

Slurry management to prevent the spread of TB

Did you know?

Mycobacterium bovis, the bacteria responsible for causing TB in cattle, can survive for up to

- 6 months in slurry,
- 3 weeks in manure.

In fact, spreading slurry stored for less than 2 months has been associated with an increased risk of a TB breakdown.

Sourcing Slurry

As far as practically possible, consider minimising spreading slurry or manure from other farms, especially if the other farm is not officially TB free as this carries a significant risk of introducing TB into your herd.

Do not dispose of carcasses, parts of carcasses, aborted fetuses, or placenta in the slurry. This further increases the disease risks associated with slurry.



Slurry Store

Slurry Storage

Slurry and manure should be stored in secure structures that are inaccessible to domestic and wild animals. Cattle manure should be stored for a minimum of 1 month to permit composting and minimise disease risk. Ideally, slurry should be stored for at least 2 months.

During a TB breakdown, slurry should be stored for at least 6 months so as few bacteria as possible remain infectious.

If stored for less than 6 months, slurry and milk from reactors can be treated with 11.25 to 20kg calcium hydroxide (lime) per m3 which deactivates the bacteria responsible for TB in cattle within 24 hours.

If slurry from reactor herds can't be stored for 6 months or treated, it should only be spread on land that will not be grazed or cut for 12 weeks after spreading.

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Reducing the risks associated with Slurry Spreading



Spreading

Where possible, only spread manure or slurry on arable land that is not grazed by cattle or cut for grass silage for at least 2 months.

Do not spread slurry during windy weather if cattle are or will be grazing neighbouring fields.

Minimise the risk of aerosol TB disease spread by using a downward discharge method where possible, such as band spreading, injection or a trailing shoe.

Contractors and Equipment

Ideally, use your own equipment for spreading slurry and manure as this prevents cross contamination of your fields with slurry from other farms.

If using a contractor is unavoidable, ensure that the outside of the vehicle e.g., wheels and wheel arches are cleaned and disinfected before entering your farm.

Whilst it is not practical to clean and disinfect the inside of tankers and umbilical systems, start spreading slurry on land that will not be grazed by cattle or cut for silage for at least 2 months. This reduces the risk of residual slurry from the previous farm contaminating your land which is then grazed by your cattle potentially exposing them to TB.





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