



# Challenges to Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD) eradication in Scotland

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## Introduction

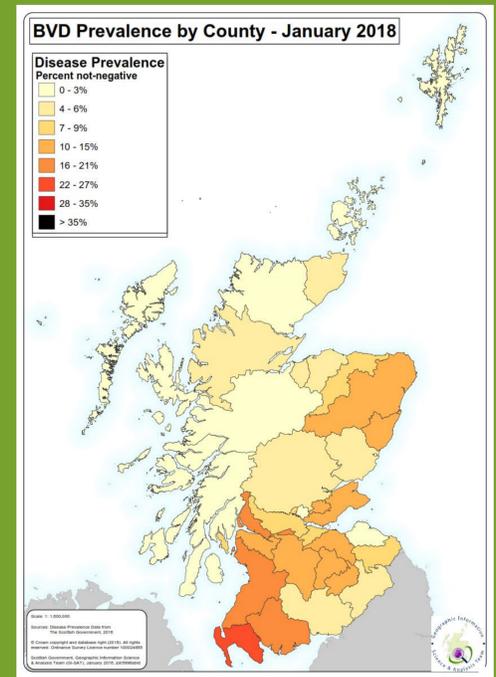
Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD) is a common cattle disease in the UK, which causes scouring, infertility, abortions, illness.

The BVD eradication programme was introduced in 2010, led by industry and supported by the Scottish Government.

This research asks:

- 1) What are farmers' experiences of the BVD scheme?
- 2) How could the scheme be improved for the future?

To explore this we interviewed beef farmers in Aberdeenshire and Angus, dairy farmers in Aberdeenshire, Dumfries and Galloway and Angus, livestock auctioneers and expert vets during phase 4 of the BVD scheme.



## Why is the scheme working?

- Many farmers interviewed agreed with the **scheme's aims** and saw it as **fair** because all farmers have to comply.
- The scheme was having an impact through **sales** – farmers interviewed saw a BVD negative status as important in reducing barriers to sales.
- BVD was seen as a **'straightforward' disease** by farmers interviewed – in terms of diagnosis, transmission and removal from the farm.

## How could the scheme be improved?



- Tackle 'neighbourly' biosecurity. The scheme was having less impact on **nose to nose contact across farms**.
- The scheme was having less impact on **private sales** than sales through market because of reluctance to discuss disease status.
- Clarify relationship between **Scottish scheme and schemes elsewhere UK**.
- Clarify **disease test issues**. Farmers interviewed wanted more information about the best and most cost effective tags to use and were unsure about the reliability of the check blood test – which is seen by scientists as the most reliable testing method.
- **More incentives for getting rid of persistently infected (PI) animals**. Farmers might hold onto PIs because of attachment, productivity or lack of visible symptoms.



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