

**Lack of monitoring and biosecurity measures to maintain a BVDV-free status in cattle herds**

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Bovine Viral Diarrhea Virus (BVDV) is still endemically present in Belgium, nevertheless many herds attempt to eradicate BVDV at herd level. Once persistently infected (PI) animals have been eliminated from the herd a strict monitoring and biosecurity should be applied to maintain the BVDV-free status. In a descriptive study we report the lack of biosecurity measures and BVDV monitoring in 40 Belgian cattle herds after having eliminated all PI animals. Data on farm infrastructure, herd management and BVDV control were collected during a face to face interview. In 30% (12/40) of the herds the BVDV-free status was not annually monitored. In all herds, contact with neighboring cattle, often non certified BVDV-free, over pastures fences was possible. In only 24% (6/25) of the herds purchasing cattle, a quarantine period of at least three weeks was applied. Moreover, 88% (22/25) of the farmers kept purchased cattle in quarantine in the same stable as the rest of the herd. Visitors had direct access to the stables at 88% (35/40) of the herds. The herd veterinarian and inseminator wore farm-specific protective clothing at respectively 33% (13/40) and 10% (3/29) of the herds. A disinfectant footbath was present in 70% (28/40) of the herds. Yet only half (35% of the herds) was filled with an appropriate disinfectant and in 15% (6/40) of the herds the footbath was always used by all visitors. The lack of implementation of these basic biosecurity measures is remarkable since the studied herds all have suffered from BVDV related problems in the past and invested time and money to eradicate the disease from their herd. The absence of these preventive measures is exposing these herds to a high risk of reintroduction of the virus.