

# GUDAIR®

## VETS GUIDE TO GOVERNMENT SUBSIDISED JOHNE'S (M. PARATUBERCULOSIS) SCREENING FOR SHEEP



**THE UK'S  
ONLY  
VACCINE FOR  
JOHNE'S DISEASE  
IN SHEEP & GOATS**

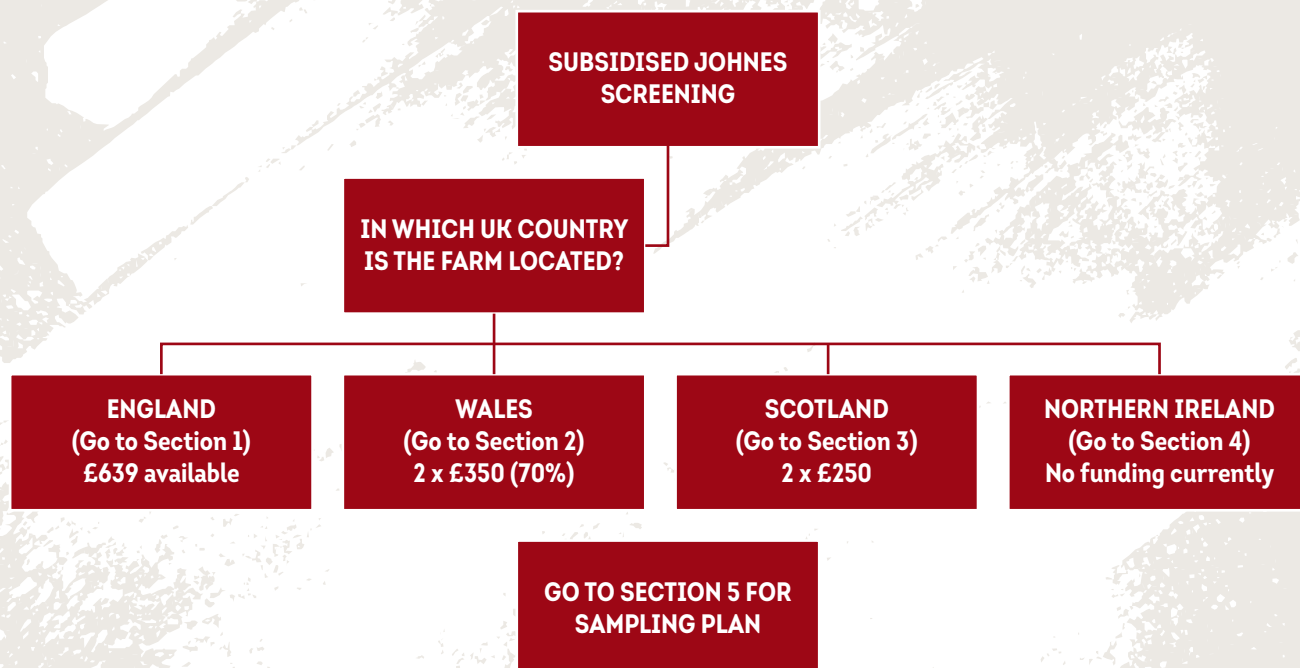


Government subsidised Johne's screening in sheep available in England through the Animal Health & Welfare Pathway. In Wales via the Farming Connect Advisory Service and in Scotland through the Preparing for Sustainable Farming (PSF) scheme. Information current as of September 2024.

