

<p><b>3.1 Projects specific to the Pig, Poultry, Sheep, Beef and Dairy sectors</b></p> <p>All livestock sectors will have access to all the elements proposed e.g. disease surveillance, animal health audit, but in addition each sector is looking at how it can tackle disease issues specific to their sector e.g. Mastitis for the Dairy Sector, Bovine Viral Diarrhoea for the Beef and Foot rot for the Sheep Sector.</p> <p>The Pig sector is already in the process of preparing a project to eradicate Porcine Reproductive Respiratory Syndrome which should be ready by early May.</p> <p>This can be achieved though awareness raising and screening, however this programme can not fund vaccinations.</p>	<p>Identify a small number of issues and try to ensure widespread uptake. Eg cattle-BVD and Johnes. Sheep-wormer resistance. Get them involved through abattoirs and markets.</p> <p>Audit to focus on cost/benefit issues-look at multiple diseases within unit and assess economic impact. Eg economic value/cost of prevention. Improve skills vocational training. Avoid sector silo's – share resources across sectors. Encourage collaboration between vet and farmer (=partners). Needs to include TB.</p> <p>Need to be assessed by each sector collating disease surveillance results etc. for specific projects – bringing together existing research on animal welfare.</p> <p>Would have to be voluntary, weakening eradication schemes. In SE extending OHECs Scheme – gold, silver, bronze levels. Useful for buyers. Johnes, BVD, IBR and Lepto. Sheep- enzootic vac., toxoplasma, sheep scab. TB identifying healthy badger setts and discussion groups to map out. Speak to Richard Gard and Brian Hill. This could highlight problems related to sett perturbation.</p> <p>We should have sector specific projects. Needed to give SWHLI focus and directions. Should not be massively expensive.</p> <p>TB is devastating the SW livestock sector and seen as major disease challenge for cattle sector. It was felt by group that some funding should be used to investigate extent of disease and suffering in the wildlife population. Additional funds should be made available to cattle farmers to convert existing buildings / facilities to develop many more EFUs to increase capacity to accommodate TB cattle and therefore improve competitiveness of those buying animal s from farms under TB restriction. Poultry eradication programmes for campylobacter. Funding for projects relating to Johnes and BVD seen as relevant by group.</p> <p>Topics need to kept fresh. Network needs to kept local. Eradication programs important to consider nationally.</p> <p>There are definitely diseases in each sector which need addresses by joint farmer/industry/SWHLI initiatives. Dairy-TB, BVD, Lameness, Mastitis, IBR. Beef- BVD, TB, Lepto, IBR. Sheep- Scab, Louping ill., lameness, anthelmintic resistance.</p> <p>TB must be addressed as a priority for cattle also sheep scab for the sheep sector.</p> <p>KT and updating on profitability / economics of production, disease surveillance, pneumonia/common diseases.</p> <p>This section is the key to the success of SWHLI. Specific projects per sector will give the biggest life in profitability over all the other sections in the summary.</p> <p>Each sector will have to push its project after doing the necessary research etc. For long term futures of SWHLI they must be achievable objectives.</p> <p>Each sector will have different issues. Representatives of (a) dairy (b) sheep &amp; beef. (a) Dairy – highlighting risks of buying-in animals eg Bluetongue/BILD! (b) Ditto eg sheep scab, SCOPs. Agreed TB not a SWHLI issue.</p> <p>Trial: Selenium supplementation of badgers – provide farmers in (say) 50 mile radius areas with 5c feed blocks or 'placebo' blocks – monitor TB incidence in each of the areas. Duration 3 years+</p> <p>To bring together the info for dissemination – focus groups on farm using experts. Discussion groups – utilise existing groups, eg breed society. Make sure the outcomes are sustainable and can be built and used in future. Relate specific sector approaches to whole-farm approach, ie salmonella &amp; cross sector diseases, so general awareness needs to be considered.</p> <p>Need to define if proposal is for small groups or region wide. Eg Mastitis – small group of farmers with a specific project, as a regional campaign for Mastitis control. Pig sector is a good model. Park the TB on one side. BVD favourite option for cattle controls. Johnes second favourite. Regional controls of cattle issues important, eg digital dermatitis. Sheep scab in sheep – but will need co-ordination and maybe legislation. Breeding programmes may be important here – can we breed for health?</p> <p>Disease specific training (and sector specific) – delivery and measurement very important. Small on-farm workshops – small numbers. Evening meetings – larger policy issues. Discussion groups – cost effective. One to one on farm (vet/consultant). Need to reach those hard to reach farmers.</p>
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**3.2 Provision of vocational training activity for all sectors.** A series of SWHLI training activities is already available and being managed by Duchy College, but delivered across the whole South West region. 39% of the courses put on are on issues related to improving animal health.

