

(1) 20140711 Response to BHS draft survey with comments

**From:** [Redacted] (DEFRA)

**Sent:** 11 July 2014 17:58

**To:** [Redacted]

**Cc:** [Redacted] [Redacted]; [Redacted] (Defra); [Redacted] (Defra); [Redacted] (Defra)

**Subject:** Comments to Draft questions for the BHS Survey on ragwort

[Redacted]

Please see attached the draft survey with comments from [Redacted] and [Redacted].

Once you had considered their remarks and corrections, could you send the final version for internal approval?

In respect of the logo, I haven't had any definitive advice from Comms; however, better read the comments in the draft referring to Defra's name. I'll try to get an answer early next week.

Kind regards

[Redacted]

**From:** [Redacted] [[Redacted]]

**Sent:** 09 July 2014 14:51

**To:** [Redacted] (DEFRA)

**Cc:** [Redacted]; [Redacted]

**Subject:** FW: 07-09-14 Draft questions for the BHS Survey on ragwort

Please find attached our draft questions for the survey.

Note:

1. These will have yes, no questions and the detail you see is for the yes responders!
2. The long lists will be drop downs
3. This is not yet designed

Please do let me have your feedback asap.

I would also be grateful for your logo (see my previous email).

Regards

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Attachment to the previous e-mail

## Draft questions for the BHS' Survey on Ragwort

Thank you for taking part in the **British Horse Society Ragwort Survey**. The aim of this survey is to assess the level of awareness and understanding about ragwort. We are very grateful to you for finding time to complete the survey. The results of the survey will help us to protect horses.

The survey has been tested and will take approximately n minutes to complete. All your answers will be kept completely confidential, results reported at the aggregate level and will not be used for any enforcement **action**.

The first set of questions (Questions 1-9) is about you and will help us understand how well the issues around ragwort are understood by different groups in society.

- 1) Do you own or manage land that is used by horses?
  - a) If yes, in what capacity? (tick all that apply)
    - i) Riding school
    - ii) Livery yard
    - iii) Agricultural
    - iv) Private land/home
    - v) Other – (please write in)
- 2) Do you own or manage land that is adjacent to land used by horses?
  - a) If yes, what is your land used for?
    - i) Arable for fodder
    - ii) Other arable
    - iii) Livestock
    - iv) Housing/gardens
    - v) Unused
    - vi) Other – (please write in)
- 3) Are you a horse owner?
  - a) If yes, in what capacity?
    - i) Sporting
    - ii) Agricultural
    - iii) Breeding
    - iv) Recreational
    - v) Other – (please write in)
- 4) Are you a horse rider?
  - a) If yes, what sorts of horse riding do you do? (tick all that apply)
    - i) Recreational horse riding
    - ii) Competitive horse riding
    - iii) Professional horse riding

**Comment [TP1]:** I think we need to think very carefully about adding the Defra logo next to the one on the left. I do not add logos to any surveys I commission.

**Comment [TP2]:** Linked to point above, no mention of Defra funding (do we want?)

**Comment [TP3]:** Anything on where / when results available?

5) Are you a member or active supporter of any of the following organisations (tick all that apply)

The British Horse Society  
British Riding Clubs  
Blue Cross Animal Welfare Charity  
Bransby Home of Rest for Horses  
Donkey Sanctuary (The)  
Equine Grass Sickness Fund  
Horses4Heros  
Horses and Ponies Protection Association (HAPPA)  
Horse Trust (The)  
HorseWorld  
Pony Club (The)  
Rare Breeds Survival Trust (RBST)  
Redwings Horse Sanctuary  
Riding for the Disabled Association  
RSPCA  
Society for the Welfare of Horses and Ponies  
Veteran Horse Welfare (The)  
Working Horse Trust (The)  
World Horse Welfare  
British Carriagedriving  
British Dressage  
British Dressage Supporters Club  
British Equestrian Federation  
British Equestrian Trade Association (The)  
British Equestrian Vaulting  
British Equestrian Veterinary Association (The)  
British Eventing  
British Harness Racing Club (The)  
British Horseball Association (The)  
British Horse Driving Trials Association  
British Horseracing Authority  
British Paralympic Association  
British Showjumping  
British Show Pony Society  
British Young Riders Dressage Scheme  
Byeways and Bridleways Trust (The)  
Countryside Alliance  
Country Gentlemen's Association (The)  
Country Land and Business Association (The)  
Endurance GB  
Horse Driving Trials Supporters Club  
Horse Trials Support Group  
Hurlingham Polo Association  
JumpCross  
Mounted Games Association of Great Britain (The)  
National Farmers Union (The)  
National Trainers Federation (The)  
Open Spaces Society  
Ponies Association (UK)  
Pony Riders Association  
Racehorse Owners' Association

