

Detailed guide: Animal by-product categories, site approval, hygiene and disposal

Updated: Disposing of small quantities of ABP section updated.

ABPs are animal carcasses, parts of animals, or other materials which come from animals but are not meant for humans to eat.

They can either be destroyed or can be used to make compost, biogas or other products.

ABP categories explained

ABPs are divided into 3 categories, based on the risks they pose.

Category 1 ABPs

Category 1 ABPs are classed as high risk.

They include:

- carcasses and all body parts of animals suspected of being infected with TSE (transmissible spongiform encephalopathy)
- carcasses of wild animals suspected of being infected with a disease that humans or animals could contract
- carcasses of animals used in experiments
- parts of animals that are contaminated due to illegal treatments
- [international catering waste](#)
- carcasses and body parts from zoo and circus animals or pets
- specified risk material (body parts that pose a particular disease risk, eg cows' spinal cords)

Category 2 ABPs

Category 2 ABPs are classed as high risk.

They include:

- animals rejected from abattoirs due to having infectious diseases
- carcasses containing residues from authorised treatments
- unhatched poultry that has died in its shell
- carcasses of animals killed for disease control purposes
- carcasses of dead livestock
- manure
- digestive tract content

Category 3 ABPs

Category 3 ABPs are classed as low risk.

They include:

- carcasses or body parts passed fit for humans to eat, at a slaughterhouse
- products or foods of animal origin originally meant for human consumption but withdrawn for commercial reasons, not because it's unfit to eat
- domestic catering waste
- shells from shellfish with soft tissue
- eggs, egg by-products, hatchery by-products and eggshells
- aquatic animals, aquatic and terrestrial invertebrates
- hides and skins from slaughterhouses
- animal hides, skins, hooves, feathers, wool, horns, and hair that had no signs of infectious disease at death
- processed animal proteins (PAP)

PAP are animal proteins processed from any category 3 ABP except:

- milk, colostrum or products derived from them
- eggs and egg products, including eggshells
- gelatine
- collagen
- hydrolysed proteins
- dicalcium phosphate and tricalcium phosphate of animal origin
- blood products (although any processed blood would still be subject to this guide)

Getting your site approved or registered

If your site uses ABPs, it needs to be approved by or registered with the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA).

Whether you need approval or registration depends on what your site does and the ABPs you handle there.

Sites that need approval

You need approval if you are using ABPs at a:

- [processing facility](#)
- [biodiesel factory](#)
- [site that makes pet food](#)
- combustion site
- [commercial compost or biogas/anaerobic digestion site](#)
- [site that makes organic fertiliser or soil improver](#)
- site where boilers use tallow as fuel
- [high or low capacity incinerator site](#)
- [handling or storage plant](#)

- [site that stores derived products](#)

How to get your site approved

Complete an application form to [get your site approved](#).

Your application form needs to show:

- that you know how to set up and operate your plant
- that you've identified the most hazardous risk areas on your site
- that you have a workable plan to control these risks
- how you'll maintain hygiene in common areas like canteens, offices, waste water plants and boilers
- what you'll do if cross-contamination occurs
- how you'll manage spillages of any ABPs or processed products
- how you'll maintain equipment, clean it, and deal with any faults
- how you'll train your staff to safely operate the site
- where you'll store raw ABP materials and finished products

After you've applied, APHA inspectors will then check your site to make sure you're operating legally.