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# VETS GUIDE TO GOVERNMENT SUBSIDISED JOHNE'S (M. PARATUBERCULOSIS) SCREENING FOR SHEEP



## 1. ENGLAND

Farmers in England can access free screening for Johnes disease as part of the **Animal Health & Welfare Pathway**. The Pathway is a 2 stage process, Johnes testing is available in the 2nd step of the process, termed the "*Endemic Disease Follow-up*". Before farmers can access subsidised testing for Johnes, farmers (and their vet) must complete the 1st step which is called the "*Animal Health and Welfare Review*". Both steps in the pathway have dedicated funding available to reimburse farmers for the cost of the testing and for the cost of the vet input in collecting samples and providing tailored advice based on the results. In 2024-25 the maximum funding is £436 for the Animal Health and Welfare Review and £639 for the Endemic Disease Follow-up. To access this funding farmers must register through the government website and vets must complete the visits and testing as set out in the guidance documents. In order to unlock the greater amount of funding for the endemic disease investigation you need to complete the initial Animal Health and Welfare Review. This provides an opportunity to discuss with your client aspects of their enterprise which is of concern to them, or where improvements in health, productivity or welfare can

be achieved. Testing for anthelmintic resistance is mandatory and the only funded screening test in this first step but it does provide the opportunity to have a conversation about flock productivity. This opportunity is very valuable especially when it allows you the time to discuss topics such as ewe infertility/empty rates, replacement and culling rates with your client all of which can be elevated in flocks infected with MAP. Once the Animal health and welfare review is complete the farmer can apply for the endemic disease follow-up. At this point the recommended screening MAP screening protocol should be followed (below), which was independently established in 2022 as the most appropriate sampling approach to maximise likelihood of detecting infected flocks. Prior to submitting samples to the laboratory, it is advisable to check the AHWP rules on accredited laboratories and tests to ensure compliance with the testing requirements at the time.

Links for farmers and vets : <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/funding-to-improve-animal-health-and-welfare-guidance-for-farmers-and-vets>

## 2. WALES

Wales has the longest track record of providing subsidised livestock health support via the **Farming Connect Advisory Service (FC)** which is administered by *Mentera*. The FC service covers a very wide range of business support services for farmers in Wales. These services are delivered to either individual farmers or groups of farmers through a number of service categories. Every FC registered eligible farming business has £3000 worth of funding available towards any eligible type of advice/courses/services during the program. Within the FC scheme there are two direct Advice categories through which Vets are able to provide advice and disease testing/sampling:

1. Animal Health Welfare & Biosecurity
2. Technical Specialist Veterinary Advice

NB. Two important limitations apply to the funding for farmers wanting animal health advice under the FC program:

1. only two instances of technical advice for the duration of the programme
2. up to 70% funding available to a max of £350 per instance of advice

To enable vets to deliver under the FC framework, they must subcontract under one of seven companies that are sub-contractors to *Mentera*, the vast majority of vets work under *Mabis Amaeth* who will deduct a percentage of the available funding for administration.

<https://businesswales.gov.wales/farmingconnect/>

## 3. SCOTLAND

In Scotland the **Preparing for Sustainable Farming (PSF)** scheme was launched in 2022 and runs until the end of 2024. Under the PSF farmers can access 2 x £250 animal health 'options' which include testing and subsidised veterinary advice on a range of predefined health topics including Johnes under Option 6 (see below).

Under the PSF payment will be made on evidence of investigation plus advised action. The action must be defined by an Expert Adviser, ie the farm's vet or agricultural consultant. If only the investigation is conducted without the advised action the farmer will not be eligible for payment. In addition, farmers will receive with your first claim, an additional payment of £250 for doing 'development activities' (time spent researching animal health and welfare best practice) appropriate to their flock or herd.

Applicants agree to the collection of data related to livestock health. This data may be shared within Scottish Government and with researchers to help inform future policy decisions. Individual livestock keepers and herds/flocks will not be identifiable from research or policy outputs.

Eligibility for the PSF is based on the client being a farming or crofting business that has an active Business Reference Number, is Rural Payments and Services online registered (including bank account details), and has a flock/herd number. Each farmer can choose to undertake up to

two interventions from the list below in each year of the Programme. Each intervention would attract a standard payment of £250.

In total livestock keepers can claim for up to £750 in the first year, and £500 in the second year, giving a maximum of £1250 per keeper over two years.

Those that do not claim for funding until year two would only be eligible for a maximum of £750.

Investigations and actions must be completed for the year by 31 December 2024. Claims must be submitted by 28 February 2025.

