



RURAL
BUSINESS
SCHOOL

Tel: 0845 458 7485

Healthy Livestock - Impact

Richard Soffe - Director, Rural Business School

Paul Ward - Manager, Healthy Livestock

AFCP Meeting

Annual Forum

25th November 2014

Rural Business School



OVER THE LAST 18 MONTHS

1445 EVENTS



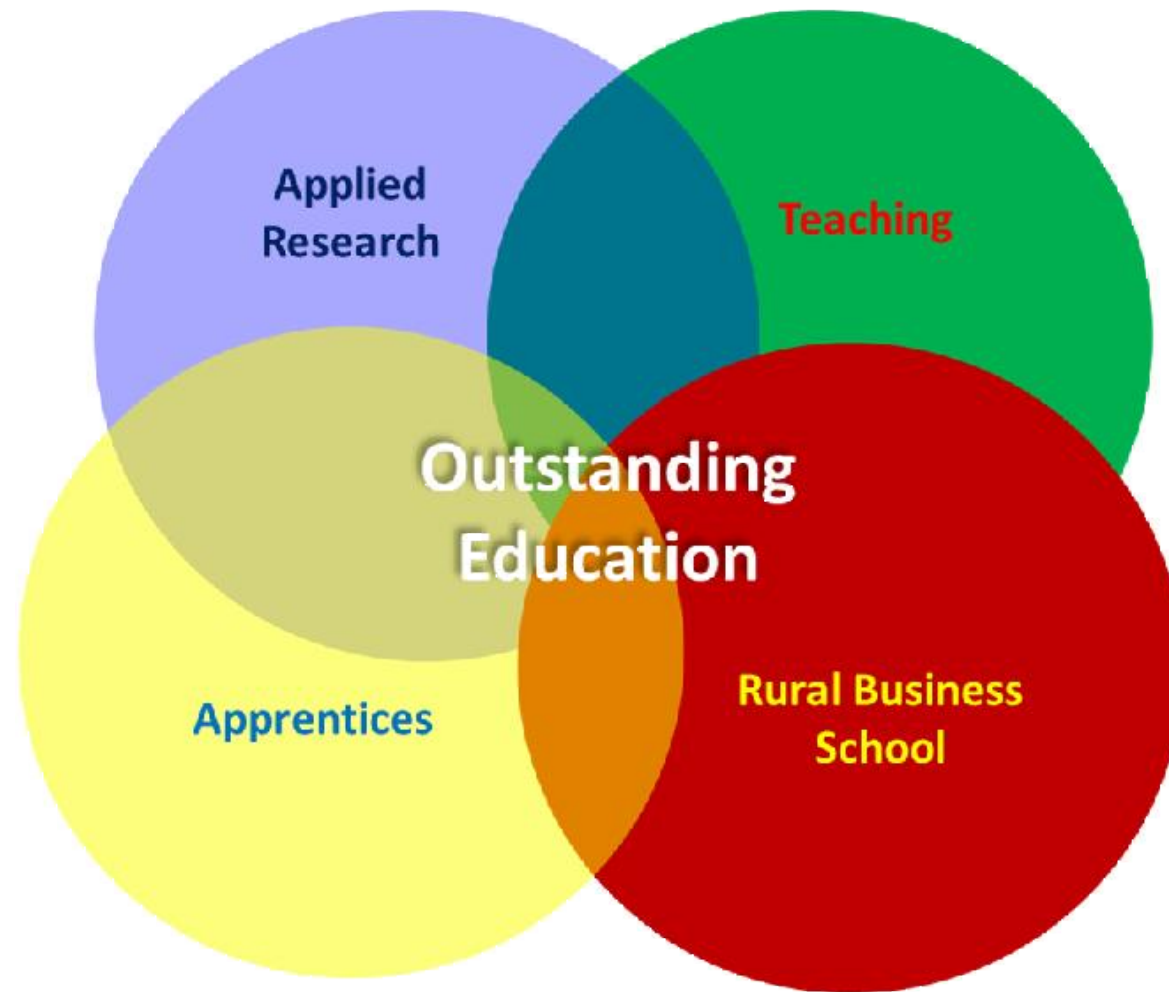
13,000+ PEOPLE



8 NATIONAL CONTRACTS

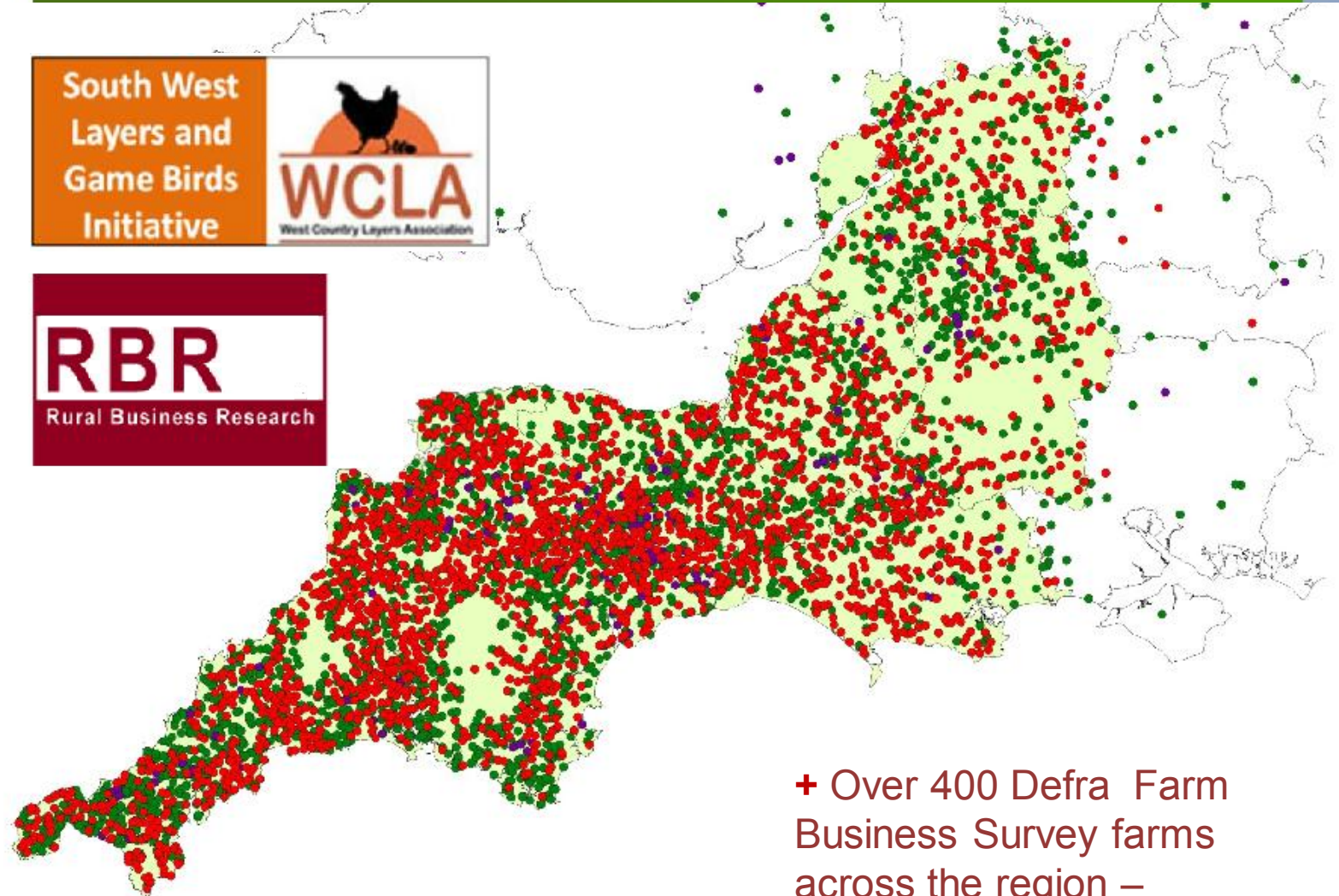


DUCHY COLLEGE





South West
Layers and
Game Birds
Initiative



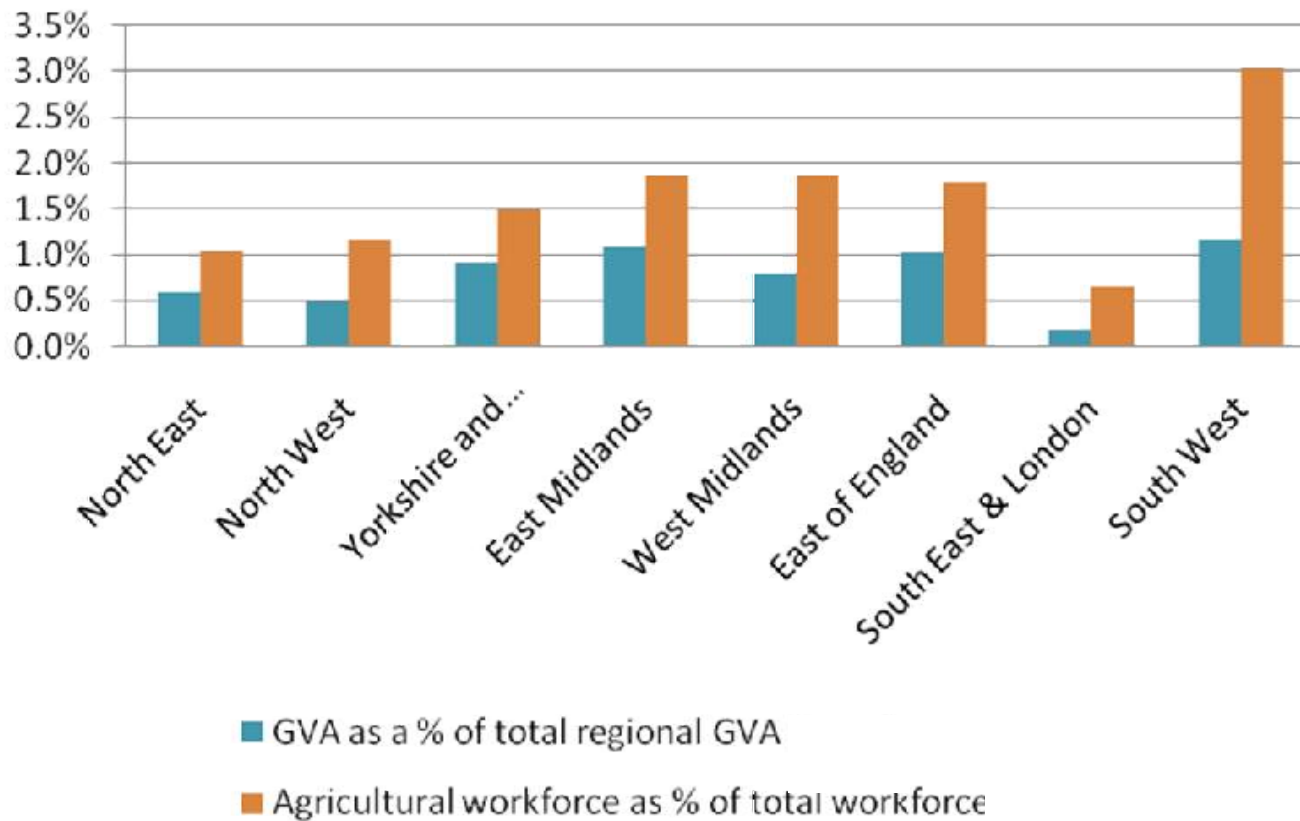
+ Over 400 Defra Farm
Business Survey farms
across the region –
location confidential

