

# *Mycoplasma bovis* PCR for service bulls

With the current heightened awareness around biosecurity for *Mycoplasma bovis* in the South Island of New Zealand, we have been working together with MPI to do everything possible to mitigate any spread of disease and help you look after your clients.

Gribbles Veterinary is pleased to be able to provide veterinarians with a PCR-based test for *M. bovis* for healthy service bulls. We have compared and validated three PCR assays, and the validation data has been reviewed and approved by MPI. Based on discussions with MPI, the assay can be applied to both nasopharyngeal and preputial swabs as well as the testing of semen specimens. MPI advises that samples should be tested individually to maximise the sensitivity and specificity of the testing and hence samples will **not** be pooled prior to analysis.

**Note: For any suspect cases, i.e. animals with clinical signs of *M. bovis*, MPI must be notified immediately, with sampling being carried out by MPI and tested via MPI laboratories.**

There are three ways of sampling bulls for *M. bovis* PCR testing:

1. Semen
2. Preputial swabs
3. Nasopharyngeal sampling

In some cases, a routine bull soundness exam is done, and will include a semen sample being taken. Submitting fresh semen for PCR testing is suggested for these cases. Otherwise, preputial swabs and nasopharyngeal swabs are the preferred options for sampling bulls. Sampling the external nasal area is unlikely to be sufficient to identify *M. bovis* and is not recommended. Where multiple bulls have been run together for many months, it is recommended that at least 10% of the bulls be sampled. Please see the [NZVA procedure for nasopharyngeal swab technique](#) and the [NZVA procedure for preputial swab technique](#).

Although PCR testing is sensitive, *M. bovis* can be intermittently shed by animals and may not be present in the sample taken, so the results will be reported as “not detected” rather than “negative”.

<b>Cost of testing:</b>	Urgent samples or <5 samples per case	\$65.85 (ex. GST) each
	Submissions of 5 or more samples per case	\$23.40 (ex. GST) each

**Turn-around time:** 3-7 working days

**Samples required:** Semen, nasopharyngeal or preputial swabs\*

If you have any questions or would like any further information, please contact Paul Fitzmaurice or Meghan Blackwood at Gribbles Veterinary, Palmerston North (06 356 7100).

\* Phosphate buffered saline (PBS) is the transport media required for these samples if a tricamper is used for sampling and it can be ordered using our [consumables order form](#). Dry swabs are also suitable.

