**BVD requirements to export cattle to EU Member States** **with BVD Free status**

In October 2021 the European Commission introduced a new Export Health Certificate (EHC) for cattle moving between EU Member States, including moves from Northern Ireland to the Republic of Ireland. New requirements must be met if the importing Member State has either a BVD eradication programme which has been approved by the European Commission, or if the importing Member State has achieved BVD Free status under the terms of EU Animal Health Law. Slightly different export requirements apply in these 2 cases.

The latest list of EU Member States with an approved BVD eradication programme or BVD Free Status is [here](https://food.ec.europa.eu/animals/animal-diseases/surveillance-eradication-programmes-and-disease-free-status_en#maps-of-areas-with-disease-status-disease-free-or-under-eradication-programme). As of 19 July 2023:

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| **Approved BVD eradication programme** | **BVD export requirements** |
| * Republic of Ireland * Parts of Germany (contact DAERA Trade section for details) | Please refer to the BVD page of the DAERA website [here](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/bvd-requirements-export-cattle-eu-member-states-approved-bvd-eradication-programme-or-bvd-free) |

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| **BVD Free status** | **BVD export requirements** |
| * Austria * Denmark * Finland * Sweden * Parts of Germany (contact DAERA Trade section for details) | BVD requirements to export cattle to these Member States are listed in this document. |

This document details the conditions which must be met to enable an approved Private Veterinary Practitioner (aPVP) to sign an EHC to export cattle for breeding and production to Member States with BVD Free status. **This will become of much greater significance for exports from NI when the ROI achieves BVD Free status, which could happen at some point in 2024. aPVPs and keepers who may wish to export cattle to the ROI from 2024 are advised to prepare for these new requirements.**

For non-pregnant and pregnant cattle 4 options are available, one of which must apply for the export to be permitted. These options are set out in the following tables.

**Key points**:

1. BVD requirements apply only for animals exported for breeding and production. Animals exported for direct slaughter are not affected.
2. DAERA does not know exactly when the ROI will be granted BVD Free status by the European Commission. DAERA will publicise the expected start date when this becomes available.
3. **In all cases, animals to be exported for breeding and production must never have been vaccinated for BVD**. This is because Member States with BVD Free status will use antibody testing for BVD surveillance. If the animal is being exported from the natal herd, the keeper must sign an Owner’s Declaration to confirm the animal has never been vaccinated for BVD. The herd keeper must also present his medicine records to the certifying aPVP. If the keeper is unsure, or, if the animal is being exported from a herd which is not the natal herd, it must be blood sampled to confirm it is BVD antibody negative within 30 days pre-export. This means that Option 4 in the following tables is not possible where the animals is being exported from a herd which is not the natal herd.
4. In all cases, every animal in the exporting herd must have a negative virus test result. This can be a direct negative result (BVDN status on APHIS) or an indirect result (INDNEG status on APHIS). If there are any animals with BVDP, BVDI, DAMPI, OFFPI, BVDU (untested and born since compulsory testing in NI started – 01.03.2016) or ‘blank’ status (untested and born before 01.03.2016) then the export cannot be certified. The only exception is for calves <30 days old on the date of export, which can be BVDU.
5. Some of the options to export cattle require the exporting herd to have ‘Establishment Free from BVD’ status. This is defined in European legislation and is summarised in document EF1. Any keeper who believes they meet these requirements should complete an EF2 application form and this will be considered by DAERA. If the requirements have been met DAERA will issue a letter (EF3) awarding ‘Establishment Free from BVD’ status which will be used as a Veterinary Support Certificate to enable this option to be selected by the aPVP on the Export Health Certificate. This letter will be valid for 14 calendar days and further exports beyond this will require a new application for ‘Establishment Free from BVD’ status. Full details of Establishment Free from BVD including forms EF1 and EF2 is [here](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/establishment-free-bvd).
6. Most herds in NI are unlikely to meet the requirements of ‘Establishment Free from BVD’ status due to the conditions which must apply to animals which have moved into these herds in the previous 12 months. Herds which have had no moves in over the previous 12 months may be able to demonstrate they meet the requirements of ‘Establishment Free from BVD’ status.
7. Some of the options to export cattle require the animals to be kept in an ‘Approved Quarantine Establishment’. This is also defined in European legislation ([here](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32019R2035&from=EN) – see pages 49 + 50) and is summarised in document AQE1. Any keeper who wishes to apply for an AQE should complete application form AQE2. Local DAERA staff will carry out an inspection of the proposed location and if this is acceptable a letter will be issued to confirm the ‘Approved Quarantine Establishment’ conditions. Full details of Approved Quarantine Establishments including forms AQE1 and AQE2 can be found [here](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/approved-quarantine-establishments-aqe).
8. If females over 12 months old are to be exported as non-pregnant, the keeper and certifying aPVP will both be required to sign declarations of each animal’s pregnancy status.
9. Where virus testing is required this can be the tissue tag result when the animal was a calf (BVDN status on APHIS).
10. Where an antibody test is required ‘pre-departure’ this must be in the 30 days before the date of export.
11. Useful advice and guidance in relation to exporting cattle for breeding and production to EU Member States direct from their premises of origin is available [here](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/export-certification-breeding-production-cattle-eu-member-states-direct-their-premises). For exports from an Export Assembly Centre see [here](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/export-certification-breeding-production-cattle-eu-member-states-export-assembly-centre).
12. The Model Export Health Certificate for BVD is available at Chapter 1 within [Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/403](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32021R0403) (BVD requirements are at pages 44-46 of the PDF version)
13. The BVD requirements under EU Animal Health Law are detailed in Annex IV, Part VI of [Commission delegated regulation 2020/689](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32020R0689). The criteria for granting Establishment Free from BVD status is at Section 1 of Chapter 1 (page 83 of PDF version).

