

# **DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND AGRICULTURE**

## **MAEDI-VISNA (MV) THE MV-ACCREDITED FLOCKS SCHEME Updated September 2017**

### **The scheme**

The MV-Accredited Flocks Scheme (MVAFS) is voluntary and designed for the owner who wishes to establish and maintain their breeding flock free of maedi-visna. Flocks will be registered as MV accredited on the basis of two consecutive clear blood tests and inspections. Three tests will be required if the flock has a known history of and/or is at high risk of MV infection.

In this scheme "animals" refers to sheep and goats. Goat herd owners may also join the Caprine Arthritis Encephalitis Accreditation Scheme (CAEAS) under the same conditions as those applicable to sheep flock owners. The rules of the CAEAS are identical to MVAFS rules except that:

- They are applied to goat herds.
- A three metre gap is required between accredited and non-accredited animals whilst on a holding.
- The animals must be separated by a three metre high solid barrier at temporary locations.

### **Introduction**

Maedi-visna is a virus disease affecting sheep. Maedi and visna are Icelandic words which mean "laboured breathing" and "wasting" respectively depending on whether the lungs or the brain are affected. Animals may be infected at any age but loss of condition and pneumonic signs are not normally seen in sheep less than 3 to 4 years old. Sheep with early signs of infection may lag behind the flock and breathing may be fast and shallow after exercise. There is no vaccine or treatment available and animals usually die three to eight months after the onset of disease. The virus spreads most readily between infected and non-infected animals during periods of close contact and can be brought into a flock by the introduction of apparently healthy infected animals of any age. Maedi-visna virus is spread through milk from infected ewes, by droplets from the nose or mouth and by needles or punches used on infected sheep or goats. The virus which causes Caprine Arthritis Encephalitis (CAE) in goats is very similar to MV virus and there is evidence that cross infection can occur between species. Therefore for the scheme purposes "animal(s)" refers to both sheep and goats.

### **Key Benefits for members**

- It helps to reduce the risk of your flock contracting MV.
- It allows your sheep to attend shows and sales as MV accredited animals.
- It allows you to advertise to potential purchasers that your flock is MV accredited
- It allows you to export to certain countries free from MV.
- The Register of Isle of Man MV-Accredited Flocks will be the only official list of maedi-visna accredited flocks in the Isle of Man.

## **Definitions**

**Animal(s)** means sheep(s) or goat(s).

**CVO** means Chief Veterinary Officer of the Department

**DEPARTMENT** means the Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture.

**MV** means Maedi-Visna

**MV-ACCREDITED** when applied to premises, flocks or individual animals means that the maedi-visna accredited status laid down by the Department has been achieved and maintained.

**MVAFS** means Maedia-Visna Accreditation Flocks Scheme

**Test** means blood test for MV sent to an approved laboratory for analysis.

## **The rules**

### **1. Membership and certification**

#### **1.1. Application Process**

In order to join the MV accredited flocks scheme you must complete the official application form to start the application process. All enquiries and application forms should be directed to the CVO at The Agricultural Directorate, Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture, Thie Slieau Whallian, Foxdale Road, St.John's IM4 3AS or scan and e-mail completed form to agriculture@gov.im.

#### **1.2. Certification**

Only flocks that have a current and valid health status report, and which have not lost their accredited status are deemed MV accredited in accordance with the rules. The Department is responsible for issuing health status reports. As the keeper of the flock you are responsible for ensuring that testing is carried out within such a time frame that enables the Department, subject to the results of the testing, to issue each health status report prior to the expiry date of any existing health status report. Certification requires negative test results and also a declaration stating that the rules of the scheme have been adhered to and signed by the flock keeper. Valid and current health status reports are required to gain entry to MV accredited sections of shows.

### **2. Reporting suspected infection**

If you suspect that an animal is infected with MV, this must be reported to both the Department and your veterinary surgeon for investigation. The owner must ensure that CVO is notified in writing of the results of any private test or examination related to MV conducted after entry to the Scheme; and submit copies of the relevant test certificates or laboratory reports to the CVO.