Sites that must register

You need to register your site if you use:

- blood or blood products, except if you're using them in feed
- medical devices like heart valves
- hides, skins, wool, hair, pig bristles, feathers, down or related materials
- commercial game trophies or taxidermy pieces
- chemicals derived from plant or animal fats
- bee-keeping by-products
- bones, horns, hooves and related materials
- milk, milk-based and milk-derived products
- colostrum (milk from animals) and colostrum-based products
- ABPs for feeding zoo or circus animals, or other wild animals
- ABP samples for research or diagnostic tests (unless this is for education)

You also have to register your site if it's a:

- [collection centre](#) (any site where dead stock is collected for use as feed for carnivores)
- site that mixes components for organic fertilisers or soil improvers
- cosmetics manufacturing site
- landfill site
- [pet cemetery](#)
- medical or veterinary supply factory

You also must register if you're:

- a trader selling untreated agricultural [wool or hair](#)

- an animal keeper who gets [hides and skins](#) from your animals returned after slaughter
- handling ABPs as trade samples, or for exhibition and artistic uses
- a [haulier or transporter](#) who doesn't work for an APHA-approved site or an FSA approved food or feed business

How to register your site

To [get your site registered](#) complete form AB117 and [post it to APHA](#).

When you don't need registration or approval

You don't need to be registered to:

- run a farm, breeding farm or a shop which produces ABPs
- supply other farms with colostrum (milk from animals) for feeding
- dispose of category 2 and 3 materials on your site, if they came from surgery on a live animal (eg horns from calves)
- collect and transport manure between 2 places on the same farm, or between farmers within the UK
- make game trophies or taxidermy pieces that aren't to be sold commercially
- use ABP samples for education, eg at a school, college, or university

ABP hygiene on your site

If you want to use different categories of ABPs on one site, you must:

- keep unprocessed ABPs in category-specific rooms, divided by floor-to-ceiling walls or partitions
- keep raw ABP material separate from any processed final products

If you run a category 3 processing, handling or storage plant, you must do one of the following:

- keep any category 1 and category 2 materials in a separate building, that's both:
 - divided from the category 3 plant by floor-to-ceiling walls or partitions
 - accessed by a dedicated entrance and exit
- prove to AHPA inspectors that you're using an equally effective method to separate category 1 and 2 material from your category 3 plant

Cleaning your site and vehicles

You must clean and disinfect your site and any containers or vehicles used for storing or transporting ABPs.

You should:

- make and enforce a cleaning plan for all areas of the site
- regularly inspect the site and all equipment to make sure they're clean,

and record the results

- have a waste-water disposal system
- disinfect vehicles fully, including the wheels, before they enter clean areas of your site
- make sure finished products are not contaminated by splashes or run-off
- have a pest control programme as protection against insects, rats, birds, and other pests

ABP safety and your staff

You must:

- control the movement of staff between areas that use different ABP materials
- make sure all clothing and footwear are disinfected after use
- make sure staff change protective clothing when moving between areas that use different categories of ABP
- use colour-coded protective clothing to identify staff working in clean or unclean areas
- clean and disinfect common areas like toilets, changing rooms, and canteens
- train staff so that they are familiar with your plant's safety procedures and keep a record of the training
- keep a list of any staff who own livestock in case a notifiable disease breaks out

ABP safety and your equipment

Your equipment can spread diseases if you don't clean and disinfect it.

You should:

- check all equipment regularly to make sure it works
- use trained maintenance staff to fix any broken equipment
- only use each piece of equipment for a single category of ABP, and colour-code accordingly
- limit the movement of equipment between clean and unclean parts of your site
- wash and disinfect equipment, especially if you're moving it between clean and unclean sectors
- use caustic decontamination for equipment that you're moving from category 1 processing sites to category 2 or 3

Loading and unloading ABPs

When you're getting your site approved or registered, inspectors will check your loading and unloading method is safe.

Generally, loading and unloading must be done inside, in a covered area, but inspectors may allow other methods.

Loading and unloading ABPs next to the building

If you can't drive a vehicle inside your building, you may be allowed to load and unload by docking with the building.

This means that a vehicle or container backs up to the building and empties or fills through a covered dock. This must not be open to the outside.

Docking is more likely to be approved when the materials you're transporting won't spill, eg a carcass is safer than liquid waste.

