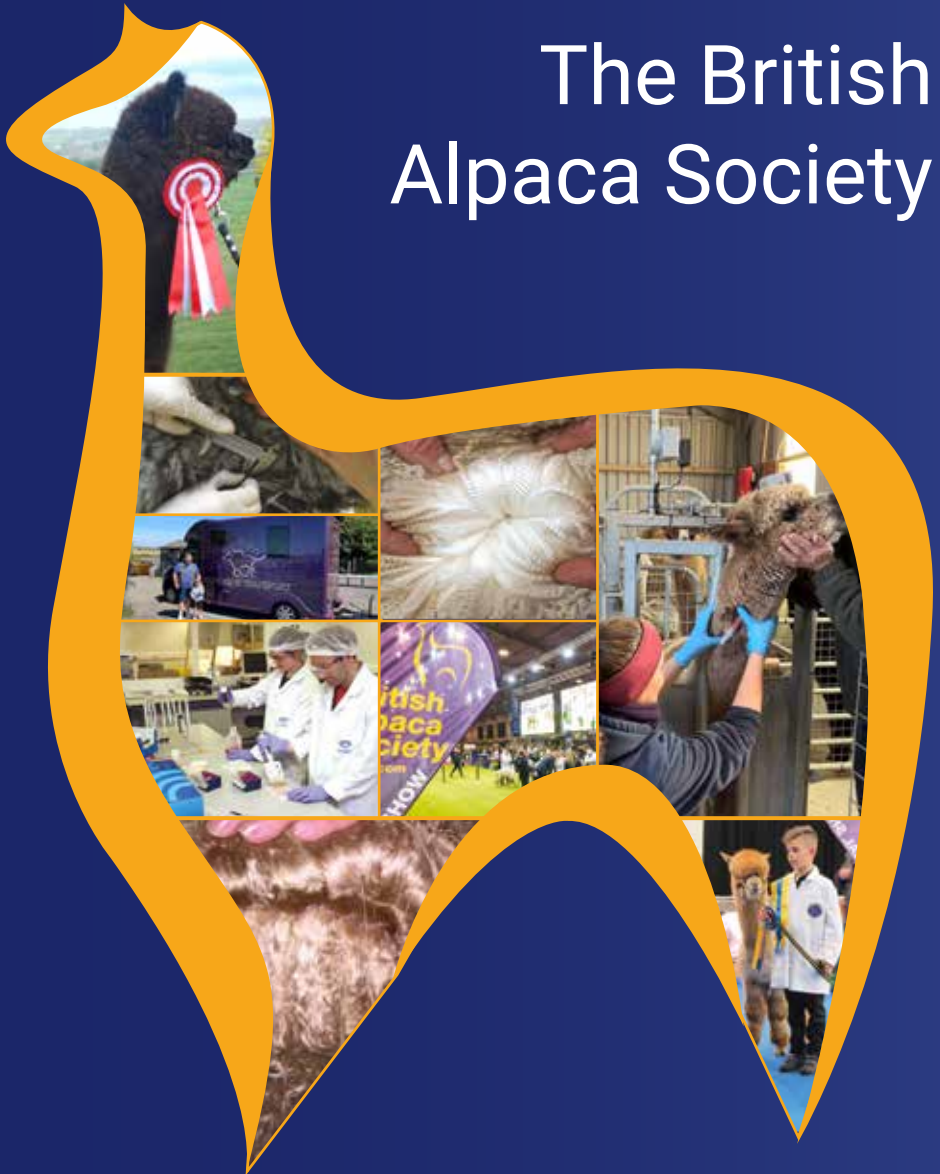


The British Alpaca Society



A standard to work for...
Export and disease monitoring

www.bas-uk.com



The UK alpaca industry is strong, vibrant, and open for business

The United Kingdom (UK) has long had a special relationship with alpacas, starting in the mid 1880's with Sir Titus Salt who "discovered" the remarkable fibre of the alpaca and began promoting its use in the finest fashion houses of Europe.

Today the alpaca industry in Britain has never been stronger as the market remains buoyant for the high quality, well bred and healthy stock. Since the UK left the EU, exporting has gone through some minor changes and new routes have opened up. Even with these changes, exporting to and importing from the EU remains simple and straightforward for both the exporter and importer.

High quality breeding stock

The British population of registered alpacas sits above 40,000 and the quality goes from strength to strength. High level of investment of carefully selected breeding stock, together with scientific selection processes, ideal nutrition and underpinned by high health, is resulting in the production of some of the best alpacas in the world. This holistic approach to alpaca breeding is being supported by the extensive show circuit present in the UK which includes both halter and fleece shows. The increase in the health and correct conformation of the national herd has provided a firm foundation to push the boundaries of high

yield and quality fleece production. The British alpaca industry is committed to becoming a fibre industry.

Exporting/importing EU – UK

After Brexit, the UK moved from EU member state to third country status, meaning that alpaca exports between the EU and UK are subject to customs checks. When the export health certificate (license to export alpacas) for all EU member states and third countries changed in April 2021, the exporting farm needed to meet a number of criteria around animal health.

