

Court warrant carried out to prevent spread of bovine TB

News story

bTB-positive alpaca known as 'Geronimo' has been euthanised to prevent the spread of disease.



A court warrant has been used today (Tuesday 31 August) to enter premises for the purposes of removing the bTB-positive alpaca known as 'Geronimo'. The infected animal was moved from the premises and euthanised by staff from the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) as a necessary measure to control the spread of bovine tuberculosis (bTB).

bTB is an infectious disease of cattle and other mammals. It is one of the most significant animal health challenges that England faces today, leaving behind devastating impacts on our farming and rural communities and costing taxpayers more than £100 million each year. In 2020 alone, more than 27,000 cattle had to be slaughtered to curb its spread.

Chief Veterinary Officer Christine Middlemiss said:

This is a terribly sad situation and our sympathies remain with all those affected by this devastating disease.

No one wants to have to cull infected animals if it can be avoided, but we need to follow the scientific evidence and cull animals that have tested positive for bTB to minimise spread of this insidious disease and ultimately eradicate the biggest threat to animal health in this country.

Not only is this essential to protect the livelihoods of our farming industry and rural communities, but it is also necessary to avoid more TB cases in humans.

A post mortem examination will now be undertaken by veterinary pathologists

from the APHA. This will be followed by a bacteriological culture of selected tissue samples, which can take up to three months.

Further information on the need to eradicate bTB can be found on our [APHA science blog](#).

Published 31 August 2021