

Animal Health and Welfare Board for England

Bovine TB:

**Call for views on future bovine TB
strategy and how to meet the challenges
ahead**

**Telford
Workshop outputs**
Date: 2 October 2012

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About the workshop and this report

▪ Purpose of the workshop

The TB Eradication Programme for England was published in 2011. Key principles include partnership working between Government, industry and the veterinary profession, giving farmers more control and choice, empowering industry to take greater responsibility for tackling TB, sharing and reducing the cost of TB, and ensuring that farmers have the right incentives.

The purpose the regional workshops was to widen the opportunities for stakeholders to provide feedback on and actively contribute innovative solutions on

- The strategic direction of TB policy, including future measures to strengthen disease control
- achieving a fair and effective balance of roles and responsibilities between livestock keepers, the veterinary profession and Government

The workshops form part of the AHWBE engagement which begins an open and informal dialogue with a wide audience about the challenges faced by Government and industry, and looking at options for the future.

We are still in the early stages of developing policy on new ways of working. To address these challenging circumstances, we need new ways of working with more partnership and sharing of responsibilities.

The engagement and particularly these workshops will provide those affected by and who have experience of dealing with bovine TB the opportunity to share suggestions and innovative ideas to help us address these challenges together.

Participants' contributions will form part of a Final Engagement Report to the AHWBE later this year, along with the written responses. The AHWBE will consider and make recommendations to Ministers in early 2013.

▪ About this report.

During workshops the essence of everything that is said is noted in writing on flip-charts, 'post-it' notes or forms. Following the workshop these are typed up, 'word for word' and then sorted to put similar ideas together. This report follows the same order as the event.

▪ Why sort the outputs?

Conversations do not progress in a linear fashion but go off at tangents, circle back and change direction suddenly. As a result, it can be difficult to make sense of a discussion when it is reported in the order in which it happens, and important themes and ideas can be obscured.

For this reason the outputs of each session are sorted and clustered.

The sorting is done by 'emergent processing' ie seeing what themes emerge rather than organising the text to a predetermined set of titles. The ideas could have been grouped differently or different titles chosen, so no weight should be attached to them.

Whilst this report serves as a record of what was discussed, and an *aide memoire* for those who took part in the workshop, the contents are inevitably quite cryptic in places so it is strongly recommended that it is not used as a means of communicating with people who were not at the workshops without proper explanation.

Acronyms used in this report	Meaning
ABP	Animal By-Products
AFU	Approved Finishing Units
AH	Animal Health (now AHVLA)
AHVLA	Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency
AHWBE	Animal Health and Welfare Board England
AQU	Approved Quarantine Unit
BCVA	British Cattle Veterinary Association
BCVA	British Cattle Veterinary Association
BVA	British Veterinary Association
CHeCS	Cattle Health Certification Standards
CIR	Cattle Identification Regulations
CTS	Cattle tracing systems
DRF	Disease Report Form
EBLEX	English Beef and Lamb Executive Ltd
EFU	Exempt Finishing Unit
FCN	Farm Crisis Network
FSA	Food Standards Agency
IR	Inconclusive Reactor
NE	Natural England
NVL	Non-Visible Lesions (tubercule)
VL	Visible lesions (tubercule)
OTF	Officially TB Free
OTF-W	Officially TB Free - Withdrawn
OTF-S	Officially TB Free - Suspended
OV	Official Veterinarian (private vet)
PrMT	Pre-movement testing
PZ	Protection Zone
R&D	Research and Development
RDPE	Rural Development Programme for England
RoI	Republic of Ireland
SAM	AHVLA IT system
SLH	Slaughterhouse
SR	Spending Review
SZ	Surveillance Zone
TBEAG	TB Eradication Advisory Group
VO	Veterinary Officer (AHVLA vet)
WSA	Work Schedule Activity number (AHVLA TB test ID number)

1 Imagine it is 2025. You are at the market talking about how bovine TB is handled now compared to way back in 2012. For you the best two things are.....

TB problem? What problem?

- All farm animals free from the risk of TB wherever they are on farms and in the countryside!
- All clear now, but then great public concern that we're going to kill all badgers.
- TB is now not a problem!!
- The disease is rare
- Hopefully TB is not the subject of every meeting.
- At last something was started after a long wait.
- All clear now but back then great public concern that we were going to kill all badgers

Trust and Fairness

- Honesty
- Fair compensation

Working together

- All organisations working together
- A practical strategic national policy that everybody agrees on, is in place to control TB.

Public understanding

- Better public understanding of the impact of TB on our cattle / farmers

Effective cattle vaccine

- Vaccine for hot spot areas.
- At last a vaccine: no problem!
- Cattle vaccination
- They finally developed a vaccine for cattle that is compatible with the TB test.
- An effective vaccine available
- All cattle are vaccinated
- Cattle vaccine
- Use of marker / vaccine helped to clear disease – along with testing.
- Vaccinate cattle and a test which can distinguish vaccinated from infected.
- God, are we still waiting for a cattle vaccine! I remember when.....

Badger vaccine

- Oral badger vaccine
- Our understanding of the relationship between wildlife and bTB has meant we've been able to target badger vaccination at vulnerable geological areas. Nearly sorted!
- Test and vaccinate or cull badgers
- If only, if only the right effort had been made 10 years ago TB wouldn't now be a public problem. We should have halved the badger population, and spent much more sooner, with vaccination efforts.

Farmers supported

- Farmers have been fully supported in combating the disease
- Better case management with clear roles and responsibilities for dealing with a breakdown, looking at supporting business, not restricting business
- TB testing not a burden on farmers.

Holistic approach for livestock and wildlife

- The development of effective vaccines for cattle and badgers were a great relief. Good to see disease driven right back nearly eradicated
- Both farm livestock and wildlife are treated the same.
- At last a whole approach ie. dealing with livestock and wild animals
- TB eradicated from cattle and wildlife
- They dealt with the disease in all the affected species

Disease controlled in wildlife

- Wildlife control
- Wildlife control and culling programmes
- My future view is healthy wildlife roaming in the countryside in balanced numbers!

- Farmers allowed to control their own wildlife process
- Badgers are back to the levels they were before protection
- HMG taken full control unlike...; Glad that cull worked!
- Give badgers the same protection as foxes
- Cull badgers with TB.
- Infected wildlife is eliminated
- TB testing and identification in badgers ensuring badgers are clean and stay clean

Biosecurity

- Lessons learned and practices followed during 70's and '80's should have been adopted sooner
- Using ideas and technology to keep badgers out of water tanks and feed sources for cattle.
- Bio-security
- Double fencing cattle farms
- More use of badger-proof fencing on border and to keep badgers off farms.
- Stop new infections

Testing and movement

- Accurate low/ no cost testing
- The whole country back to 3 year testing
- Reactors are really reactors.
- No linked holdings and 100% pre-movement and 100% 12-month testing.
- Remove all infected animals
- Apply post-movement testing
- Quarantine after buying livestock
- Better identification control
- Zoning of risk areas for cattle movements
- Non AHVLA allocation and admin of testing

Livestock farmers responsible

- It is accepted that livestock farmers are responsible for the health status of their animals

2 Questions to clarify what you have just heard in the presentations

(What do you mean by...? Or Please explain...? Please write your question on one of the white cards. There will be plenty of opportunity to give your views during the workshop.)

Q - **What is the scientific evidence for controlling an epidemic of an endemic disease by eliminating the wildlife reservoir? An epidemic cannot be controlled without also addressing the wildlife reservoir e.g. rabies, brucellosis and blue tongue.**

A - No country has dealt with TB without dealing with the wildlife reservoir eg white-tailed deer in the US, New Zealand and Australia. With TB in the reservoir of badgers in UK, plus other species of wildlife from which it doesn't spread – is less of a problem.

Q **What does SR mean?**

A - 'Spending Review', the 2010 Government spend programme.
- Allocation by government department may be less money.

Q **What is the EU requirement for TB? How much leeway do we have with regard to vaccination / testing?**

A - Lots of requirements, not imposed but part of the ministerial process: - Prohibition of cattle vaccination in EU law; differentiation between vaccinated and diseased animals with a separate test. It is negotiable. It does take a long time because of field trials testing effectiveness.
- EU hasn't been a blocker but a help.
- We will not let it be a problem in conflict with our interests and we will not jump to EU instructions unless in our interest.

Q **What about vet advice and support, and support for enforcement?**

A - Farmer advice is often via vets especially re: bovine TB as both know the business and risks best. If advice to vets is to work closely with vet associations, so they are essential advising authorities too. Ideas are needed on how to improve.

Q **How many EU member states admit to having bTB?**

A – Some have TB: - Ireland, Spain and Italy. France is still officially TB free but complete eradication is almost impossible, so they are dealing with very low levels.

