



In association with

# An update on CVERA

Professor Simon More, University College Dublin, provides key updates on the Centre for Veterinary Epidemiology and Risk Analysis

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Professor More is director of the Centre for Veterinary Epidemiology and Risk Analysis in Ireland. He is also chair of the Scientific Committee of the European Food Safety Authority, seeking to inform policy decision-making in animal health and welfare and public health in Ireland and Europe.

The Centre for Veterinary Epidemiology and Risk Analysis (CVERA) is the national resource centre for veterinary epidemiology, based within the UCD School of Veterinary Medicine. The centre provides scientific advice in support of national policy decision-making in many aspects of animal health and welfare and public health. A detailed article about CVERA appeared in the June 2017 edition of the *Veterinary Ireland Journal*. However, in this feature, we provide several updates on some key initiatives.

## BOVINE TUBERCULOSIS

Recent studies have added considerably to our understanding of bovine tuberculosis (bTB) eradication, both in terms of opportunities and constraints. Further to work conducted in Co. Kilkenny during 2009-13, we now have robust information about the performance of the BCG vaccine in badgers! Vaccination was found to reduce susceptibility in non-infected badgers by, on average, 59%. We also have a clearer understanding of the scale of live cattle movement in Ireland, with the development of an animation of movements during 2016.<sup>2</sup> In a recent paper,<sup>3</sup> Simon More focused on the issue of whether bTB can be eradicated from Ireland, and whether this can be achieved by 2030. This is an important national discussion, as decisions made now will have long-term implications both in terms of time-to-eradication and cumulative programme costs.

## JOHNE'S DISEASE

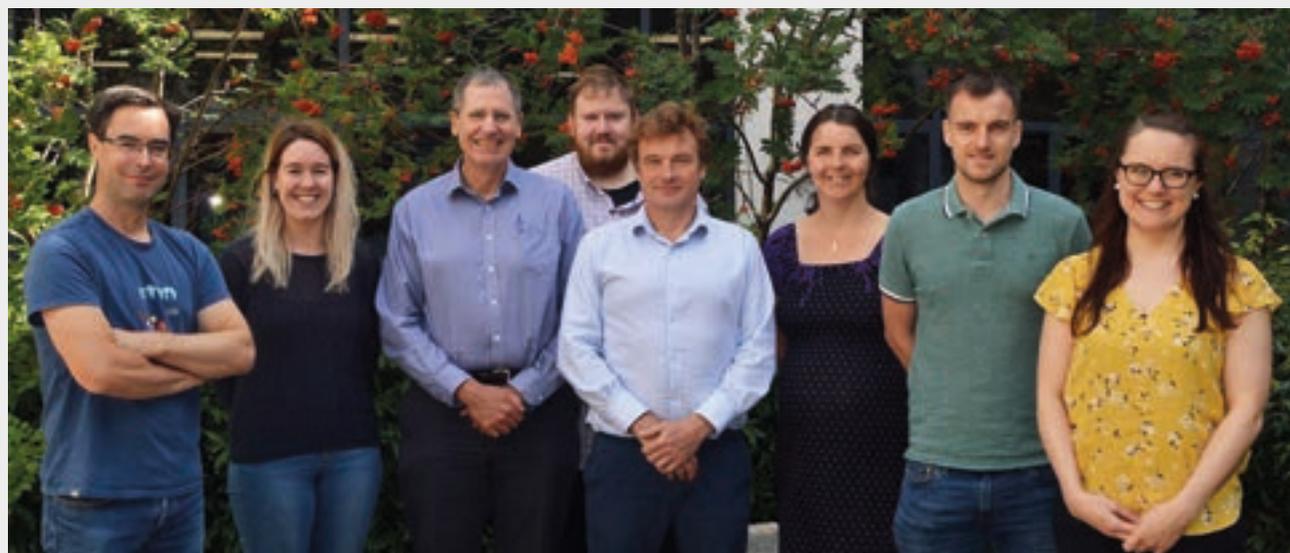
The Irish Johne's Control Programme (IJCP) was recently agreed, following many years of discussion, and will be managed by Animal Health Ireland. Detailed scientific research has been conducted, seeking to inform national discussions about the most appropriate approaches under Irish conditions for

the two main surveillance strategies of 'case detection' (finding infected herds) and 'freedom from infection' (building confidence of freedom from infection for those herds that consistently test negative at consecutive annual herd tests). This background work has been recently published<sup>4,5</sup> and builds on work conducted by international consultants and Irish scientists.

## BOVINE VIRAL DIARRHOEA

CVERA continues to conduct research in support of the national bovine viral diarrhoea (BVD) eradication programme. Fiona Reardon recently focused on Trojan dams in fulfilment of her Masters studies. While the role of Trojan dams is well-recognised, their contribution has not previously been quantified. During 2013-15, 8.6% of all BVD-positive birth events in Ireland could reasonably be attributed to Trojan dams (rising, as expected during the eradication programme, from 7.1% in 2013 to 10.6% in 2015).<sup>6</sup> Strategies are available to mitigate the risk posed, focusing on approaches that limit the inward movement of animals that could potentially act as Trojan dams.<sup>7</sup> The results of these studies have helped to shape decision-making in the national programme.

References 1-7 available on request from [cvera@ucd.ie](mailto:cvera@ucd.ie)



The CVERA team, including Guy McGrath, Ann Barber, Simon More, Daniel Collins, Jamie Tratalos, Miriam Casey, Jamie Madden and Aine Collins.