

[Home](#) | [Parliamentary business](#) | [MPs, Lords & offices](#) | [About Parliament](#) | [Get involved](#) | [Visiting](#) | [Education](#)
[House of Commons](#) | [House of Lords](#) | [What's on](#) | [Bills & legislation](#) | [Committees](#) | [Publications & records](#) | [Parliament TV](#) | [News](#) | [Topics](#)

 You are here: [Parliament home page](#) > [Parliamentary business](#) > [Publications & records](#) > [Written Questions and Answers and Written Statements](#) > [Bovine TB:Written statement - HCWS135](#)
[Publications & records](#)
[Written Questions and Answers and Written Statements](#)
[Written questions and answers](#)
[Written statements](#)
[Daily Reports](#)

Bovine TB:Written statement - HCWS135

WS

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Made on: 18 December 2014

 Made by: [Elizabeth Truss](#) (The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs)

 [HCWS135](#)


Bovine TB

Today I am updating the House on the measures we have taken to tackle TB in cattle since we published our Strategy in April 2014.

Between 1997 and 2010, TB in cattle increased nine-fold, threatening the future of our beef and dairy industries and our food security. England has the highest incidence of TB in Europe, and that is why we are taking strong action to beat the disease.

This Government is pursuing a comprehensive Strategy, based on best international practice, supported by leading vets and endorsed by the Government's Chief Scientific Adviser, Defra's Chief Scientist and the Chief Veterinary Officer. This approach includes cattle movement restrictions, badger vaccination in the edge area (bordering the high risk area) and culling where the disease is rife.

Cattle measures remain at the heart of the Strategy and that is why we have steadily reinforced them over this Parliament. In the coming months we plan to launch a consultation on further cattle measures including statutory post-movement testing for cattle entering the low risk area. This measure will help us remain on course to achieve TB free status for the low risk area of England by 2019.

On 2 September 2014, I announced our Badger Edge Vaccination Scheme which will create a buffer zone to help prevent the spread of TB to new parts of the country. We are working closely with wildlife organisations, vets and farmers to establish large areas within which a high proportion of the badger population will be vaccinated for a minimum of four years.

Badger culls were carried out in the Autumn. Culling ended on 20 October 2014 and I am today publishing the report and supporting data of the independently audited results. I have placed the summary report and the Chief Veterinary Officer's advice in the Library of the House.

In West Somerset, 341 badgers were safely and humanely removed, against a minimum of 316, while in West Gloucestershire, 274 badgers were safely and humanely removed, against a minimum of 615. The results in Somerset show that this approach works. The results in Gloucestershire reflect the challenges of extensive unlawful protest and intimidation.

The Chief Veterinary Officer reviewed the effectiveness and humaneness data and supports the continuation of culling by a combination of cage trapping and controlled shooting as part of our comprehensive strategy. In his view the outcome of this year's cull in Somerset indicates that industry-led culling can, in the right circumstances, deliver the level of effectiveness required to be confident of achieving disease control benefits.

As part of our focus on practical measures to reduce the risk of disease spread, I am today publishing a Biosecurity Action Plan developed by industry and government. We have recently awarded £50,000 in small grants to livestock markets to support voluntary risk-based trading of cattle and we have been working with the private sector to develop a TB-risk accreditation system for cattle herds. To help all farmers manage the risk of TB we plan in early 2015 to launch a web-based map showing locations of TB breakdowns and to publish TB reports for the edge and low risk areas. We will also be starting a trial of a new service to provide farmers within the two badger cull areas with bespoke advice on how better to protect their farms from TB.

TB can also affect other animals and humans. We have introduced additional TB measures for South American camelids including statutory compensation and consolidated existing legislation concerning TB in deer. We are planning a further review of TB controls in non-bovine animals.

We have continued to invest in TB research and I am today publishing a summary of the research that we are funding this year. Over this Parliament, we have invested over £24 million into TB vaccine research. An independent report on the design of field trials of cattle vaccine and a test to detect infected cattle among vaccinated cattle (DIVA) shows that before cattle vaccination field trials can be contemplated, we need to develop a better DIVA test. This research is likely to take a further two years. We are also investing in research on badger diagnostics and improving epidemiological analysis of the disease, while the dairy industry is progressing Defra-funded research potentially to enable farmers to breed cattle with greater genetic resistance to TB.

Finally, I am pleased to confirm that the European Commission has informed us that our comprehensive TB eradication programme is approved, securing further financial support from the European Union in 2015.

The Government is determined to continue implementing all elements of our comprehensive Strategy until this terrible disease is eradicated.

[Summary of badger control monitoring during 2014](#) (PDF Document, 56.72 KB)

[CVO's advice on outcome of year 2 of badger culls](#) (PDF Document, 14.84 KB)

This statement has also been made in the House of Lords: [HLWS139](#)

Share this page

 Tweet 

[A-Z index](#) | [Glossary](#) | [Contact us](#) | [Freedom of Information](#) | [Data Protection](#) | [Jobs](#) | [Using this website](#) | [Copyright](#)