19 November, 2013

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 a major endemic disease of cattle and works at several levels within beef cow breeding herds and fattening units to disrupt production: causing substantial economic loss and significant animal welfare problems. Apart from the direct deaths from the mucosal disease form of the disease there are usually much greater losses associated with abortion and depressed reproductive performance. The effects in younger calves and fattening stock can be even more of an issue, although less obviously linked to BVD virus infection by farmers, because BVD induced immunosuppression increases the incidence and severity of other infectious diseases such as severe pneumonia outbreaks. For all of these reasons Scottish beef farmers have made eradication of this disease a major priority.

Following Quality Meat Scotland’s survey of disease priorities for Scottish farmers, SRUC’s work in this area has been of invaluable help to establish the evidence base for endemic disease control in Scotland and in other regions.

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

[Signature]

Uel Morton
Chief Executive