



Taupo Update

East Taupō TB response and movement control effective 1 February 2025

Good evening

Since late 2023, OSPRI has worked closely with local farmers affected by TB infection within their livestock.

Our investigation has also confirmed that the disease pathway was contact with infected possums which, in New Zealand, are the main hosts of TB in wildlife.

Since our response began any infected herds have been under movement restriction to limit spread of disease, and we've undertaken further testing to understand the level of infection amongst their animals. We then changed the on-farm TB testing policy for properties in the immediate area and advanced their test due date, as a further precaution.

We've also worked with local hunters searching for TB in wild pigs (to determine new areas of interest) and possum control continues on the ground.



[For more about TBfree](#)

Herd infections



TB herds update



Disease control



Today, the number of infected herds is currently five (so a rise of one since our October update), at a new property. One additional herd is under further investigation (to rule out or confirm disease).

Confirming an animal TB positive takes time



1. We start with skin tests at the farm. Any animal that has a positive reaction to a skin test is called a 'reactor' (and tagged)
2. Usually, reactors are given a blood test next, no sooner than 10 days after the skin test
3. If this result is positive, we have to slaughter the animal and complete a post-mortem to confirm if TB is present or not. Typically, the post-mortem takes place within a month.

[More about TB testing](#)

Possum control

Our response team is working with landowners, iwi trusts, Hapu, leasees, conservations groups, pest control operators and forestry managers across approximately 89,000 hectares of land where OSPRI is proposing to undertake possum control (in the next 12-18months).

So far 17,000 hectares of possum control in the Taupō area has been completed, and a further 7664 hectares of work is currently underway. Early in 2025 possum control will commence on another 17,111 hectares.

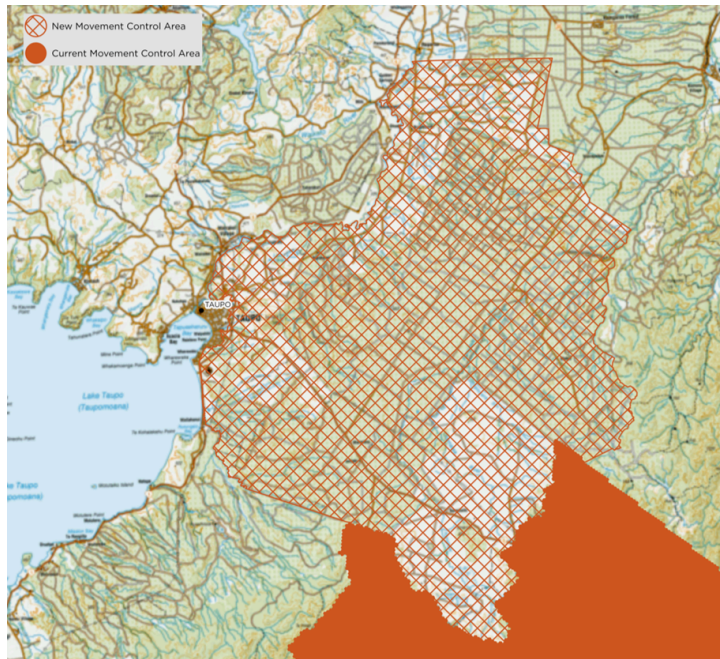
Pest control operators may have already been in touch about work on your block or farm or near you. Please give this vital activity your support.

Livestock movement control area extended

Now with greater understanding of the status of TB in the response area, and to further limit its potential spread, OSPRI* is expanding movement control restrictions (for cattle and deer) currently in place nearby, to include the area east of Lake Taupō. This new movement control area (MCA) comes into effect from 1 February 2025.

If this restriction applies to your property, we'll let you know by letter early in January 2025.

For those farms in this area, all livestock over three months of age, must be TB tested within 60 days before being moved. Stock moving directly to slaughter do not need a pre-movement test.



We realise for many farms this may affect plans for their herd and business, and we want to reassure farmers that increasing the movement control area is a precautionary measure to limit the potential spread of infection to other parts of the country.

For more information about movement control and how this can affect herd management you'll find some helpful FAQs at the bottom of this email.

Using NAIT

Having access to accurate data is crucial when dealing with an infectious disease or biosecurity threat. Please ensure cattle and deer are tagged, their movements recorded, and that NAIT accounts are up to date. NAIT is the national online tool for enabling the tracing of movement of cattle and deer in New Zealand.