Q Are any countries vaccinated already against TB?

A – No, but there is a reference to some field data in Ethiopia.

Q If you cannot vaccinate cattle without knowing their TB status, how can you vaccinate badgers without knowing theirs?

A – A good point – it is an issue; and Ireland is developing a programme. But as of now it is still an ambition.

Q Have you any feel for when a cattle vaccine might be available, or are you effectively writing it off for now?

A – It is still ongoing but we have to satisfy the European Commission. We can't give a time yet but need to be able to show effectiveness – probably 5 years at best.
– Every effort is being made – it has not fallen off the list. Some EU states don't have the urgency we do.

Q Even if the UK produces a vaccine and Diva test how would these affect exports?

A – We don't want to end up with a 2-tier trade. Vaccines are a control measure; vaccines allow protection of animals.

Q Is eradication possible or impossible?

A – It is managed but it can't be truly eradicated; Official TB free status is the aim.
– And (it) possibly can be marked, but not for export.

Q If compensation and testing costs is £75 million, what is the rest spent on?

A – Research and Development; SAM (the IT system); Regional offices; and overheads.

Q If Government only get £10 million salvage back for carcasses, how do you expect an individual to get a better price?

A – The purpose of this afternoon is to get your ideas and suggestions for solving these issues.

Q How is the £100 million cut made up? What is the gap between compensation to farmers and retrieval value from slaughter houses? How much are Private vets paid in total? (Answers within the 'Call' document on chairs)

A This information is within the 'Call for Views' document on chairs

Q What is the split/breakdown of people/professions here today?

Confirmed post-meeting, and see Annex B for numbers

- Farmers or farming organisations: 57%
- Vet or veterinary organisations: 29%
- Other incl Local Authorities: 8%
- Wildlife groups/land trusts: 6%

Q Will we have access to reports from the other meetings?

– I believe all meetings across the country will be combined.

(Post-meeting note: the Word for Word reports won't be combined but each separate one will be sent to attendees at each workshop. They will all be available on request, and may be published on the AHWBE website – to be confirmed Nov 2012)

Questions on cards not answered in Q&A session due to time:

Q – Is there not a more significant role for Post-Movement Testing?

– Defra is currently doing work looking at if and how post-movement testing could be used to better control TB

Q – Is EU ban on vaccinated cattle applicable to meat and products as well as live exports?

A – Yes, it is applicable to cattle products

Q – Why control TB?

A – There are several reasons: the avoidance of human health impacts and associated costs; avoidance of agricultural production losses; reducing the impact on farm businesses and ensuring freedom to trade, and reducing costs to the taxpayer for TB surveillance and control

Q – Who is communicating to the general public? - targeted messages in newspapers paid for by EBLEX needed. Need to get messages to public. Crucial to get key messages to public - not happening now. Need adverts in press paid for by Defra/EBLEX

A – Defra are continuing to monitor and improve communications, both to direct stakeholders

and the general public, using new and cost effective methods to do so. A key method is through providing sufficient and timely information to the media through for example, press releases, interviews, press briefings and 'busting myths' wherever possible, as well as engaging with social media routes such as Twitter. This has resulted in more balanced reporting of the issues.

Q – Bio-security – what have farmers in the S.W. done to successfully avoid TB? ie. Best practice tips before TB arrives on farm?

- A – Good biosecurity practice focuses on separating badgers from cattle and keeping badgers out of feedstores. Fitting badger proof doors on cattle sheds and locking away feed in badger-proof bins are two such measures that can be used. The South West Tb Farm Advisory Service is trialling some badger proof feeding and water troughs, and can offer advice to farmers on measures that can be effective. Each farm's circumstances are different, there is no one solution to biosecurity but a good assessment of where the risks of badger contact occur and appropriate measures to reduce these can help to reduce the level of disease risk posed by wildlife.
- Adhering to cattle controls are very important too such as ensuring tests are done on time, being careful where bought-in stock comes from, maintaining a herd health plan

Q – What proportion of badgers examined post-mortem are TB positive?

- A – Various estimates have been made of average disease prevalence in badgers in areas where TB is endemic, ranging from 6.9 % to 34.5 % in previous badger removal operations up to 1982, with 33-80 % of social groups found to be infected. During the RBCT, an average of 16.6 % (within a range of 1.6 % to 37.2 %) of badgers in proactively culled areas were found to be infected. The estimates are affected by the population studied and the level of detail of the post-mortem examination: when a sample of badgers from the RBCT was subject to a more detailed post-mortem, prevalence was shown to double.

3 What's working and new ideas

3.1 What is working well now?

Nothing

- Nothing, totally dissatisfied.
- Looking at the level of TB: - nothing
- There isn't anything working.
- The question isn't quantifiable.
- Nothing
- Still nothing
- Nothing is working well.
- Worse off than 6 months ago
- Is anything working well?

Improved communications/collaboration

- Uniting livestock industry to sort TB out – all getting involved.
- Local Authority has improved communications with Defra. Could still be improved.
- Improved communications between AHVLA and private vets
- Good farmer/ Ministry vets/ OV relationships, in some cases

Vets

Value of relationship with local vets

- Allows vets to get on farms – a 2nd set of eyes
- Vet is used to the farm. Local knowledge

Vets benefit financially from relationship with farmers

- But the vet makes a lot of money out of the farmer. Conflict of interest is possible.
- Some disagree. No conflict -because the aim is to get clean.
- Vets get well paid

Testing

Extend testing/controls that work

- PrMT is working well – should be extended countrywide
- Some elements of cattle control are working – Extend them
- Few or no cattle condemned

Aspects of testing working well

- Delivery of TB testing working well: we can fit tests in when farmers want them.
- Pre-movement testing prevents spread in new areas, (but no evidence that PrMT is slowing the incidence down).
- Frequency of test is working well.
- Cattle testing in endemic areas working reasonably well (but not controlling disease).
- Testing regimes are up to date. Practices are getting on with testing.
- Testing is being done by people you know and trust
- Greater farmer acceptance of due diligence of doing test properly is improved.
- The test does work ok.
- Testing by local vet is good because not paying for it.
- Regular testing works well in most cases. Not so well in herds where buying in a lot of cattle.

Ineffective Testing

- Testing has shown up use is ineffective. (Some disagree)
- Testing doesn't work – of 64 taken, (only) 3 found under culture to be 'Possibles'.

Dealing with reactors/diseased animals

- Removal time of reactors.
- Reactors being moved on time.

Compensation

- Getting salvage is a good thing.
- Speed of payment for reactors.
- Compensation (paperwork sorted)
- Compensations
- Compensation is clearly understood.
- Valuation of pedigree stock – get a better price for pedigree stock versus general stock

Trading/moving

Tracking movements

- CTS (Cattle Tracing System) means movements can be traced, tracked, identified
- Movements more accurate.

Lancashire farmers careful buying stock

- Farmers in Lancashire have greater awareness of TB problem and more careful about buying cattle

Local (to Telford?) farmers avoiding moving cattle/disease

- We are miles in front of the disease (are not moving 20 miles stock-wise)

Cattle to cattle transmission

Quarantine units working well

- Quarantine units working well

Bio-security

Organising cattle ID on farms

- Getting tags sorted means farms have to be organised ie. ID

Bio-security measures are improving

- Lots of visits in pilot cull areas with NE showed lots are doing as much as possible with regard to bio-security

General comments- Farmers struggling against TB

- Farmers doing (their) best to shift disease but are losing (the) battle.
- Farmers want to be free from TB.
- Everyone makes a living out of TB but farmers ie. laboratories, vets.

Ministerial support

- Jim Paice MP worked hard for farmers on the issue of TB. As Shadow Minister he promoted killing badgers and followed that through as Minister of State.

3.2 How could this be strengthened, enhanced or improved further?

Improved communication/collaboration

Better information provision

- CTS movement and testing history should be available publicly so farmers can check.

Information/data availability at markets

- Farmer needs to know pre-movement test data – some markets do this
- Enhanced information in markets- TB history at market place- Gives buyer greater decision making process

Consistency

- Make it a level playing field ie. countrywide approach
- A more consistent approach to decision – can depend on who you ask. Consistency is crucial to get on top of disease

Improve advisory process for farmers

- Improve and expand the targeted advice to farmers
- Advice process should be more open and straightforward.
- Make sure issues such as language barriers don't add to problems
- Advice should be flexible (ie. from vets) not prescriptive

Farmer input/collaboration for policy

- Farmers must have a role in decision making process – policy development.

Information improvement for restriction/serving notices

- Serving notices could be improved.
- Ambiguous (re. if they) should be killed on the farm
- Linked farms (are?) not given restriction paperwork at the same time.