Farmers can arrange the investigation(s) for the chosen intervention(s) at a time of year that suits them.

**"6. Sheep iceberg diseases -Targeted disease investigation (options: Maedi Visna, Johnes, Border Disease, Contagious Lymphadenitis, lung scanning for OPA). Screen cull ewes. Implement sustainable prevention and control plan [eg. Gudair vaccination], including biosecurity measures for screening and/or isolating purchased and returning stock, using appropriate expert advice"**

Claims for payment must be accompanied by proof of investigation plus action, provided on the Expert Adviser form signed by your vet or animal health adviser.

More information for farmers and vets can be found on the Preparing for Sustainable Farming Guidance page at [www.ruralpayments.org](http://www.ruralpayments.org) where guidance and case studies can also be found.

## 4. NORTHERN IRELAND

In Northern Ireland Johnes Disease is notifiable. However, only passive surveillance for Johnes is conducted on samples submitted or postmortems conducted by AFBI.

The future farming supports within Northern Ireland are in the earliest stages of roll-out with further developments expected. Importantly while substantial areas are developed (see link below) measures to support animal health are still subject to discussion and so DAERA have not yet settled on the details of how animal health might be supported.

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/landing-pages/farm-support-and-development>





# 5. SAMPLING PLAN - A GUIDE TO SCREENING FOR OVINE JOHNE'S DISEASE

## SCREENING TEST

- Pooled faecal polymerase chain reaction (PCR) for *Mycobacterium avium subsp. paratuberculosis* (MAP) is the appropriate screening test (APHA test code - TC0693).
- Use the maximum **pool size of 5** individual samples.
- **Serum ELISA is insufficiently sensitive for screening purposes.**

## RECOMMENDED LABORATORY

- **APHA, test code - TC0693** *Mycobacterium paratuberculosis* (Johne's Disease) - pool of up to 5 samples PCR (real time) £42.20 per pool (2024 price list).

## SAMPLING REQUIREMENTS

- APHA require 2-3g of fresh faeces from each individual animal sampled. Change gloves between animals to avoid cross-contamination.
- Submit individual samples and pooling will be done by the laboratory. **Do not pool samples yourself prior to sending.**

## TARGET ANIMALS

- **Thin** (BCS  $\leq 2$ ) ewes  $\geq 2$  years of age should be preferentially sampled to maximise chances of MAP bacteria being detected.
- In the absence of sufficient numbers of thin ewes, collect samples from randomly selected ewes  $\geq 2$  years of age. (NB. Cull ewes in Scotland for option 6 of PSF scheme)

## WHEN TO SAMPLE

Ewes can be sampled **at any time of year** but potential suggestions include:

- Thin ewes who fail to put on condition post weaning prior to tupping.
- Thin, barren ewes at mid-pregnancy ultrasound scanning.

## NUMBER OF ANIMALS TO SAMPLE

- **Minimum of 30 individual sheep** which equates to **6 pools of 5 individual samples**. Sampling this number of ewes provides an approximately 80% chance of detecting MAP in at least one pool from Johne's positive flocks.

## MINIMISING COSTS AND MAXIMISING VALUE

- In order to help minimise laboratory costs, you can ask the APHA laboratory to stagger testing of your submitted pooled samples and stop testing additional pools once a single positive pool has been detected as this is all that is required to ascertain whether Johne's is present within a flock.
- However, the total number of positive pools may help gauge the level of infection and shedding of MAP bacteria within the flock and this may aid subsequent management decisions, for example providing stronger evidence in favour of implementing a vaccination programme.  
(2024 price list £42.20 per pool, therefore max sampling cost per farm is £253.20)



**CATCH A KILLER.**

**TALK TO YOUR SHEEP & GOAT FARMERS ABOUT JOHNE'S DISEASE.**

GUDAIR® emulsion for injection for sheep and goats. Indication(s): For the active immunisation of sheep and goats against *M. avium subsp. Paratuberculosis* infection, as an aid in the control of Johne's disease in those species.

Prescription decisions are for the person issuing the prescription alone.

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