Rural Business Research

6 Universities and Colleges



Agriculture's contribution to the regional economy





A success story at farm level

Background

- Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) - EU/Defra funding
- South West Regional Development Agency (SWRDA) (*now Defra*)
- Consultations with livestock producers

Priority diseases

DAIRY

- Johne's
- Mastitis
- Lameness
- BVD

BEEF

- Johne's
- BVD
- Respiratory disease

SHEEP

- Lameness
- Parasite control
- Flock health management

Diseases with most economic impact

SHEEP AND BEEF FOCUS FARMS

Monitor farms are commercial livestock units, demonstrating health planning effects on physical and financial performance.

SHEEP FOCUS FARMS ●

Cornwall

D Turner, Mendennick Fm, Torpoint
J Hosking, Fentongollan Fm, Truro
J & S Menhinnick, Burniere Fm, Wadebridge
R Hawke, Bodgate Fm, Launceston
P & A Coombe, Dupath Fm, Callington

Devon

J.Starr, East Alsery Fm, Bradworthy
M.Brice, Beacon View, Tiverton
B.Ayre, Kimberland Fm, Barnstaple
W.Dracup, Broadaford, Widecombe

Dorset

Kingston Maurward, Dorchester
A.Frampton, Manor Fm, Sturminster

Gloucestershire

M & P Whitaker, Overtown Fm, Cranham
S.Willes, Ladbarrow Fm, Cheltenham
D & J Cutter, Monkhill Fm, Longhope

Somerset

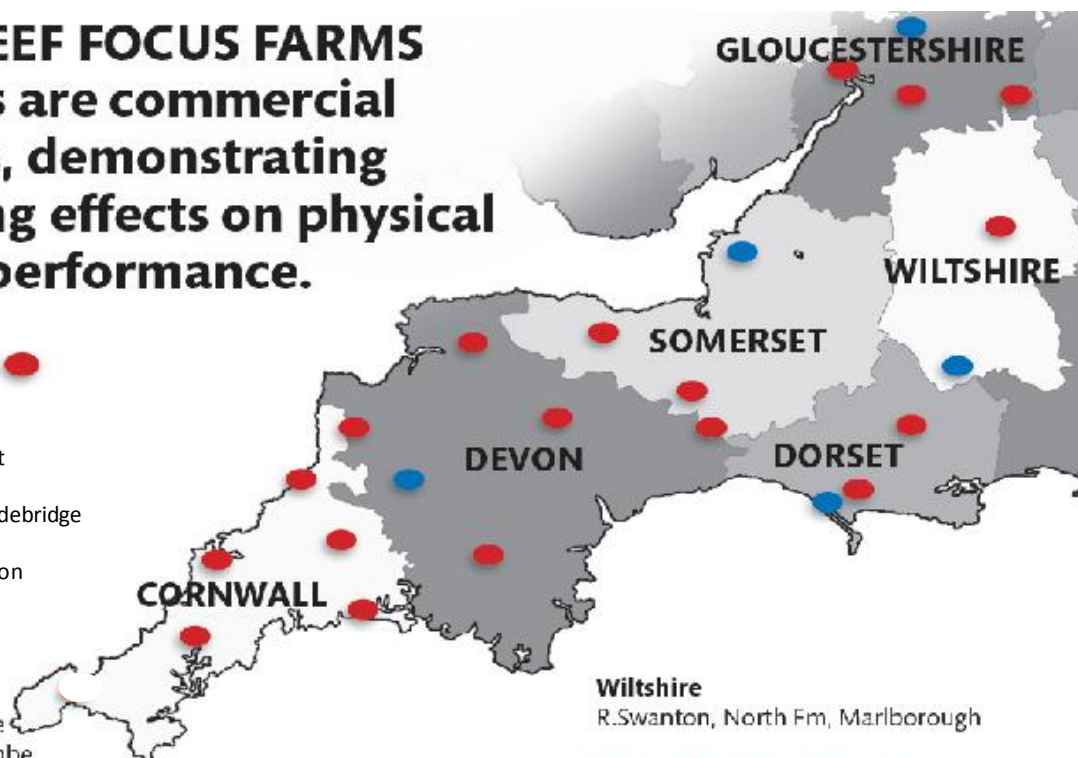
C.Salisbury, Bickenhall Fm, Taunton
D.Knight, Wydon Fm, Minehead
M.Mouland, Horn Fm, Chard

Wiltshire

R.Swanton, North Fm, Marlborough

BEEF FOCUS FARMS ●

D.Edwards, Pool Fm, Weston-super-Mare
P.Heard, Meldon Fm, Okehampton, Devon
Herringston Estates, Dorchester, Dorset
Bramshaw Hill Farming, Salisbury, Wiltshire
Gray Farms, Grange Fm, Tewkesbury, Glos.