Training already available (delivered through vets).

Already being done through duchy etc.

Need for more structured approach to AHW training, not ad hoc, modular approach preferred, scope to utilise NVQ approach to recognising training undertaken, treat vocational training as CPD for farmers.

Training needed, on farm visits across region, knowledge transfer on health necessary, focussed training events.

Some grass roots up activity for actual workers, sharing of best practice – good idea.

Same as 3.6 people have to be competent. Farmers as well as workers. Courses need to be modular days courses building towards a qualification. So needs to be linked to 3.6 leading to series of certs with NVQ. Needs to be recognised widely, preferably linking scheme.

Linked with 3.6. Concept is good would like to see more of it. Vet/animal health professional has a role to play in organising and co-ordinating.

General view was that funding was already available. Apprenticeships viewed as valuable as could give new entrants/farmers valuable training in other areas eg marketing/business studies (Ag. Studies). Better signposting of existing pots of money.

Careful not to be funding something that is already being done. Important not to duplicate. Must be on a local basis.

Can be very good, needs to be high quality and targeted. Use farm discussion groups. Be prepared to travel (?50 miles).

Funding should not be wasted on courses aimed at hobby farmers. The aim of improving profitability of the SW livestock sector must remain the objective.

VTS yes! New contract required targeted at AHW, specifically informed by disease surveillance.

Attempt to engage small holders in bigger regional disease issues. Advertising campaign in small holder.

Yes

Already available – not a SWHLI issue

Improve all livestock farmers IT skills so that they are confident to access existing information networks especially electronic ones. Use RPA data and the like to identify farmers who still send in their claims on paper. Legacy = existing information more widely used by the “hard to get at” farmers

Needs to be fresh and targeted. Only top farmers attend. Linked to specific health issues that are identified as priorities.

Enough funding already out there.

Not keen to promote a voluntary system for VTS – as could become compulsory. A need for vocational training for ICT etc.

Excellent ideas. Encourage and extend the support that is already available. Will have the added benefit of peer pressure.

One route does not fit all farmers – experience in these suggests a mix of alternatives – small group/longer day; daytime/evening; face-to-face/online (cf NADIS initiative). We recognise the value of social content for farmers – isolation of farmers a serious issue.

**3.3 Farmer discussion groups** - farmers discussing and working together on delivering health improvements.

Previous experience of £1000 for 1000 cows good base to build on.  
Use VTS funding for this, coordination through SWHLI.  
Link to SW Rural Enterprise Gateway, only if adds value: time is a scarce resource.  
Farmer led, sharing knowledge and experience, element of competitiveness and collaborative, facilitator needed for steering.  
Good idea.  
Linked with 3.4 Already in existence. Milk academy working well. They wax and wane, go through funding. They are a good way of using funding as the keen people get involved. Often not through vets more consultants. The meetings without experts are working well. Short lived groups to address a specific problem. Could work with existing or new groups. Groups for different levels of staff.  
Goes hand in hand with 3.4. Could also tie in with animal health professionals.  
Felt unnecessary as many already exists, support and highlight continuation of existing schemes.  
Use existing discussion groups as well as promoting new ones.  
Yes. Make use of existing groups get list of groups.  
A good way of exchanging information and learning from each other. Also useful to bring in expert advisers.  
yes, benchmarking groups etc.  
Yes  
Develop active farm discussions, but probably one already present. Encourage to look at animal health matters with groups by provision of speakers  
Duplication  
Not only groups of local farmers sharing info, but facilitators bringing in information and collating/sharing all the info gained at discussion groups.  
Bring in expert speakers.  
Eblex system – it works. No need to re-finance. Structures already exist.  
Good idea – cost effective. Small (10 farmers). Use vet practice networks – established client list.  
Good idea. Important that it does not duplicate work & groups already available. Should be match funded by the industry groups whose members will benefit.  
Possibly link with above. The co-ordination is a key element for a good discussion group – might require a paid co-ordinator. If SWHLI appoints a ‘full time co-ordinator’ – no room for ‘ho-hum’. Avoid duplication – SWHLI should liaise with existing discussion groups (but be prepared to establish new ones where needed).

