

Restrict contact between badgers and cattle

- Introduce barriers to prevent badgers accessing cattle

Manage cattle feed and water

- Restrict badger access to feed stores, troughs and mineral licks

For more information see Five Actions on the TB Hub website: <http://www.tbhub.co.uk/biosecurity/protect-your-herd-from-tb/>

Electric fencing (Badgers)

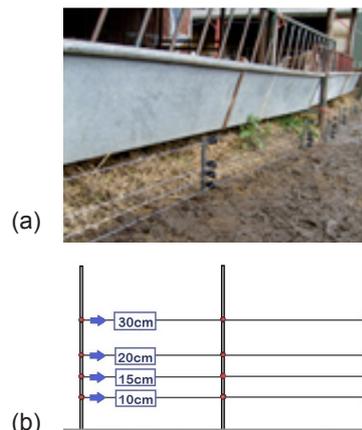


Fig.1 (a) Electric fencing along feed trough, and (b) recommended wire spacing (cm from the ground)

How does this measure work?

Preventing badgers from gaining access into yards, clamps, clusters of buildings and other areas on the farm will reduce opportunities for contact with cattle or cattle feed/water. Low, 4-strand electric fencing can be erected to specifically prevent badgers from entering certain areas. These low electric fences can also be constructed with handles and connections to accommodate gates and create access points for cattle and farm machinery. Sections of electric fencing can be used to secure areas of farm buildings that would otherwise be practically difficult or prohibitively expensive to secure with permanent barriers.

How has this measure been tested?

During a 2-year Defra funded project (SE3119) APHA tested various configurations of electric fencing around cattle yards, silage clamps and feed troughs. These measures were effective in protecting relatively large areas on farms but do require proper maintenance.

Hartpury College tested four strands of high tensile electric fencing deployed at low levels around a paddock containing calf sheds, preventing badger access to the area. See case study (p.2) and details on the TB Hub website.

Product examples	Approximate Guide Price (£*)
Example 1: Square wooden stakes (2"x2" (50 mm) x 450-500 mm Long), insulators, galvanised wire, earth spike, signage, gate handles and anchors (excl. fencer unit and 12v battery)	From £2.50 - £3.50 per metre
Example 2: Plastic electric fence posts (Multi-wire, 1050 mm tall), Polywire, earth spike, signage, clamps, insulators & gate handles and anchors (excl. fencer unit and 12v battery)	From £2.80 - 3.30 per metre

* Prices listed exclude VAT and cost of fitting (as of January 2017)

Examples of biosecurity measures: Electric fencing (Badgers)

Case study A:

This farm had a silage clamp area dug out from land adjacent to the yard (Fig.2). The clamp did not have solid walls and the shallow banks provided easy access for wildlife. This area was protected from badger visits by erecting an electric fence line around the back edge of the clamp. The low level fence provided a barrier to the maize clamp at the exposed edge. Closely spaced stakes ensured adequate tension of the wires. The maintenance required for the electric fence to remain an effective barrier involved periodic weed killer application along its length to prevent vegetation overgrowth. This measure reduced the risk of badgers coming into contact with cattle feed.



Fig. 2: Maize clamp electric fence (inset, wooden stakes)

Case study B:

Hartpury Agricultural College farm is in a TB High Risk Area and educates students on how to protect cattle herds from TB. Following a TB breakdown the farm deployed biosecurity measures including electric fencing. Four strands of high tensile electric fencing were placed at the recommended level and spacing on a perimeter fence (Fig. 3). This prevents badgers from entering the paddock and accessing cattle sheds housing young livestock and their feed buckets and water troughs.



Fig. 3: Hartpury Farm, paddock electric fence

Measure recommendations

Low level, 4 strand electric fencing to secure areas such as perimeters of silage clamps, the outer side of fence lines, open sided buildings and under feed troughs:

- Wire at heights of 10 cm, 15 cm, 20 cm and 30 cm from the ground, see Fig.1 (Optional visible wire/tape at waist height to allow farm workers and livestock to see the fence line).
- Posts (wooden, plastic or bespoke with insulators) closely spaced to prevent all wires from sagging or leaving gaps greater than 10 cm from the lowest wire to the ground.
- Fencer unit and battery with sufficient power to electrify the entire fence line.
- Where vegetation is present it is essential that adequate maintenance (e.g. weed killer/strimming) is carried out to prevent vegetation growth causing earth contact shortages and reduced voltage.