Open Spaces Society

Side Saddle Association (The)

Thoroughbred Breeders Association (The)

UK Polocrosse Association

Western Equestrian Society

Western Horsemen's Association of Great Britain

Comment [TP4]: duplicate

6) Your postcode

7) Please tick the box that applies to you.

a) Male

b) Female

8) Please tick the box that applies to you.

a) Under 18

b) 18 to 29 years

c) 30 to 49 years

d) 50 to 64 years

e) 65 and over

9) Please tick the box that applies to you.

a) Asian/Asian British

b) Black/Black British

c) Chinese/other ethnic background

d) Mixed ethnic background

e) White

f) Prefer not to say

Comment [TP5]: I don't think we need this, in fact I think we should not collect

**The following batch of questions (Questions 10 – 13) concern your general awareness of ragwort.**

10) How confident are you that you would recognise ragwort if you saw it growing?

a) Very confident

b) Fairly confident

c) Not very confident

d) Not at all confident

11) Which, if any, of the following images contains ragwort? (tick any or all that you think contain ragwort)



(ragwort)



(common fleabane)



(European goldenrod)

(Ragwort, rosette stage)

12) Which of the following phrases most accurately reflects your understanding of the effects of ragwort on horses:

- a) I am fully aware of the effect that ragwort can have on horses
- b) I am reasonably aware of the effect that ragwort can have on horses but without knowing all the details
- c) I am aware that ragwort has some effect on horses but I am not certain of the details
- d) I am vaguely aware that ragwort has some effect on horses but I have little detailed knowledge
- e) I have no knowledge of the effect that ragwort can have on horses

13) Before you began taking part in this survey, to what extent were you aware of the following facts about ragwort?

Facts about ragwort	I was fully aware of this fact	I was vaguely aware of this fact	I was not aware of this fact	I believed something that would contradict with this fact
Ragwort is extremely toxic to horses.				
A horse can consume small amounts of ragwort over a long period of time with no apparent ill effects.				
If enough ragwort is consumed, no matter				

**Comment [TP6]:** I think the questions are meant to be correct..... Are they facts or not. I would suggest all need to be true

**Comment [jmd7]:** I'm a little confused by this table as some of the facts in the left seem to be incorrect – or is that the point? Something about dry/dead ragwort still being poisonous might be a good question somewhere in the survey.

over how long a period, ragwort will cause irreversible liver damage in horses that leads to i death.				
Ragwort is controlled under the Weeds Act (1959) and Ragwort Control Act (2003).				
Cattle, pigs and chickens are also highly sensitive to ragwort.				
Dead and dying ragwort remains poisonous to livestock.				
Ragwort can contaminate feedstuff (hay, silage).				

**The following questions (Questions 14 to the end) focus on your personal experiences with ragwort and your opinions**

*If participant answered yes to questions 1 or 2 (own land used by horses or adjacent to land used by horses):*

14) To what extent are you aware of your legal responsibilities to remove ragwort from land that you own?

- a) I am fully aware of my legal responsibilities to remove ragwort from land that I own.
- b) I am generally aware of my legal responsibilities to remove ragwort from land that I own although not certain of the details.
- c) I am vaguely aware of my legal responsibilities to remove ragwort from land that I own
- d) I am unaware of my legal responsibilities to remove ragwort from land that I own
- e) I do not believe that I have any legal responsibility to remove ragwort from land that I own

**Comment [jmd8]:** Maybe a box exercise asking what people think their responsibilities are?

15) Do you take any preventative measures to reduce the risk of ragwort on land that you own?