Unloading ABPs in outside yards

Inspectors may allow certain ABPs to be unloaded in outside yards, if the materials are:

- moved into the building immediately
- stored in covered and leak-proof containers or sealed packages
- dry, eg fresh whole carcasses, fully salted hides, skins, horns, hooves

They'll also check that:

- your yard is made from concrete or another material that won't let liquid seep through and contaminate the ground
- materials are not unloaded anywhere else on your site besides this yard

Loading ABPs in outside yards

If you want to load ABP materials in outside yards, inspectors will make sure:

- materials are held outside for the shortest possible amount of time, ideally loaded on the day of dispatch
- your containers are leak-proof and securely covered immediately after loading
- the ground under and around the container is made from concrete or another material that won't let liquid seep through
- the ground can be cleaned and disinfected, and has a fall to a foul drain

Keeping records and labelling

If you're moving consignments of ABPs or derived products, you must have a commercial document.

The commercial document must list:

- a detailed description of the contents, including category and quantity
- the date of transport
- an address of origin and destination, and contact names at both
- approval or registration numbers for the factory or vehicle
- the signature of whoever is responsible for the contents

- ear numbers and details of species, where carcasses have been taken from farms

You should keep a copy of the commercial document for at least 2 years.

Keeping records of consignments

You must keep a record of any consignments of ABPs or derived products that enter or exit your premises.

You can do this using your commercial document or a logbook – you should record:

- the date you sent or received the consignment
- a description of the material you sent or received including its category
- the weight, volume and quantity of the material
- the place where you sent the material or the place it came from

See

[an example of a logbook](#)

(MS Word Document, 49KB)

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Labelling

When labelling ABP vehicles or containers you should measure quantity by:

- weight
- number of containers, with estimates of their average weight
- number, for example '85 tripes'
- volume, for example '20,000 litres of bovine blood'

Vehicles, containers, or packaging must also have a label attached that says what category of ABP the contents are.

You must use these wordings:

- category 1 material – 'for disposal only'
- category 2 material – 'not for animal consumption'
- category 3 material – 'not for human consumption'

Disposing of ABPs

Category 1

You can only dispose of category 1 ABPs by:

- incineration or co-incineration at an approved plant
- [processing using processing methods 1-5](#) followed by permanent marking using GTH, then incineration or co-incineration

- pressure sterilisation (apart from possible TSE cases or animals killed under TSE eradication laws) followed by permanent marking, then landfill
- using them as fuel for combustion at an approved combustion plant
- sending them for burial at an authorised landfill, if they are [international catering waste](#)

Category 2

You can only dispose of category 2 ABPs by:

- incinerating or co-incinerating without processing or with prior processing, when resulting material has to be marked with glyceroltriheptanoate (GTH)
- sending them to authorised landfill after processing by pressure sterilisation and marking with GTH
- making them into organic fertilisers/ soil improvers, after processing and marking with GTH
- composting or anaerobic digestion after processing by pressure sterilisation and marking with GTH (milk, milk products, eggs, egg products, digestive tract content, manure do not need processing, providing no risk of spreading serious transmissible disease)
- applying them to land, in the case of manure, digestive tract content, milk, milk products and colostrum, this can be done without processing
- using them in composting or anaerobic digestion, if they are materials coming from aquatic animals ensiled
- using them as fuel for combustion
- using them for manufacture of certain cosmetic products, medical devices and safe industrial or technical uses

Category 3

You can only dispose of category 3 ABPs by:

- [incineration or co-incineration](#)
- sending them to landfill after they've been processed
- processing them, if they're not decomposed or spoiled, and using them to [make feed for farm animals](#) (where allowed by the TSE/ABP regulations)
- processing them and using them to [make petfood](#)
- processing them and using them to [make organic fertilisers and soil improvers](#)
- using them in [composting or anaerobic digestion](#)
- ensiling (turning them into silage) if they come from aquatic animals
- applying them to land as a fertiliser, in some cases
- using them as fuel for combustion
- using them to make cosmetic products or medical devices

Disposing of small quantities of ABPs

If you are a retail business producing a total weight of less than 20kg of raw or partially cooked meat, fish or shellfish waste per week, you can send this waste to landfill each week.

