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/training/veterinary-training/johnes-disease-market-assurance-program-training/

LPA and Biosecurity Plans www.mla.com.au/meat-safety-and-traceability/red-meat-integrity-system/about-the-livestock-production-assurance-program/seven-lpa-requirements/biosecurity/

Johne's disease – See **JD Information for NT producers** (Information Sheet No 1.)

Johne's Beef Assurance Score (J-BAS) – See **J-BAS FAQ's for NT producers** (Information Sheet No 2.)

J-BAS Options for NT properties – See **J-BAS Flowchart for NT producers** (Information Sheet No 3.)

Cattle movements - See **JD livestock movement requirements** (Information sheet No. 4)

Biosecurity planning - See **Property Biosecurity Plan** (Information Sheet No. 5)