

Bovine Tuberculosis (TB) is a major risk to public health, farmers and their families, and the livestock sector. As a farmer it is your responsibility to reduce the risk of Tuberculosis infection on your farm.

## HOW DOES TB SPREAD

In Fiji, the main route of infection is by breathing in droplets of mucus from the lungs of infected cattle. Heavily infected cattle can also spread TB through milk, urine, faeces, pus or any body fluids. TB can survive for a long time in the environment and can also spread via contaminated footwear, clothing, equipment/machinery etc. In some countries, there are also wildlife species that can spread or carry TB. However, in Fiji no wildlife (including mongoose) has been confirmed as a source of bovine TB spread.

The whole of Fiji has been declared a biosecurity emergency area due to high levels of bovine TB. Movement of cattle is prohibited unless the Biosecurity Authority of Fiji (BAF) provides authorisation in advance of the movement. It is to be noted that lack of secure fencing on farms poses a huge risk of spread of this deadly disease through movement of infected cattle to nearby farms.

## BOVINE TB TESTING REQUIREMENTS

TB testing and slaughter of positive reactor cattle is the way forward to eradicate TB from Fiji. Hence, farmers are required to test their herd annually with more frequent testing done during herd breakdowns or in heavily infected areas. Farmers are required to present all cattle for testing that are on their farm (including calves older than 3 months, cattle recently purchased, stray cattle and cattle awaiting culling). They are to ensure availability of safe and secure testing facilities on their farm so that the TB test can be carried safely and effectively.

## HOW CAN YOU REDUCE RISK OF TB INFECTION IN YOUR HERD?

- Test the cattle entering your farm for TB - when buying new cattle, ask about the TB history of the farm over the previous year and get the test results to prove it. Arrange for TB testing of cattle before allowing them into your farm. If this is not possible, isolate the cattle and TB test them on arrival. New cattle, cattle from an outside-farm and/or shared bulls should be tested.
- Reduce the risk from neighbouring farms by fencing your farm securely. Avoid sharing equipment or vehicles with other farms. Avoid grazing your cattle with other farms minimising the nose-to-nose contact or contact with contaminated equipment or vehicles which can increase the risk of spread.
- Do not use raw milk from TB Reactors Infected cows as they can shed TB in milk. Never feed milk from other farms as infected cows may be present on the farms. Raw milk should be boiled or commercially pasteurised before use.

## HOW TO BETTER MANAGE

- Cull non-productive and older cattle which are in poor health as chronic TB infections or older cattle with weak immune systems do not always react to the TB test. Removing these cattle from your farm will help to reduce the risk of spreading TB to your healthy cattle.
- Castrate, sell, or cull non-breeding bulls. Bull to cow ratio should be 1 to 30. Helps to reduce bulls breaking out/straying to neighbouring herds. If you are keeping non-breeding bulls/steers, manage them separately from milking herd and heifers. Doing so will improve management and allow for safe and effective TB testing.

## PUBLIC HEALTH ADVICE

If your cattle has TB, or you have come in contact with an infected cattle or material, you and your family/ staff should contact a medical doctor for advice regarding human TB testing.

## CATTLE TB TESTING IS MANDATORY UNDER THE FIJI BIOSECURITY ACT 2008

It is the responsibility of farmers to comply with the testing programme

being implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) and BAF. Farmers that do not cooperate with the programme may face legal action, liable to penalties prescribed under the Biosecurity Act 2008.

Declaration of Biosecurity Emergency Area for Bovine Tuberculosis (Myco- bacterium Bovis)

The whole of Fiji is declared as a Biosecurity Emergency Area for Bovine Tuberculosis:

Any movement of cattle and calves within Fiji is strictly prohibited unless BAF provides prior authorisation for the movement. People intending to move cattle and calves within Fiji need to follow the following procedures;

### 1) Movement of cattle/ calves from Farm to Abattoir (FMIB/ Vuda) allowed to move with Clearance certificate from BAF.

- Farmer needs to fill the application form and lodge the application form to any nearby BAF Office.
- BAF officer will provide movement certificate to move the cattle from farm to approved abattoir.
- The farmer or middle man should have the movement certificate issued by BAF for the movement of cattle from the farm to approved abattoir.
- Surrender the movement certificate to Biosecurity Officer at abattoir and or abattoir officer.

### 2) Movement of cattle/ calves from farm to any other farm or farm to outer island within Fiji

- Farmer needs to fill the application form and lodge it to any nearby BAF office.
- Recent Bovine Tuberculosis (TB) & Bovine Brucellosis free test result from Ministry of Agriculture should be submitted with application form.
- BAF veterinarians will verify the application and TB & Brucellosis test result and clearance certificate will be issued for the movement of cattle from farm to farm or farm to outer island if individual cattle have 2 clear test for both diseases.
- The farmer or middle man should have the clearance certificate issued by BAF for the movement of cattle during the transportation phase.
- Surrender the clearance certificate to nearest Biosecurity Officer after the movement of cattle from farm to farm or to BAF Officers at local wharf for farm to outer Island



Animal meat infected with TB

## For Further Information Please Contact:

Biosecurity Authority of Fiji on 3312512 or Short Codes:

General Enquiries - 5994, Termites - 5996,

Giant Invasive Iguana (GII) - 5995, Animal Disease Surveillance - 5997

or email [info@baf.com.fj](mailto:info@baf.com.fj), visit BAF website [www.baf.com.fj](http://www.baf.com.fj)