

From: ccu.correspondence@defra.gsi.gov.uk
Sent: 22 September 2011 18:26
To: xxxxxxxx
Subject: Response to your Query : - Ref:DWOE000246276 - TB vaccinations - RE: DWOE000238711 - Bovine TB issues relating to cattle vaccination

Dear xxxxxxxx,

Thank you for your further email of 26 August about bovine TB and cattle vaccination.

The UK would not knowingly and deliberately break EU law by vaccinating domestic cattle. The consequences of flouting EU law would be severe and could include reputational damage, loss of EU funding for our TB eradication programme, loss of trade with the EU; and costly infraction proceedings.

The UK currently receives substantial financial support for TB eradication - some €27m in 2010. We could expect live cattle and cattle product exports to the EU to be banned. Current live cattle exports are negligible but £375m (based on 2010 figures) in cattle product exports could be lost. In addition, for breaching the legal ban on cattle vaccination, the UK could expect to be taken to the European Court. If we lost, that could lead to very substantial fines which the Commission can levy in the form of periodic penalties or lump sums, or both. We cannot speculate on the scale of such fines but in assessing them the European Court can take into account the seriousness of the breach; the duration of the breach; and a deterrent factor (looking at the size of the Member State and its ability to pay). The minimum lump sum alone that the Commission will request for the UK is now some €10m.

I hope this helps to clarify our position.

Yours sincerely,

TB-Correspondence Team
Defra - Customer Contact Unit Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)