**Task 3a:** Under the heading of **Action**, a number of specific services are proposed, as set out in your consultation document.  
This is **your** opportunity to comment on those proposed services.

3.4 **Monitor farms** – Innovative activities could be demonstrated and there would be a requirement to be following elements in the Information, Assessment and Taking Action process e.g. Boumatic step matrix or thermal imaging. *This could be supported by the capital grant element (3.5).*

On farm events.  
Good ideas but how much money available and implementation?  
Welcomed but tie into training.  
Identify farms using new /best practice and support KT activities / visits. Several across region, small financial support where needed. Whole farm approach to health.  
Good idea for specific issues, pay someone to set up a good demonstration but not necessarily spend capital grants.  
Good to go to farm with a problem. Opportunity to fund something new. A means to see new technology. Could be tied in with 3.5.  
Could be linked with sector specific projects. Monitor farms – monitor and benchmarking diseases. Could be linked with SWARM activity.  
Good idea one per sector.  
From experience this type of KT works, tapping into existing groups will cut costs for this. Demonstration farms across the sectors in each sector.  
Supportive of ideas, combined with other funding. Demo farms for other aspects of RDPE monies not just H and W budget to even other funding agencies eg Natural England.  
A series of farm walks so that farmers can see how others tackle issues. Demonstrate handling facilities, for example. Better to visit many farms than have a single farm to use. Biosecurity is important and is educational in itself.  
No but yes, facilitate groups of farmers-sector and area. No but yes, help farmers visit 'best practice' farmers.  
Case studies better for pigs.  
Do not create one but use existing farmers who demonstrate best practice in whatever field: ie disease, buildings etc  
Consider on these farms (not necessarily the same farmers) – individual cost/benefit projects eg disease eradication for discussion groups – need economic evaluation in this. SWHLI to pay for data capture & additional costs eg economic evaluation (not testing/treatment)  
Improve public access, especially for schoolchildren. Reduce H&S red tape which causes many farms to stop offering to open their doors to schools. Legacy = better educated next generation of consumers  
Good in principle  
Monitor farms very effective. Eblex system – have to be "half-an-hour" farms = no more than half an hour from target audience.  
Not appropriate for pigs/poultry. Can work.  
Stick more money into existing sites, like Kingshay. If nationally run by govt – yes.  
Good idea. Linked in with 3.2, 3.3 etc – join it all up. ADAS has demo farms in Wales – build on their model. Problem could be that they are capital intensive and may have limited benefit to other farms. Do not over-support the demo farm. Maybe use Beacon farms instead. Look at alternative funding mechanisms for demo farms (ie sponsorship etc) and use case studies.  
A very valuable facility – "always learn something on these visits". We strongly support SWHLI developing good links with organisations such as Kingshay (Dairy) and Blade Farming (Beef) – both have the potential to operate suitable demonstration farms.

### 3.5 Small capital grant scheme (£1.2 million)

To achieve the best value for money, capital grants would not be made available to the majority of individual farmers, but could be used to benefit groups of farmers, for example:-

Faecal Egg Count Packs could be provided to veterinary surgeries, so that farmers have easier access FEC data;

Calf rearing units and Exempt Finishing Units could be made eligible to house TB restricted cattle, allowing farmers to move such cattle off farm.

Needs incentive to engage. More animals /less labour requires investment for H and S reasons. Improved stock handling will lead to all round more efficient health treatments.

Linked to knowledge transfer eg do cert into 'scops' – grants for weighing crate

Not cost effective.

TB units needed in some areas. Capital grants need to be evidence based and assessed.

Far better route to take to ameliorate restrictions of TB – good way to spend money in a urgent need to cut economic cost of TB.

Prepared to allow free access and sharing of expertise and knowledge.

