

8th February 2013

Dear Sir/Madam,

Reference 1 looks at herd incidence due to bovine TB from 1966 to 1992 in Thornbury where badgers were killed between 1975 and 1981.

The following is an extract from that report. (In this extract, the intervention area refers to the Thornbury area where badgers were killed)

"All cattle herds within the intervention area, tested under the national cattle tuberculosis eradication programme during the period 1966-92, were identified from Animal Health Office records and tuberculin skin test records entered on the national badger control and cattle tuberculosis databases. Herds were monitored for evidence of *M. bovis* infection by annual or biennial skin testing during this period; the results of these tests are available, but up to 1985 not the precise date of each test."

Also in that report, the following 2 tables are presented.

Table 2. Cattle herds with evidence of *M. bovis* infection in South-West England, 1966-92

Period	Herd years at risk	VL* or <i>M. bovis</i> +ve† or NVL‡	% VL or <i>M. bovis</i> +ve or NVL
1966-70	181596	2904	1.60
1971-75	155621	2399	1.54
1976-80	141651	1295	0.91
1981-85	130739	1127	0.86
1986-90	119218	1148	0.96
1991-92	44486	755	1.70

* VL, herds with reactors to the tuberculin skin test with lesions typical of tuberculosis at post mortem examination.

† *M. bovis*+ve, herds with *M. bovis* isolated from VL or NVL reactors or from animals found at slaughter with lesions typical of tuberculosis.

‡ NVL, herds with reactors to the tuberculin skin test with no lesions typical of tuberculosis at post mortem examination and no isolation of *M. bovis*.

Period	Herd years at risk	Intervention area			
		*VL or <i>M. bovis</i> +ve	% VL or <i>M. bovis</i> +ve	VL or <i>M. bovis</i> +ve or NVL‡	% VL or <i>M. bovis</i> +ve or NVL
1966-70	615	28	4.53	50	8.09
1971-5	696	45	6.61	63	9.05
1976-80	786	18	2.01	21	3.89
1981-5	765	0	0	6	0.78
1986-90	754	0	0	11	1.46
1991-2	256	1	0.39	4	1.55

* VL, herds with reactors to the tuberculin skin test with lesions typical of tuberculosis at post mortem examination.

† *M. bovis*+ve, herds with *M. bovis* isolated from VL or NVL reactors or from animals found at slaughter with lesions typical of tuberculosis.

‡ NVL, herds with reactors to the tuberculin skin test with no lesions typical of tuberculosis at post mortem examination and no isolation of *M. bovis*.

ND, no data available.

The following extract makes reference to confirmed incidences in particular years.

"Secondly, in the same year, the protocol for the routine tuberculin test was changed under a European Commission Directive (EC 64/432). Bovine PPD was substituted for mammalian PPD partly because of the improved specificity for

discriminating against skin tuberculosis (STB), even though similar improvements were not found against other causes of cross reactivity, such as vaccination against Johne's disease [23-25]. It was argued that using this PPD would reduce the number of false positive reactors detected, and hence the number of herds with reactors reported. The prevalence of STB in cattle in Great Britain is unknown and the effect of the increased specificity has not been quantified. However, it cannot account for the decline in new, confirmed incidents in South-West England from 129 in 1975, to 108 in 1976, 73 in 1977 and 62 in 1978. "

The above tables refers to data summed over 5-year periods and the last extract refers to incidences in particular years.

If you can, please email to me for each year from 1966 to 1992 the number of herds with unconfirmed incidences and secondly the number with confirmed incidences in each of the 2 areas given by the South West (Avon, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Somerset and Wiltshire) and the intervention area (Thornbury). If you can also extend on this to include such numbers for years subsequent to 1992 this would be very helpful.

If possible, please treat this as a Freedom of Information request.

Responses by email will be preferred.

Yours faithfully,

XXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXX
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Reference

1. The occurrence of Mycobacterium bovis infection in cattle in and around an area subject to extensive badger control. R S CLIFTON-HADLEY et al. Epidemiology Department, Central Veterinary Laboratory, Surrey. Accepted 3 October 1994.