OSPRI regularly offers NAIT education or drop-in sessions for one-to-one help, just head along to our [upcoming events page](#) to find out what's happening in your area.

To login to NAIT, or for helpful support materials, please visit www.ospri.co.nz.

For your reference your NAIT number is

Support & more info

We know having TB infected herds in the area can be stressful for farmers, neighboring families and communities. We're available to assist people who need it, and [The Rural Support Trust](#) is also offering help.

Finally, swift action to detect TB, if it is present, may help prevent the spread of disease. If you have any information, concerns or questions regarding our work in the area, please reach out to OSPRI.

For more information head to the [East Taupō TB response page](#) on the OSPRI website.

Need to get in touch with us? 0800 482 463 | info@ospri.co.nz

Nga mihi,

Helen Thoday
General Manager, Service Delivery North Island



NAIT and TBFree are OSPRI programmes

FAQs

What is the TB situation in East Taupō?

While the district has been considered free of TB for years, an infected herd was detected in September 2023 within 40km of an area where we know disease is present in wildlife. It was concerning that the farming operation's livestock movements showed no obvious links to other (TB

infected) herds outside of the region. Since then, the number of herd infections has risen to five.

Where has the infection come?

While our investigation looked at all disease pathways, we were suspicious TB had spread from the local wildlife. During 2024, TB identified in a wild pig caught on the affected property confirmed the disease was present in wildlife, and it is OSPRI's conclusion that this was the source of herd infections. Pigs are good indicators of TB in surrounding habitat because they scavenge widely. They can't maintain TB within their own population, so if they're infected, it means it's from another species – and the main carrier and spreader of TB in New Zealand is possums.

How many infected herds are there?

Currently there are five infected herds in the area.

How is OSPRI responding?

OSPRI, as the agency responsible for the TBfree programme (the eradication of TB in New Zealand) is managing the response. We are committed to ensuring farmers are supported, herds recover, and that the disease is contained and removed from the area. Our actions include:

- **Movement control:** Expanding the central North Island movement control area (MCA) to include the area east of Lake Taupō will prevent the potential movement of infected stock. The MCA introduces compulsory pre-movement TB testing for the area from 1 February 2025
- **TB testing** of herds is being completed to detect disease within farmed cattle and deer and some targeted TB surveillance of wildlife species will help identify the extent of the affected area
- **Possum control:** Over the next 12 to 18 months, wider landscape possum control involves working with the landowners, iwi trusts, Hapu, leasees, conservations groups, pest control operators and forestry managers across approximately 89,000 hectares. So far 17,000 hectares of possum control in the Taupo area has been completed, a further 7664 hectares of work is currently underway, and early in 2025 possum control will commence on another 17,111 hectares
- **Management of infected herds:** Infected herds are placed on a testing regime to identify and remove those animals with TB.

What is OSPRI doing to support farmers?

We know having TB infected herds in the area can be stressful for farmers, neighbouring families and communities. OSPRI's Veterinarian and Regional Partners are in touch with all affected farmers, and we're available to assist people who need it. Finally, the Rural Support Trust is also offering help.

Rural Support Trust phone 0800 78 72 54 (0800 RURAL HELP)

Is there a risk to human health?

The risk of bovine TB being transmitted to humans through food consumption is minimal because most milk for human consumption is pasteurised, a process which kills harmful bacteria, and meat is inspected at slaughter plants. Cases of humans contracting bovine TB in New Zealand are rare, though risks come from drinking unpasteurised milk or handling an infected animal carcass. Standard safety procedures for working with animals minimise the possibility of exposure. More information about this is available on our website; www.ospri.co.nz

What happens next?

The Central North Island Movement Control Area (MCA) expands on February 1 to encompass the area east of Lake Taupō where TB has been detected or is suspected. This will reduce the risk of disease spread through stock movement. All livestock over three months of age, must be TB tested within 60 days before moving from your farm.

Stock moving directly to slaughter do not need a pre-movement test.

What do I do if I am now within the MCA?

For the owners of herds with a Clear status, located within an MCA, who intend to move cattle or deer three months of age and older from the herd (apart from movements directly to slaughter) the animals to move must be negative to an approved TB test applied within 60 days prior to the movement.

If this applies to you and you need to organise a test contact OSPRI on 0800 482 463 and allow at least 14 days for the test to be completed.

Will this affect my herd's TB status?

Your herd's TB status is not affected by these TB cases.