Improved information /co-ordination Defra/LA/Vet/Farmer

- All information needs to be fed through from Defra to vets; – not getting everything all the time.
- Defra needs to coordinate testing with farmers.
- Communication for holdings under ongoing TB restrictions to help them come clear – communication with vet, and Local Authority.
- Communications between Defra, farmers, and vets need to be improved

Relationship /co-ordination with the EU re TB control

- Ignore the EU
- Can't afford to come out of the EU

Improve public communication/PR/media

- Communication with public
- The situation on the ground isn't reflected
- Inform public about situation, get them on board, counter the opposite view
- Health and welfare of all animals should be discussed in the media, not just livestock: all animals are affected by disease.
- Educate/awareness about why policies (i.e. wildlife) are implemented.

Improved documentation systems for cattle health

- Stamp or sticker or some means for cattle (so)TB can be on passport – work up a system
- The market can't cope with TB test documents
- We have cattle that are farm assured – could have same.

Biosecurity and risk control

- Categorise farms according to risk
 - More information for purchase
 - Co-operative culture

- Provide more information to farmers to enable them to protect themselves
- Risk-based trading group is looking at improving co-operative culture
- Empower farmers to control their own risks
- Avoid apathy
- Disappointed to hear this, as implies that most farmers think it is someone else's problem
- Work to be done on education on badger bio-security. Wales further ahead on this.

Relationship with vets

Improvements to be made by AHVLA

- Administration and allocation could be put out to tender; taken from AHVLA.
- Testing organised by people with understanding

Improve collaboration between public/private vets

- Practice and AHVLA vets should deal with breakdowns in partnership.
- Farmers should not have to phone round different offices
- Defined structure for public/private vet team-working should happen in all cases.
- Strengthen farmer/ OV/ AHVLA relationship
 - Best placed to assess risk and advise on bio-security
- State responsibility to address risks too.
 - Movements from dirty to clean areas.

Farmers able to go direct to vets

- Enhance opportunity for OV to take more responsibility at local farm level e.g. bio-security/purchasing
- Instead of phoning Defra, contact vet Direct for testing, advice, decisions – within a framework.
- (For) Other diseases farmer goes to a private vet; should be the same for TB

Testing

Improve effectiveness/accuracy of tests

- Improve efficacy of TB test
- Improved, accurate test.
- Need more confidence in test – very important.
- Test needs to be more effective and accurate, including interpretation needs to be consistent.
- Testing – all it is, is that the cattle's system has been 'triggered'
- Priority is find a test that works
- It doesn't work it only picks up that the immune system has been triggered.
- No faith in quality of test, just going through the motions
- If cannot find lesions should culture them to give more faith in testing.
- Communications around VL/NVL (visible/non-visible lesions) need to be much better

Pre-movement testing

- PrMT and CTS work well: so link the systems.
- Enhance pre-movement testing – make more robust
- Pre-movement tested animals going down at abattoir – serious issue of test quality.
- No dispersal of animals without pre-movement testing on major movements.
- Even cattle from 4 year testing areas should be pre-movement tested

Types of test

- Skin test has poor sensitivity
- Better use of gamma-interferon test.
- Consider interferon for moves from dirty to clear area
- Best test should be used eg. a blood test, when needed, not rejected on cost grounds.

Tracing tests

- Tracing tests need to be looked at - not clear they contribute to controlling disease.
- WSA (Work Schedule Activity) numbers need to be grouped for trace testing.

Testing intervals

- Four year testing interval is too long.
- Split country to annual/biannual testing.

Scale of testing

- Test OK at herd level but not so good at individual level.
- Increased testing is a big cost on the industry but may reduce breakdowns further down the line.
- Post-movement testing
- Edge-testing
- (Be) Consistent across England and Wales
- Why do they need to test feeding farm?

Dealing with reactors/diseased animals

Standardised consistent protocol for breakdowns

- Need a structural protocol when there is a breakdown, standardised and consistent

Loss of stock quantity and quality

- Too many going to knackers yard
- Loss of gene(tic) stock
- Loss of production stock – leave cattle on farms to calve before removing cattle.
- We get nothing for the calf

Speed of removal of reactors

- Reactors should be removed within 24 hours
- Removal time could be improved in some cases.
- Improve reactor removal times – new procedures have caused delay – can now take up to 3 weeks to remove. (Achieving 10 days in Wales, but not England.) IR's are a particular problem.
- Removal times are causing inconvenience
- Reactors need to be removed more quickly – on the day or as close as possible. Will help business move forward and positive from disease control perspective.

Trading/Moving

No movement from infected area to non-infected

- No animal should be moved from an infected to a non-infected area.

Appropriate movement control

- Modify restrictions for moves from dirty to clean areas,
- Too many controls will tip industry over the edge.
- Farmers falling between the boxes – avoid one size fits all.
- Local discretion (needed)
- Enable industry to continue to function.
- Don't see need to TB test animals which are going to be slaughtered imminently.
 - More scope to apply discretion.
- Reintroduce quarantine units.
 - Managed route out to AFU's

Increased dairy cattle movements

- A lot of dairy cattle are moved: buying cattle to replace TB loss
- Look at herd dispersal sales.

Economic issue for beef cattle

- Issue that for beef cattle is more of an economic issue.

Vaccine

Effective disease prevention with cattle vaccine

- Test and vaccine that works.
- It should fundamentally be a cattle vaccine
- Need vaccine that works, and be able to sell (cattle) between vaccinated farms
- More work on vaccines needed; prevention rather than killing cattle would be better.

Disease in wildlife

Balanced wildlife management

- Wildlife management. (It is) not just about culling
- Needs to be a balance in wildlife management/policies so one species isn't protected -> (becomes) dominant

Badger vaccine availability, effectiveness and tracing

- Vaccines are ineffective – badger vaccine only 75% efficient
- Limited availability of vaccine
- No recording of which badgers vaccinated.
- Use state of the art equipment for vaccinated animals.
- Issue - no money to spend on infrastructure practicality of badger vaccine.

Testing wildlife

- Waste of time testing wildlife, they've got it!
- Testing wildlife - used to test road-kill and no longer do.

Deer as reservoir

- Muntjac deer
- Target endemic areas
- No, target non-endemic areas- to stop spread.
- Muntjac have wider ranging behaviour.

Control disease in wildlife

- Control disease in wildlife sector

Increase in badger numbers

- The issue of badgers given protected status, and (now) it's out of control. Need a natural predator. TB is now the only natural killer.
- Increase in maize – a sweet crop- has encourage growth of badgers

Increase badger/wildlife cull

- Decent wildlife cull – would get support and buy-in for other measures.
- Put a headage bounty on badgers and it will be controlled in 2 years.

Farmer empowerment to cull badgers

- Farmers need to be able to deal with wildlife

Openness about culling and legal implications

- Need honesty amnesty on disclosing if cull illegally. And any other wildlife.

Bio-security

Farmers take more responsibility for bio-security

- Farm assurance schemes could be promoted for more sign-up up as leads to bio-security standards increasing
- Improve isolation on farm.
- Need proper gates for bio-security
- Improve rules around Approved Finishing Units (AFU's) and Approved Quarantine Units (AQU's)
 - There are so many technical rules
 - Enforcement is with the farmer, not hauliers or markets. Farmers at fault if move a diseased animal off farm, not hauliers, so incentivise hauliers.
- Farmer should be responsible / do their best
- Can't make farmsteads bio-secure.
- Farmer doesn't stand behind health status of cattle.

Consistency across industry

- PrMT should be countrywide this would improve public perception
- Consistency across the whole industry not just the farmer

Tracing infected animals at market

- How does the haulier/ market know if infected animals go through?

Increased investment and support towards farm bio-security

- RDPE could give grant money to bio-security ie. double-fencing made mandatory for all

- cattle farms
- Not a lot of money (spent) on doing up farms to implement bio-security, would rather throw more money now on testing, (v.) bio-security to reduce incidence.
- Defra to come up with grant scheme to enable bio-security to be improved e.g. fencing.

Bio-security only part of problem

- But bio-security is messing around at the edges

Costs to industry/business

Business support for farmers

- More help for farmers to buy equipment to improve on-farm disease control and reduce badger to cattle interaction
- Business support to help farms come out of restriction.
- Dairy cattle value is in front of them

3.3 What else needs to happen?

Collaboration/Communication

Improving trust in Government

- Need to build trust with Government and farmers.
- Less talking more action needed from Government
- TB too much of a political focus – all needs to be de-politicised.

