

New Zealand's M. Bovis Programme confirms properties continue to decrease

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The Mycoplasma Bovis Programme, led in partnership with MPI, DairyNZ and Beef + Lamb New Zealand, continues to make good progress towards eradicating the disease from New Zealand.

All properties in the high-risk area in Wakanui, under a Controlled Area Notice (CAN), have now been cleared of cattle. Testing will be underway shortly on the properties in the surrounding area. The CAN is on track to be lifted in mid-March.

The number of active confirmed properties has decreased this week with two properties now cleared of M. Bovis and preparing to return to farming without restrictions. There is one new farm infected with M. Bovis which has well-established links to another already infected property.

"This brings the current number of Confirmed Properties to 5 (compared to 40 at the height of the outbreak), and we expect all of these farms to be cleared within the first half of 2023," said Simon Andrew M. Bovis programme director.

"While this progress is great news for farmers, there is still work to be done before New Zealand can transition to the next stage of the eradication effort which will primarily focus on Bulk Tank Milk, and Beef and Drystock Cattle surveillance.

"Over time, this will provide us with the necessary information for us to be confident the country is absent of the disease. It is expected that more infected properties may be identified before this shift."

The newly confirmed infected farm is a dairy grazing operation in the Banks Peninsula. It is linked through ownership and animal movements to a Confirmed Property in the Wakanui area.

"We are working closely with the farmer to depopulate the new confirmed property as quickly as possible before the milking season to minimise the disruption to the farmer's business."

Andrew said as well as the progress made towards clearing the Wakanui area of infection, the investigation into the second strain identified from a Confirmed Property in Canterbury in October 2022 is ongoing.

"This includes testing semen and tracing all forward and backtraces on and off the infected farm. To date, none has been found on any farm that supplied the infected property with cattle, nor on properties that received cattle from this farm."