

December 2011

BOVINE TB ERADICATION PROGRAMME SCIENCE REVIEW Q & A

1) What was the purpose of the science review?

The Government is committed to ensuring that the existing measures to tackle bovine TB continue to be fit for purpose. The eradication of bovine TB in Wales is a long term programme that requires the application of new technologies and scientific developments as they become available.

2) What happens next?

The Minister will now consider the findings of the review and will report further in early 2012.

3) When will the findings of the review panel be published?

The report will be made public in early 2012 when the Minister reports next.

4) How long did the review take?

The report was commissioned in June and was delivered in the autumn term as expected. The review was carried out as quickly as possible, allowing for proper and thorough consideration of the science involved.

5) Will there be a badger cull now?

Not at this time. The Minister will now consider the findings of the review.

6) Who led the review?

Professor John Harries, the Chief Scientific Adviser to the Welsh Government was asked to arrange the review and oversaw the review panel. Professor Harries appointed Professor Chris Gaskell, the Principal of the Royal Agricultural College, to chair the independent panel of experts that reviewed the scientific evidence base underpinning the eradication of bovine TB in Wales.

7) How was the review undertaken?

The review looked at the scientific evidence base underpinning the eradication of bovine TB in Wales. It was a thorough assessment of the evidence base so far.

The Chief Scientific Adviser for Wales appointed an independent chair for the group and they convened a small independent group drawn from a range of scientific disciplines. The group examined the evidence and contributed to a report on their conclusions. The report was delivered to the Minister jointly by the Chair of the Group and the Chief Scientific Adviser for Wales.

8) How were the members of the group selected?

Professor Gaskell and Professor Harries approached recognised experts in the scientific disciplines and areas requisite to the review. The Group was made up of:

- Professor Sir Mansel Aylward CB, the Chair of Public Health Wales and Director of the Centre for Psychosocial and Disability Research at Cardiff University
- Professor Malcolm Bennett FRCPATH FHEA, Co-Director of the UK National Centre for Zoonosis Research and Professor of Veterinary Pathology at the University of Liverpool
- Professor Bridget Emmett, Deputy Director of the Biogeochemistry Programme, Section Head and Head of Site at the Centre for Ecology & Hydrology (CEH) in Bangor
- Professor Charles Godfray CBE FRS, a Fellow of Jesus College, Oxford and Hope Professor at the Department of Zoology of the University of Oxford
- Professor Dirk Pfeiffer is a Professor of Veterinary Epidemiology, and Head of the Veterinary Epidemiology and Public Health Group in the Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences at the Royal Veterinary College (University of London).

10) Does the review mean that this Government is not committed to the eradication of bovine TB and dealing with all sources of infection?

This Government continues to be fully committed to the eradication of bovine TB and has an eradication plan in place that is formally recognised by the European Commission.

12) What is the impact of the review on cattle surveillance and control in Wales?

All existing testing, movement control and compensation measures remain in place and are enforced. These include requirements laid down by the Tuberculosis (Wales) Order 2010.

13) Will you continue the additional cattle controls from the IAA until the Minister reports further?

Yes, existing cattle controls will continue.

The cattle controls within the IAA are part of a comprehensive package of measures to help eradicate bovine TB, most of which are in place across Wales. The controls that are specific to the IAA have been introduced to reflect the fact that this is one area of Wales with a serious incidence of bovine TB. Any abandonment of additional cattle controls at this stage would place cattle keepers within the IAA at increased risk.

14) What if farmers do not comply with the current cattle controls within the IAA while the Minister is considering the findings of the review?

Failure to comply with current requirements will lead to enforcement action where appropriate.

15) Will the Biosecurity visits continue in the IAA?

Yes. Developing, promoting and improving husbandry and biosecurity practices are a key component of the programme, both in the IAA and nationally. Within the IAA specifically, biosecurity action plans will remain in place and be reviewed annually.

16) Will goats and/or camelids be tested in the IAA?

Yes.

17) Does a decision on culling badgers in England have any bearing on the Ministers decision?

No. It is for the UK Government to decide on the approach to bovine TB in England.

18) What will happen if badger setts are illegally interfered with?

The Protection of Badgers Act 1992 sets out offences with respect to the interference of badger setts. This remains in place and will be enforced.