Collaboration/communication from Defra to LA's and vets and on to farmers

- Regular meeting of vets and Defra needs to include Local Authorities; have responsibility for enforcement, so need to know what's going on.
- Make Government more aware of the current science.
 - Link vets in practice, scientists, BVA/BCVA and farmers.
 - Open and transparent discussion.
- Do everything we can to get farmers back on-side
- Co-operative culture
- Strengthen OV/farmer/AHVLA link

Communication/negotiation with the EU

- Keep negotiating with EU: helpful when vaccine is available

Access to information for farmers

- Need to know if neighbours have TB to increase bio-security or not have cattle in specific fields
- Agree that need a register to know peoples' / farms' TB status
- We are looking for acceptable information.
- Get SAM working properly. It costs farmers.

Publicity about disease in wildlife

- Publicise the spread into other species
- Don't want roll-out of disease to other species; it is a bigger issue than cattle.
- Better education on wildlife issues

Increase PR about farmers situation for media and public

- Need to get PR together to put across farmers' story
- Foot and Mouth was more straightforward to communicate than TB
- Need to influence people in middle of polarised debate.
- Need public to support farmers
- Improve communication with public to explain reasons for badger controls.
- Livestock farmers are losing the PR battle so (public) need to see cattle going off to cull as well as badgers. The industry needs to fight back.
- Over-depiction of healthy badgers not diseased badgers.
- Educate media.

Financing publicity and PR

- Defra, EBLEX, could finance messages in national newspapers to get message across
 - Positive to sort farmer problems out
 - Positive to sort badgers' problems out
- Paid by EBLEX – public health issues so get message across, but is it too complicated for the public?

Vet role and communication enhanced

- Greater local veterinary knowledge and training
- Regular meeting with Defra TB vets and private vets.
- Local vet role enhanced- supported by AHVLA
- AHWBE a recent organisation do not want it to go way of other groups.

Testing

Test more and better

- Test more animals.
- Improve TB test: same as 50 years ago
- Test fallen stock

Trace and post-movement testing

- Compulsory trace testing back from reactors and test whole herd of origin/where came from.
- Everything should be post movement tested. If moving from high to low incidence (area) it should be mandatory.
- It would increase the value to the seller
- Issue that might not trust first test
- Everything should be post movement tested. If moving from high to low incidence (area) it should be mandatory.
- Identifying cattle that have passed a movement test
- Post-movement test everything moving from 1 yearly testing to 4 yearly testing.

Increase Gamma interferon test use

- Greater use of gamma interferon test as long as gamma test can be done at the same time.
- Increase use of gamma in breakdown, in all herds
- **Testing camelids**
- Testing regime required for alpacas (camelids)
- Need to reduce cost of testing - use more lay testing.
- (Farmers) shouldn't pay for TB testing if can't tackle problem.

Test copy for farmers

- Farmer has a copy of the TB test.

Compensation

- Old system of compensation was better to get more realistic value.
- No way that farmers can negotiate value for cattle: abattoirs would have power to decide.

Trading/moving

Mandatory movement testing including for camelids

- Mandatory PrMT across England
- Test camelids going to shows (a pre-movement test), and pre-movement test every movement.
- **Problems selling cattle on**
- There isn't the stigma of bad husbandry anymore, but there is a stigma in selling cattle especially with run of the mill animals.
- Issue of needing to sell quickly.

Deregulation of movements to slaughter

- Could increase deregulation for animals going to slaughter (especially slaughter)

Risks of buying infected stock

- Wouldn't buy cattle from the South and West.

- Let the farmer decide whether to buy cattle from vaccinated farms.
- Have control over bringing in infected stock but not wildlife.
- But zoning units would have to be wide enough.

Vaccines

Invest in good cattle vaccine

- Get good cattle vaccine and good oral badger vaccine.
- Need money to be put into the vaccine
- Vaccination needs to be equally promoted
 - Something farmers could do now
- Concentrate on cattle vaccine

Reactions to other vaccines

- Animals reacting to other vaccines, especially skin on Jersey (cattle).

Processing vaccinated cattle

- Need to get buy-in from processors and retailers of vaccinated cattle.
- Lots of other diseases are vaccinated against and they still go into food chain.

Disease in wildlife

Tackling wildlife reservoir for TB

- Dealing with wildlife reservoir.
- Tackle wildlife infection
- In Australia they gave oral contraceptive to wildlife to reduce problems.
- Need wildlife bodies to recognise that TB is rife within wildlife in hotspot areas- and that wildlife is suffering.
 - Investment of those bodies needs to be in helping those animals.
- TB is an animal health disease.
 - Need to involve wildlife groups and ecologists in discussions- they have resources.
- If we are licensing badger culls, Natural England (NE) should also be looking at enforcement. A badger cull alone might not remove TB.
 - Need better support and advice
- Wildlife issues not just related to badgers – deer, alpacas etc.

Potential prevention of TB in badgers

- Is there a way to make badgers more healthy and less susceptible to TB?

Badger populations

- Need to know what is an acceptable stocking density of badgers
- Take action to keep badgers away from maize.

Testing setts and live and dead badgers

- Tool to identify diseased badgers would be useful
- Identify infected setts – investigate ways to do this (dogs?)
- Re. Badgers work on DNA to test specific setts for TB
- Ensure 'shot' badgers are tested for TB
- Get dead badgers off roads – potential disease spread if not removed.

Need for vaccine for badgers

- Oral vaccine for badgers
- Wildlife PR – culling is not going to solve it, also need vaccination
- Integration of vaccination with culling policy.
- For effective control of wildlife reservoir cannot vaccinate alone- disease problem is too serious. Need to deal with diseased wildlife.
- Need to concentrate research on badger vaccine because then it wouldn't be an EU issue.
- Issue of practicality of badger vaccine.

Cull policy and programme needed by farmers

- Badgers need to be culled.
- Badger cull needs to happen before compensation is tackled.
- Government needs to be brave enough to take a decision ie culling is crucial
- Remove badgers from protection

- Current proposed cull is too restrictive

Farmers taking action to cull badgers

- Farmers need to be able to take responsibility for dealing with their own TB problem
- Need specific cull policy so that farmers don't solve the problems themselves
- Some farmers won't break the law
- It's a pity (they've) been forced into breaking the law (*some disagreement from members*)
- If reduce compensation it will increase illegal action on wildlife.

Safety risks of cull with protesters

- Badger cull won't happen because farmers will feel vulnerable with animal rights.

Implications of effective cull on cattle movements

- Tighter movement controls would be acceptable if effective badger cull in place.

Research and public education about badger risk

- Educate public on risks of badgers – but need evidence.

Historic policies

- Historically policies existed which politically can't happen now.
- Look at the past. Learn.

Research needed

Why areas remain clear of TB

- Need to ask the question of why the North doesn't have TB?
- Maize growing lower (further south)?
- Fewer badgers?
- Reducing 4 year testing down to fewer years.

Infection risks via silage/hay/straw

- Need more details of TB infection risks of silage /hay/straw, and to fill research/ knowledge gaps.

Funding

- Diverting funds for vaccination
- Could get an Animal Health Order to do vaccinating now with EBLEX funding
- Need to understand current budget.

Bio-security

Bio-security aims and methods

- Fundamental aim is to stop new infections of cattle/wildlife
- Vet/farmer to draw up bio-security plan.
- Implement a number of bio-security initiatives.
- All farms should have an isolation area fit for purpose for an isolation unit.
- Electric fences etc to keep cattle and badgers apart.
- Strategic grazing – but some fields are better suited to grazing.

Learn from practices in farms that get infected

- Would be interested to know farm practices of those who get it (TB)

Zoning of cattle areas

- Zoning of cattle areas – look at New Zealand model
- But zoning would restrict business

TB transmission to humans

- Needs science and facts supporting this i.e. how many people have contracted TB from cattle?
- Is TB in cattle an issue (for human health)? It has to be sound and scientific. Need clarity of the issue.

- What is the public health risk of TB? Don't want a public health scare.
- Issue is public think of TB as a human disease too.
- TB is a massive, worsening problem; needs to be given highest priority on human health grounds.
- Learn from 1920's approach when bTB was seen as a human health problem.

3.4 What new innovations or ideas can you suggest?

Communication

Raising public awareness of all the issues

- Improve public awareness of all the issues, the whole situation
- Change public perception
- Educate the general public about the difficulties badgers cause in the farming industry eg that badgers carry TB.
 - Problems as the issues only affect a small part of the population.

Effective collaboration between agencies

- State has a role where the industry cannot address the problem on its own. – need an overarching framework.
 - But scope for flexibility under this.
- Number of different agencies and databases involved is a hindrance to the industry – need a more consolidated approach.

Communication and ideas exchange

- More communication and exchange of ideas on the edge.

Risk management for TB in health plans (assurance)

- TB should be included in the health plans (farm assurance).

Work with own vet on strategy

- Work with own vet on strategy including use of isolation facilities.

Education for farmers about TB problems

- More education to farmers to try and reduce problems on farms.