16) Which of the following preventative measures to reduce the risk of ragwort do you take?

- a) Chemical spraying
- b) Maintaining or improving the quality of pasture

**Comment [TP9]:** Meaning what exactly? Ploughing and re-seeding rather than adding fertilizer I guess.... Sounds a bit vague – you can ‘maintain’ a poor quality field of weeds. What about the old fashioned way of hand-pulling (see q 19)

- c) Making sure that there are no bare patches in pasture
- d) Removing droppings on a regular basis
- e) Making sure not to overstock or overgraze paddocks
- f) Topping/mowing
- g) Other preventative measures (please write in)

17) Have you ever had ragwort on land that you own?

*If the participant answered yes to question 17*

18) Was this in the last 12 months?

19) What steps, if any, did you take to remove the ragwort from the land that you own?

- a) Pulling up the ragwort
- b) Mowing or cutting down the ragwort
- c) Chemical spraying
- d) Other steps (please write in)
- e) No steps taken

*If participant answers e to question 19*

20) Why did you not take action to remove the ragwort from the land that you own? (tick any that apply)

- a) Was not aware that ragwort was harmful to horses
- b) Was not aware that I had a legal obligation to remove ragwort
- c) The ragwort was in an area more than 50 metres away from any land used by horses
- d) Was unaware that the ragwort needed to be removed
- e) Did not feel that any effort to remove the ragwort would be successful
- f) Prefer to retain the ragwort for other reasons
- g) Could not afford to pay for the ragwort to be professionally removed
- h) Other (please write in)

21) What safety precautions did you take when removing the ragwort from land that you own?

- a) Wearing thick safety gloves
- b) Wearing goggles
- c) Burning all removed ragwort plant material
- d) Other precautions (please write in)
- e) No safety precautions taken

22) Have you sought advice about ragwort from any of the following organisations (tick all that apply)

- a) British Horse Society
- b) Your Local Authority
- c) Government department
- d) Other organisations (please write in)

*If any of a – d ticked in question 22:*

23) How helpful or unhelpful was that advice?

- a) Very helpful

**Comment [TP10]:** It will depend on what method – if you are mowing in a tractor then you might not wear gloves but if you were spraying then I guess you would be wearing gloves and goggles (to follow HSE requirements)

**Comment [TP11]:** What about combining into 'appropriate safety wear for the control method e.g. thick gloves, eye protection'

**Comment [TP12]:** Should we highlight NE specifically?



- b) Fairly helpful
- c) Fairly unhelpful
- d) Very unhelpful

24) Please provide an estimate of how much time you have personally spent dealing with ragwort on land that you own over the last 12 months

25) Please provide an estimate of how much money you have spent on dealing with ragwort on land that you own over the last 12 months. Please state what this comprised e.g. contractor, spray etc

26) To what extent are you familiar or unfamiliar with any of the following:

Advice	Very familiar	Fairly familiar	Fairly unfamiliar	Very unfamiliar
The Ragwort Control Act				
The DEFRA Code of Practice on Ragwort				
The British Horse Society's advice on ragwort				
The Animal Welfare Act				
The Weeds Act				

**The following questions (Questions 27 – 36) are about your experience of ragwort on land owned or managed by other people.**

27) At any point over the last 12 months have you seen ragwort on land that is used by horses?

28) At any point over the last 12 months have you seen ragwort on land that is adjacent to that used by horses?

29) At any point in the last 7 days have you seen ragwort on land that is used by horses?

30) At any point in the last 7 days have you seen ragwort on land that is adjacent to that used by horses?

***If the participant answers yes to questions 27-20***

**Comment [TP13]:** Wouldn't it be better to follow each of the questions as you could tick all four but the answers to 31 could be different

31) How much ragwort was present on the land at its most prolific?

