

New report calls for improvements to UK cattle vaccination

February 12 2016



Research into disease prevention on British dairy farms has revealed a variation in how vaccination strategies are implemented by farmers and vets.

The study on the perceptions and challenges of vaccination among farmers and [vets](#) was carried out by researchers at The University of Nottingham's Vet School on behalf of ADHB Dairy, a not-for-profit organisation working on behalf of Britain's [dairy farmers](#).

Interviews with farmers and vets throughout England, Scotland and Wales were carried out to determine attitudes to vaccination and also to examine decision-making processes in the absence of a national overarching strategy for [cattle](#) vaccination.

There are 38 vaccines currently registered for use in cattle in the UK,

offering protection against a number of viral, bacterial, parasitic and fungal infections. The Nottingham research found that most farmers were using one or more vaccines and a minority had never vaccinated their cattle. Some vaccinations were carried out in response to a confirmed or suspected diagnosis of a [vaccine](#)-preventable disease rather than as a proactive and preventative strategy.

The study also found that farmers trust their vet's advice on vaccination but the advice is not always followed. There was also scope for a more proactive approach from vets but it was acknowledged that their time and resources are scarce.

Imogen Richens, Research Fellow at the Nottingham Vet School, said: "The aim of this research was to identify the motivators and barriers of farmers and veterinary surgeons to the implementation of [vaccination strategies](#) on British dairy farms. The current trend of reduced use of antibiotics in farm animals emphasises the importance of preventive measures to control endemic diseases such as leptospirosis, which have an impact on the health of cattle and people working with cattle.

"We found there is an opportunity for farmers to be more aware of their herd's disease status by working with their vet. Our research also highlighted concerns around the practical use of cattle vaccines (i.e. timeline of boosters and cold chain storage). Proactive communication between vets and farmers will improve compliance issues."

The results of this work indicate the positive appetite in both vets and [farmers](#) to structure a more collaborative approach towards endemic disease control. Further work will now focus on how to implement the key findings into practical guidelines to optimise cattle vaccination in the UK.

ADHB Dairy has published a [report](#) based on the Nottingham Vet

School investigation and has also released a [video](#) highlighting best practice in safe and efficient vaccination of cattle.

More information: Implementation of vaccination strategies on British dairy farms: Understanding challenges and perceptions.
[dairy.ahdb.org.uk/media/131103 ... cination_branded.pdf](http://dairy.ahdb.org.uk/media/131103...cination_branded.pdf)

Provided by University of Nottingham

Citation: New report calls for improvements to UK cattle vaccination (2016, February 12)
retrieved 10 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2016-02-uk-cattle-vaccination.html>

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