

Approved Finishing Units (AFU) without grazing in England

AFUs provide a route for cattle farmers to rear, fatten and/or finish cattle from both TB-restricted and un-restricted farms

- AFUs without grazing can be approved in the **High Risk Area (HRA) and Edge Area of England**
- AFU operators can source cattle from **multiple TB-restricted and un-restricted herds**
- Cattle moving to AFUs from TB-restricted herds must have **completed a skin test with a negative result** within 90 days before movement
- Cattle moving directly between AFUs and indirectly via orange markets **do not require a pre-movement test**
- Cattle in an AFU without grazing are **exempt from routine surveillance testing**
- **Robust biosecurity requirements** must be in place, including wildlife proofing of buildings
- Cattle held in an AFU can only move to **slaughter**, to **another AFU** or to an **orange market**

Where can I find out more information?

An application form and the full terms and conditions for approval and operation of an AFU can be found at

www.gov.uk/government/publications/approved-finishing-units-for-cattle-application

Who should I speak to?

If you are considering applying for an AFU, contact APHA:

 03000 200 301

Email TB.Advice@apha.gov.uk



Case Study – Long Lane calf rearing AFU (Buitelaar Production Ltd)

During the spring of 2019, Buitelaar took over management of a calf rearing unit in Somerset and converted it to an AFU without grazing. Dairy bred calves are collected direct from TB-restricted farms and sorted in dedicated collection centres. Calves averaging three weeks of age and 55kg on intake are reared for a 12 week period up to 150kg in a housed system and are then sold to finishing AFUs in the supply chain.

Buitelaar took the decision to convert the calf rearing business to an AFU for several reasons:

- **Safeguarding the business**
Normally a TB breakdown would pose a substantial threat to business sustainability due to the location of the unit in the HRA, combined with high throughput of cattle (14 week turn over). Converting the unit to an AFU means that in the event of a TB reactor or slaughterhouse case, there is minimal disruption to the operation of the unit.
- **Guaranteed supply of calves**
Due to the size of the unit (currently housing 900 calves), a guaranteed supply of quality calves is essential. Converting the unit to an AFU means that calves can be sourced under licence from multiple TB-restricted holdings and orange markets, as well as from unrestricted holdings.
- **Demand**
Within the supply chain, there has recently been an increased demand for reared calves from AFUs as more finishers are converting to AFUs to help safeguard their businesses. As Long Lane farm was already part of the Buitelaar integrated supply chain, the obvious step was to convert the unit to an AFU to meet demand.
- **No routine TB testing**
No routine surveillance testing is required on the unit which means less hassle, cattle handling and cost.

Buitelaar made enquiries with APHA about converting the calf rearing business to an AFU. An on-site inspection was completed by an APHA vet to discuss biosecurity requirements, and after exploring various options, a wildlife-proof boundary was installed.

“When deciding whether to convert the calf rearing unit into an AFU, there was a question surrounding the cost and time it would take to make the necessary alterations to the site. However, when we had the discussion with our local APHA vet, it was evident that in our case, we only needed to wildlife proof the existing farm boundary which was a week’s work. Although the alterations will vary from farm to farm, we were pleasantly surprised at how simple the conversion was.” Alan King, AFU site manager



To create the wildlife-proof boundary, a combination of permanent and electric fencing was installed as per the biosecurity information factsheet on the TB hub.

Existing gates around the farm were sheeted using galvanised steel to close off any gaps and seal the perimeter.



The costs associated with creating a wildlife proof boundary are summarised below (including labour):

Biosecurity measure	Cost
Wildlife-proof fencing	£ 3,000.00
Sheeting of gates	£ 1,500.00
Total	£ 4,500.00