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk
www.defra.gov.uk

Our ref: RFI 5287
Date: 5th April 2013

Dear ..xxxxxxx,

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: NUMBER OF HERDS WITH CONFIRMED AND UNCONFIRMED INCIDENCES OF TB IN THE SOUTH WEST AND THORNBURY

Thank you for your request for information about the number of herds with confirmed and unconfirmed incidences of TB in the South West and intervention area of Thornbury between 1966 and the present day, which we received on 8th February 2013. Please accept our apologies for the long delay it has taken to send the information to you. As you know, we have handled your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

Following careful consideration, we have decided not to disclose some of this information.

I enclose a copy of the information which can be disclosed:

Two tables detailing confirmed and unconfirmed instances of TB in the South West (Avon, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Somerset and Wiltshire) and the intervention area (Thornbury) between 1985 and 2012.

There are two tables that present the data. One table shows the confirmed and unconfirmed instances between 1995 and 2012. The second table shows the confirmed and unconfirmed instances between 1985 and 2012, and includes breakdowns with an unknown or blank status, that were not confirmed or unconfirmed.

For clarity, the Thornbury area is defined as the land contained by a roughly rectangular shape comprised of the M48 motorway, the M5 motorway, Little Avon River, Berkeley Pill and the River Severn. Breakdowns for this area are not reflected in the data at county level.

The remainder of the information requested is being withheld as it falls under the exemption in section 12 of the FOIA, which relate(s) to situations where the cost of compliance exceeds an appropriate limit. The data for confirmed and unconfirmed instances of TB in the South West and Thornbury between 1966 and 1984 is held in paper records stored in individual Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratory Agency offices.

In applying this exemption we have had to balance the public interest in withholding the information against the public interest in disclosure.



We recognise that there is a public interest in disclosure of information concerning the data for confirmed and unconfirmed instances of TB in the South West and Thornbury between 1966 and 1984, especially considering the historical legacy and current impact of TB in this region.

On the other hand, there is a strong public interest in withholding the information because to compile the data from paper records from different offices will involve an excessive demand on resources, and would exceed the cost limit of £600. The costs of locating the requested materials and coordinating the disclosure of this historical data, which are currently filed as paper records in multiple AHVLA offices, would outweigh the public interest in disclosing this information into the public domain.

Therefore, we have concluded that, in all the circumstances of the case, the information should be withheld.

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the FOIA, all information is assumed to be releasable to the public unless exempt. The information released to you may now be published on our website together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context.

I attach Annex A, which explains the copyright that applies to the information being released to you.

I also attach Annex B giving contact details should you be unhappy with the service you have received.

Please accept our apologies for the delay in getting this data to you. If you have any queries about this letter, please get in touch.

Yours sincerely

Defra TB Programme

Email: ccu@correspondence@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Thornbury Area

Year	CONFIRMED	NOTKNOWN	UNCLASSIFIED	UNCONFIRMED	Grand Total
1986					
1989					
1990					
1992		2			2
1993		2			2
1994	3	2		1	6
1995				1	1
1996	5			2	7
1997	1			3	4
1998	1			2	3
1999	2			2	4
2000	1			1	2
2001	1				1
2002	3			5	8
2003	4			7	11
2004	2			7	9
2005	4			7	11
2006	6			6	12
2007	11			3	14
2008	8			4	12
2009	6			6	12
2010	10			4	14
2011	17		1	6	24
2012	8			6	14
Grand Total	93	6	1	73	173

Year	South West
1985	17
1986	156
1987	188
1988	191
1989	233
1990	234
1991	295
1992	305
1993	489
1994	555
1995	593
1996	590
1997	652
1998	831
1999	919
2000	1023
2001	377

2002	1787
2003	1669
2004	1735
2005	1913
2006	1659
2007	2037
2008	2372
2009	2085
2010	2143
2011	2364
2012	2516
Grand Total	29928