

Why test accredited added animals?

There is always a small risk that a positive sheep could be purchased from a flock in which an MV breakdown has not yet been detected. The chance of this happening is low. To minimise this risk even further we ask flocks that are on **three year testing** to test added animals within twelve months of purchase. This is to ensure no infection has been introduced. The most secure policy is to quarantine and blood sample purchases. While in quarantine they can be treated for worms, fluke and scab. Remember sheep need to be at least twelve months old for MV testing.

The merit of inspections - be vigilant at all times

Inspections are carried out by independent assessors contracted to PSGHS, as part of the MV accreditation scheme. These inspections are undertaken on farms, at shows and at sales.

The inspectors report back to the PSGHS manager and if breaches of rules are found action has to be taken – in some cases this can mean loss of accredited status.

On farms the most common cause of a suspension in accreditation is a failure in bio-security with accredited sheep being able to contact non-accredited sheep through inadequate fencing (remember the 2 metre gap rule) or gates.

Make sure that your fences and gates are in good order. Remember gates must not allow nose to nose contact between accredited and non-accredited stock.

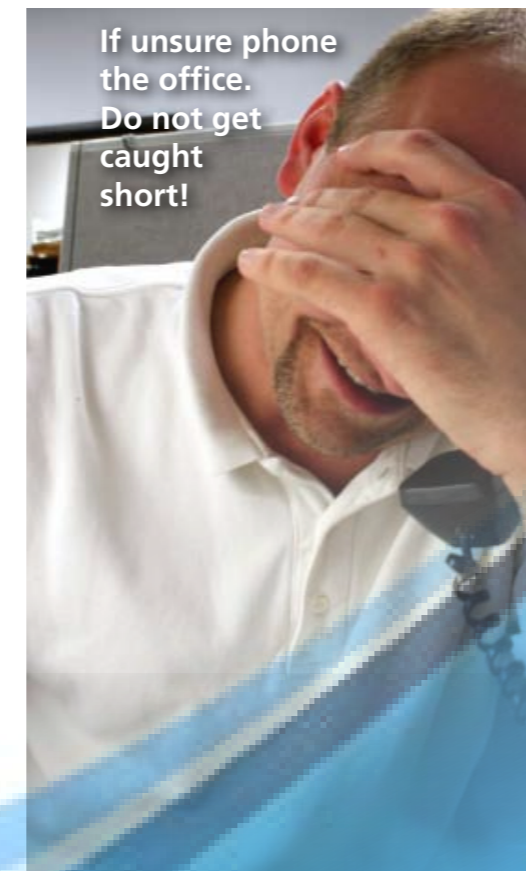
At shows and sales your MV health declaration may not be collected but it is checked to see that it is valid. This is to ensure that no non-accredited stock can gain entry to the accredited section of the show. If any MV accredited flock owner suspects shortcomings at shows and sales they should bring it to the attention of the show secretary and the PSGHS manager.



Remember to test the correct numbers

All too often producers are told by PSGHS office that they have tested a few animals short of the required numbers. This always creates a bit of discord and creates extra expense to the flock or herd owner and the vet has to revisit and sample more.

1. Remember to test all males over 18 months of age used in the current or most recent breeding season.
2. You must test all animals over 12 months of age that have been added and not tested since arrival IN ADDITION to the usual number which is determined by the ewes in your flock.



Remember sheep need to be at least twelve months old for MV testing

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Embryo transplants – think about recipients

Embryo transfer work is undertaken in many MV accredited flocks. Often the recipients used are part of the MV accredited flock. Take care if you have to buy in recipients.

Either :

1. Buy from an MV accredited source or
2. If non MV accredited recipients are purchased ensure they are bought in adequate time so that they can gain accreditation. Plan ahead at least nine months and keep separate from MV accredited flock until both the qualifying tests are done.



Bluetongue – note to goat keepers

In 2010 within the EU there has only been 120 cases of BTV. This contrasts with the peak of 45,000 cases reported in EU in 2008.

A recent announcement from the European Commission proposes that vaccination of susceptible animals in countries declared free from disease may be allowed from sometime in 2011.

If the UK is granted freedom from BTV the export of goats is likely to become easier. However importing countries can impose their standards and rules so do not rejoice quite yet.

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PSGHS NEWS

Premium Sheep and Goat Health Scheme in conjunction with SAC



Award winning PSGHS member



The Ingram family farm an all grass farm of 215 acres with another 300 acres rented near Inverurie in North East Scotland.

They run a closed flock of 1500 ewes, except for ram purchases and an occasional pedigree ewe to boost breed lines. The flocks comprise pedigree Charollais, pedigree Texel, Lley and Durno Hybrids (Charollais cross Texel). They strive to maintain a quality flock through skilled management, adoption of performance recording and the implementation of the results.

In August 2010 they held their 5th annual on farm sale of rams from the flock with 120 sold on the day to repeat buyers and to new buyers who come to the farm aiming to purchase rams with performance figures and of known health status.

