



JOHNE'S DISEASE BULLETIN

The Irish Johne's Control Programme – launch of Phase One

The launch of a new Irish Johne's Control Programme (IJCP) was announced recently. The programme recognises that the effective control of Johne's disease at a national level requires a long-term commitment on the part of the dairy industry, milk processors, government and participating farmers. The IJCP builds on the knowledge and experience gained from sources including the previous pilot programme, a review of international best practice and extensive consultation with stakeholders, and provides a range of supports for herdowners, with the objectives of building confidence of freedom for test-negative herds, the resolution of infection in infected herds, market reassurance and improving calf health and biosecurity.

A phased approach has been adopted with Phase One, commencing in 2017, acting as a bridge between the pilot programme and the IJCP for those herds that participated in the former. In Phase Two, which will become available in 2018, access to the programme will be open to all herdowners.

Animal health awareness and knowledge exchange activities are important new components of the Programme and a series of farmer workshops, convened by milk processors and aimed at promoting an awareness of Johne's disease prevention and control, will be scheduled by Co-ops in late 2017 and early 2018. For details of these workshops, farmers should contact their processors.

The key programme elements in Phase One include:

1. Farmer awareness workshops funded by the milk processor.
2. On-farm veterinary risk assessment and management planning (VRAMP) visit, delivered by an approved veterinary practitioner and funded by the milk processor.
3. Support toward the cost of whole-herd testing, funded by DAFM to actively contribute additional contemporary data to inform a consultancy that will help shape Phase Two of the programme.
4. Ancillary testing (using faecal culture or faecal PCR) to resolve the status of animals (and consequently of the herd) with positive or inconclusive ELISA results, funded by DAFM.

Farmers who were not part of the pilot programme may complete an Expression of Interest form, available from their Co-op or from the AHI website and return this to AHI, who will then contact them when registration opens in 2018.

Herdowners who were formerly enrolled in the pilot programme will receive a letter from the Johne's Disease Implementation Group inviting them to register for Phase One of the programme, allowing them to benefit from the various funded supports available for ancillary testing, VRAMP, and whole herd testing.

Full details of the programme in Phase Two will be decided in the coming months, taking into account the outcome of an international consultancy, but will include herd testing, VRAMPs, investigations for confirmed test-positive herds, funded by DAFM and the EU, and delivered through the TASA measure of the Rural Development Programme, and the calculation of a Herd Assurance Score to provide

individual herds with negative test results with an objective measure of the degree of confidence that they are truly free from infection.

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All farmers are encouraged to find out more about Johne's disease control and how to manage the risk of Johne's disease entering and spreading within their herd by participating in a Johne's disease workshop hosted by their milk processor and signing up to the new programme.

Further information

Useful information may be found in AHI leaflets on Johne's disease which are available from the Animal Health Ireland website or by clicking on the leaflets below.