Motivate and support farmers

- Address farmer inertia as they feel not enough being done to help

Testing

Testing protocols and science improvement

- Testing: protocols and science, all areas of testing need to be improved; consistency and clear regime.
- Stamps/sticker: some system for TB test

Types of test

- A new TB test? What is happening in ROI?
- Stop the skin test; use gamma for all TB tests.
- Skin test: how can this be improved? look at other factors affecting efficacy and sensitivity
- Need hair test instead of skin test
- Flexibility of testing methods eg gamma interferon and serological.
- Using a cocktail of tests to improve sensitivity

Test policies

- Post-movement testing high to low incidence
- Not testing young stock when in/ direct to slaughter
- Don't test cattle on feeder units which then go to slaughter (SLH surveillance is sufficient in these cases)

Frequency of testing

- Testing in finishing units should be by length of time animal has been on farm
- More annual testing, extended to 2-3 yearly areas
- Everyone on annual testing across the whole country.
- 'Shadow' area testing – make annual testing area(s).
- Put stop to contiguous tests, because you are made to test during summer etc.
- And tracers

- If a neighbour goes down in summer they need to test
- Look at different testing strategies on private basis.

Testing and economics

- Lay testing; save money?
- Testing history on cattle passports to be compulsory. (This could lead to a two-tier market, would need balance)

Emphasis of testing

- Disagree with emphasis put on testing

Trading/moving

Essential pre-movement testing

- Have got to get rid of disease – those in 4 year testing areas should not move without pre-movement testing.

Recording movements (including camelids) and vaccinations

- More accurate recording of animal movements (including camelids) is needed
- Dispute this point about farmers not recording movements

Trading vaccinated animals

- Able to trade between vaccinated herds. Have a register
- Would be in the minority if it affected people's ability to trade

Regionalisation and zoning – negative aspects

- Zoning was seen as positive historically (in 1950's), but now seen (as) a negative as (it) impacts on trade; more individual movements now.
- Regionalisation will stigmatise individual farmers trapped in infected area. Already have regionalisation (E/W/S) which causes difficulties eg higher compensation in Wales which distorts the market and may reduce incentive to tackle disease.

Vaccine

Effective vaccine development

- An effective cattle vaccine and DIVA test and a vaccine for camelids (alpacas and llamas)
- A vaccine that works to prevent an animal getting infected so it can't pass the disease on further

Developing genetic immunity

- Immunity can you develop a vaccine that passes immunity to calves?
- Have genetic marker for vaccinated cattle

Funding issues for vaccines

- Lack of vaccine funding

Disease in wildlife

Badger status and legislation

- Have an explosion of badgers now and change in farming structure since 1950's.
- Review badger legislation, (is) protected status needed?
- Current badger legislation can force farmers to do things illegally

Testing badgers

- Find a better test
- Wildlife control has to be much wider (than pilots) ie. include a 'ring' post-breakdown, of wildlife control, as well as contiguous herds' TB tests.

Wildlife contraceptive

- Oral contraceptive for wildlife like in Australia. This is not illegal.
- Maybe (lasts) for just 3 years oral contraception.

Badger cull implementation or alternatives

- More than 10 cull zones a year are needed.
- Do not want to cull – would much prefer a workable vaccine...but it is not available.
- Gassing badgers would be more effective.

Strategic approach to identifying and vaccinating badgers

- More strategic approach to vaccinating badgers ie. On edge of high risk area.
- Need identification of badgers as a minimum requirement for vaccination – permanent and easy to see.

Research

Genetic immunity in populations

- How can we confer immunity in different ways? What are the factors?
- Genetic link to breed out TB; look for a genetic weakness
- Genetic susceptibility of livestock: put research and development money and resources into this

Incentivising behaviour change

Incentives for combating TB infection

- Reward and recognition for combating TB
- Should we pay farmers in edge areas not to grow maize?

Penalties for poor bio-security

- Fixed penalty with enforcement of bio-security.
- Penalty against those that don't (combat TB)

Funding

Funding for R&D, technology and industry to combat TB

- Much more funding for research and development, especially vaccines (and effective vaccines).
- Greater use of bio-security technology, fencing etc (but who funds it?)
- Funding by Defra, cost benefit (invest to save) /joint industry funding

Bio-security

Responsibility and bio-security priorities

- Focus resource on keeping disease out of clean areas.
- Enforcement of bio-security
- Farmers need to take greater responsibility for bio-security (fence-off setts etc)
- Make use of slaughterhouse surveillance where all cattle are going to slaughter.

Obstacles to bio-security

- Cost and manpower for farmers to deal with bio-security an issue - need to have the money to do this, and would not stop the problem anyway.
- Do away with linked holdings, but this will impact on dairy business.
- People buying for store cattle units going to slaughter get very annoyed.
- If housed what's the point.

Business economics

Bio-security benefits

- Healthy animals which have been kept healthy (good bio-security) then they should be worth more.
- Need cost analysis of measures and how much money they will save – need proper economic analysis and proper targeting and monitoring

Reduced value for TB restrictions

- Reduced market value for TB restricted cattle is disheartening, as well as financial impact. What can be done?

Potential increase in financial values

- AQU's/AFU's lead to a two-tier market. Don't help everyone, not everyone can set one up / makes sense to use one, so how best to get maximum and realistic value for TB-restricted cattle especially calves.?
- Government to take calves at a fair price – would help dairy sector
- Potential financial value of vaccinated meat
- Look at exports of vaccinated meat products (may be illegal, check); could expand?
- Give farmers more scope to make choices whilst accepting the business liability (without risk to neighbours)
 - Buy pre-movement tested cattle and send to slaughter and accept losses at slaughterhouse in exchange for reduced testing – ie Earned Recognition.

4 What do you think?

Some ideas emerged from workshops AHWBE held with key industry representatives (including NFU, BVA, NBA, and Dairy UK). People were asked to consider these and say what they thought. When answering, people were asked to think as broadly and widely as they could (for example: short and long term, for personal interests and for the industry as a whole, initial and knock on effects/consequences).

4.1 What do you think about the idea of reducing compensation combined with greater ability for farmers to remove reactors and negotiate salvage payments?

1. What are the benefits and positives of this idea

None

- No positive benefits to this – only about Defra saving money.

Speed would lower risk of disease spread

- Speed of movement off farm is a benefit as reduces contact.

More outlets

- Could lead to more outlets and takers of TB reactors

More streamlined process

- Current compensation is unfair and unclear/not transparent, so could be improved.
- Greater ability for farmers is a good idea, streamlines the process, more control, but.....
 -No to reduced compensation

Financial savings/business benefits

- More choice, greater choice = better for business
- Could get better salvage value if animal is worth more than table valuation
- Greater ability for farmers to do transport of reactors could lead to administrative and financial savings.
- Improves cash flow ie quick!

Sanctions against non-compliance

- Could be potential sanction against non-compliance (review compliance)

2. What are the negatives, challenges and difficulties?

Government retreat

- Government would retreat: it wouldn't cost them so would leave farmers to it.

Could affect public perception

- May affect public perception of TB - reactor meat going into food chains.

Unfair

- Could lead to greater inequalities if farmers have to negotiate individually.
- TB tests cost farmers a lot anyway: if reduced compensation then it would be unfair.
- Animals under medication need compensation based on clean meat value not just knackers yard value. Farmer hasn't done anything wrong, they've followed vet advice/ best practice / and legal obligations.
- Lose a huge amount of goodwill if reduce compensation.
- Farmers would need to feel they can deal with the root cause of the problem before reducing compensation.

Greater impact to dairy sector

- Dairy sector would be disadvantaged
- Would impact dairy sector much more than others, which is unfair.

Issues around valuation

- If based on current system (financial value calculation) the lack of genetic value will still be a problem.
- Don't agree as pedigree value is not reflected.
- Could get less salvage value if animal is (deemed to be) worth less than through compensation table.

Weaker negotiating position

- Slaughterhouses would have a stronger hand in individual negotiations: Government can make a much better deal.
- How could farmers be in a better negotiating position than Government?
- Farmers would not get better salvage deal from abattoirs directly than AH should be able to.
- Abattoirs don't /won't want diseased carcasses, which means no or poor value for the farmer.
- If AH aren't getting best value, employ those who can.

Greater fraud

- Could encourage fraudulent activity, and lead to more disease incidence, and on-farm reservoir not addressed

Illegal Culling

- May be in breach of the Bern Convention as reduced compensation would lead to illegal culling.

Traceability

- Must have more controls over traceability of those animals

Disaster

- It would be a disaster.

Questions

- Would SLH's /processors take more reactors?

3. Any amendments or refinements you can think of?

Ability to keep animals until can get clean meat value

- Keep animals under medication separate from herd/others until off medication then go for clean meat value.

