



National Johne's Management Plan Veterinary Guidance Notes

The National Johne's Management Plan (NJMP), facilitated by Dairy UK, is entering Phase 2. The programme is moving from farmer engagement to a position where farmers must consult with vets who have completed the NJMP online training successfully and become BCVA Johne's accredited vets.

This document intends to explain the process you need to follow to provide a compliant veterinary declaration including how to establish status, think through a risk assessment and agree a written, agreed Johne's disease control plan for each of your client's farms.

The overall objectives and principles of the NJMP are outlined in Appendix A and should be read and understood prior to signing the declaration.

Progressing through Phase 2

The scheme is being rolled out in two phases; both require a vet and farmer signature of engagement.

Veterinary Declarations

Year 1, Phase 2

"I can confirm that an assessment of Johne's risk and status has been undertaken on this farm in the last 12 months and that there is a written Johne's management plan in place which has been agreed with the herd owner. In my opinion, the plan complies with the objectives of the National Johne's Management Plan".

Veterinary Declaration

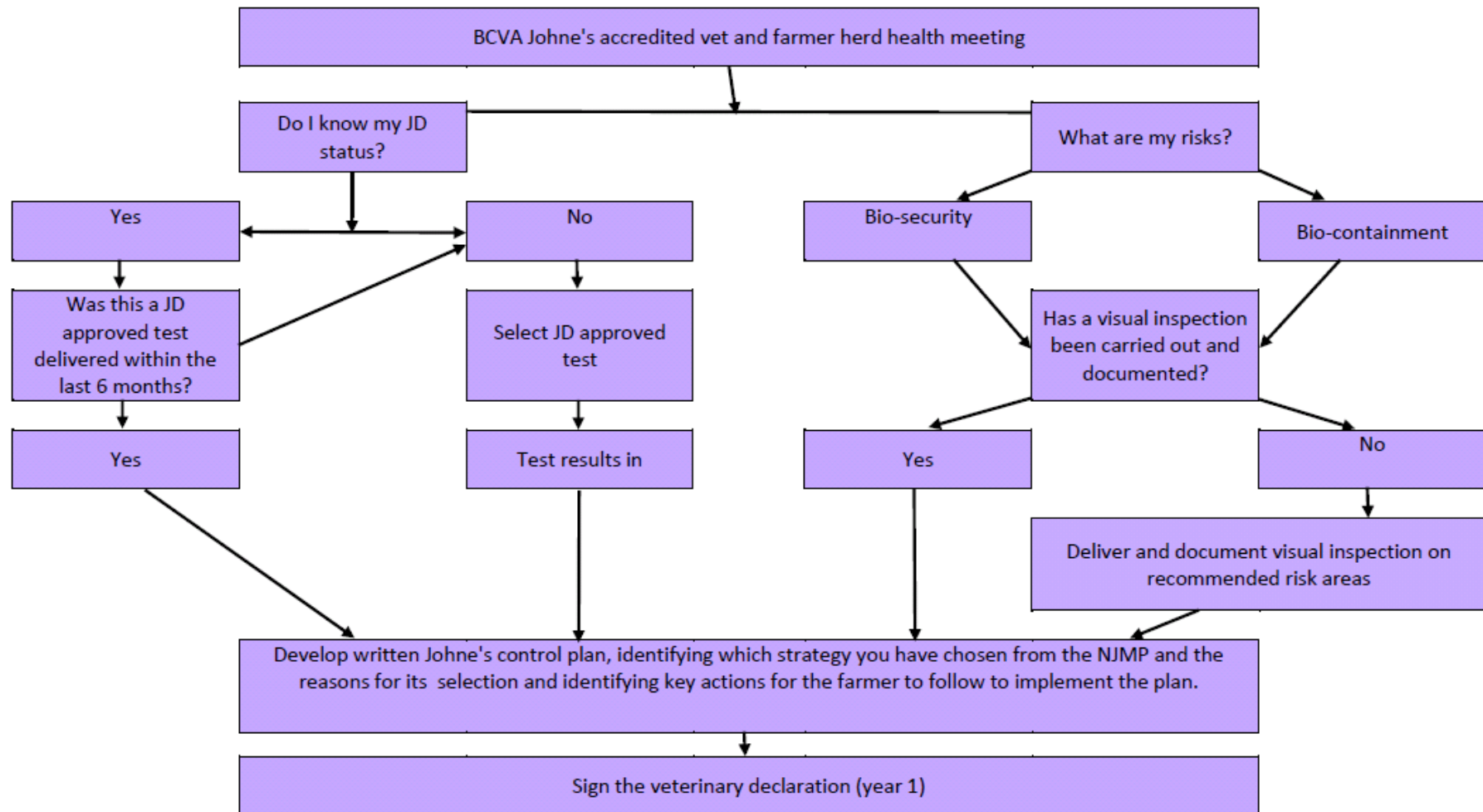
Year 2, Phase 2

"I can confirm that an assessment of Johne's risk and status has been undertaken on this farm in the last 12 months and the herd owner has provided a signed declaration that he/she undertakes to adopt the written Johne's management plan in place and which, in my opinion, is compliant with the objectives of the National Johne's Management Plan."

Farmer Declaration: (Years 1 and 2)

"I can confirm that an assessment of Johne's risk and status has been undertaken on this farm in the last 12 months in conjunction with a NJMP trained vet and I undertake to adopt the written Johne's disease management plan"

How to implement the veterinary declarations in Phase 2



What do I have to do to ensure that the farmer is compliant with the National Management Plan?

Do I know the Johne's disease status on farm?

What is appropriate assessment of Johne's status?

- The establishment of Johne's status can be achieved by a variety of surveillance approaches. The approach taken by the vet will depend on farmer aspiration, resources and suspected prevalence.
- The minimum acceptable level of testing for ELISA antibody (blood or milk) is the 30 cow targeted screen of 3-5 year old, thin, scouring, poorer production, high cell count or suspect cows.
