

Checking BVD status

An online database that aims to allow calf buyers to check an animal's bovine viral diarrhoea (BVD) status before purchase has been developed by XLVets. The database forms part of the company's BVD CHECK TAG initiative, which was launched earlier this year and uses branded white ear tags to show that an animal has been tested for BVD. A tissue sample is taken during the normal tagging of newborn calves or, alternatively, before movement, and is tested either by a veterinary practice or by a central laboratory. The company hopes that the ear tags will prompt calf buyers to check test results online before purchasing an animal.

Once calves have been tagged and the tissue samples have been analysed, the results are recorded through the farm's veterinary practice onto the new database, which XLVets says will be accessible via any smart phone in the future.

The initiative, which is being sponsored by MSD Animal Health and piloted through XLVets member practices, aims to improve the identification of source farms and reduce the risk of persistently infected (PI) calves moving from unit to unit. Participation in the scheme is voluntary and it is not limited solely to XLVets member practices.

'The ultimate aim is that all practices will have the option of participating in the scheme, with the database being hosted independently, thereby allowing the branded white tag to become a universal symbol to promote BVD awareness and prompt positive action to remove PIs,' said Dan Humphries from XLVets' practice Lambert, Leonard & May.

Address: XLVets, Carlisle House, Townhead Road, Dalston, Carlisle, Cumbria CA5 7JE, telephone 01228 711788. www.xlvets.co.uk