Can I move my animals to my runoff or grazing?

If the animals are moving to your own block that is managed under the same herd number as the home property, they will not require testing. If they are moving to a property with another herd, they will require pre-movement testing.

Can I complete a pre-movement test and a whole herd test at the same time?

Yes, provided the TB test is done within 60 days prior to the movement.

How will an MCA change my routine whole herd test?

You will now be required to present all cattle older than 3 months of age and deer older than eight months of age, at your whole herd test. All stock over three months of age must complete a clear TB test within 60 days before movement.

Will farmers be compensated for animals sent to slaughter?

OSPRI compensates the owners of stock slaughtered as TB reactors. Compensation is paid to reduce the impact of TB infection on individual farmers. Before TB reactor animals are sent to slaughter, they will be valued by a TB tester and the ownership of the animal(s) is transferred to OSPRI. This frees the farmer from the cost of transport and slaughter, which are paid by OSPRI. Compensation payments are made after reactors are slaughtered.

My neighbour got a positive skin test and or a positive blood test, does that mean they have TB?

Further testing will be undertaken to determine whether the animal is infected or not. If the tests are positive for TB, all direct neighbours will be notified.

Can I do my own possum trapping?

Yes, you can. If we're not currently working in your immediate area, you can help by undertaking your own possum control on the farm - by baiting, trapping or spotlighting. If you have winter feed crops close to bush lines that's a great place to trap, as possums will venture out into pasture to forage.

What do hunters need to know?

It's important to know how to recognise TB in wildlife and know what to do if you suspect an animal is infected – including keep yourself safe. The following link has [TB information for deer and pig hunters](#). | [OSPRI](#)

If we're undertaking possum control in an area, warning signs will be placed at all main access points to the operational area. Everyone must follow the cautions on the signs.

Do not bring dogs into the area until the warning signs have been officially removed. Dogs are particularly susceptible to 1080. They must not be allowed access to bait or poisoned carcasses which remain toxic to dogs until they have fully decomposed.

What do I do if I suspect an animal has TB?

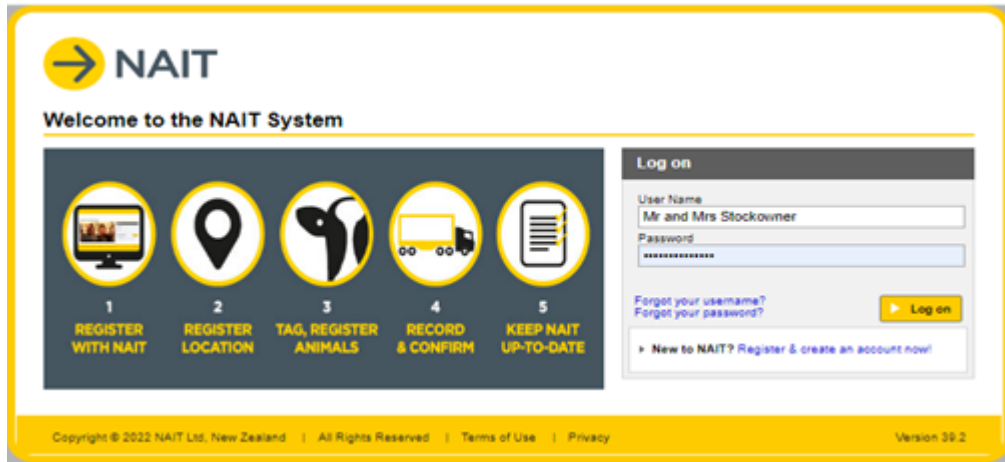
Whether on the farm or out hunting swift action to detect TB, if it is present, may help prevent the

spread of disease. If you have any information, concerns or questions regarding our work in the area, please reach out to OSPRI.

What is NAIT?

NAIT is an online tool used to provide fast and accurate tracing of NAIT animals. It supports disease management in New Zealand.

To logon or register with NAIT use the 'NAIT' logon page at the OSPRI website www.ospri.co.nz



How do I get help with my NAIT account?

Traceability plays an extremely significant role in determining the most likely source of infection which enables us to protect other herds from TB infection. Ensuring a farm NAIT records are correct, and current, is critical in helping us eradicate TB.

If you require support with amending records, please contact the OSPRI Support Centre 0800 482 463

This email was sent by OSPRI Ltd, Level 9, 15 Willeston Street, Wellington 6140,
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