



Johne's Disease

Can I vaccinate my cattle against Johne's Disease?

A vaccine against Johne's disease does exist, but it has serious limitations. It is a live vaccine which is itself a risk (accidental self injection can cause you harm). Although it may help reduce the number of animals which develop disease, vaccination does not necessarily prevent infection with Map. A further drawback is that vaccinated animals react to tests for the disease. This means that vaccination will further complicate the diagnosis of infected animals and the eradication of Johne's disease from a herd. In addition, vaccination against Johne's disease may interfere with the diagnosis and control of bovine tuberculosis.

Is there a link between Johne's Disease and illness in people?

It has been suggested that Map might be the cause of Crohn's disease in people. This has yet to be proved or disproved. Steps taken now, however, to limit the spread of this disease and reduce its incidence within the national beef herd, may help safeguard beef markets by ensuring consumer confidence as well as improving welfare, productivity and profitability.

What can I, as a Beef Farmer, do now about Johne's Disease?

If you believe your herd to be free of Johne's disease you should, with the assistance of your vet, implement a health plan to keep it that way. Particularly this will involve seeking reassurances about the health status of any animals that are purchased, and of the herds from which they come. (If possible they should be sourced from herds accredited free of Johne's disease.) If you run a closed herd you should try to keep it that way. You should consider testing your herd to confirm its health status. If you plan to sell breeding stock you should consider seeking to achieve accreditation of your herd as free of Johne's disease through Johne's disease accreditation programme