

OIE Twinning - A valuable concept for regional development of brucellosis

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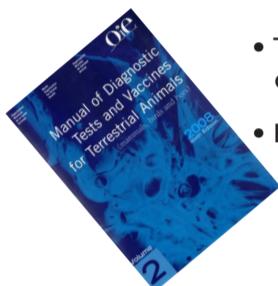


Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency (AHVLA) is committed to improving animal and human health through control of diseases such as brucellosis.

In addition to providing consultancy, expertise, diagnostic services, reagent supply and training, AHVLA is also actively engaged in OIE "Laboratory Twinning".

OIE twinning schemes involve pairing an established OIE Reference Laboratory with a candidate laboratory so that scientific expertise can be transferred and candidate laboratories can build their capacity in a particular disease area.

- The twinning projects ensure that the candidate laboratory can improve compliance with OIE guidelines and standards.
- Knowledge and skills are exchanged.



The OIE funds the duration of the project – thereafter, it is the responsibility of the national authority.

The brucellosis team at Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency (AHVLA) are the Parent laboratory to Pendik Veterinary Control and Research Institute (PVCRI) in Turkey and also to the Central Veterinary Research Laboratories Centre, in Khatoum, Sudan.



Our twinning projects with both laboratories aim to enhance their diagnostic capacity, including training workshops and application of molecular techniques to investigate the epidemiology of brucellosis in the country.

We include training in safe handling of dangerous organisms such as *Brucella* which causes a disease in humans and for which there is no vaccine.



Benefits to candidate lab and country

- ◆ Fully trained technicians able to use internationally recognised assays.
- ◆ Safe storage of samples, understanding any risks associated with samples and/or test procedures, safety management structure and decontamination of potentially infected equipment and materials.
- ◆ SOPs written for all procedures and understood.
- ◆ Able to participate in proficiency testing.
- ◆ Establish regional co-ordination and promote importance of brucellosis.

Benefits for UK

- ◆ Materials from infected animals are obtained for test development and validation of new procedures which are included into AHVLA funded Research and Development Grants.
- ◆ As a National Reference Laboratory AHVLA need to maintain expertise in identifying *Brucella*, as brucellosis was eradicated officially in GB in 1985.
- ◆ Sera & strains for collection enable test development & validation.
- ◆ Marketable reagents and antigens provides income to AHVLA.
- ◆ Synergy with other training programmes such as for FAO and MoD.
- ◆ Provides personal development of AHVLA staff and better understanding of disease.
- ◆ Publications in peer reviewed journals benefits both parties.



To provide a more even world-wide geographical distribution of expertise needed for disease prevention, surveillance and control, OIE want to expand the number and location of OIE Reference Laboratories.