

Changes to the valuation of in-calf cattle for TB compensation announced

Animal owners are paid compensation for cattle slaughtered because of TB, based on the market value of the cattle concerned.

The valuation determines the market value of an animal based on the price the animal might reasonably obtain if it was for sale in the open market and was not affected or exposed to TB.

Following concerns that some cattle were potentially being valued as being in calf when they were not, a 12 month evidence gathering exercise was carried out by the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) and the Food Standards Agency (FSA).

A total of 7,418 cattle, that were declared by their owner as being in calf were examined post mortem, of which 2,817 animals were found not to be in calf following slaughter. The total amount of extra compensation paid for those not to be in calf is estimated as in excess of £459,000 over a 12 month period.

The Cabinet Secretary has therefore announced from 1 November 2018, written proof of Pregnancy Diagnosis (PD) will now be requested at valuation stage.

Cattle owners will be allowed to request PD evidence, in an agreed format, from their veterinarian that can be presented at valuation stage, provided the PD has been carried out within the previous three months (90 days) of the date of valuation. This will allow the cattle owner to arrange for their animals to be examined before the TB test is due to minimise any disruption to normal farming routines.

The Cabinet Secretary said:

“Cattle owners are rightly paid compensation for cattle slaughtered because of TB. However, we had concerns that some cattle were potentially being valued as in calf when they were not.

“The study by APHA and FSA shows that this is a real issue and that is why I am introducing changes to the valuation and payment of in-calf cattle, with written proof of Pregnancy Diagnosis now being required at valuation stage.

“These changes will come into force from 1 November this year. I urge all cattle owners to familiarise themselves with the new measures in advance of the changes being implemented and to contact their Official Veterinarian to arrange Pregnancy Diagnosis if appropriate.”