The CVO may decide:

- That the animal is not infected with MV and that no further action is required.
- That MV cannot be ruled out and that testing of each animal suspected of being infected must be undertaken and samples submitted to an approved laboratory. If the testing carried out on the suspect animal confirms the presence of MV, the MV accredited status of the flock of which it is a member will be suspended immediately unless the positive animal is one which has been (and is still being) kept in isolation in accordance with Rule 7. If MV is confirmed in a flock, breakdown procedures in 9.1 must be followed in order to regain MV accredited status.

### **3. Discretion of the Department**

The Department's decisions are deemed to be final and they reserve the right to carry out farm inspections and to require that any animal is to be tested at any time. These rules are not exhaustive and the Department reserves the right to act as it sees fit in relation to any circumstance relating to the operation of the scheme.

### **4. Preliminary visit**

Flock owners wishing to join the Scheme should apply via the application form. Before arranging a qualifying test, they should contact the Department who will arrange an advisory visit by a field officer to assess boundary fencing, discuss and give advice on appropriate biosecurity measures to ensure compliance with the Rules and Conditions of the Scheme.

### **5. Testing Programme**

Flocks will be registered as MV accredited on the basis of two consecutive clear blood tests (qualifying tests) and inspections. Three tests will be required if the flock has a known history of and/or is at high risk of MV infection. Testing will be performed by the owner's private veterinary surgeon.

The owner must ensure that CVO is notified in writing of the results of any private test or examination related to MV conducted after entry to the Scheme; and submit copies of the relevant test certificates or laboratory reports to the CVO.

#### **5.1. Qualifying Tests**

The initial flock blood sampling of all adult animals over nine months of age, known as the qualifying tests, will be required to be carried out by the owner at his/her own expense (this is the same for the second and third qualifying tests as required). The testing of such blood samples must be carried out by an approved laboratory (contact the Department for details). If two qualifying tests (three tests will be required if the flock has a known history of and/or is at high risk of MV infection) performed 6-12 months apart are clear, then the flock will be classed as MV accredited and the flock thereafter undergoes periodic testing.

#### **5.2. Periodic testing**

After becoming MV accredited the first periodic test must take place 6-12 months after the last qualifying test.

If the first periodic test is negative the second periodic test must be carried out a maximum of two years after the first periodic test and periodic testing should continue every 2 years unless other factors dictate more frequent testing is required.

The minimum number of animals to be tested should be calculated from the table in the appendix. Include all breeding Rams and any animals which have attended a show or sale (since the last periodic test) within the random sample size calculated from the table in the appendix. All MV accredited animals over 9 months of age added to the flock and not tested since arrival must be tested in addition to the number of animals as calculated above

Routine periodic testing after accreditation, will normally be undertaken at the expense of the Department and performed by the owner's private veterinary surgeon (for non-commercial flocks testing will be at the owners own expense).

At each qualifying and periodic test a declaration that the rules of the MV scheme have been adhered to should be signed by the owner/manager and forwarded to the Department.

### **5.3. Reactors/ positive animals**

If a reactor is disclosed at a qualifying test and the owner wishes to pursue his application, he must isolate the reactor and dispose of it for slaughter within 14 days under permit obtainable from the Department. All lambs which have suckled infected animals or fed milk from infected animals must be removed from the flock, preferably to slaughter failing that into isolation\*.

The flock must then pass 3 qualifying tests. The first qualifying test must take place at least 6 months after the removal of the last infected animal(s) from the flock. Then subsequent qualifying tests at 6-12 month intervals. Each test must include all animals in the flock aged 9 months or over at the time of testing. If the identity of all the lambs which may have suckled an infected animal cannot be determined, then the flock will not be eligible for MV accredited status until all lambs have passed further qualifying tests determined by the CVO. The earliest that the first qualifying tests for the lambs can be carried out is at 12 months of age.