There is no need to register with APHA, however you do need to keep records of the type and approximate weight of ABP sent to landfill each week.

This is a weekly limit, not an average limit over a number of weeks.

[Corporate report: Durham's National Nature Reserves](#)

Updated: Updated the schools and education and volunteer section of the Castle Eden Dene reserve.

Details on the management, features, location, safety and contact information for Durham's NNRs:

- [Castle Eden Dene](#)
- [Derwent Gorge and Muggleswick Woods](#)
- [Durham Coast](#)
- [Moor House-Upper Teesdale](#)
- [Thrislington](#)

Research opportunities

Some NNRs host students who are working on dissertations or similar projects. This provides the opportunity to study on a high quality site and to contribute to the research and management of the reserve.

Read [more information](#) about how we arrange these projects, the list of reserves that currently offer this facility and some suggested topic titles.

[Detailed guide: Newcastle disease: how to spot and report it](#)

Updated: Contact details for reporting a notifiable disease updated.

Newcastle disease affects chickens and other captive and wild birds.

Humans aren't normally affected, but people in direct contact with infected birds may develop a very short-term eye infection, which passes without

treatment.

The disease was last confirmed in Great Britain in 2006.

Newcastle disease is a [notifiable animal disease](#). If you suspect it you must report it immediately by calling the Defra Rural Services Helpline on 03000 200 301. In Wales, contact 0300 303 8268. In Scotland, contact your local [Field Services Office](#). Failure to do so is an offence.

Latest situation

If you keep poultry or birds, you must keep a close watch for, and report, any signs of Newcastle disease.

There's an [increased risk of the disease in the UK](#), with cases reported in 2018 in Belgium, Netherlands and Luxembourg. You can read our [assessment of the risk](#).

How to spot Newcastle disease

As the disease develops affected birds may show some of the following signs:

- respiratory distress such as gaping beak, coughing, sneezing, gurgling, rattling
- nervous signs characterised by tremors and paralysis and twisting of the neck
- unusually watery faeces (diarrhoea) that are yellowish-green in colour
- depression
- lack of appetite

Affected hens may also suddenly produce fewer eggs. Eggs that are laid may be soft-shelled.

The disease may lead to intense clinical signs, with a sudden onset leading to likely death. Or it may have a lesser affect, with breathing problems and lower egg production the only detectable clinical signs.

How Newcastle disease is spread

The disease is spread by direct contact with bodily fluids of infected birds, especially their faeces.

It can also be spread indirectly through people and objects that have been in contact with infected birds, or their excretions (such as faeces). Objects that can carry the disease include:

- vehicles
- equipment
- clothing
- water and feed

The disease can spread from wild to kept birds. Pigeons may carry [pigeon paramyxovirus](#), which can cause Newcastle disease in kept birds.

Preventing and controlling Newcastle disease

You can help prevent the disease by:

- vaccinating your animals against the disease – talk to your vet for advice
- [practising strict biosecurity](#) on your premises

If you report suspicion of Newcastle disease, APHA vets will investigate.

If the disease is confirmed, the outbreak will be controlled in line with the [contingency plan for exotic notifiable diseases](#) and the control strategy for notifiable avian diseases will be implemented.

Further information on prevention and control

[Controls to prevent disease](#)

[What happens when a notifiable disease is suspected or confirmed](#)

Legislation on Newcastle disease

Newcastle disease is covered by the [Diseases of Poultry \(England\) Order 2003](#).

[Detailed guide: Rabies in bats: how to spot it and report it](#)

Updated: Contact details for reporting a notifiable disease updated.

It is possible, although rare, for a bat infected with rabies to pass the disease on to other mammals, including humans.