- Structured Pooled faecal tests (PCR/ culture) have been shown to be effective as a method of defining herd status.
- A bulk milk test is not sufficiently sensitive to identify infection at a prevalence less than 5%.
- Further guidance on testing approaches are provided within the technical manual. The aim of the surveillance is to establish as expediently as possible the likely prevalence within the herd.
- The purpose of the surveillance is to provide sufficient information to ensure the correct control strategy is in place.

What are the Johne's disease risks on farm?

What constitutes a risk assessment?

- The prevalence of Johne's disease within a herd is driven by the risk of disease entry (biosecurity risks) and risk of spread within the herd (biocontainment risks)
- A risk assessment should follow a structured format. The NJMP is not prescriptive about the risk assessment tools used as there are a number of established systems available and being used already (see Appendix B).
- A structured format is required to ensure that the process is sufficiently robust, that risk areas are identified and in subsequent years the notes and observations can be correlated with any changes in risks.

What do I have to do to perform a risk assessment?

- The risk assessment requires you to have a clear understanding of the key risk areas on the farm.
- The risk assessment requires a **recent visual inspection** of the key areas of risk transmission e.g.
 - Calving areas,
 - neonatal management,
 - colostrum management,
 - youngstock housing and
 - potential risks of adult to adult transmission.

- The NJMP vet must have visited the farm recently and have undertaken a structured evaluation of these risks in sufficient detail to help identify the most appropriate Johne's disease control and risk mitigation plan for the herd.

The written control plan

What is an appropriate written control plan?

- For the Johne's disease programme to be effective, the risks identified on the farm must be controlled. To ensure that the plan is as robust as possible the farmer is required to have a **written control plan**.
- The NJMP does not prescribe the format of the plan as there are accepted templates that can be used (see Appendix B).
- The plan should be agreed, bespoke and sufficiently detailed that the key tasks for controlling Johne's disease are defined to ensure compliance.
- In year 2 onwards, the farmer will be asked to sign a declaration that he/ she is complying with this written plan.

