

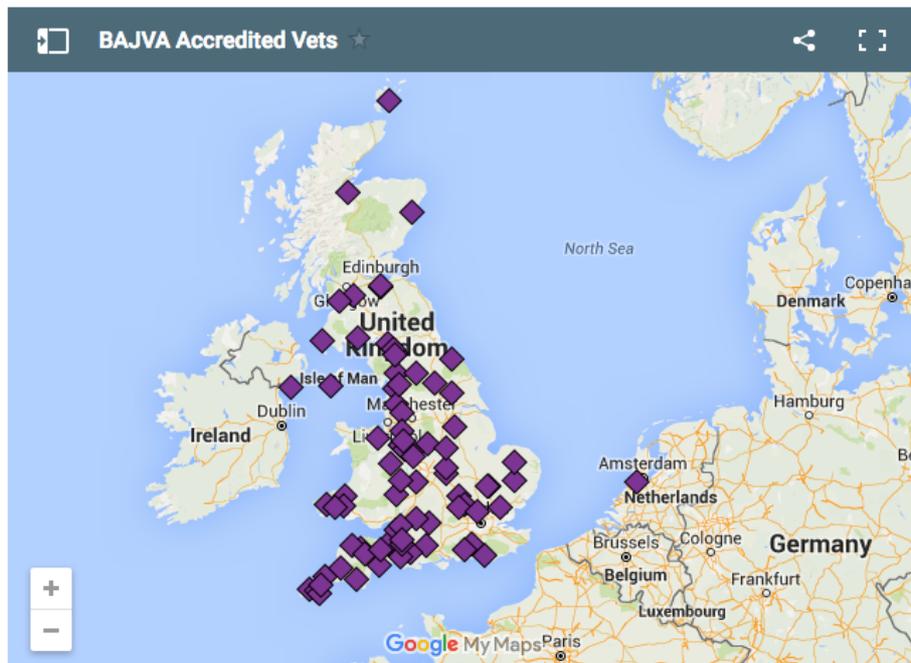


Johne's disease can adversely affect the physical and economic performance of a dairy herd. A recent study of 385 UK Dairy Herds by James Hanks of the University of Reading (2013) showed that Johne's disease test positive cows were 2x more likely to have a cell count > 200,000 cells/ml and were 2x more likely to have milk yields 25% below their adjusted herd average. Johne's disease costs can rise to excess of 1-2p/ litre with higher disease incidences and these costs remain for a number of years until the disease is brought under control. However, international experience has shown that if a rigorous control program is implemented and applied robustly Johne's disease can be brought under control. In Denmark the Johne's disease test prevalence for herds adopting the national control program fell from 10% to 2% over 6 years.

### **BCVA Action Johnes Accredited Veterinary Advisors**

The BCVA training provides consistency in approach and message for the National Johnes Management Plan and to make sure that as many vets as possible are fully up to speed with the details of Johne's control strategies.

The BCVA online training and accreditation process to gain the status of "BCVA Accredited Johnes Veterinary Advisor" (BAJVA) has been well received. So far, 265 vets from all over the country have undergone this training and are now officially accredited advisors for Johne's disease control.



<http://www.actionjohnesuk.org/bcva-action-johnes-accredited-veterinary-advisors/>

### **Case Studies**

We have recently been visiting farmers that have implemented an Action Johne's control strategy on to their farm to see how they have been getting on, and how successful their control of Johne's has been for them. On our website we have uploaded case studies for each control strategy, giving a background on each of the farms and how they managed to implement a National Johne's Management Plan.

We have also created a video of a farmers testimonial on eradicating Johne's disease from their farm and what measures they have taken with their vet. These can all be found on our website. <http://www.actionjohnesuk.org/control-strategies/>

### **Open Day**

At the end of May, Action Johne's in conjunction with SRUC took a trip up to Brechin Scotland to host a Johne's Open Day on the Milne's Family's farm. The Milne's family have been extremely successful in lowering the number of Johne's disease cases through using Control Strategy 4: Improved Farm Management, Test and Cull of the National Johne's Management Plan. The day included Mr Milne giving a background of the farm and what implications they have had from Johne's and how they have found implicating one of the Action Johne's Control Strategies. This included a tour around the farm showing the systems they have in place, including the ear tag categorisation they use to decipher which cows have a history of Johne's from their own accord or their blood line. This three coloured tag system uses a white tag that indicates an animal classed as clear, a blue tag shows the grand-dam tested positive for Johne's disease and finally a yellow tag shows the animal was snatch calved.

Tim Geraghty, the Centre Manager for SAC in Aberdeen gave an in depth talk on the cycle of Johne's disease including how it can start, how it spreads from cow to cow, how the disease can then advance into becoming a debilitating problem, to the potential of it becoming a widespread disease ending in death if not controlled in the first instance. This included the biosecurity hotspots and what to look out for to rectify the problem.

Katie Adam's from SRUC then led on from this giving a brief of the history of the background behind Action Johne's and the Paraban scheme. Throughout Scotland the Paraban scheme found that through industry collaboration Johne's disease was able to be tackled by using the correct approach. This been echoed by the National Johne's Management Plan promoting the control of Johne's disease throughout Britain.

For more information please visit: <http://www.actionjohnesuk.org/events/>

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**Notes to editor's**

1. Johne's disease is a chronic, debilitating and irreversible disease of ruminants caused by infection with *Mycobacterium avium* subspecies *paratuberculosis* (MAP)
2. Animals are usually infected as calves with at least 80% of infections occurring within the first month of life. Infection is mainly caused by ingesting faeces often through contaminated bedding, udders, teats or buckets or from colostrum or milk. Much less commonly the disease can be acquired in the womb or later in life.
3. Youngstock in particular can be infected but may not yet be infectious, and so may be difficult to detect with currently available tests.
4. Many animals will carry the infection harmlessly throughout their lives without being a danger to themselves or to others, but some become infectious, and some become clinically diseased. We can use the tests currently available to detect infectious animals and manage them effectively.
5. Johne's disease is almost always introduced to a herd by purchasing infected replacement breeding stock (calves, heifers, cows or bulls).
6. Johne's disease can adversely affect the physical and economic performance of a dairy herd. A recent study of 385 UK Dairy Herds by James Hanks of the University of Reading (2013) showed that Johne's disease test positive cows were 2x more likely to have a cell count > 200,000 cells/ml and were 2x more likely to have milk yields 25% below their adjusted herd average. Johne's disease costs can rise to excess of 1-2p/ litre with higher disease incidences and these costs remain for a number of years until the disease is brought under control.
7. With Johne's disease, the cost of the disease is not just from clinical disease of infected animals. In most herds, the major costs come from increased susceptibility to other conditions and increased forced culling and the retention of cows that should otherwise be culled.
8. International experience has shown that if a rigorous control program is implemented and applied robustly Johne's disease can be brought under control. In Denmark the Johne's disease test prevalence for herds adopting the national control program has reduced from 10% to 2% over 6 years.

### **Media contacts**

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