Incentivise good practice

- Look at bigger picture, ie link what farmer is or isn't doing in other areas (ie. records, tagging) to compensation payment.
- Link to on-farm bio-security. If a financial incentive, people will do it.
- Good bio-security standards and membership of ie. CHeCS scheme = full compensation.
 - If standards less etc, then reduce compensation.

Ban maize

- Ban maize.

4. Any alternatives or innovations you can suggest?

Independent negotiator of reactor values

- Another/ independent body who would oversee/manage/negotiate best/maximum value of reactors.

Individual valuation return

- Return to individual valuation.

Exclude badgers from opportunity to feed on maize

- Ban maize growing in high risk TB areas or adequate fencing of maize/ ploughing of maize stubble.
- Electric fence round maize fields: keep badgers out.

5. What would you want to know about the idea to consider it further?

Improved collaboration and trust over finances

- Must have improved trust between Government and industry over financial compensation data.
- More transparent financial values and how they are calculated.

4.2 What do you think about the idea of an insurance type scheme to help farmers meet any additional cost?

1. What are the benefits and positives of this idea

Promotes responsibly

- May encourage more responsibility in the farming community.
- Could encourage more farmers to take greater responsibility for controlling disease.

Insurance/Assurance

- If coupled with farmer assurance, so if you're well farm assured it's more affordable for farmers (lower premiums)
- Example: With 'Genesis' insurance – if you have better farm assurance you have more affordable premiums through lower risk.
 - Genesis is more into pig insurance but the principle is a good one

2. What are the negatives, challenges and difficulties?

Won't work

- Nice idea, but impractical.
- Unlike Foot and Mouth disease, TB is an ongoing intractable problem and cost for farmers so cannot work for TB.

Cost cutting

- Just a Government cost-cutting measure.

Insurance companies have to make a profit

- Insurance companies want to make a profit.

Can't afford insurance

- Industry over-burdened already – no capacity for funding this.
- Industry paying too many levies already.
- Premiums too high.

Finding a fair framework for risk assessment

- Would need a fair framework for assessing risk and premium levels.
- If farmer at risk because of inconsistent enforcement it would be unfair potentially because of lack of resources.
- Ok for low incidence areas, in endemic areas premiums too prohibitive.

Some areas uninsurable

- Farmer advised by insurance company cannot get TB cover. <21>
- Farmers can only get insurance at too high a cost, particularly in TB areas or close to them.
- SW group of farmers could be left uninsurable.
- Insurance will not deal with the problem.

Farmers can't avoid or manage all the risks

- Farmers cannot avoid all the risks.
- Farmers cannot manage the risks of the disease.

UK wide approach needed

- Need to be a Great Britain-wide approach.

3. Any amendments or refinements you can think of?

Funding insurance

- Mandatory subsidy on cattle sales to fund insurance across UK

Premiums

- Greater number of movements = a higher premium
- Risk-based approach to premiums.

Levels of cover

- Different levels of cover. eg. Top up over table valuations.

Mutual Approach to insurance

- Mutual approach to developing an insurance product.

4. Any alternatives or innovations you can suggest?

Compensation

- ABP model of financial value of an animal
- Could set up a fund to cover TB compensation.

5. What would you want to know about the idea to consider it further?

Effective system and open communication

- How could it be made simple and transparent?

Trusting Government finance

- Assurance that the Government would spend 100% of money collected, where it said it would.

Need to know cost to farmers?

- How much would it cost the farmer? - Cannot consider this without that intelligence.

4.3 What do you think about the idea of cattle keepers arranging their own tests and negotiating prices directly with an AHVLA approved veterinary practice?

1. What are the benefits and positives of this idea

Potential for cooperatives

- Farmers can get into a group/cooperative
- Co-operation : gather herds together (handling), Neighbours giving a hand: share crushes
 - But this is a disease risk!
- In handling only: not grouping herds. Helping out on each other's farm.

Better timing

- Can choose a time to suit the farmer.
- Need to have flexibility to testing: have lives beyond our farmers
- Have lee-way in timing
 - This already happens

Want own vet

- Rather contribute than get unknown vets that don't know farm. If own vet (they) can do other work there/on farm (current situation)

Remove cost barrier

- Defra involvement is a cost barrier

Fairer

- Fairer system

Lay testing

- Lay tester cheaper than vet

2. What are the negatives, challenges and difficulties?

Just cost saving

- This is all about saving money for Defra: Defra aren't going to pay.

Risks around vet regulation/behaviour

- Will your vet continue to do the test similar to vets writing prescriptions and what cost
- Local vets need guidelines: not a licence to print money
- Who is going to regulate the vets?
- If farmers don't contribute we'll get foreign vets
- What about monopolies by vets?
- Predatory vet practices - both physical and behavioural.

Fragmented Approach to animal health

- Benefit of TB testing is vet on farm: will lose welfare aspects and (treating?) diseases other than TB.

- Divorcing other elements of animal health.

Standards and accountability

- Need to stick to the number of times a year
- Keep within guidelines
- Where does the account go? accountability

Cost to farmers

- Farmers are paying a fair price already
- More expensive to farmers
- Can't see a farmer getting it done cheaper than AH.
- Farming industry can't absorb more of the cost.
- Will cost more: easier to put 200 through than 20. Still have to do paperwork.
- It costs farmers now for labour to TB test: this will be more.
- Specialist market

Divisive

- Create tension between farmers: some will get more than others
- Divisive between big and small farms.
- Farmers divided; can't get a fair price.

Particular difficulties for small farms

- Small beef farms will struggle to get vet: currently large practices subsidise these herds.
- Larger farmers would feel they were subsidising smaller farmers.
- Handling set-up: some farmers only have 2-3 animals which will be prohibitive to rare breed community.

3. Any amendments or refinements you can think of?

Negotiated price to Defra

- Negotiated price to Defra

Farmers working together

- Farmers working together

Ensuring standards of good practice

- Needs independent oversight and appeal: independent body

Lay testers?

- If lay testers are used -vet to follow up on farm
- Lay testers would need to be employed by a vet practice.
- Lay testers need to be properly trained; need to get veterinary profession to agree.

Better handling facilities needed

- Incentives to install handling facilities.
- Need better handling facilities across farms.
- Tow-able crush: tester to have own crush, like foot-trimming people. It is safer. But expensive for a small herd.
- Situation is OK for routine testing but not for breakdown testing.

Move animals direct to slaughter

- Can move animals direct to abattoir/slaughter as any problems will be picked up at that point.

Farmers negotiate slaughter price

- Farmers negotiating slaughter price for cattle

4. Any alternatives or innovations you can suggest?

Farmers need representation

- Farmers can't negotiate costs for salvage – needs a specialist.
- Why aren't (vet?) practices employing animal health technicians?: needs deregulation
- Needs to be made legal

Testing intervals

- Annual testing for everybody: four-yearly animals not tested and can move between holdings and never get tested.

Cattle to cattle infection

- Need to get beyond cattle measures only.

Delay measures until other areas addressed

- Until such time both sides are dealt with, we farmers should not pay.
- Should save money in other areas before this.

5. What would you want to know about the idea to consider it further?

Cost of vets

- What do vets charge?

Testing type and tester

- Is it routine testing or breakdown testing?
- Are lay testers used in Europe?

True testing cost taking unit size into account

- What is the true cost of testing? I.e. a 100 cow unit compared to half a dozen.

4.4 What do you think about the idea of areas being able to get 'TB free status'

1. What are the benefits and positives of this idea

Not feasible

- Highly unlikely – not feasible.

Essential

- Essential -won't progress until this is introduced.

May be accepted with other measures

- Attractive to some farmers.
- Farmers may accept if felt other things (to improve) were happening

Financial benefits for those in TB free areas

- Save money on reduced testing and clean areas
- Will get better prices from big retailers from those areas.

Incentivises good biosecurity in clean areas

- Farmers who are clean are more likely to stay clean.
- Start with TB nucleus area and extend out.
 - Identify an area and gradually extend boundaries – need to incentivise farmer with funding similar to farm assurance scheme - penalise non-compliance.
- Pay farmer to maintain good health/disease status of stock

2. What are the negatives, challenges and difficulties?

Resentments

- Would add to existing resentments

Practicalities

- Not easy to enforce.
- Already missing 15% of positives via testing. Therefore 1 in 7 chance of still being affected.
- Individual animals may/may not be a problem (in terms of disease)

Values

- Reduced animal values
- Compensation issues – different systems in England/Wales

Defining the area

- Problem between clean and not clean – need to create buffer zones.
- Areas need to be defined

Testing

- 'Clean' buying 'dirty' will require more TB testing.

In TB area no incentive to tackle disease

- No individual incentive to do anything to tackle the disease i.e. no chance of changing status.

