Vitenskapskomiteen for mat og miljø
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Your ref:
Our ref: 2024/229262
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Mattilsynet

ASSIGNMENT TO VKM ON BOVINE TUBERCULOSIS

Background of the case

After decades without bovine tuberculosis in Norway, the disease was detected again in 2022, and a significant amount of resources have been allocated to attempt it's eradication.

Bovine tuberculosis, as referred to here, is tuberculosis caused by *Mycobacterium bovis*. Bovine tuberculosis is a category B disease in the European Union, and eradication is therefore required according to the Animal Health Law. There is great variation in the prevalence of the disease in European countries. Norway has official free status based on long historical freedom. Norway monitors the presence of bovine tuberculosis through mandatory reporting, meat inspection, health surveillance requirements for imports and breeding station testing. In November 2022, bovine tuberculosis was detected for the first time since 1986. As of now, the infection has been confirmed in one cattle facility. Two additional facilities with epidemiological connections have been confirmed based on immunological tests. The source of infection remains unknown.

Bovine tuberculosis has several reservoir species, and transmission from humans to animals has been described. Furthermore, bovine tuberculosis has limited contagiousness, a long incubation period, and diagnostic tools with restricted performance. The occurrence of infection can therefore be challenging both to detect and to combat.

Assignment/mandate

The Norwegian Food Safety Authority requests a risk assessment of the pathways for the introduction of *Mycobacterium bovis* into Norway and Norwegian livestock, as well as an assessment of critical risk factors related to the detection, spread, and establishment of bovine tuberculosis in Norwegian cattle populations or among other Norwegian reservoir species. The aim is to establish a general knowledge base that can be used in various scenarios.

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The Norwegian Food Safety Authority requests that VKM does the following:

1. Assess the current risk of the introducing of infection to Norway, focusing on the movement of live animals, vectors (e.g. food, feed, equipment and vehicles) and humans.
2. Assess the risk of transmission to humans and animals following the introduction of infection into Norway via the movement of live animals, vectors (e.g. food, feed, equipment and vehicles) and humans.
3. Assess the risk of reservoirs establishment in Norwegian livestock and in wild fauna.
4. Describe the risk mitigation measures for the points above. Diagnostic options for detecting infection are also to be described.

Data, reports, regulations, etc.

Relevant resources for this assessment include:

https://eur-lex. EU 2020_689

https://www.visavet.es/bovinetuberculosis/databases/bt-protocols.php

https://www.visavet.es/bovinetuberculosis/bovine-tb/eradication.php

Tuberculosis Disease Network (europa.eu)

https://www.woah.org/en/what-we-do/standards/observatory/implementation-of-standards-the-observatory-annual-report/

https://www.gov.uk/environment/bovine-tuberculosis

Conditions

Schedule
Deadline: 28 February 2025

Language
The report must be in English, with a comprehensive Norwegian summary.

Contact persons at the Norwegian Food Safety Authority

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Regards,

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