The most recent case of rabies in a bat in Great Britain was in July 2018.

Rabies in bats is a [notifiable animal disease](#). If you suspect it you must report it immediately by calling the Defra Rural Services Helpline on 03000 200 301. In Wales, contact 0300 303 8268. In Scotland, contact your local [Field Services Office](#). Failure to do so is an offence.

Signs that a bat may have rabies

Infected bats may not show any signs of rabies. Infection can only be confirmed in a laboratory.

But clinical signs in bats may include:

- behaviour changes: infected animals are prone to more aggression
- disorientation and difficulty flying (infected bats may be injured as a result)
- eyes taking on a staring expression

How rabies is spread

Rabies is present in the saliva of infected bats and is usually spread by the bite of an infected bat.

The disease can also be spread if the saliva of an infected animal gets into open wounds or mucous membranes such as the nostrils, mouth and lips, eyelids and ears.

Risk to humans from infected bats

Humans can catch rabies from a bat, although this is very unusual as the disease is very rare among bats in Great Britain.

In humans symptoms of the disease include:

- anxiety, headaches and fever in early stages
- spasms of the swallowing muscles making it difficult or impossible to drink
- breathing difficulties

There are vaccinations against rabies, and the disease can normally be prevented if you are treated soon after exposure. But once signs of rabies appear, there is no treatment. Past human cases have been fatal.

Read the [NHS guide to rabies](#) for more information about the disease in humans.

How to avoid catching rabies from a bat

You should be vaccinated against rabies if you regularly handle bats.

If you have not been vaccinated against the disease:

- assume that all bats are possible carriers of rabies
- avoid touching bats, living or dead, whenever possible
- if you must touch a bat, [follow the Bat Conservation Trust guidance](#) and wear thick gloves to avoid being bitten or scratched

If you are bitten or scratched by a bat

If you have been bitten or scratched by a bat, or exposed to bat saliva or nervous tissue in any other way, you must:

- wash the wound or contact area with soap and water
- disinfect the wound
- contact a doctor immediately who will decide whether you need treatment

If you suspect rabies in a bat

If you suspect rabies in a bat or you see abnormal behavior in a bat [contact APHA](#) for help.

APHA vets will investigate and may submit the bat for testing to see whether the signs were caused by rabies.

If you find a dead bat

If you find a dead bat:

- do not directly handle the bat if possible
- if you have to touch the bat [follow the Bat Conservation Trust guidance](#) and use thick gloves
- follow the Bat Conservation Trust guidance on [what to do with the dead bat](#)

If your pet finds a bat

It is possible, although very rare, for infected bats to pass rabies to other animals including pets.

If your pet catches a bat, keep your pet under observation.

If your pet falls sick or starts behaving unusually, you must contact your vet immediately. Your vet will tell APHA if he or she suspects your pet has rabies.

Monitoring rabies in bats in Great Britain

APHA [tests dead bats submitted by the public](#) to monitor how widespread the disease is in Great Britain.

Only 21 infected bats have been found in more than 15,000 tests since 1986, so the risk of catching rabies from a bat is very low.

| Site | Location | Dates |
|------|-----------------------|-------|
| 1 | Newhaven, Sussex | 1996 |
| 2 | Carnforth, Lancashire | 2002 |

| Site | Location | Dates |
|------|--------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 3 | Blackburn, Lancashire | 2003 |
| 4 | Staines, Surrey | 2004 |
| 5 | Abingdon, Oxford | 2006 |
| 6 | Craven Arms, Shropshire (3 cases) | 2007, 2008 and 2014 |
| 7 | Teddington, Surrey | 2008 |
| 8 | Linlithgow, West Lothian, SCOTLAND | 2009 |
| 9 | Newtown, Powys, WALES | 2015 |
| 10 | Skipton, Yorkshire | 2016 |
| 11 | Haydon Bridge, Northumberland | 2016 |
| 12 | Chesterfield, Derbyshire | 2017 |
| 13 | Peterborough, Cambridgeshire | 2018 |
| 14** | Robertsbridge, East Sussex (5 cases) | 2018 |
| 15 | Rothbury, Northumberland | 2018 |

** Once a positive case is confirmed at a site, we will not publicise further incidents there during the given year's 'bat season' – May to September.