Collaborative Approach

- Liaise with research centres and roll out e.g.
 - BVD – Royal Veterinary College approach
 - Johne's disease – Danish model
 - Lameness – University of Bristol 'Healthy Feet' project
 - Use of 'Myhealthyherd' for herd and project management of infectious diseases
 - Mastitis – Dairy Co Mastitis Plan



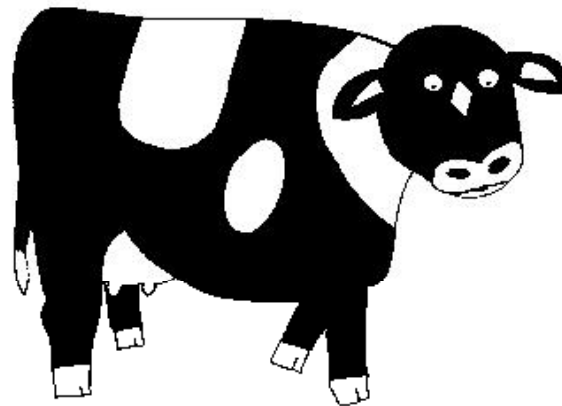
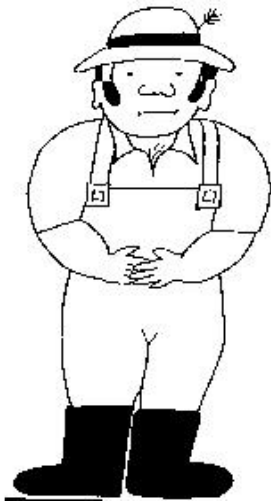
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Approach

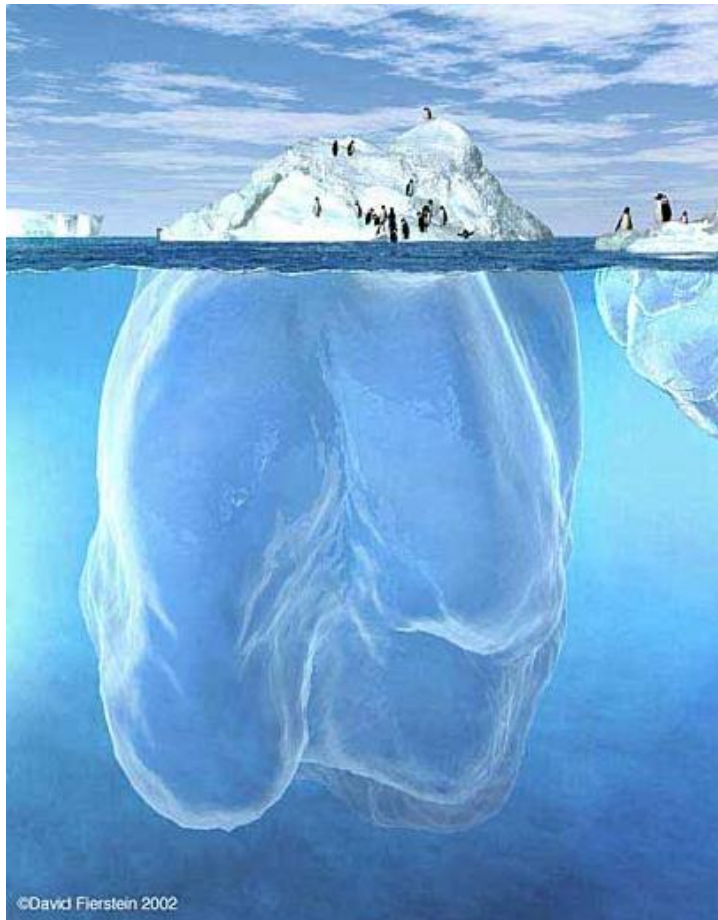
- Barriers?
- ‘Give a farmer a solution and he’ll find a problem!’
- But....
- ‘Give him a problem and he’ll find a solution!’

Approach....



But....Vets like to give solutions!

For example: Johne's disease 'difficult'



**Clinical cases are 5%-10%
of the infection load
Many cows are culled
prior to development of
clinical disease**

- Tests don't show early infection
- Cattle may have already passed on the infection
- immunosuppressive effects of MAP

The Healthy Livestock experience

Recruitment, Education and Awareness

1. Inform and engage vets in the process
2. Knowledge share with farmers – of all types (including awareness programme prior to meeting)
3. Engage and motivate farmers to apply on farm though 1:1 work with vet & diagnostics



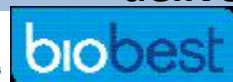
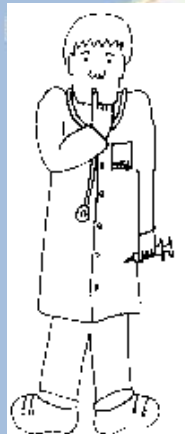
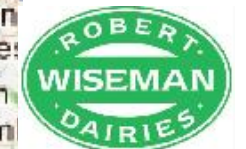
SW Healthy Livestock – the Johnes Work Strand



- **Johnes 1** – Education
- **Johnes 2** – Risks and status
- **Johnes 3** – Health planning
- **Johnes 4** - Motivation



