

Bovine Tuberculosis: People, Politics and Culture

Workshop at Warwick HRI, 12 May 2010

Bovine Tuberculosis (bTB) is one of the most intractable and challenging policy problems facing policy-makers in the UK today. Rates of infection continue to increase while the disease also spreads out across the country. In the meantime, controversy over bTB is increasingly impacting on wider relationships between the farming community and government, as efforts are made to develop new mechanisms for the management of animal diseases. The number of reactors continues to increase and the controversy is increasingly impacting on wider relationships between the farming community and government, as efforts are made to develop new mechanisms for the management of animal diseases. The scientific evidence base is contested in terms of the sources of infection, mechanisms of infection and the most effective policies to contain the disease. Against this background of uncertainty and disagreement, there is particular scope for social scientists to contribute to the debate.

The four speakers are all engaged in current research on the social context and management of bTB, and work in a range of disciplines from politics through to science and technology studies. Wyn Grant (Warwick University) has been interested in how the policy debate has been framed and why traditional techniques of stakeholder management have failed. Angela Cassidy (University of East Anglia) is engaged in an extensive project on the public controversy over bTB, which has included work on the social and cultural position of the badger in the UK. Katy Wilkinson (Newcastle University) has analysed bTB in the context of the demand for evidence-based policy-making. Finally, Gareth Enticott (Cardiff University) has undertaken extensive research on the bTB issue, including lay understandings of epidemiology and farmers' attitudes to biosecurity measures. His latest project addresses the role of expertise in the principles and practice of bTB testing.

Our speakers will report on their current research findings during morning sessions at the workshop, and in the afternoon will engage in an open roundtable discussion of the current bTB situation.

We also invite contributions to a poster session at which researchers and PhD students working in the area can report on and discuss their work in progress.

Attendance at the workshop will be subject to a fee of £30 to cover costs.

Angela Cassidy *Wyn Grant*

On-line booking form can be found at: <http://www.warwick.ac.uk/go/gold>