Penalises some farmers

- Would set up a 2-tier market
- Those in non-clean areas would be 'left to rot' – need to be able to tackle wildlife.

- Retailer bias towards purchasers
- So would penalise some farmers even more.
- Would make some farmers 2nd class citizens
- Not a fair playing field
- All farmers want to get to 'clean' status
- Not good for business

Effects on trade and value

- Creates trade and value issues and economic barriers.
- Would not be able to 'buy-in'?
- Will affect pedigree more than commercial animals (in terms of sales values)

3. Any amendments or refinements you can think of?

Restrictions on movement and more testing

- Full restriction of movement between endemic and non-endemic areas
- If go upstream have isolation and post-movement testing regime.

Protection/buffer zones

- Consider regionalised areas where 'protection zones' /surveillance zones -that may help disease control – provide different levels of legislation dependent on location.
- Need to create buffer zones between clean and non-clean areas.

4. Any alternatives or innovations you can suggest?

UK-wide testing and status assignment

- UK-wide status required
- Whole of UK should be on annual testing

5. What would you want to know about the idea to consider it further?

Movement zones defined

- Areas need to be defined.

Vaccination/infection status comparisons

- 'Vaccinate'/'non vaccinated' versus 'clean'/'dirty'

4.5 Minimising the geographical spread of TB in cattle:

1. What else can Government and Industry do?

Reduce demand

- Get rid of the cows!
- Look at reduction of dependence on dairy products.

Traceability/history

- Make the animal vendor give more information re the history of the herd.
- Promoting classification of disease status of individual animals for sale, linked to farm status, so can feed into purchase risk analysis. Should be freely available.
- Link knowledge of TB status with other disease status information eg CHeCS.
- Livestock markets should display the status of the TB test and date as a compulsory measure and the area it has come from.

Merge holdings

- Look into merging holdings where rental agreements allow.

Equity between England and Wales

- Make payments and restrictions between/across England and Wales more equitable.

Include Camelids in disease management measures

- Re. camelids check if only self-certification exists. There needs to be complete compulsory regulation, certification and identification of individual animals.
- Alpacas and llamas must be pre-movement tested and recorded before every movement eg shows etc.

Industry wide initiative

- An industry-wide initiative would be affecting value so is needed.

Improved and tailored testing strategy

- Pre-movement test everything nationwide
- Post-movement test all stock going from a high risk to a low risk area
- Allowing different testing strategies
- 12-month test all herds
- Testing farms surrounding a breakdown farm faster (ignoring natural and man-made boundaries like rivers and roads because it can spread across).
- Waste of time testing finishing units who do not graze, so this would save financial resources.

Cattle movement

- Restricting movement of cattle on breakdown farms for summer grazing.
- Cut down movement of cattle from infected to clean areas eg. zoning which is happening in Scotland now.
- Review where the boundaries are fixed within the 16km limit.
- Movement controls needed for camelids, not just have as best practice. British Llama and Alpaca Societies/ Associations make compulsory
- To prevent, use regionalised protection so animals only move within PZ's and SZ's similar to other disease controls like Foot and Mouth.
- Advocate a stronger co-operative ethic re movement of cattle especially in endemic areas.

Clearer law and enforcement notices for whole industry

- Law and notice enforcement need to be clarified and strengthened for farmers and others eg. Markets, hauliers who also impact/ industry players)

Disease in wildlife

- Consider vaccinating badgers on a band along the edge of the endemic areas to be a vaccinated buffer zone
- More co-operation between England and Wales re. measures of culling badgers etc.
- Emphasise lack of link between density of badgers and disease prevalence from research <41>
 - It is up to carrying capacity of habitat for badger population
- AFU's/EFU's and Get-out clauses should be banned.

Improved biosecurity advice and practice

- Encourage better bio-security on the farms to try to keep cattle and badgers apart.
- Avoid using mineralised licks on the floor. Attempt to enforce using a design to stop cattle knocking them over.
- Linked holdings should be eliminated.

Look at farm holding factors

- Look at the re-arrangement of farms – should macro-farms which merge over huge areas be restricted in favour of returning to smaller discrete farm units, or vice versa?
- In terms of size – bigger may have better segregation facilities, Bio-security, etc and resources may possible which help to control TB which small farms can't manage. Eg benefit of bringing food to animals in large farms so not out grazing.

Research

- Government invest more money into all research areas.
- Investigate other species for milk – do buffalo, goats and sheep suffer from TB?
 - Yes, they all do.
- Investigate re: where 2-tier market valuations exist, if finishing areas (TB finishing unit) reduce the value.

4.6 Different types and providers of support and advice.

Listed by theme

The cause of TB

- Would like advice on what is happening about the cause.

Dealing with reactors

- Farmers are being left for 6 weeks in limbo if they get a reactor.

Testing

- Testing should be more independent to avoid potential conflict of interest
- Advice needs to be coordinated so not contradictory.

Answering questions from public

- Useful to have advice for farmers on how to deal with questions from the public – a role for Government

Identification technology and cattle

- Need to focus on bigger picture – not just on fire-fighting. eg. Are there issues with cattle ID on that farm. Need to check addressing all issues.
- Electronic ID may make things easier, but may be problems with technology and increase costs.

Restricted activity

- Can't get advice on things that want to do because not allowed.
- Banging head against wall because nothing is being done about the cause

Evidence based advice/research

- Like advice to be evidence-based

Advice linked to earned recognition

- If want to link advice to earned recognition it needs to come from a reliable source.

Bio-security/prevention

- Where do you get advice on bio-security?
- Need more focus on advice before you get a TB breakdown rather than after i.e. preventative.

Support for stressed farmers

- Samaritans or other support for mental trauma when have to slaughter animals which you have reared. Huge trauma for stockmen.
- Stressful for vets and lay staff in terms of supporting clients with TB breakdowns.
- Having to book tests weeks in advance because of backlogs in the system

Business support

- Should be supporting business. Should be priority to get that business active as soon as possible.

General comments

- Problem is because of a lack of proactive approach in the past
- The situation is ever changing – can be good one year but bad the next.

Listed by organisation

Farming Union

- Highlights need for a farming union
- NFU play a key role in support/advice – a lot of knowledge and expertise

Ministry

- Has to be ministry support as private vets don't have resources – use ex-servicemen?
- Ministry staff arrive earlier, and work later, when come to do blood test, so would get test done in two days instead of three.

Vets

- Get advice from people you trust – private vet not from government officials or leaflets
- Private vets are already giving advice especially where doing frequent testing.
- But own vets are more used to the farm and the livestock
- Vets rather than lay testers are better place to provide local advice on disease situation.
- More training need for staff in vet practices so are aware of steps then need to take
- Would be good if farmers could sit down with vet practice to tailor the testing schedule
- Defra give specific time to test X cattle but takes different amount of time in different situations
- Provision of advice must be regulated – should not be a licence for vets to print money.
- Private vets don't know the law. There is a need to know the law, not just provide advice the client want. So need unbiased impartial source of advice -to- Local Government

BCVA

- Vets need more training on bio-security eg provide by BCVA?

AHVLA

- Difficult to get hold of people to give advice in AHVLA. Rely on Regional NFU.

- Need a change, so that support/advice from AHVLA does not have to be instigated by farmer/vet. Need more proactive and consistent approach.
- Nice to have a letter from AHVLA saying who the case vet is.
- Have had a breakdown. Find AHVLA wanting; lack of clear information; inconsistencies; assigned case vet but not always available. There should be someone as a backup to make decisions. Some staff have a lack of basic understanding of farming; some are very poor at making decisions; some have poor people skills.

Lay testers co-ordinated by vet practice

- Lay testers would need to be co-ordinated by vet practice – local knowledge is vital. Essential to know how farm functions – labour, handling etc.

TB Advisory Service

- Role for extending the TB Advisory Service beyond the South-West but need to find the funding.