Healthy Livestock delivery partners



85 partner farm veterinary practices
538 vets trained and delivering Healthy Livestock

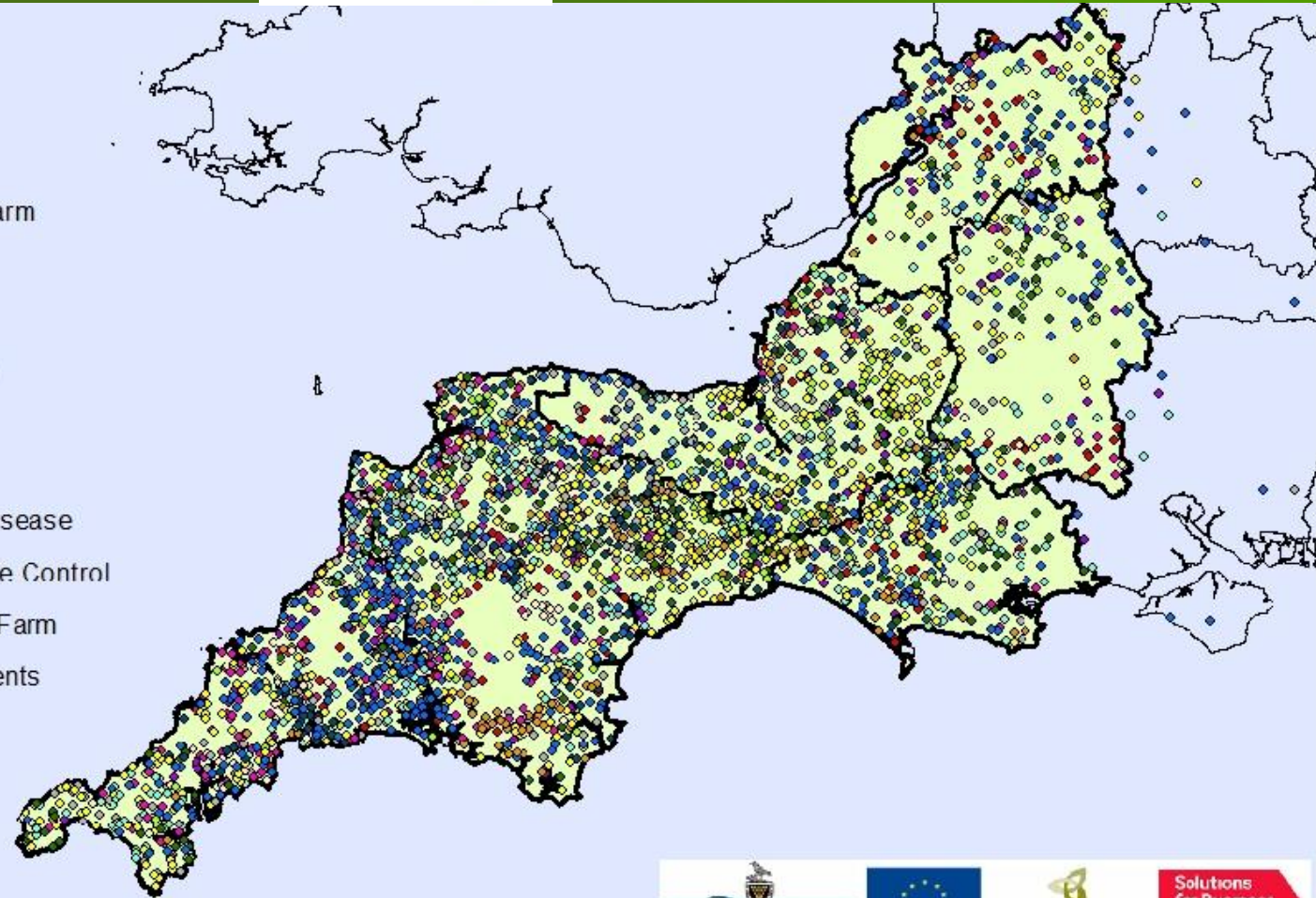


Initial meetings arranged through
producer groups, milk processors,
meat processors , auctioneers as
well as veterinary practices



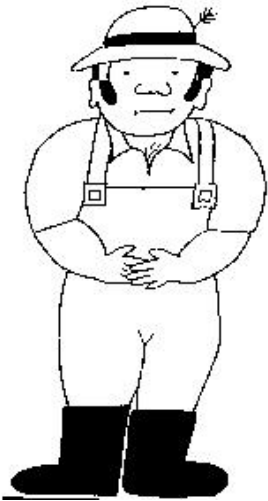
Work Strand

- ◊ Beef BVD
- Beef Focus Farm
- ◊ Beef Johne's
- ◊ Dairy BVD
- ◊ Dairy Johne's
- ◊ Lameness
- Mastitis
- ◊ Respiratory Disease
- Sheep Parasite Control
- Sheep Focus Farm
- Deliverers Events
- Other Events

