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News Release

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VIRAL HAEMORRHAGIC SEPTICAEMIA UPDATE: FIRST ROUND NEGATIVE TESTS AND PARTIAL RELAXATION OF MOVEMENT RESTRICTIONS

The first round of testing for the VHS virus on fish farms within the Yorkshire Ouse designated area has proved negative.

As a result, the National Control Centre at the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas), Weymouth has advised Defra that certain live fish movements to, from and within the affected area may now be considered upon application to the Fish Health Inspectorate. Currently only dead fish may be moved from farms within the affected area, and fish must be gutted before being moved out of the area.

The Designated Area around the Ouse catchment area is under constant review and, pending the findings of the on-going epidemiological investigation, it may be possible to reduce and redefine the area under restriction.

A second round of testing is currently in progress and results are expected by mid July.

The live fish movement restriction does not apply to the movement of ornamental fish to or from pet shops and aquaria.

VHS has no implications for human health.

Notes to Editors

Anyone wishing to move live fish, to, from or within the affected area, should apply in writing to the Fish Health Inspectorate at Cefas, Weymouth. Defra will be writing to all fish farmers in the area outlining the types of live fish movements that may be considered.

The Fish Health Inspectorate are also able to provide advice on biosecurity requirements, both on farm and for fish transportation purposes.

Appropriate consents are also needed from the Environment Agency, for the introduction of live fish into waters other than fish farms.

As of 26th June, the following movements of live fish will be considered upon completion of a movement application form, submitted to the Fish Health Inspectorate:

1. Introductions of live VHS-susceptible fish may be permitted into river and stillwater fisheries within the designated area (other than into or from waters in the River Nidd sub-catchment).
2. Movements of live non-susceptible fish may be permitted into the area.
3. Movements of live non-susceptible fish from the area may be permitted, where they originate from farms that are isolated from any watercourse and do not hold any VHS-susceptible fish species.

A copy of the movement application form VHSM1 and guidance for its completion, is available at:

www.efishbusiness.co.uk

or by telephone from the Fish Health Inspectorate on 01305 206673

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