



CUMBRIA

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Bovine TB testing zone extended around Cumbria farm

More than 20 farms in Cumbria will be tested for bovine tuberculosis after an outbreak at a farm.

Infection was found in April in a closed herd at a farm near Penrith, which has not been identified, and led to the slaughter of about 100 animals.

The Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency (AHVLA) has now extended testing to cattle within 3km (1.8 miles) of the outbreak.

Any dead badgers or deer in the zone will also be tested.

Alistair Mackintosh, the NFU's national livestock chairman, said this was standard practice for an isolated incident.

"The fact that the infected area is classed as an enhanced surveillance zone concentrates and targets the hotspot", he said.

"There a better chance that by targeting that in a shorter period of time you can bear down on the disease and free up that area."

He added that he would not speculate as to the cause.

"We have to follow the vets, and they will have ongoing tracings," he said.

"The zone allows us to test some of the badgers and wildlife and let us find out if it's there."

The disease is caused by *Mycobacterium bovis*, a close relative of the bacterium that usually causes TB in humans.

Because the bovine bacterium can also cause human TB, infected cattle have to be destroyed.



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