General Information - Economic Benefits

Animal Health Ireland (AHI) launched a stakeholder consultation to gather the views of all aspects of the industry on the level of support for a co-ordinated industry-led national programme to eradicate BVD in Ireland during November 2010. This ran for three months and was accompanied by extensive stakeholder consultation.

Overall there was strong support for such a programme, with a preference for the testing of tissue tag samples (taken as part of the official identity tagging process) as the primary diagnostic method.

The absence of specific data relating to the losses due to BVD in Ireland, and the costs of a tag-based eradication programme were identified as critical knowledge gaps. To address this AHI commissioned SAC (Scottish Agricultural College), who have extensive experience in this area, to do the work reported here with the objectives of (1) estimating the benefits of freedom from BVD to the Irish beef and dairy sectors at farm level, and (2) estimating the costs of eradicating BVD from Ireland.

Major findings

Annual losses due to BVD in the Irish cattle industry were estimated to be 102M euro

The total cost to industry of a six year eradication programme was estimated to be 54M euro

The overall benefit:cost ratio for eradication was estimated to be 10:1 i.e. a return of 10 ten euro for each euro spent during the six years of the programme

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Economics of eradicating BVD from Ireland