

AN ROINN TALMHAÍOCHTA AGUS BIA
THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & FOOD



31stth March 2015

To whom it may concern

Wildlife can often act as a reservoir for diseases which can also infect our farm animal species. Classical swine fever has been found in the wild boar population in Europe and back home in Ireland there is the infamous link between tuberculosis in cattle and the badger.

For the last five years, the CVRL have monitored deer populations throughout the country for Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD), Infectious Bovine Rhinotracheitis (IBR) and Bluetongue infection. To date, we have detected BVD, IBR and Schmallenberg virus but reassuringly so far no Bluetongue. The level of exposure to BVD virus detected in deer samples so far is 7% (12/174 over 4 years) with some significant regional and breed variation found.

This work has been made possible by the co-operation of huntsman, Sean Creane, who was persuaded to get involved in the project. Sean has proved a very able and enthusiastic sampler and we have developed a good system for handling and testing the samples he supplies. He gets no payment for his work but seems to have a keen interest in the health and well-being of these wild animals - he often advises us as to the condition of carcasses or any unusual lesions he sees.

Background information is invaluable when making decisions on disease control. BVD is now under a compulsory control programme in Ireland (<http://www.animalhealthireland.ie/>) which commenced in Jan.2013. All information on the extent of BVD infection in Irish wild deer will inform that programme, similarly so for IBR. Schmallenberg virus is another pathogen which may re-emerge in 2015. If you can assist Sean in any manner, we would be very grateful.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any queries or thoughts on this matter.

Yours sincerely

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