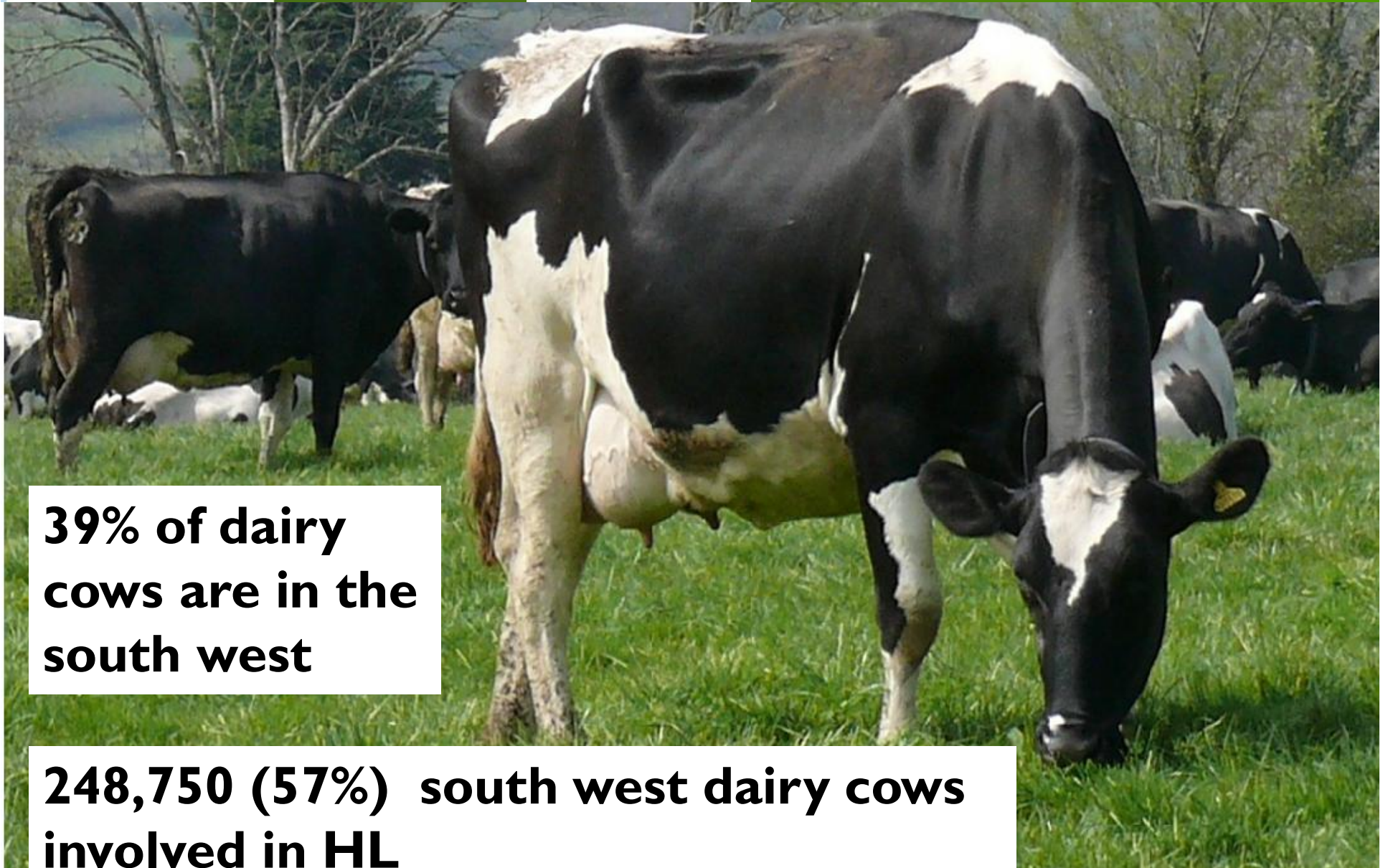


0 15 30 60 90 120
Kilometers

Farmers participating to date

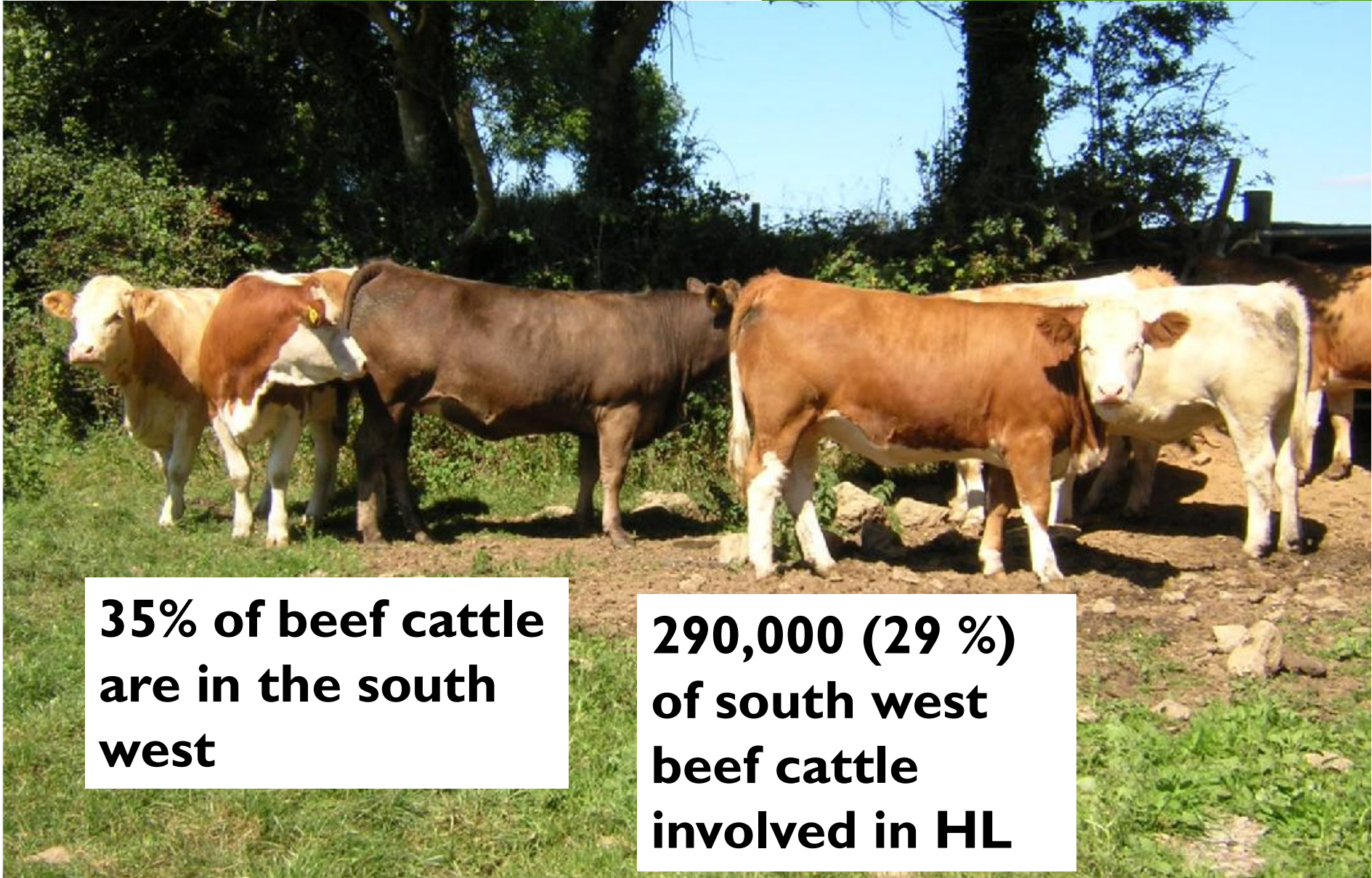


- Dairy: 1,990 = **62%** of all in the south west
- Beef: 2,898 = **29%** of all in the south west
- Sheep: 2,173 = **27%** of all in the south west



39% of dairy cows are in the south west

248,750 (57%) south west dairy cows involved in HL



**35% of beef cattle
are in the south
west**

**290,000 (29 %)
of south west
beef cattle
involved in HL**



**23% of sheep are in
the south west**

**902,000 (31%) south
west sheep involved in
HL**



86 % of participating farmers want to continue as it produces the most on-farm benefits compared to other Defra – moderated national schemes

– Defra farmer survey, June 2012

Queens Anniversary Prize



**THE QUEEN'S
ANNIVERSARY PRIZES**
FOR HIGHER AND FURTHER EDUCATION
2013

Impact – national

- **BVD:** Healthy Livestock is by far the largest (by numbers farmers participating) regional initiative in the nation to prevent and control BVD.
- **Mastitis:** 1 in 3 of all the herds participating nationally in the DairyCo Mastitis Control Plan do so through Healthy Livestock.
- **Johne's disease:** 1 in 2 of the dairy herds engaging in Johne's disease prevention and control nationally do so through Healthy Livestock.

Healthy Livestock Initiative could be copied throughout the country

BY OLIVIA COOPER

The Healthy Livestock project has been so successful at boosting South West farmers' returns that industry experts hope it will be rolled out across the country.

The EU-funded Healthy Livestock Initiative, organised by the Rural Business School at Duchy College, was established to boost farm productivity through better animal health. Working across the industry, it has brought vets, farmers and livestock specialists together to introduce proactive farm health planning for producers across the region.

One aspect of the project was to set up 18 sheep focus farms and five beef focus farms, on which to hold regular events to help producers tackle a wide range of health issues including lameness, fertility, parasites, respir-

