

Projects

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The healthy badger project.

Finance was obtained from private sources to produce a film on a way forward to control TB in cattle and badgers using field assessments of badger activity. The film Bovine TB - A Way Forward has been shown to veterinary surgeons and farmers. The aim is healthy badgers and healthy cows. A web version is available:

http://www.clearstats.co.uk/videos/bovine_tb_a_way_forward/index.php

Copies of the film are available from www.chrischapmanphotography.co.uk.

Following two trial sites involving veterinary practices and their clients with neighbouring cattle farms, a strategy to control TB has been developed. Five additional assessors are to be trained to be available in Devon, Cornwall and Somerset.



Unhealthy badgers are evicted from setts by healthy badgers. It is the unhealthy badgers that are associated with TB in cattle. By identifying and conserving the healthy badgers both cattle and badgers benefit. It is important to assess farmland during the winter when the nettles, bracken and other vegetation do not obscure tracks and latrines. Currently the project has to function without outside financial support, working with veterinary surgeons and their clients who wish to reduce the TB situation in cattle and wildlife. Financial support for assessor training and area meetings is being sought. Initially discussions take place between veterinary surgeons, farmers and other land owners within a ten square mile area with adjacent land. An initial meeting with the Healthy Badgers - Healthy Cattle project team is arranged and local practicalities discussed. Maps showing field boundaries to be made available and the wildlife survey booked at @£300 per farm. A second meeting between all the farmers, the veterinary surgeons and the project team will identify the local TB situation and the actions indicated to improve bio-security. Funding for the training of additional assessors will be required if the project is to be expanded. Currently there are over 2000 cattle farms in Cornwall, Devon & Somerset under TB restrictions.

A series of articles have been written by Richard Gard about TB and published mainly in the veterinary press.

April 2008 'Listening to the badger men' Veterinary Practice.

June 2008 'A healthy way to contain TB' Western Daily Press.

August 2008 'Listening to the badger men and others' Veterinary Practice

October 2008 'Mastering disease in cattle practice' Veterinary Practice.

April 2009 'Bovine TB a Way forward' Veterinary Practice.

June 2009 'Skanky badgers and Mycobacterium bovis' Society of Practising Veterinary Surgeons Annual Review 2009.

September 2009 'TB Myth Busting' Veterinary Practice

December 2009 'Bovine TB and some myth busting ' Veterinary Practice

April 2010 'A farmer's frustration with TB' Veterinary Practice.

June 2010 'The hunt for the skanky badger' SPVS Annual Review 2010

March 2010 'A field based approach to Bovine TB in England' One Health Newsletter USA

July 2010 'PCR, Mycobacterium bovis & badgers' Veterinary Practice

February 2011 'TB and the countryside' Goat Veterinary Society Journal

To see the full text of any of the above articles, click [HERE](#)

A book highlighting many of the field based experiences and observations about the country badger in sickness, health and politics has been written and a publisher is being sought (Feb 2011)