



You are invited to a virtual conversation on understanding Tick-borne diseases in UK farmlands on 9 October 2023 at 12:00-13:00 (UK time)

Speakers and topics

Dr Beth Purse: Overview of the OPTICK Project

Beth is a senior scientist at the UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, where she co-leads the population ecology group. She has over 15 years' experience in ecological and epidemiological modelling, leading research to understand and predict infectious diseases impacts on animal, plant and human health in changing environments. She is currently working on ecologically informed decision support tools for livestock diseases in India, forest Phytophthoras pathogens worldwide and emerging midge- and mosquito- borne infections in Europe.

Rachael Collins: The Clinical Signs of Bovine Babesiosis

Rachael qualified from Glasgow Vet School in 2006 and worked for two years in mixed practice in North Yorkshire before joining APHA Starcross as a Veterinary Investigation Officer in 2008. She completed an MSc in Veterinary Microbiology in 2019. Rachael works at the APHA Veterinary Investigation Centre based in Starcross, Devon. The majority of her workload comprises of post-mortem examination and investigation of disease outbreaks in livestock species with the aim of detecting new and emerging disease threats to the UK. Their catchment area covers the entirety of Devon and Cornwall along with parts of Somerset, Dorset, Western Wiltshire and Hampshire.

Dr. Nicholas Johnson: Diagnostics of Tick-borne Disease

Since completing a PhD at the University of Southampton, Nick completed a number of research fellowships on infectious diseases within the university sector. He joined APHA in 2000 to investigate infection models for rabies and related lyssavirus. From 2007, Nick began developing research and molecular testing for vector-borne diseases and has a particular interest in the transmission of zoonotic viruses by arthropod vectors.

Dr. Kayleigh Hansford: Tick Surveillance & Research at UKHSA

Kayleigh is a Principal Medical Entomologist working for the UK Health Security Agency, where she has spent the last 14 years specialising in vector-borne diseases. She has a particular interest in tick-borne disease, tick ecology and Borrelia transmission cycles. Kayleigh coordinates the UKHSA national Tick Surveillance Scheme and leads ecological research studies which aim to developing a better understanding of Lyme borreliosis transmission risk. She also works closely with various stakeholders to co-develop public health tick awareness information and campaign materials.



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