atory disease and general health planning. And the results have been extremely encouraging.

"We've had a very high level of take-up," said project manager Paul Ward at a conference in Cornwall. "Farmers have really taken to the package approach, which enabled them to drill down into different diseases at different times. An independent survey found that 92% of farmers would want to continue with the project after its official end later this year."

Farm adviser Tim Dart said that one of the biggest issues to address on sheep farms had been the number of barren ewes.

"We found that toxoplasmosis was present on 14 of the 18 focus farms. It was much more prevalent than anyone expected," he said.

But by introducing vaccination and other measures, nine farms had

cut barren rates. Better nutrition at lambing time had reduced ewe losses by an average of 1%, with the number of lambs reared rising by an impressive 9.4%.

Adopting this preventative approach had improved gross margins to an average of £55.64 per ewe, said Mr Dart. "Most farms have made considerable progress, leading to improved health and output."

ADAS consultant Elwyn Rees said the beef focus farms had made improvements in a number of areas.

"One farm reduced calf mortality by 10%, another cut Johnes cases from six a year to none in two years, and many have reduced anthelmintic use through faecal egg counting."

Several producers had also managed to tighten up their calving pattern and boost calf growth rates, both of which would add consid-

erably to the bottom line, he added.

Brian Ayre, a sheep farmer from Kimbland Farm, Brayford, near Barnstaple, said the focus meetings had been extremely beneficial. "It's always good to have an outside view of your business, and to see where you are strong or weak," he said. "The one-to-one vet time has also been brilliant - and listening to the problems that fellow sheep farmers have encountered means you can be ahead of the ball."