If a reactor is disclosed at a periodic test and the owner wishes to remain in the Scheme, the procedures relating to reactors and progeny outlined above will apply. THERE IS NO PROVISION FOR COMPENSATION UNDER THE SCHEME, although verification of slaughter will be required. Movements from the premises since the previous clear test will, if at all possible, be traced and if the new owner is a Scheme member, traced animals will, if appropriate, be tested and if the animal is the progeny (under two years of age) of a female reactor the new owner will need to remove these animals from the flock, preferably by slaughter failing that into isolation\*.

\*Any isolated animals are required to remain in isolation and be tested at intervals of 6 – 12 months until all animals have passed three consecutive tests before re-joining the flock. Testing cannot be started until all animals are a minimum of 12 months of age.

## **6. Animal Movements**

### **6.1. Establishing a new MV accredited flock by acquiring MV accredited animals**

You must apply to join the scheme, the holding must be inspected (prior to arrival of the animals) and you must insure that the health status of the animals has been maintained in accordance with this scheme.

The first blood test will be a periodic test which must be carried out 6 months after the date of the arrival of the first purchased animal onto your holding. The second periodic test will be 12 months after the first periodic test and then testing will be every 24 months.

### **6.2. Adding MV accredited animals to a MV accredited flock**

Movement of an animal from MV Accredited flocks to another MV Accredited flock must be recorded, these animals must be identified and presented for testing at the next periodic test. They must be moved as per movements in Rule 6.6.

### **6.3. Acquiring non-MV accredited animals to a MV accredited flock**

If you acquire non-MV accredited animals, each animal must pass two qualifying tests, 6-9 months apart (or 3 if they are from a high risk flock) in order to become MV accredited. Non MV accredited animals **MUST NOT** be added to a MV accredited flock until they have passed both qualifying tests and confirmation of the results has been received by the Department. You must isolate non-MV accredited sheep as per the biosecurity Rule 7 until they have passed two (or if required 3) qualifying tests.

If you acquire animals and are unsure of the animals' status they will be classed as non-MV accredited.

### **6.4. Shows and markets**

Where there has been no close contact with sheep or goats from non-Scheme flocks, sheep may immediately re-join the flock. These animals must be tested at the next periodic test. While at any temporary location such as a show or sale, MV accredited and non-MV accredited animals may share an airspace provided that they are separated by a 2 metre division or a solid barrier at least 2 metres high. This is only acceptable for short periods of up to 10 days.

### **6.5. Contact with Non-MV accredited animals**

In instances where close contact has taken place with non-MV accredited animals, the animals must be classified according to the status of the contact animals or flock and immediately be isolated on return. The animals will remain in isolation for 6 months, after 6 months the isolated animals must undergo testing. If the result is negative they may re-join the MV accredited flock.

If any MV accredited animals re-join the flock after contact with non-MV accredited animals without adherence to the above rules the flock status will be suspended until all animals in the flock are tested 6 months after the introduction of these animals.

### **6.6. Movements**

Any animal which moves from one location to another will automatically lose its MV accredited status unless you ensure that all of the following conditions are met:

- MV accredited animals must travel segregated from and not come into contact with any animals which are not MV accredited.
- MV accredited and non-MV accredited animals must not be transported in the same vehicle.
- Vehicles previously used for transporting animals must be cleaned and disinfected before being used for MV accredited animals.

## **7. Biosecurity**

### **7.1. Farm Boundaries**

MV accredited animals must not be allowed to come into contact with non-MV accredited animals at any time.

Owner must provide and maintain:

- Boundary fences/walls which, to the satisfaction of the Department, are calculated to keep his/her flock within approved premises and prevent contact with other sheep or goats. This should provide a minimum 2 metre gap from adjacent non-MV accredited animals.
- Such premises/facilities as the Department deems necessary for isolating animals, having regard to the type of flock and the management system.
- Take all reasonable precautions to keep his flock within the approved premises and ensure that it does not come into contact with non-MV accredited animals, and notify the Department of any straying or other accidental contact with non-MV accredited animals.
- A 7 day minimum interval between grazing MV accredited stock on pasture previously grazed by non-MV accredited stock.

