



Launch of the new Johne's Disease Tracker: The Action Group on Johne's launches the new test result interpretation tool and outlines the new BCVA (British Cattle Veterinary Association) training programme for vets.

Vets and dairy industry stakeholders gave their full support to the new Johne's Tracker at the launch event held on 21st July. The Tracker will provide vets and farmers with a powerful tool for interpreting Johne's test results that will give further momentum to industry efforts to tackle Johne's disease.

The event was attended by vets from all over the country along with purchaser and farmer representatives.

The Tracker will provide a common framework for presenting Johne's Disease test results which will give vets and farmers greater insight into the effectiveness of the Johne's Disease management strategy used on the farm.

The Tracker takes historic test results, along with other herd data, and provides a simple visual representation which gives a clear picture of disease progression in the herd. This will support farmers and their vet to determine what they need to do to continue to reduce the incidence of the disease, or for low prevalence farms, ensure they maintain control.

The tool is being incorporated into the result reports provided by the Johne's testing labs and is expected to be available by the end of the Summer 2021.

Chair of the Action Group on Johne's, Lyndon Edwards said: 'As a farmer I believe the Johne's Tracker gives both farmers and vets another useful tool in their toolbox, simplifying the understanding of Johne's disease results and enabling farmers, and their vets, to make good decisions and reduce the future levels on Johne's disease on farms'.

Also launched at the event were the new training modules developed by the BCVA. The first new module centres on interpretation of test results and testing protocols and the second module focuses on the use of the Johne's Disease Tracker. They will supplement the modules that already exist and have been completed by all current BCVA Accredited Johne's Veterinary Advisors (BAJVA).

The new modules are part of the commitment by the BCVA to ensuring that vets remain fully up to date on developments in Johne's Disease management.

Only BCVA Accredited Johne's Veterinary Advisors (BAJVA) can provide the certification required under the National Johne's Management Plan. All current BAJVAs will be required to undertake the two modules to maintain their advisor status.

The National Johne's Management Plan (NJMP) is now beginning its fourth year and the Action Group on Johne's has again published encouraging annual data from the previous year showing that all milk purchaser members of the Action Group on Johne's have



obtained declarations from most of their supplying dairy farmers, with the majority achieving over 80% in what has been a difficult year.

It is currently estimated that over 90% of UK milk producers supply milk purchaser members of the scheme. The success of the scheme in winning industry engagement was a significant factor in the decision that participation, by both farmers and purchasers, was made a mandatory part of the Red Tractor scheme in 2020.

From the 1st April 2020, the Red Tractor Registered Dairy Purchaser scheme required all members to be a member of the NJMP.

Notes:

The NJMP is a coordinated initiative for the benefit of the industry and cow welfare. Milk purchaser members of the NJMP require their associated farmers to obtain a signed declaration to confirm that in conjunction with a BCVA Johne's Accredited Veterinary Advisor (BAJVA) they have done:

- an annual structured risk assessment to understand the Johne's disease risks on the farm, and
- testing within the last 12 months to understand the herd's Johne's disease status, then
- a written Johne's disease management plan has been produced, reviewed and agreed with the farm that one of the six NJMP control strategies is understood and will be implemented.