Cattle handling facilities would be great but the money is not going anywhere. Could be demonstration farms establishment. FEC packs. Needs to be used strategically/such a small amount of money.

Group felt FEC packs should be readily available with some veterinary assistance/training. Should direct some funds to new entrants.

This is the most important part of the project as it gets directly to the farm profitability. Handling facilities for vaccination esp. common land. Redirecting rain water etc.

Perhaps small amounts – demonstration farms. Portable races for encouraging and enabling handling of stock-to be owned by a co-operating group. Not supported, not enough money to spread many already set up.

Yes subsidise. Handling facilities to be shared by a group mobile sheep dipping facilities, TB testing (blood testing kits. Brock testing kits.

Yes, weigh / crush, improve ventilation/ building, handling facilities. The farmers should contribute 40/50% to these.

Exclusion of money on vaccines and meds for short term use. This small investment will reduce dependence long term. Profitability. Temporary facilities/gilt mating units. Disinfection. Staffing/clean down gangs. Transport (cleaning facilities at slaughterhouses)

The money would be better used to back up some of the other initiatives, ie: farm audits, extra training, specific disease control

Mobile handling facilities between groups of farmers to facilitate handling grazed stock eg Bluetongue vaccination

Mobile handling facilities for TB testing & other health monitoring – held by local groups of farmers – bookable by individuals for a modest charge. Legacy = more efficient, lower cost, safer testing. Agree with Exempt Finishing Units; Legacy =- reduced financial impact of TB outbreak

Link this to the animal health audit/building audit.

May have some scope eg EID – groups of farmers to have access to research and IT support. Could lead to unfairness. Could be poor value – little difference overall. Electronic & IT systems to allow access to?

Linked to training & building audits. Small project size, eg handling equipment, foot baths, isolation facilities (upgrading of). Like Faecal Egg Count kits. Cutting edge technology – min grant £200, very small & very specific.

Can't work – how would it work? Investigational work on a commercial farm – available for all in the sector.

What would be the different emphasis for these grants – how would it differ from RDPE etc. good to encourage collaboration. TB isolation facilities in each county to keep them separate from healthy animals. Encourage use of separate finishing units. Use the money to pump prime activity in 3.2, 3.3 (training, health plans etc).

In principle, we strongly support SWHLI having a small capital grants scheme. We suggest that collaborative ventures would provide the best benefit/cost outcome. One example could be a high quality mobile handling system (cattle)... We are not aware that there is a real need for Tb finishing units – the market should take care of this!

**3.6 Development and promotion of an Animal Health Qualification -**  
Could be awarded after attendance at an appropriate number of SWHLI  
organised events.

Not sure it could become part of statutory requirement.  
Linked to nadis activity and others  
No but certificate of attendance (endorsed by delivery body).  
Valuable to region's knowledge base and drive quality / health. Delivery outcomes – events/online/correspondence.  
Good idea particularly for those actually working with animals.  
Brilliant idea. Tim Phillips is thinking about a farm workers qualification. Already happening in freedom Food eggs. Needs to be a qualification – can be certificate of attendance but something more is good. Could tie in with Stockman for Dairy. Open for farmers and farm staff at different levels.  
Linked with 3.2. should be a legal requirement for livestock keepers. Could give a lot of pride. Could improve employer and employee relationship.  
Groups felt fantastic idea as demonstrates professionalism of the Industry. Demonstrated due diligence. Need to be able to identify financial benefit to qualification-must not add to paperwork /audits. May help to encourage people into the industry if it is seen to be a progressive industry.  
Query the value of this. Knowledge Transfer is far more important than a certificate.  
Concerned whether it could become a FABBC requirement or SFP? NB grandfather rights. NB NVQZ may cover some of this. Link into existing qualifications.  
No confidence.  
Yes accreditation for staff on vocational training, assurance scheme, CPD credits.  
Pigs have this already.  
Yes, good idea. Develop a passport scheme like pigs & poultry have now  
Not required  
Any qualification needs to be linked to a premium price for your product or a reduced chance of being inspected. Promote to all retailers and accreditation bodies.  
A low priority for the funding  
Principle is good idea, but beware of being used in rules and regs – “you must have 2 people with qualifications on this form to get farm assurance” or SFP.  
Industry recognised – NPTC, ATB. Simple vocational/specific ie lameness (Dutch foot step course), mobility scoring. Evidence for farm assurance – risk based inspection (Defra RCS agenda, lower payment). Run by vets – accreditation, certificates, admin. NADIS lameness module – used in Yorks/Humber. Trainee assessed/measured 6 months later (SMART targets) – ongoing/updating skills.  
Concerned about regulation for an animal health qualification – but there is thought that there is benefit to learn about other farms. Some difference of opinion here. A certificate of attendance would be good, but not the requirement for a qualification. Good for sending staff who are weak in some subjects. This needs to be market driven.  
Could be beneficial for the industry as a whole. Good idea. Do it on a modular basis – or mix & match with SWHLI events attendance. SWHLI promote what is available and allow farms to register attendance on courses. Submission of courses for assessment by funding body. 3.2, 3.3 & 3.4 will also feed into this.  
We are not convinced this should be a priority for SWHLI.

