



MYCOPLASMA BOVIS



Top tips for farmers directly involved in the *Mycoplasma bovis* response

If you are a farmer directly affected by *Mycoplasma bovis*, the following tips will help you minimise the impact of response activities on your farm. These tips have been developed with input from farmers, industry representatives and officials.

- Seek clarity on whether things said to you by anyone from Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) or AsureQuality (AQ) are suggestions or legal directions. Require MPI/AQ to put every direction in writing.
WHY: It can make claiming compensation easier when there is clear evidence that your losses stemmed from a legal direction given by MPI/AQ.
- Read, be confident you understand and fully comply with directions given by MPI/AQ.
WHY: Compliance with Directions is to support eradicating *Mycoplasma bovis* from New Zealand. Aside from this, failure to comply with Directions may prolong response operations on your farm.
Failure to comply with Directions is an offence under the Biosecurity Act that can affect your entitlement to compensation or even lead to prosecution.
- Do your utmost to work with MPI's efforts to locate and sample trace animals (animals that may have come from infected properties) and groups of cattle of interest. If any of the trace animals are no longer in your herd, provide details of where they have gone or when they died.
WHY: Any trace animals that remain on your farm must be presented and tested (or otherwise accounted for), as well as in-contact cattle. Only once testing requirements have been met can movement controls be lifted.
- Keep a log book of the details of all conversations with response staff including names, dates and times. You may wish to also take photocopies or photos of the Farm Systems Manager (FSM) log book.
WHY: It will help with any future discussions about your situation to have a clear record and timeline of all the information you have been given and provided.
- Update and maintain accurate NAIT records and give MPI response officials all of the information they ask for. The OSPRI call centre can help you with any issues you have with your NAIT account.
WHY: NAIT is the primary source of data on cattle movements. If there are differences between the cattle on your farm and the cattle showing on your farm in NAIT, or differences in cattle movements on and off your farm and other records, it makes it harder to trace disease pathways. Poor records can really slow down getting your farm through the testing process and the movement controls lifted.
- For farms placed under a Notice of Direction (NOD) restricting movements, keep farming as close to business as usual as possible within the restrictions placed upon you. Ensure you seek clarity and understanding of the conditions within the NOD, including whether stock can be moved and under what conditions. If in doubt, check with your Farm Systems Manager.
WHY: Over 80% of farmers under a NOD are subsequently cleared and the recovery of your business will be impacted if you voluntarily cease business-as-usual activities.

- If your farm is placed under active surveillance but without any movement controls, keep farming as close to business-as-usual as you can. If in doubt seek clarification from MPI/AQ.

WHY: On the majority of farms tested (~ 95%), *Mycoplasma bovis* is not detected and compensation will not be available for any losses to your business that you incurred because you did not continue to farm as usual.

Also, be aware that although some farmers have felt a moral obligation to inform customers and others about testing and/or to limit the movements of stock, compensation is unlikely to be payable for losses stemming from reluctance of others to purchase animals or graze land.

- Put compensation claims in as quickly as possible with full documentation and accept any money offered by MPI. Contact the DairyNZ and Beef + Lamb New Zealand Compensation Assistance Team for help with your claim on **0800 322 281**.

WHY: Maintaining cash flow for your business can significantly ease your situation and accepting Compensation from MPI doesn't mean you have committed to that as a final amount, you can always submit further claims later for other things or where you feel an insufficient amount has been offered for an existing claim.

- If affected by the response, use your professional team (e.g. your vet, bank manager, farm consultant, etc) who will understand the need to treat this information confidentially. MPI will not contact any third party organisations about your situation without your consent.

WHY: These organisations or people are those that can help your business get through some of the challenges you may face.

- If your farm or part of your farm is placed under a Restricted Place (RP) notice, the cattle included as part of the RP will be culled. Consider informing your neighbours as early as possible. For RPs, MPI will otherwise seek to inform neighbours that they are next to a farm with *Mycoplasma bovis*.

WHY: They will usually find out anyway as a sign will be placed at the farm entrance. Many farmers have found it's better to tell them personally or via a trusted third party.

- Reach out to friends and family and/or the Rural Support Trust for support.

WHY: If your farm is caught up in a biosecurity response, it's normal to find this stressful and uncertain. Nobody should be expected to handle this alone. The Rural Support Trusts are up to speed on *Mycoplasma bovis* and the response, and are there to walk you through it. They can put you in touch with other sources of information or support, including financial, health, or technical options, or farmers who have already come out the other side into recovery. Share the load, you are not alone, and we will get through together.

More information and support

For weekly updates on the overall response, sign up to MPI's stakeholder update. It is for anyone interested in the eradication of *Mycoplasma bovis*: <https://govt.us16.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=478b6510eba6aad9749219fb1&id=f6f318290a>

Latest information on *Mycoplasma bovis* and the response:
www.mbovis.govt.nz

General questions on *Mycoplasma bovis*:
call MPI on **0800 00 83 33** or email
MBovis2017_Liaison@mpi.govt.nz

Compensation information: call **04 894 0055** or email
compensationcoordinator@mpi.govt.nz

Direct farmer support (Rural Support Trust):
0800 787 254

To report a pest or disease (Exotic Pest and Disease Hotline): **0800 80 99 66**



Ministry for Primary Industries
Manatū Ahu Matua