### **7.2. Using and sharing non-MV accredited stock facilities**

- If MV accredited and non-MV accredited animals are kept on the same holding they must be kept as far apart as possible (a minimum of at least 2 meter gap).
- MV accredited and non-MV accredited animals should not be housed together in the same airspace (except on a temporary basis as per sales and shows above).
- Equipment such as ear tattooing forceps, drenching guns, surgical equipment, needles and any other equipment which may draw blood must not be shared between MV accredited and non-MV accredited animals.
- Handling facilities and livestock trailers which are used by MV accredited and non-MV accredited animals must be cleaned and disinfected before use by MV accredited animals.
- Colostrum from non-MV accredited animals must not be fed to MV accredited animals. Embryos and semen used to inseminate or fertilise a MV accredited animal must be from a MV accredited animal.
- If a non-MV accredited flock is introduced to a holding previously holding only MV accredited animals, the Department must be notified and an inspection maybe required.

### **7.3. Record Keeping**

Owners must keep records for seven years, including:

- Identification, breed and sex
- Identification of dam
- Date of birth
- Date of death and cause of death
- Dates and results of all MV testing
- Full and complete records of movements, including incoming stock, must be maintained by the Scheme member.

All records must be made available to an officer of the department upon request.

## **8. Membership obligations**

Flock owners will be expected to observe the Rules and Conditions of the Scheme which are intended to safeguard their flocks from the introduction of maedi-visna infection. Membership of the Scheme is voluntary and owners will be able to withdraw from it at any stage.

The Department's decision is final and it has the sole discretion to determine if a flock's MV accreditation status should be suspended or removed. Where the Department proposes to

remove a flock from the Scheme the owner will be so informed in writing and given an opportunity to make representations. The Department shall not be liable for expense, loss or damage arising out of any requirement under the Scheme or the loss of a flock's or animal's MV accredited status however so caused.

Where ownership of an MV-Accredited Flock changes, the flock may be re-registered in the new owner's name provided he/she undertakes to comply with the Conditions and Rules of the Scheme and provided the flock concerned remains a separate entity on the same approved premises, and has maintained the required testing regime. It is the new owner's responsibility to inform the Department of the change of ownership.

## **9. Withdrawal from MVAFS or Loss of MV Accredited Status**

### **9.1. Loss of MV accredited status**

Your flock will immediately lose its MV accredited status if any of the following events occur:

- You fail to comply in all respects with Rules 5.2 periodic testing, Rule 7.3 record keeping and Rule 6 animal movements.
- If any animal within the flock tests positive for MV (unless it is in isolation as either an added animal or one that has come into contact with a non-MV accredited animal).
- Your flock fails an inspection where breaches of rules and conditions are found.
- You inform CVO that you want your flock to be withdrawn from the MVAFS

The following rules shall apply where an animal has tested positive for MV:

- If a flock loses MV accredited status, a set of procedures for regaining MV accredited status will be issued to the flock owner.
- If the MV positive animal has been added from another MV accredited flock then the flock of origin will have its MV accredited status suspended and will be subjected to extra testing.
- When MV infection is detected in a flock, all animals that have moved to other MV accredited flocks will be traced. These individual animals must then be tested.
- It is the responsibility of the flock owner of the breakdown flock to provide details of all animals moved out of the flock and sold privately or at sales so tracings can be performed.
- It is the responsibility of the flock owner of the breakdown flock to provide the details of all animals purchased into the flock for the time period specified by the Department.
- Information requested by the Department should be provided within 2 weeks.

The Department may suspend or remove your flock from the MVAFS if any of the following events occur:

- If you breach or fail to comply with any of these rules
- You incorrectly portray your flock status
- If there is any suspicion that an animal has been exposed to MV

### **9.2. Regaining MV accredited status**

If your flock loses its MV accredited status because of a positive confirmation of MV, your flock can be re-admitted to the MVAFS provided that you comply with the following:

- All infected animals must be removed from the flock for slaughter.
- All lambs which have suckled infected animals or fed milk from infected animals must be removed from the flock, preferably to slaughter failing that into isolation. Any isolated animals are required to remain in isolation and be tested at intervals of 6 – 12

months until all animals have passed three consecutive tests before re-joining the flock. Testing cannot be started until all animals are a minimum of 12 months of age.