DAERA will update this guidance as further information becomes available.

**Pre-export requirements to move cattle for breeding and production to an EU Member State with BVD Free status**

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| **Non-pregnant animals – All animals to be exported must NOT be vaccinated for BVD.** | | |
| Option 1 | From an **Establishment Free from BVD**;  Herd testing in previous 4 months with negative results to the following level:  - Serological tests for the detection of antibodies against BVDV are carried out at least annually on samples taken from bovine animals that have been kept in the establishment for at least 3 months prior to testing.  The number of animals tested must allow at least for the detection, with a 95% level of confidence, of seropositive animals at a target prevalence rate of 50% and must be at least five animals or all the animals if there are fewer than five animals kept;  In case the bovine animals of the establishment are kept in separate groups without direct contact with each other, a respective number of animals of each group must be tested;  If the exporting herd is not the natal herd, the animal also requires a negative antibody test within 30 days pre export | This option is unlikely to apply unless no animals have been moved into the herd in the past 12 months AND serological (antibody) testing as a means of BVD surveillance has been carried out.  Very few NI herds will be carrying out serological testing to this extent, as the NI BVD scheme is based on virus testing. |
| Option 2 | From an **Establishment Free from BVD**;  Individual animal testing to exclude the presence of BVD virus prior to departure of the consignment  If the exporting herd is not the natal herd, the animal also requires a negative antibody test within 30 days pre-export | This option is unlikely to apply unless no animals have been moved into the herd in the past 12 months. If no animals have been moved in it may be possible for a herd to achieve Establishment Free from BVD status.  Tissue-tag testing as a calf is acceptable for the individual animal testing. |
| Option 3 | From an establishment not free from BVD;  Animal has negative virus test  AND  Animal housed in an **Approved Quarantine Establishment** for 21 days  If the exporting herd is not the natal herd, the animal also requires a negative antibody test within 30 days pre-export | This is likely to be the easiest option for most exporters, however it requires the exporting herd to have a suitable shed which can meet the requirements of an Approved Quarantine Establishment. |
| Option 4 | From an establishment not free from BVD;  Animal has negative virus test  AND  Positive antibody test within the 30 days before export  THIS OPTION IS NOT AVAILABLE IF THE EXPORTING HERD IS NOT THE NATAL HERD, AS THE EXPORTER CANNOT SIGN AN OWNER’S DECLARATION THAT THE ANIMAL HAS NOT BEEN VACCINATED. | This will apply where the animal has been exposed to natural infection and has sero-converted. This option avoids the need for an Approved Quarantine Establishment but requires an additional blood test. As BVD prevalence reduces it will be increasingly unlikely that animals will be antibody positive through natural infection. |
| **Pregnant animals – All animals to be exported must NOT be vaccinated for BVD** | | |
| Option 1 | From an **Establishment Free from BVD**;  Herd testing in previous 4 months with negative results to the following level:  Either  - Serological tests for the detection of antibodies against BVDV are carried out at least annually on samples taken from bovine animals that have been kept in the establishment for at least 3 months prior to testing.  The number of animals tested must allow at least for the detection, with a 95 % level of confidence, of seropositive animals at a target prevalence rate of 50 % and must be at least five animals or all the animals if there are fewer than five animals kept;  In case the bovine animals of the establishment are kept in separate groups without direct contact with each other, a respective number of animals of each group must be tested.  If the exporting herd is not the natal herd, the animal also requires a negative antibody test within 30 days pre-export | This option is unlikely to apply unless no animals have been moved into the herd in the past 12 months AND serological (antibody) testing as a means of BVD surveillance has been carried out.  Very few NI herds will be carrying out serological testing to this extent, as the NI BVD scheme is based on virus testing. |
| Option 2 | From an **Establishment Free from BVD**;  Individual animal testing to exclude the presence of BVD virus prior to departure of the consignment  If the exporting herd is not the natal herd, the animal also requires a negative antibody test within 30 days pre-export | This option is unlikely to apply unless no animals have been moved into the herd in the past 12 months. If no animals have been moved in it may be possible for a herd to achieve Establishment Free from BVD status. Tissue-tag testing as a calf is acceptable for the individual animal testing. |
| Option 3 | From an establishment not free from BVD;  Animal has negative virus test  AND  Animal housed in an **Approved Quarantine Establishment** for 21 days  AND  Negative antibody test from sample taken not less than 21 days after the start of quarantine. | This is likely to be the easiest option, however it requires the exporting herd to have a suitable shed which can meet the requirements of an Approved Quarantine Establishment and relies on the animal having a negative antibody test result. |
| Option 4 | From an establishment not free from BVD;  Animal has negative virus test  AND  Positive antibody test from sample taken before insemination preceding current gestation  THIS OPTION IS NOT AVAILABLE IF THE EXPORTING HERD IS NOT THE NATAL HERD, AS THE EXPORTER CANNOT SIGN AN OWNER’S DECLARATION THAT THE ANIMAL HAS NOT BEEN VACCINATED. | This will apply where the animal has sero-converted following natural infection. This option avoids the need for an AQE but requires an additional blood test taken in some cases months before the export. Significant advance planning is needed here. As BVD prevalence reduces it will be increasingly unlikely that animals will be antibody positive through natural infection. |