

A Petition from Scottish Beef Farmers to The European Commission calling for a common sense approach based on sound science for the use of vaccine to protect livestock in Scotland from encroaching Blue Tongue Virus Strain 8.

We, the undersigned, call upon the European Commission to:

- 1. Permit vaccination against Bluetongue Virus serotype 8, with inactivated licenced vaccine, in a Bluetongue-free country/region such as Scotland BEFORE the disease arrives and without the requirement to declare that country/region as a Protection Zone.**
- 2. That vaccination should be used to protect against Blue Tongue virus in Scotland as a Free Zone, therefore gaining Scotland the status of 'vaccinated free of virus'.**
- 3. That, in the event of the Surveillance Zone encroaching into Scotland before Bluetongue vaccination can be achieved, vaccination against Bluetongue virus should be permitted without the consequences of that area being designated a Protection Zone.**

Please enter your name: _____

Your email address: _____

Address line one: _____

Address line two: _____

Town: _____

Postcode: _____

Signature: _____

By entering your details, you agree to your name and town being shown on our list of signatories.



NATIONAL BEEF ASSOCIATION SCOTLAND

When Blue Tongue Virus arrived in Europe, the Standing Committee in Brussels agreed a zoning criterion with the aim to stop the spread of the virus.

But with the development and imminent arrival of vaccines for Blue Tongue Virus strains, the zoning criteria should be looked at in a different light.

To date, the European Commission (EC) has refused to alter the rule which forbids Bluetongue vaccination for strain 8 in a Bluetongue-free country or region, unless that country or region declares itself to be a Protection Zone.

When a country declares a Protection Zone, free movement of animals into that zone from all other Protection Zones across Europe is permitted.

If Scotland declared a Protection Zone to allow breeders to vaccinate for Blue Tongue Virus Strain 8, it would result in a serious risk of Bluetongue Virus entering and spreading within Scotland, particularly during the 6 weeks before vaccination could be fully effective.

In general, Scottish livestock breeders would like the choice to vaccinate animals before the Blue Tongue Virus Strain 8 arrives but, are very concerned about declaring a Protection Zone because of the movement risks.

It is understood that the EC has concerns about the use of live vaccines in other countries that may have lead to the spread of disease. But it is emphatically not live vaccine, but inactivated vaccine, that would be used in the UK and Bluetongue-free Scotland in particular.

It is also alleged that the EC has concerns that the vaccine, which is not a marker vaccine can not distinguish between an infected and a vaccinated animal, therefore the use of the vaccine would have to continue indefinitely until a marker vaccine was available.

If Scotland begins a coordinated vaccination programme with structured monitoring and spot checks from the Border with England and working northwards, the chance of Blue Tongue Virus Strain 8 getting a hold will be significantly reduced. In the event that Blue Tongue Virus was suspected in a vaccinated animal, that animal can still be tested for viraemia using PCR technology.

This petition aims to gather the wishes of the Scottish Livestock sector, to be able to vaccinate animals using an approved inactive vaccine for BTV stain 8 outside the Protection Zone so that animals can be protected from the arrival of the strain 8 virus, and, to apply to the EU for a derogation, so that Scotland can be a region declared 'free of BTV 8 with vaccine', therefore avoiding the need to declare a Protection Zone.

How to Respond: Enter your name and contact details into the petition and:

1. Email back to: [Helen can you put email address in.](#)
2. Fax the form back to 01434 601008
3. Post the form back to: The NBA, Mart Centre, Tyne Green, Hexham, Northumberland, NE46 3SG.
4. Go to the NBA website: www.nationalbeefassociation.com, Click on the **NATIONAL AND REGIONAL NEWS** menu (left hand side of the home page) and then click on **Scottish News**, then click on **Petition**. Enter your name and contact details and then press **SUBMIT**.