- The flock must then pass 3 qualifying tests. The first qualifying test must take place at least 6 months after the removal of the last infected animal(s) from the flock. Then subsequent qualifying tests at 6-12 month intervals. Each test must include all animals in the flock aged 9 months or over at the time of testing. If the identity of all the lambs which may have sucked an infected animal cannot be determined, then the flock will not be eligible for MV accredited status until all lambs have passed further qualifying tests determined by the CVO. The earliest that the first qualifying tests for the lambs can be carried out is at 12 months of age.
- The flock must pass 3 qualifying tests. The first qualifying test must take place at least 6 months after the removal of the last infected animal(s) from the flock. Then subsequent qualifying tests every 6-12 months. Each test must include all animals in the flock aged 9 months or over at the time of testing.
- If you cannot identify all the lambs which may have sucked an infected animal, then the flock will not be eligible for MV accredited status until all lambs have passed further qualifying tests determined by the CVO. The earliest that the first qualifying tests on the lambs can be carried out is at 12 months of age respectively.

If you lose MV accredited status for any other reason, the CVO will determine what, if any, qualifying testing is required for re-admission to the MVAFS and what the frequency of testing will be thereafter.

Non-compliance with the rules may result in loss of MV accredited status under the MVAFS and your Health Status Reports or other veterinary certificates issued for export purposes may be cancelled or withdrawn.

## **10. Appeals**

An applicant may, within 30 days of the date of notification of a decision under this Scheme, request in writing that the CVO review the decision, stating the grounds on which the review is requested. The CVO shall reach a recommendation which will be sent to the Minister of the Department for consideration and final decision. The Minister may request additional information in relation to the appeal if so required. Appeal decisions are to be made and notified within 30 days of the appeal being received by the Department or as soon as practicable thereafter.

## **11. Variation of MVAFS rules**

The Department reserves the right to vary the conditions and rules of the scheme from time to time and shall have the right to terminate the scheme. In the event of the conditions or rule changes existing members will be informed in writing and will be requested to sign up to the new rules of the scheme to enable continuing membership of the scheme.





# Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture

*Rheynn Chymmyltaght, Bee as Eirinys*

**Isle of Man**  
Government  
*Reilrys Ellan Vannin*

## MAEDI-VISNA (MV) - ACCREDITED FLOCKS SCHEME APPLICATION

### APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP/DECLARATION FOR CHANGE OF OWNERSHIP

1. Name of flock owner:.....  
Address:.....  
.....

Telephone number:.....Mobile Number:.....

Email Address:.....

2. Address where flock are kept (if different from above):.....  
.....

3. Official flock number(s): .....

4. Please enter number of sheep/goats on the premises where the accredited flock/herd is/will be kept:

Currently/to be accredited		
Age	Sheep	Goats
Under 9 months		
9-18 months		
Over 18 months		

Non-MV accredited (not joining scheme)	
Sheep	Goats

5. Breeds to be included in scheme:

Breed	Number of animals

6. Has application previously been made to enter the flock for this Scheme or a similar Scheme in another country? **YES/NO**

If **YES** please give date and country.....

7. Has there been any history of clinical MV or positive test results in any of the flocks within the last three years? .....

8. Name and address of your Veterinary surgeon:.....  
.....

9. Is there more than one flock in the same ownership? **YES/NO**  
If YES, please enter address(es) and give details (breeds and numbers).....  
.....

