

Buyers' checklist for breeding cattle



Buying in livestock is risky and is the most likely way of introducing a new disease onto your farm. The cost of a disease outbreak can be huge with long lasting effects. There are many potential diseases of concern as this checklist shows. The fewer red marks on the list, the lower the risk of buying in disease. Try not to rush a buying

decision and involve your vet early on so they can guide you. Your vet may want to speak to the vendor's vet and arrange for some testing of the animals you want to buy. All stock bought on to the farm should be quarantined for three weeks on arrival to allow time for vaccinations and treatments to be completed and for health to be assessed.

| General questions | | | |
|---|-----|-----|------|
| Is the source herd closed? | Yes | | No |
| Does the source herd belong to any health accreditation scheme? | Yes | No | |
| How many animals are in the source herd? | <50 | | >300 |
| Johne's Disease has a slow onset of disease, but is ultimately fatal. | | | |
| Is the source herd accredited as Johne's free? (CHeCS accreditation) | Yes | No | |
| Has the source herd had any confirmed or suspected cases? | | No | Yes |
| Does the source herd vaccinate against Johne's? | | No | Yes |
| Bovine Viral Diarrhoea is a viral disease, causing clinical signs including infertility and abortion. Calves born to infected dams are termed Persistently Infected (PI) and will eventually die, but can spread BVD to other cattle. | | | |
| Has the source herd been tested to prove it is free of BVD? (CHeCS accredited) | Yes | No | |
| Is the source herd vaccinated against BVD? | | Yes | No |
| Have the cattle to be purchased had a clear test for BVD antigen? | Yes | No | |
| Are the animals to be purchased pregnant? | No | Yes | |

| | | | |
|--|-----|------------|-----|
| Leptospirosis is a bacterial disease of cattle, causing reproductive failure and milk drop, and it can affect people. | | | |
| Has the source herd been tested to prove it is free of Leptospirosis? (CHeCS accredited) | Yes | No | |
| Is the source herd vaccinated against Leptospirosis? | | Yes | No |
| Infectious Bovine Rhinotracheitis (IBR) is a viral disease of cattle causing respiratory disease, reproductive failure and milk drop. A carrier status can be produced. | | | |
| Has the source herd been tested to prove it is free of IBR? (CHeCS accredited) | Yes | No | |
| Is the source herd vaccinated against IBR? | | Yes | No |
| If the source herd does vaccinate, have they always used a marker vaccine? | | Yes | No |
| Parasites may be harboured by purchased cattle, and may pose a risk to your herd. | | | |
| Have the animals to be purchased been vaccinated against lungworm? | Yes | | No |
| Has any treatment been given to eliminate parasites in the last three weeks? | Yes | | No |
| Have the animals had any boluses for longer acting anthelmintics? | Yes | | No |
| Is there any evidence of external parasites, such as ringworm, lice? | | No | Yes |
| Have the animals to be purchased had a clear test for liver fluke in the last year? | Yes | Not tested | No |
| Bovine Tuberculosis is a notifiable bacterial disease, which can also affect people. | | | |
| Is the source herd tested for TB more frequently than every 4 years? | | No | Yes |
| Has the source herd had TB reactors or inconclusive results in the last 4 years? | | No | Yes |
| Have the animals to be purchased had a clear test in the last 60 days? | Yes | Not tested | No |
| Neospora caninum is a protozoal parasite that can cause cattle to abort. | | | |
| Have the animals to be purchased has a clear test for Neospora? | Yes | Not tested | No |
| Salmonella is a disease causing scour and abortions. This disease is trasmissible to humans (zoonosis). | | | |
| Have there ever been a confirmed cases in the source herd? | No | | Yes |
| Is the source herd vaccinated? | | Yes | No |
| Campylobacter foetus venerealis is a sexually transmitted disease that can cause fertility problems. | | | |
| Is natural service used in the source herd? | | | Yes |
| If the animal(s) is pregnant was service via a bull or artificial insemination (AI)? | AI | Bull | |
| Has the animal ever run with a bull? | No | Yes | |

This is a simple guide, remember to discuss with your vet to test and treat where a risk has been identified. AHDB Beef & Lamb would like to acknowledge the Aberdeen Angus Cattle Society for their contribution to this checklist.