

BBSRC Animal Health CLUB – Executive Summary

Introduction

Food security is an increasingly important issue for the UK and internationally and is a major strategic priority for the BBSRC. Animal health has been identified as an area where targeted research is required to address the challenges associated with food security, in order to ensure a secure and sustainable supply of sufficient, safe and nutritious food in the future. A Research and Technology Club for animal health is proposed to support research in this area.

The Animal Health Club will support excellent quality research that is relevant to industry's needs. The research will be conducted at the UK's world-leading research institutes, universities and independent research organisations. BBSRC aims to attract 10% of the Club's funding (approximately £1M) from industry contributions (through annual member subscriptions). BBSRC will provide the remaining 90% of the funding (approximately £9M).

In return for a financial contribution to the club your company will gain access to the outcomes of a research portfolio of up to £10M. This will equate to approximately 20 research projects all focused on innovative, industrially relevant research.

Research Challenges

The over-arching theme of the Club will be to improve livestock resistance to pest and disease organisms through genetic improvement. A number of specific research areas have been identified through consultation with industry; however the exact remit of the Club is still open to discussion.

- Determining the effects of selection for production traits on immune function.
- Understanding genetic variation in vaccine responsiveness, immuno-competence and disease outcomes
- Developing novel tools for defining disease phenotypes to inform breeding strategies for increased disease resistance
- Understanding the genetic basis of resistance/resilience to pests and diseases in livestock and aquaculture species

Benefits

The Research and Technology Club mechanism has been successfully employed by BBSRC in numerous other industry sectors. Company members have reported a range of significant benefits from their involvement with other clubs:

- ✓ Capacity to influence research in important strategic areas
- ✓ Up to date knowledge on the progress of research projects and early access to results
- ✓ Opportunity to work with leading researchers and to build strong relationships with them
- ✓ Opportunity to identify the best potential industry recruits
- ✓ Guidance on other Research Council activities and funding opportunities
- ✓ Promotion of your company through the Club's activities, objectives and outputs

Further Details

For further information about other BBSRC Research and Technology Clubs please visit our website; www.bbsrc.ac.uk/clubs.

BBSRC is the UK's principal funder of basic and strategic biological research