The flock also sell at some of the Premier Sheep Sales and this year averaged £3,382 from 14 rams at the Worcester Charollais Sale and had champion and reserve at the Royal Welsh Show.

The flock has been MV accredited since the early days and are also in the Scrapie Monitoring Scheme (SMS).

Why is health status important? William and Carole say *“it enables us to trade at various levels – export of genetics, sales to other breeders and to commercial farmers. Knowing we have healthy sheep gives us peace of mind and our buyers are given confidence from buying sheep of a known health status. There is a cost involved but the UK sheep industry needs to promote itself as having a high health status.”*

‘As we show we are well aware of the risks and we ensure that high levels of bio-security are maintained not only at shows and sales but around our flock at home’.

The attention to detail and their innovative approach to sheep farming resulted in the Ingram family being named Farmers Weekly Sheep Farmers of the Year 2010.

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SAC Consulting

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Selling at non-MV accredited sales – watch your status

MV accredited stock sold at non-MV accredited sales immediately lose their MV accredited status on unloading at the sale. This is because there is a significant risk that the sheep could become infected at the sale. Remember any MV accredited sheep not sold and returned home cannot be added back to the MV accredited flock. These sheep must pass two qualifying tests, six to 12 months apart, whilst kept in isolation from all other sheep.

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Apart from inadequate fences and gates other risks are from:

- Blood contaminated equipment such as needles, tattooing equipment, taggers, and dosing guns. Use separate equipment if you have non-accredited stock.
- Housing MV and non MV stock in same airspace.
- Grazing- minimum 7 day gap after grazing with non-MV accredited stock.
- Handling facilities and transport – clean and disinfect thoroughly between MV and non-MV.
- Semen and embryos must be from MV accredited animals- check before use.
- Colostrum - only use colostrum from MV accredited stock. Can use cow colostrum.

Added sheep must

- a) come from another MV accredited flock.
- b) Be quarantined and pass 2 qualifying tests 6 to 12 months apart.

There must be a minimum of a two metre (six foot) gap between MV accredited and non-MV accredited sheep at all times. MV accredited sheep should be kept as far apart from non-MV accredited sheep as possible. It is important not to forget the gates as single gates between MV accredited and non-MV accredited sheep are NOT acceptable. You must ensure that animals cannot stray off or onto the holding.

The success of the MV accreditation scheme relies on the rules being followed. Flock owners invest considerable amounts of money in having accredited sheep. Breaches of rules not only affect sheep in the flock but also all other sheep they come into contact with. Random flock inspections are undertaken as part of the accreditation scheme.

The PSGHS Office must be informed if there has been a breach in flock security so they can guide you on the procedures required in order to retain or regain status. The above points have been extracted from the Rules and Conditions for the MV Accreditation Scheme which all members have been issued with. They can also be accessed on the PSGHS website at <http://www.sac.ac.uk/mainrep/pdfs/mvrulespdf>.

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Details for PSGHS web pages



To increase the value of your membership and to help you in the marketing of stock PSGHS are developing web pages detailing accredited members.

What are the benefits to me?

1. Breeders often seek to find stock of similar health status. If your details are on the PSGHS web pages with your contact details and perhaps a link to your own web address it is likely to create marketing opportunities.
2. Shows and sales have to check health status of stock entered and accessing this data on the web will simplify procedures.
3. You can download your health status report prior to attending shows and sales.

Putting your details on the web pages is voluntary. To date 25% of the membership of PSGHS have signed up.

If you want to be included in the PSGHS web page please sign the consent form enclosed and return it to the office.

Premium
Sheep & Goat
Health Schemes

Scrapie Monitoring Scheme (SMS) – no more free sampling of fallen stock

Members need to note that from January 2011 there will be changes in the sampling of fallen sheep and goats for TSEs. Responsibility will move from RPA to Animal Health.

There will not be the usual outlet through FSS where, up to now, it has been possible to get sheep/goats tested for nil cost.

However SMS members still need to test the requisite number of fallen stock, but at their cost.

A list of centres where carcasses can be sent for sampling and testing is available on www.sac.co.uk/sghs

Risks to MV accredited flocks

Testing in the MV accreditation scheme identifies evidence of infection in around three MV accredited flocks each year. This year we have seen more breakdowns in accredited flocks and another three in sheep undergoing qualifying tests. This is good evidence that there is more disease among non-accredited flocks. Consider how you can reduce the risk of disease in your flock.

The risk of a breakdown with MV is over two times higher in flocks with non-MV accredited sheep on the same holding compared to holdings with solely MV accredited stock. Is now the time to run only MV accredited sheep? However holdings with solely MV accredited stock are at risk if there is inadequate biosecurity. Think about your fences and gates.

Remember that MV virus is spread through close nose-to-nose contact via aerosol droplets from the respiratory tract.

Therefore MV accredited stock must not come into contact with non-MV accredited stock at any time.

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