5 Out of everything you have seen and discussed today what two things would you most want to see happen?

Communication/collaboration

Better PR for the industry/public awareness

- Education of the public on the true facts relating to bTB in cattle and badgers
- A better balanced nationwide understanding of TB effects with regard to the disease, Government expenditure and its value and the food supply.
- More PR with public in general
- Positive PR with the public; EBLEX playing a financial role in advertising in national press
- Better PR for the industry so that there is a deeper public understanding of the impact of TB on the national herd.
- Public awareness of real Badger-TB-Cattle problem:- the real ugly badger not the fluffy badger perceived by public therefore more support/less resistance to badger control/cull and therefore successful TB eradication.
- Public be more understanding of what we are trying to achieve- not just wanting to get rid of the 'Black and Whites'
- Greater publicising of the TB problem nationwide eg i) number of badgers destroyed have TB lesions
- Communication with general public –raise the profile of bovine TB and the will to tackle it

Better Collaboration/Co-operation between all involved with the industry

- Joined-up approach by all regulators (LA, AHVLA, DEFRA), the veterinary profession, and the industry, (including markets, hauliers) to combat disease. Where there are licences issued to cull badgers, this must be part of a collective approach to eradication and include the farm premise involved having a full 'MOT' which includes how testing is done on the farm and bio-security measures, CIR (CLR?) measures etc. This would help ensure steps taken are successful and may reduce criticisms from non-industry members on how process undertaken.
- Improved relations between Government, Public, Farmers, Conservation Groups. Better understanding of issues and science. Increase in knowledge + decrease in conflict.
- Improve education of all in cattle farming – farmers, vets, nutritionists, Food Standards Agency re.TB
- Much improved co-operation between cattle farmers, private vets, and AHLVA (SVS) and with practical solutions
- Better communications and co-operation between farmer/vet/AHVLA
- Good co-operation among vets, farmers and animal health

Vet involvement and support

- Greater involvement of local vets in TB control assessments and advice at farm level
- Hope that notice will be taken by AHWBE from what has been discussed – acceleration of TB tendering process

Testing

Testing regime

- Pre-movement testing of all cattle
- More rigorous testing regime in all areas to get ahead of disease
- Test all farms annually

Reliable accurate test development

- A reliable diagnostic test!
- A better test that can more reliably differentiate between TB infected and clean animals.
- A new competent accurate bTB test system
- More blood testing whilst something practical is being organised to eradicate the source

Compensation

- A new and more specific/accurate compensation scheme

Vaccines

Development of Cattle vaccine and test

- Reliable vaccine being able to use with reliable TB test
- Vaccinated cattle and wildlife with more accurate testing up-taking new technology.

Cattle and badger vaccine

- Cattle vaccine and Badger vaccine
- Vaccination of cattle and badger population asap.

More work on cattle vaccine

- Same as when I came in: Cattle vaccine
- Cattle vaccine to be available
- More work on a cattle vaccine
- A bTB vaccination option for livestock farms

Badger vaccine

- An effective vaccine for wildlife, also a test to identify setts that are infected, to cull to protect badgers that do not carry the disease

Disease in wildlife

- TB in wildlife must be clear as they move around farm to farm un-controlled/ free movement.
- Get rid of disease in wildlife

Badger vaccination

- Badger vaccination properly promoted and supported now both within and on the edge of endemic areas as a method of addressing wildlife reservoir
- Same as when I came in: Oral badger vaccine
- Establish edge area of badger endemic infection: deploy vaccination there and work back into endemic areas

Remove protected status from badgers

- Remove badgers from protected species list

Farmers empowered to cull

- I would like more control of the control of wildlife on your own farms ie managing badgers yourself if needs be.
- Empower livestock keepers to control their own risk
- Remove all statutory wildlife control and allow farmers, gamekeepers etc to do the necessary control.

Call for comprehensive badger cull

- Rapid increase in wildlife cull
- No reduction in compensation without a comprehensive badger cull
- Appropriate wildlife policy
- Badger cull asap !!!! Look at all the evidence
- Badger cull to go ahead in all high risk areas

- A comprehensive badger cull
- Effective culling of badgers not just 4x10x150 sq km but whole 12m zone. Ditch badger vaccination – waste of time and resources.
- Control of wildlife that carries bTB in hotspot areas, to effectively stop the spread of this hideous disease.
- Cull badgers in TB endemic areas
- Publicise TB control as a way of controlling TB in badgers. It is a disease of badgers not just cattle.

Research and Technology

- Research why badgers get infected by TB and act to address that issue
- More use of technology to reduce the spread of TB, and publicising bio-security options better.
- Less myth and hearsay and more true facts
- To eradicate TB to a realistic level- manageable – both farm livestock and wildlife
- England and Wales declared TB free!

Incentives for farmers to control TB and sanctions for non-compliance

- Greater publicising of the TB problem nationwide e.g., advantages of TB free status.
- There needs to be accountability for controls to be effective. This includes sanctions against anyone who fails to comply with TB legislation including farmers, markets etc and any compensation paid/ insurance applied should reflect responsibility and Earned Recognition. Likewise there needs to be appropriate control measures/ criminal sanctions against protest groups etc that may compromise control strategies outside public order legislation.

Funding support

- Build state/industry bonds which are fair to tax payers and livestock keepers

Bio-security

- Better understanding on farm re the need for bio-security. If the need for bio-security is understood then that will encourage correct bio-security protocols.
- No further TB spread/reduction because GMT (Government?) listen(s) to farmers and implement(s) constructive ideas from farmers
- Bio-security in affected areas and areas ahead of 'tide' of infection
- Farmers to care more about the health of their animals – and as a consequence to give much more consideration to health status when trading.
- Make farms /vets recognise that livestock farming is food production and they have a responsibility for animal health not Government.
- Should cattle still move into areas of low TB incidence?
- Concentrate on preventative spread to non-endemic areas- 'Edge policy'

Financial implications for farmers

- As farmers we are business people and the countryside is our shop floor
- Farmer no worse off financially than under current regime! Farmers are already bearing the brunt of disease costs.

General comment

- The whole afternoon has been used to approve the AHWBE proposals by getting enough opposing opinions to cancel each other out. Fait accompli!

Action

- Something!
- HMG to grow some balls and use them. Ie make a decision to get on with it!

Other bTB related issues outside of today's discussion

- Test badgers culled for bTB and release information. May change public perception.
- Trial other methods. License catch, test, and release or cull badgers

Annex 1 Agenda

Bovine TB Where do we go from here? Agenda

12.30 Doors open for registration. Coffee and tea will be available (Please have lunch before you arrive).

Starting activity:

Imagine it is 2025. You are at the market talking about how bovine TB is handled now compared to way back in 2012. For you the best two things are.....

1:00 **Welcome and how the workshop will be run.** Lead Facilitator
Setting the scene Chair of AHWBE
Context and key information Defra Team Leader

Questions to clarify what you have just heard

(What do you mean by...? Or Please explain...? Please write your question on one of the white cards. There will be plenty of opportunity to give your views during the workshop.)

What's working and new ideas – work in small groups to discuss the following:

- **What is working well now?**
- **How could this be strengthened, enhanced or improved further?**
- **What else needs to happen?**
- **What new innovations or ideas can you suggest?**

2:40 20 **Tea and coffee**

3:00 **What do you think?**

Some ideas have emerged from workshops AHWBE held with key industry representatives (including NFU, BVA, NBA, and Dairy UK). Please visit each of the different topics below and have your say. When answering the questions aim to think as broadly and widely as you can (for example: short and long term, for your personal interests and for the industry as a whole, initial and knock on effects/consequences).

PLEASE NOTE: It is unlikely that you will be able to get around all of the questions so do prioritise the ones you most want to respond to.

1. **What do you think about the idea of reducing compensation combined with greater ability for farmers to remove reactors and negotiate salvage payments?**
2. **What do you think about the idea of an insurance type scheme to help farmers meet any additional cost?**
3. **What do you think about the idea of cattle keepers arranging their own tests and negotiating prices directly with an AHVLA approved veterinary practice?**
4. **What do you think about the idea of areas being able to get 'TB free status'?**

For each of the above four topics you will be asked the following questions:

1. What are the benefits and positives of this idea
2. What are the negative, challenges and difficulties?
3. Any amendments or refinements you can think of?
4. Any alternatives or innovations you can suggest?
5. What would you want to know about the idea to consider it further?

5. Minimising the geographical spread of TB in cattle:

- What else can Government and Industry do?

6. There could be different types and providers of support and advice.

- What support or advice would you like?
- Who could provide it?

Out of everything you have seen and discussed today what two things would you most want to see happen?

Finishing tasks

What happens next

No
later
than
4.45

Finish

Annex 2: Attendee List

Organisation / sector

BCVA
Camlas Vets
Cattle health advisor
DairyCo
Dairy consultant
EC Straiton and Partners (vet practice)
Farmers and livestock keepers (beef, suckler, pedigree and dairy)
Lambert Leonard and May (vet practice)
Local Authority Trading Standards
Marches Veterinary Group
NFU Shropshire
NFU Staffordshire
NFU West Midlands
Shropshire Farm Vets
Shropshire Wildlife Trust
Stapeley Veterinary Practice Ltd
University of Liverpool - Farm Animal Practice
Wright and Morten Veterinary Surgeons
Wyre Community Land Trust
XL Farmcare

Officials

AHWBE Chair
TBEAG Chair
Acting Director, TB Programme, Defra
Regional Veterinary Lead, AHVLA

Numbers attending:

49

Farmers or farming organisations:

28

Veterinary practices or organisations:

14

Wildlife and conservation groups:

3

Other:

4