



## Minimising the risks from *Mycoplasma bovis* at cattle shows and events

### Background

On 21 July 2017 samples taken from a South Canterbury dairy herd tested positive for *Mycoplasma bovis*. The farm is part of a 16 farm group and all the farms in the group were placed under Restricted Place Notices.

As at 15 September 2017, there is a total of 6 properties where infection has been confirmed. 5 in North Otago/South Canterbury area (4 of which are in the farm group) and 1 in North Canterbury. None of these infected properties are unexpected and all are linked to the original infected properties via animal movements and have been caused by close animal contact. Despite intensive testing, no adjacent properties have as yet been identified as infected.

Not all infected animals get sick, but they can pass on the disease to other animals. The greatest risk of *Mycoplasma bovis* infection is through close contact between animals. This illness is hard to treat and clear from an animal.

### Minimising the risks

The risk from *Mycoplasma bovis* at shows and events is low.

All the animals on the infected places and the farm group's farms are under movement control and cannot be moved without permission from MPI. The infection is spread by direct and prolonged animal contact, despite intensive testing no infection across boundaries has been detected.

There are some simple actions that can minimise the risks from *Mycoplasma bovis*.

### What can exhibitors do?

Exhibitors should ensure only healthy cattle take part in shows. In particular symptoms of *Mycoplasma bovis* include:

- unusual mastitis in cattle that doesn't respond to treatment,
- arthritis in cows and calves,
- late-term abortion,
- pneumonia in calves.

Farmers should practice good on-farm biosecurity and clean and disinfect outer wear, boots and equipment before attending a show. On their return they should again clean and disinfect before taking outer wear, boots and equipment back onto the farm. For more information refer to the guidance on the MPI website -

<http://mpi.govt.nz/protection-and-response/responding/alerts/mycoplasma-bovis/> .

All exhibitors must have tagged and registered their cattle with NAIT.

All exhibitors must keep their NAIT movements' up-to-date and accurate and record movement to and from the event. Refer to NAIT guidance - <http://nait.co.nz/manage-animals/sending/events/recording-event-movements/>.

### What can show organisers do?

Ensure that exhibitors are aware of the farm biosecurity and hygiene recommendations and their NAIT obligations.

Animals without a NAIT tag should be denied entry to the show in accordance with Royal Agricultural Society rules and non-compliance should be reported to MPI.

Ensure stalls are cleaned out before you put cattle in them. If possible, don't use the same stalls for cattle belonging to different exhibitors.

Minimise contact between cattle during the show.

Provide hand sanitiser for cattle judges as they move between animals.

Any milking equipment used at the show should be cleaned and disinfected between using on animals from different exhibitors.

**Readiness and Response Services Directorate, Operations Branch**