**DECLARATION:**

- (i) I apply for the flock, particulars of which are given above, to be entered/remain on the register of MV-Accredited Flocks.
- (ii) The flock will be segregated from all other flocks from the date of approval of boundaries and biosecurity and all adult animals in the flock are clearly and permanently identifiable, a description of the means of identification is given overleaf.
- (iii) For the purposes of the scheme I agree to all relevant information concerning the health of my flock being passed by my private veterinary surgeon to the Department.
- (iv) I do/do not\* consent to details of this flock if accredited under the MVAFS to be listed on the Department's website including flock name, address, e-mail address and breed.
- (v) I certify that the details provided on this form, including those overleaf, are to the best of my knowledge complete and correct. If this application is accepted, I hereby undertake to comply with the scheme conditions and rules, a copy of which I have read (Current version available [www.gov.im/maedi-visna](http://www.gov.im/maedi-visna)).

Signature (flock owner): ..... Date: .....

Name: .....

\*Delete as appropriate



Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture

*Rheynn Chymmyltaght, Bee as Eirinys*

**Isle of Man**  
Government  
*Reiltys Ellan Vannin*

**MV - ACCREDITED FLOCKS SCHEME**

**Veterinary Certification Qualifying Test**

I certify that,

On (date):..... (number) adult animals over 9 months of age in the flock (including any resident goats which have contact with the flock) belonging

to .....

of .....

.....

have been inspected and found free of clinical signs of MV and have been blood tested for evidence of infection with negative results.

In this qualifying tests no reactors have been identified in the said flock, or, within 6 months prior to the date of this qualifying test.

Copies of the laboratory results in respect of this clear qualifying tests are attached.

Signed ..... Name: .....

Date: .....

Practice name or stamp: .....



**MAEDI-VISNA (MV) - ACCREDITED FLOCKS SCHEME**

**Declaration from owner/manager at periodic tests**

1. Name of flock owner: .....

2. Address: .....

Telephone number: .....Mobile Telephone number:.....

Email Address:.....

3. Address where flock are kept (if different from above): .....

4. Please enter number of sheep/goats on the premises where the accredited flock/herd are kept (on the date of the periodic testing):

<b>Currently accredited</b>		
<b>Age</b>	<b>Sheep</b>	<b>Goats</b>
Under 9 months		
9-18 months		
Over 18 months		

<b>Non-MV accredited</b>	
<b>Sheep</b>	<b>Goats</b>

5. Type of breed or crosses of MV-accredited sheep:.....

6. Date of periodic test.....

7. Name and address of your Veterinary Surgeon: .....

**DECLARATION:**

- I apply for the flock, particulars of which are given above, to remain on the register of MV-Accredited Flocks.
- The flock will be segregated from all other flocks and all adult animals in the flock are clearly and permanently identifiable.

- I certify that the details provided on this form, are to the best of my knowledge, correct. If this application is accepted, I hereby undertake to continue to comply with the scheme conditions and rules, a copy of which I have read. (Current version available on [www.gov.im/maedi-visna](http://www.gov.im/maedi-visna))

Signature of applicant: ..... Date .....

Name: .....

Status: .....  
(e.g. Owner, Manager etc.)

Note: This form is to be submitted by the sampling veterinary surgeon to the CVO along with a copy of the MV blood test results at each periodic test.

**Appendix: BLOOD SAMPLING TABLE FOR PERIODIC TESTS.**

**(EXCLUDING QUALIFYING TEST)**

We do not MV test any animal under 9 Months.

<b>Number of eligible animals in each group</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>
1 - 50	ALL
60	55
65	60
70	65
80	70
90	75
100	80
120	85
140	90
160	95
180	100
200	105
250	110
300	115
350	120
400	125
500	130
700	135
900	140
1000	145
1000+	150

For extrapolation go to the nearest higher whole number, e.g. for group of 320 eligible animals sample 120, for a group of 87 eligible animals sample 75.

**Routine periodic tests:** Include all breeding Rams and any animals which has attended a show or sale (since the last periodic test) within a random sample size as in the above table. All animals aged 9 months or older that have been added to the flock from other sources, and not tested since arrival, must be also be tested in addition to the numbers in the table above.

**Qualifying tests:** ALL Sheep over 9 months of age.

Note: The CVO has discretion to require a greater proportion of the flock to be tested if he considers this necessary.