- a) A few isolated plants
- b) Covered around a quarter of the land
- c) Covered around a half of the land
- d) Covered around three quarters of the land
- e) Covered most of the land

***If the participant answered yes to questions 28 or 30:***

32) Where you have seen ragwort on land adjacent to that used by horses, who owned the land?

- a) Network Rail
- b) Highways Agency
- c) A Local Council
- d) Utility Companies
- e) Other public organisations – (please write in)
- f) Private individuals or Businesses
- g) Don't know...

***If the participant answered yes to any of questions 27 – 31:***

33) What steps have you taken when you have seen ragwort growing on land that you do not own?  
(tick all that apply)

- a) Reported the presence of ragwort to the landowner
- b) Removed the ragwort by pulling it out by hand
- c) Removed the ragwort by digging it out
- d) Carried out chemical spraying on the area affected
- e) Reported the ragwort to a local council
- f) Reported the ragwort to the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs
- g) Reported to the BHS or other charity
- h) Reported to Natural England
- i) Other action – (write in)
- j) No action taken

***If the participant answered 'a' to question 33:***

34) Where you have reported the presence of ragwort to a landowner how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the action that was taken as a result?

- a) Totally satisfied
- b) Fairly satisfied

- c) Fairly dissatisfied
- d) Very dissatisfied

*If the participant answered 'j' to question 33:*

35) Were there any particular reasons why you did not take any action? (please write in)

36) To the best of your knowledge was the ragwort fully removed?

*If the participant answered yes to any horse ownership questions:*

37) Has any horse you have owned had health problems where ragwort poisoning was suspected?

38) Has any horse you have owned had health problems where ragwort poisoning was confirmed by a vet?

**Comment [jmd14]:** 'Confirmed by a vet' might be a bit misleading. Would it be better to say, 'confirmed by a vet on the basis of a full histopathological test'. Otherwise it could just be a vet speculating which doesn't provide answer they are looking for.

39) Have any of any of your friends, neighbours or immediate family owned or kept horses that have had health problems where ragwort poisoning was suspected?

**Comment [jmd15]:** Ditto above

40) Have any of any of your friends, neighbours or immediate family owned or kept horses that have had health problems where ragwort poisoning was confirmed by a vet?

41) Has any horse you have owned ever died in circumstances where ragwort poisoning was suspected?

42) Has any horse you have owned ever died in circumstances where ragwort poisoning was confirmed by a vet?

**Comment [jmd16]:** Ditto

43) Have any of any of your friends, neighbours or immediate family owned or kept horses that have ever died in circumstances where ragwort poisoning was suspected?

44) Have any of any of your friends, neighbours or immediate family owned or kept horses that have ever died in circumstances where ragwort poisoning was confirmed by a vet?

**Comment [jmd17]:** ditto

*If the participant answered yes to any of questions 37 – 44:*

45) Was this at any time during the last 12 months?

**Comment [TP18]:** Again, ideally this needs to come after each question else you don't know which question this relates to

46) Do you check the forage that you buy for the presence of ragwort?

**Comment [TP19]:** What about a 'if no, why not?' follow-up

47) Have you ever purchased contaminated forage?

*(If the participant answered yes to 47)*

48) Did you report the contaminated forage that you found?

- a) Yes - to the supplier
- b) Yes – to another organisation (please write in)
- c) No

(If the participant answered a) or b) to 48)

49) Where you have reported the presence of ragwort in forage how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the action that was taken as a result?

- a) Totally satisfied
- b) Fairly satisfied
- c) Fairly dissatisfied
- d) Very dissatisfied

50) To what extent do you think more or less is appropriate for the following statements:

Statement	<b>much more needed</b>	<b>more needed</b>	<b>about right</b>	<b>less needed</b>	<b>much less needed</b>
enforcement of ragwort control regulations					
ragwort control action by owners of all land					
information to let people know what they need to do about ragwort if they see it growing					
Local councils monitoring ragwort					

**Comment [TP20]:** I agree and would re-do in a more neutral way. There is no way this is acceptable from a survey assurance basis

**Comment [jmd21]:** These questions seem to be a bit 'leading'.

51) Do you have any other comments that you would like to make on this subject? (please write in)

Thank you etc