

Johne's Disease Dairy Score

March 2021

The Johne's Disease Dairy Score (JDDS) is a risk-profiling tool developed for use in dairy cattle. It is to be used as a guide to assess Johne's disease (JD) risk in a clearly defined group of cattle, such as a herd on a dairy farm or some other discrete grouping of dairy animals. When introducing cattle, farmers should ask further questions about JD in the herd and other species on the property from which the cattle are sourced, rather than rely on the score alone. The Dairy Score, in place since February 2019, has been developed to meet the specific needs of the dairy industry.

There are three outcome levels to JD management:

1. First steps - progressing,
2. Managed risk of clinical disease, and
3. Managed risk of infection.

There are eight scores within these levels to be obtained via interventions being put in place and an animal satisfying the minimum criteria of that score and all lower scores.

First steps - progressing

All farms should have a **biosecurity plan** that meets industry assurance and regulatory requirements. Hygienic calf rearing practices and controls over introductions should be appropriate to the risk of infection on the farm and within the region.

A **clinical case** means a clinical case of JD of any strain in any species on any farm where the animal spent time in its first 12 months of life. Having no clinical cases in at least the past three years is evidence of progress beyond implementation of the Biosecurity plan.

Managed risk of clinical disease

A **negative test** means a negative Herd Environmental Culture (HEC) Test or Sample Test. The most recent test must have been conducted between 12 months and three years (reducing to two years at the next level). If a positive test occurs, prior negative tests cannot be counted. Herds which achieve JDDS 8 using four or more Sample Tests may perform Check Tests after the fourth sample test. Further information on tests can be obtained from *Johne's Disease in Cattle Definitions and Guidelines 2019*, available on the [Animal Health Australia website](#).

For herds with JD, **vaccination** of cattle with Silirum® should be considered. This inactivated (killed) vaccine is a tool to complement on farm disease management practices relating to JD. Producers wanting to use the vaccine in their cattle should check with their relevant Department of Primary Industries (or equivalent) about any state/territory rules for using it and follow the label requirements for permanent identification of vaccinates.

Managed risk of infection

Veterinary oversight of a Biosecurity plan at Score 8, means that every 12 months a veterinarian has discussed with the person completing the plan biosecurity risks associated with the herd and property, including ways of managing those risks. Following this discussion, the veterinarian signs the plan to confirm the discussion took place.

Johne's Disease Dairy Score

Risk Profile	Achieving the Score	Maintaining Score once achieved	Score
Managed risk of infection	3 or more negative tests 12 months to 2 years apart AND Biosecurity plan overseen by veterinarian annually	1 negative test every 2 years and maintain active biosecurity plan overseen by veterinarian annually	8
	3 negative tests 12 months to 2 years apart	1 negative test every 2 years and maintain active biosecurity plan	7
Managed risk of clinical disease	2 negative tests 12 months to 3 years apart OR 1 negative test AND approved vaccinate and no clinical cases in the last 5 years	1 negative test every 3 years and maintain active biosecurity plan	6
	1 negative test 12 months to 3 years after attaining score 4 OR Approved vaccinate (*) and no clinical cases in the last 4 years		5
	No clinical cases for over 5 years OR Approved vaccinate and no clinical cases in the last 3 years	No clinical cases ongoing and maintain active biosecurity plan	4
First steps – progressing	No clinical cases in the last 4 years		3
	No clinical cases in the last 3 years		2
Unmanaged risk	Biosecurity plan implemented	Maintain active biosecurity plan	1
	Clinical cases not known		0

(*) Approved vaccinate is an animal that, along with all other calves being reared in the same group, was vaccinated as a calf with Silirum® vaccine according to label directions, marked appropriately, and the vaccination was correctly recorded on the NLIS database.