Collection: Notifiable diseases in animals

Updated: Contact details for reporting a notifiable disease updated.

'Notifiable' diseases are animal diseases that you're legally obliged to report to the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA), even if you only suspect that an animal may be affected.

Notifiable diseases can be:

- endemic – already present in the UK, such as bovine TB
- exotic – not normally present in the UK, such as foot and mouth disease

Some endemic and exotic diseases are zoonotic which means they can pass between animals and humans, such as rabies.

If you suspect a notifiable animal disease you must report it immediately by calling the Defra Rural Services Helpline on 03000 200 301. In Wales, contact 0300 303 8268. In Scotland, contact your local [Field Services Office](#). Failure to do so is an offence.

What happens if you suspect a notifiable disease

If you suspect an exotic notifiable disease:

1. Report it by calling the Defra Rural Services Helpline on 03000 200 301.
2. APHA vets will investigate – they usually visit your premises and carry out an enquiry. The APHA duty vet will tell you what restrictions should be applied to your premises before the APHA veterinary inspector arrives.
3. If the APHA veterinary inspector suspects a notifiable disease, they will take samples for testing (this may involve killing the suspected animal before taking samples).
4. They put restrictions on your premises. This means you must at least stop moving animals susceptible to the disease on or off the premises. It can also include stopping the movement of anything that can transmit disease, like meat products, equipment or vehicles.
5. If certain diseases are suspected (particularly foot and mouth disease or African horse sickness) a temporary control zone will be introduced around your premises. This restricts the movements of animals susceptible to the disease.
6. Restrictions remain in place until the investigation is complete and an exotic notifiable disease is ruled out.

What happens if a notifiable disease is confirmed

If a notifiable disease is confirmed:

1. Action will be taken on the infected premises to reduce the risk of the disease spreading, including movement restrictions. For some diseases, like foot and mouth disease and African swine fever, this will include culling all susceptible animals. Premises are then cleaned and disinfected with strict rules on restocking.
2. The government investigates where the disease came from and whether it has spread.
3. The government puts restrictions on all premises where the disease is likely to have spread from or to (for example when animals have been moved).
4. Further restrictions in a wider area may be introduced, depending on the risk of the disease spreading. In the case of foot and mouth disease in particular, animal movements would be restricted throughout the country. For some diseases control zones are automatically applied. APHA will tell you what action to take – this depends on the nature of the disease and EU requirements.
5. The following activities that could spread disease may be banned:
 - hunting or shooting
 - animal gatherings (like shows)
 - exports

Controlling exotic notifiable diseases

Contingency plans outline how the government will manage an exotic notifiable disease outbreak:

- [Contingency plan for exotic notifiable diseases for England](#)
- [United Kingdom contingency plan for exotic notifiable diseases of animals](#)

How to prevent notifiable diseases

You can help prevent notifiable diseases by following:

- [strict biosecurity practices](#)
- [rules on imports and exports](#)
- [rules on feeding to farmed livestock](#)

Animals or birds spared from culling

For most notifiable diseases, there are legal powers to cull animals to prevent the spread of disease during an outbreak.

Certain animals and birds, including breeds at risk, may be spared from culling if this doesn't compromise controlling the disease (this isn't guaranteed).

Find out more about [animals and birds that may be spared from culling](#).

Compensation when animals are slaughtered compulsorily

For some notifiable diseases, you may get [compensation if your animals or birds are compulsorily culled](#).

Get notified about exotic disease outbreaks

You can get the latest news about exotic notifiable disease outbreaks from the [APHA subscription service](#).