**Task 3b: Are there any other services that you would like to see provided, with the proposed Action? Please write your responses below.**

<p><b>Additional service that could be incorporated in Animal Health Knowledge Network - Action</b></p>	<p><b>Why this is being proposed</b></p>
<p>Survey of vets practices</p> <p>Communication</p> <p>Raise awareness of best practice on farm and encourage practical application at farm level not to fund issues that should be best practice.</p> <p>General –could funds work through existing framework eg REG? Vets could be used by REG.</p> <p>TB liaison officers</p> <p>Service for minimising movements of livestock – data base of information to bypass movements to livestock market. Video auctions?</p> <p>OLMC – organic livestock marketing company.</p> <p>Whole programme needs to be demand led but it needs pushing by vets, local consultants and animal health professionals.</p> <p>It has all got to be long term.</p> <p>TB co-ordinator</p> <p>Retail involvement with the project important.</p> <p>Capital grant scheme</p> <p>Abattoir information</p> <p>Train the trainer</p> <p>Need to capture valuable info on farm that is not part of 'mainstream' thinking</p> <p><u>Get a move on – don't wait till time is running out!</u></p> <p>This is a waste of a good day.</p> <p>The best use of tax payers money is to spend it on vaccinations.</p> <p>Would it be possible to have available cattle/sheep handling equipment owned by farmer groups – as done with machine rings. So this would cover H&amp;S and disease eg Bluetongue vaccination,/TB testing.</p>	<p>See what is already going on.</p> <p>See what things are already being done they just need to be brought together/ communicated. Specific West Country links to information eg parasite forecast link goes straight to south west not national.</p> <p>Helping farmers through the TB issues, get a full understanding of what they can do. Other diseases would be addressed pro-actively if TB situation was improving widespread belief that TB will get the animal if cured of everything else.</p> <p>Person to handle/advise farmers affected by bTB, whether new herd breakdown, issues with compensation, guidance/information on testing regimes and use of tests (suin/gamma interferon).</p> <p>Realise this is unlikely.</p> <p>Send back to farmers and facilitate info. Sent for disease surveillance.</p> <p>Keep the knowledge transfer people up to speed so the knowledge can be transferred up to date.</p> <p>Make sure the trainers have the resources to do the training for efficiency. A central store.</p> <p>Farmers find ways round problems, eg an effective (tried &amp; tested locally) homeopathic remedy/treatment that would not be shared through conventional training/workshops</p>

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The Pig sector is already in the process of preparing a project to eradicate Porcine Reproductive Respiratory Syndrome which should be ready by early May.

This can be achieved through awareness raising and screening, however this programme can not fund vaccinations.

More investigation into reasons for abortion in sheep flocks.

The majority of the funding should be directed at these specific areas – taking action is the most fundamental (80% of funding). What about goats? – make sure every sector is covered ie goats at risk of TB as well as Dairy, Beef etc. However, camelids should not be included. Game birds as well as poultry.

We see establishing credibility (of the delivery body) as a key element. In principle, we strongly support this area of activity by SWHLI and suggest attention is given to reaching those farmers who don't often go to such events (and provide some food). Pitch for top quality speakers – to get farmers to turnout, it needs to be something really worthwhile.