

Planning for Success. Breeding for Success.

Hire Bulls

Hiring bulls is a high risk activity because:

1. These bulls have been on multiple farms increasing their risk of contracting infectious diseases, such as TB.
2. Bulls come into contact with a high proportion of your herd giving them ample opportunity to infect your cattle.

Ask yourself if it is worth the risk. Avoid hiring bulls or hiring out your own bull where possible.



Resolved Inconclusives

Whilst these inconclusive animals pass subsequent follow-up tests, they are over 10 times more likely to become reactors compared to cattle that consistently test negative.

If infected but undetected, they can act as a reservoir of disease resulting in prolonged or reoccurring breakdowns.

It is important to keep a record of these cattle. Consider any concurrent diseases they may have, for example mastitis and lameness, and consider not breeding from them further.

These cattle should be culled as soon as is practical to remove the risk they pose.

Disease Carriers

These may not show clinical signs but are infected. This occurs with diseases such as IBR, BVD and Johnes.

Carriers pose a risk to your herd and should be culled as soon as practical.

Johnes infection can also affect the TB skin test by increasing the risk of false negatives and thus residual infection resulting in prolonged or re-occuring breakdowns.



Phone: 0300 200 7855

Department of
Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
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An Roinn
Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe

Depairtment o'
Fairmin, Environment an' Kintra Matthers



What is TB Advantage?





What is TB Advantage?

A genetic index published by AHDB to help dairy farmers make informed decisions when selecting bulls to help select for resistance to bovine TB.

How is TB Advantage developed?

Extensive research by Edinburgh University, the Roslin Institute and Scotland's Rural College using data from over 650,000 holstein cows in England and Wales and over 87,000 Holstein cows from Northern Ireland who have TB data recorded. This data has been used to identify bloodlines with more TB resistance.

How to use TB Advantage?

It is expressed on a scale from-3 to +3.
Bulls with values below 0 indicate increased susceptibility to TB and should be avoided.
TB advantage should be used as part of a range of important genetic traits to select a bull.

Further Considerations

- TB advantage has a small, but favourable, relationship with all traits in the UK breeding indexes so should not have a detrimental effect.
- The reliability of the TB advantage ranges from 20 to 99%, with an average of 65%.
- Breeding cattle with increased TB resistance is a long-term approach.
- TB advantage should not be used in isolation but as part of a broader control strategy

For more information regarding TB Advantage in Northern Ireland:
https://www.srgni.com/

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