Veterinary Checklist

Below is a simple check list of the tasks to be undertaken:

Tasks		Actions
Surveillance		Targeted 30 cow screen, whole herd screen, pooled faecal test to assess status
Risk assessment		Structured walk around risk areas and assessment of risks using a risk assessment template
	Maternity areas	Assessment of risks of cow to calf transfer in maternity, dry cow, neonatal areas
	Milk and Colostrum	Assessment of risks of MAP transfer via milk and colostrum
	Youngstock	Assessment of risks of transfer of MAP from high risk cows to calves and high risk calves to other replacement calves
	Adult	Assessment of risks of adult to adult MAP transfer via feed and water combined with review of culling policies
	Biosecurity risks	Assessment of risks of introduction of JD from cattle, wildlife, colostrum, milk and slurry
Control Plan		Development of a written, agreed, bespoke control plan defining the JD control strategy which is compliant with the NJMP framework together with the key tasks to control the risks of spread.
Farmer declaration		Inspection of farmer declaration of compliance with the NJMP

Appendix A

An extract from the NJMP Programme document

Overall Objective of Phase II

22. The overall objective of Phase II of the Action Johnes Initiative remains the management and reduction of Johnes in the dairy herd of Great Britain.
23. The Action Group is of the view that this is an appropriate level of aspiration at this stage in the industry's efforts to tackle the disease and that raising the level of aspiration to minimisation or elimination would be premature at this time. Consequently setting targets for the reduction of the disease will not be necessary at this stage. Nor will there be any requirement for determining the disease status of individual animals or the creation of a centralised industry database on farm status.

Operating Principles

24. The operational requirements of Phase II are:

- Members of the NJMP would require their associated farmers to obtain annually over three years beginning 1st January 2017 a signed declaration by a BCVA Johnes Certified Veterinary Adviser that they will be implementing one of the six strategies specified by the National Johnes Management Plan.

In 2017-2018 the declaration would confirm that the farmer had:

- undertaken to assess their risks and herd status and,
- put in place the necessary management information, equipment, husbandry and resources to implement the agreed control strategy.

In 2018 and 2019 the declaration would confirm that the farmer at the time of the consultation:

- had reassessed their risk and status and,
- was correctly utilising the management information, equipment, husbandry and resources to implement the strategy effectively.
 - Only vets that have undergone the BCVA training programme would be permitted to sign the declaration.
 - The BCVA Certified Johnes trained vet would issue a declaration that in their opinion, the farm's Johnes management plan was appropriate and compliant with the objectives of the NJMP. The wording to be used in the declaration is set out below in annex 3.
 - For all three years if deficiencies are identified by the vet then these would have to be rectified by the farmer before the declaration could be signed.

Alternatively, the chosen strategy could be changed to enable compliance with the resources available.

- The farmer would make a copy of the signed declaration available to their milk purchaser if they were requested to do so.
 - Purchasers would provide the Delivery Team annually with information on the number of farmers obtaining veterinary declarations using a standard questionnaire developed by Action Group on Johne's.
25. In providing the declaration vets would make every endeavour to ensure that the consultation with the farmer took place at the same time as the annual review of the farmer's herd health plan to ensure all other relevant disease control factors were taken into consideration and to minimise costs.
 26. Membership of CHeCS would be recognised as giving equivalence to the requirements of phase II
 27. In respect of the use of risk assessment tools it would be at the judgement of vets which tool was most appropriate to use for an individual farm.
 28. In developing this framework the Action Group on Johne's has sought to:
 - Ensure that only properly trained vets are permitted to provide the signed declaration
 - Create and maintain a dialogue between vets and farmers
 - Include external verification in the implementation of the scheme
- Provide commercial incentives for all parties to engage, through:
- Purchaser commitment to requiring the involvement of their supplying farmers
 - Leaving the provision of veterinary advice to farmers on a commercial basis
 - Requiring vets to be trained before being able to verify farmer compliance
 - Demonstrating to farmers the commercial benefits of tackling the disease

Appendix B

Useful resources for further information

Action Johnes'- further advice on the NJMP

<http://www.actionjohnesuk.org/>

Myhealthyherd- online tool for assessing disease risks and developing and storing control plans

www.myhealthyherd.co.uk

USA – American risk assessment tool

<https://agr.wa.gov/FoodAnimal/AnimalHealth/Diseases/JohnesRiskAssessmentsandDevelopmentPlans.PDF>

Irish – review booklet on JD <https://www.enfergroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/frequently-asked-questions-from-AHI.pdf>