Bryan Griffiths from Southcott Farm, Burrington, near Torrington, said the practical, individual advice made the Healthy Livestock Project stand out from other EU-funded initiatives.

"The concept of having experienced farmers sharing knowledge with the backup of technical experts is commendable and I'd like to see more of it," he added.

Entitlements 2014
Milk Quota 2013/14
Rural Planning
Landlord/Tenant



To Let - Tender 14.08.13 - 200 acre Dairy Unit
Witheridge Devon. 20 yr FBT wef Oct 2013. 203 cubicles, housing & ringbone. Option to buy herd including followers. Viewing Days 9/1
Contact James Clack BSc (Hons) 01392 823935 townsendcharteredredsurveye



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HL – models for national approach

Why do we need to roll this out?

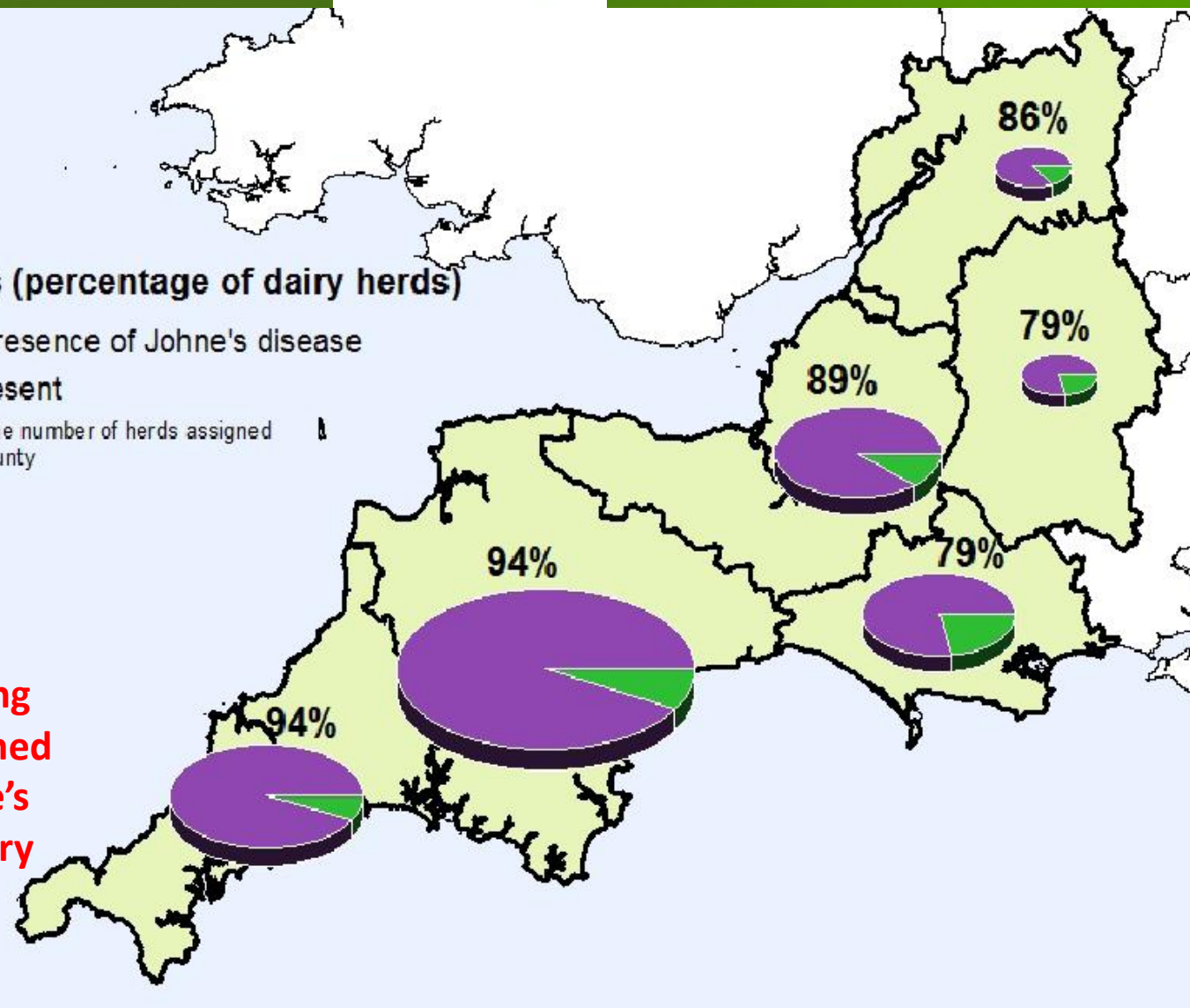
Johne's Disease Status (percentage of dairy herds)

- Definitive or possible presence of Johne's disease
- No Johne's disease present

n.b. The size of the pie charts reflects the number of herds assigned a Johne's disease status within that county

1,730 farmers

81% of participating farms have confirmed or suspected Johne's disease in their dairy herd





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Thank you

Questions?



Solutions
for Business

Funded by
Government

A RDPE initiative from the Rural Business School



Hidden disease

Draft national plan based on HL approach

Not necessarily economic return in the short term for the producer

Zoonotic threat Crohne's disease link

Threat to high-value exports e.g. whey products

Longer term threat to dairy industry production and processing

HL – summary

- Perceived market failure
- Cutting edge research
- Innovative use of vets to deliver to farmers
- Huge take-up by farmers at farm level
- Risk-based approach now being taken up in endemic disease control and prevention
- Need to keep momentum going