One of the main health implementations that were set was the requirement for exporting farms to be part of a bTB surveillance scheme using Single Intradermal Comparative Cervical Tuberculin (SICCT) test, commonly known as a bTB skin test.

The UK government (DEFRA) decided to go one step further and create another level of security for alpacas leaving the UK for the EU. This involved not only following all EU testing requirements but also adding another layer of protection where all breeding alpacas on the exporting farm must have an Enferplex Blood test following the skin test. Only farms that have this double bTB testing regime on all of their breeding alpacas are allowed to then export to the EU. This means that the alpacas leaving the UK have the most stringent testing regime in Europe.

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Laboratory-confirmed TB incidents (breakdowns)*	6	14	9	9	13	8	11	9	10	4	2
Registered BAS herds	1,060	1,112	1,149	1,140	1,203	1,243	1,320	1,333	1,380	1,512	1,707
Registered population					36,960	38,490	39,048	40,521	41,526	43,232	38,449
Estimated UK alpaca population					52,000	54,000	56,000	58,000	60,000	60,000	60,000
Estimated herds in UK					2,300	2,350	2,400	2,450	2,500	2,500	2,500
% of herds affected by bTB					0.6	0.3	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.2	0.1

*Source: Official statistics from Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA)



Tuberculosis testing and current situation in the UK

Bovine Tuberculosis (bTB) is a complex infectious zoonotic disease which is caused by the bacterium *Mycobacterium bovis* (*M. bovis*). It is found in the UK and in many mainland European countries.

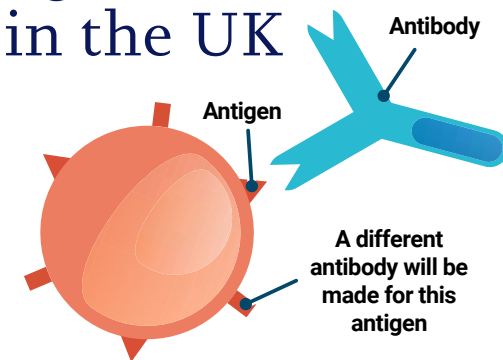
bTB has been declared a notifiable disease – which means that if it is found or suspected it is to be reported to the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA). Although cases have remained low, the BAS have been educating members to reduce the level of bTB in UK herds. This has been done by:

- Encouraging annual Enferplex testing
- Education on how to implement industry leading biosecurity on farm
- Introducing biosecurity guidelines for shows

As the official government data shows, the cases of bTB in new herds have been falling in the UK since 2017 and in 2021 there were only two herds from 1,707 herds or 0.1% with confirmed bTB.

Enferplex antibody blood test

This test is used for annual whole herd bTB surveillance, pre and post movement and pre-export testing. The Enferplex test uses a computer to accurately measure the level of seven of the most common bTB antibodies. The seven different TB antigens in the test are placed separately as spots in the machine along with some conjugate and some serum from the test alpaca's blood. If an antibody to bTB is present in the blood sample, it will bind to the relevant antigen and the resultant reaction produces a luminescent reaction, the light from which can be measured and quantified as a number of Relative Light Units (RLU) by the Enferplex reader.



How well does the skin and Enferplex tests work?

By themselves these tests work well but have limitations for various reasons, including; the time the alpaca has had the infection and variations in individual alpaca immune response.

Testing individual alpacas for bTB using the Enferplex test yields a Sensitivity of 66.7% (CI: 53.4-80.0) and Specificity 96.9% (CI: 94.8-99.0) using the Enferplex 2 antigen interpretation and this is increased by around 10% when combined with a skin test, as the tuberculin used in the skin test 'boosts' the level of antibodies in the blood which are then detected by the Enferplex test.

Now that the ONLY way UK alpaca breeders can export is to have all of their breeding alpacas both skin plus either the Enferplex or combined DPPVetTB – IDEXX tests, the risks of bTB leaving the UK is highly unlikely. If you combine that with excellent biosecurity measures then the possibility of spreading infection is reduced even further.

To read more about the Enferplex test and how it works please visit www.surefarm.co.uk



The flow of genetics across Europe is essential

For the first time, alpaca breeders based in Europe face challenges in relation to the availability of new genetics to improve the quality of our Suri and Huacaya alpacas.

With extremely limited new genetic lines being imported due to global restrictions in movement and the demand coming from Asia, the need for a steady flow of genetics from the EU to UK and UK to EU, has never been more important.

The alpaca breeders of the United Kingdom welcome their fellow alpaca breeders and friends in the EU to talk and free up trade between the UK and EU member states so that we can all benefit from each other's genetics and take our respective industries forward.

We appreciate that disease transmission needs to be taken seriously and in the past there has been a lot of speculation as to the severity of the bTB situation in the UK. We have shown that incidences of disease is lowering and we are building a healthier herd for all to benefit from.

BAS members welcome our fellow EU alpaca breeders with open arms. A lot of improvements in disease surveillance and prevention has happened in the last ten years and we believe that we have the measures in place to offer alpacas that are extremely high quality, highly productive and healthy.



The British Alpaca Society is committed to the long term future of the alpaca industry and welcomes EU based alpaca associations to work together for a bright future.



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