

# SAFE PRACTICES FOR TB TESTING

FACTSHEET HSSE4

## TESTING ON THE FARM

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This factsheet explains the key health and safety responsibilities for contractors managing testing operations on farms for OSPRI's TBfree programme and a guide to hazard management.

Regular TB testing of cattle and deer herds forms the basis for controlling the disease. The frequency of testing, plus any requirements for pre-movement testing, depends on an assessment of the TB risk in a herd or an area. Routine testing varies between one, two and three years.

OSPRI's TBfree programme for testing cattle is funded by slaughter and dairy levies. OSPRI pays for routine herd testing, pre-movement testing for herds in movement control areas, infected herd testing and dairy service bull testing. All other tests are paid for by the farmer.

The TB testing programme for deer is a user-pays system. Some herds are eligible for a refund of some of the costs of TB. Please call OSPRI on 0800 482 463 for further information.

## KEY HEALTH AND SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES

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OSPRI is responsible for making sure its workers are safe, and that their working environment is safe. We work with Worksafe's SaferFarms programme to ensure that all workers involved in TB testing and management are aware of hazards they might encounter and the appropriate management of risk to eliminate injury or damage.

TB tests are designed to measure an animal's immune response. The primary test is a skin test, with follow-up blood tests used in some cases. Procedures are straightforward, administered by a registered TB tester or vet.

- For cattle – The tester comes out on one day and injects a small amount of tuberculin into the skin flap under the tail. The tester will then come back three days later and feel if there has been a reaction.
- For deer – The tester comes out one day and shaves a patch of fur off the neck. A small amount of tuberculin is injected into the skin. The tester will then come back three days later and feel if there has been a reaction.

For these tests to be performed safely, testing situations must be appropriately set up and correct procedure must be followed.

## CONSIDERATIONS FOR A SAFE TEST ENVIRONMENT

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Well-designed yards make it safer and easier to manage livestock. Principles of effective yard design include the following:

- Stock handling yards should be clean, well maintained and well lit areas with easy safe access for animal handlers
- Ideally, the site should be level and on a raised, well-drained area with protection from the prevailing wind

- A free-draining layer of gravel or other all-weather surface that lets people and animals move freely in all weather conditions.

For further information on principles of safe yard design, Saferfarms publishes a guideline [available here](#).

## WE WILL WORK WITH YOU

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Health and safety is all about communication, which goes both ways. We want to know who and what you care about, to help us avoid causing any harm or damage. We will tell you about the hazards and risks involved in our work too. If you have any questions, please contact your local OSPRI office, visit [ospri.co.nz](http://ospri.co.nz) or call 0800 482 463.