To whom it may concern,

I am writing in response to your request for industry corroboration for the claims made in the REF2014 impact case study entitled “Control of bovine viral diarrhoea virus in livestock”.

BVD is one of the most important endemic diseases in terms of its potential for causing economic loss within the cattle industry. The disease causes a wide range of symptoms varying from the acute to the chronic debilitating conditions. The main problems are abortion, infertility, failure to thrive and often death. The disease is spread by persistently infected cattle which are born with the disease and which can shed the virus infecting other cattle around them. Removing these animals is critical to controlling and eradicating the disease. Due to the nature of the clinical symptoms BVD also poses a serious welfare problem in the infected herds.

SRUC’s work in this area has helped the establishment of disease priorities for UK farmers and provision of evidence base for endemic disease control, in particular BVD. As with any policy it is essential to have the evidence base on which to identify the most appropriate way forward. In the case of BVD the evidence provided by the research carried out at the SRUC not only identified the overall extent of the disease but also the ways in which it could be controlled. This evidence has been used by the Scottish Government and the industry to develop the control programme. Similar progress has been made in the rest of the UK and Ireland. The overall outcome has been dependant on using the evidence from the SRUC research to convince government, industry and most importantly individual farmers that control is feasible, practical and cost effective.

Without the significant contribution made by SRUC over the last 20 years it is unlikely that the progress that has been realised on BVD control would have been achieved.

Yours Faithfully

J M Scudamore