

Results of the implementation of the United Kingdom's bovine Brucellosis eradication programme for 2014

AHW-CIC SCoPAFF
June 2015



Department of
**Agriculture and
Rural Development**

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Summary

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Epidemiology

Brucellosis in NI in the past was caused solely by *Brucella abortus*.

There have been no confirmed cases of infection since February 2012.

Cattle infection was not geographically regionalised until the last confirmed infections, however significant clusters appeared at times in the southern part of the province.

Herds are small on average and land parcels are considerably fragmented.

Traditionally high cattle movement is seen both within herds and to other herds. Intra-herd movement is significant due to small farm sizes and consequent dependence on rented pasture for grazing cattle.

Brucellosis Breakdowns 2009

Breakdown Type

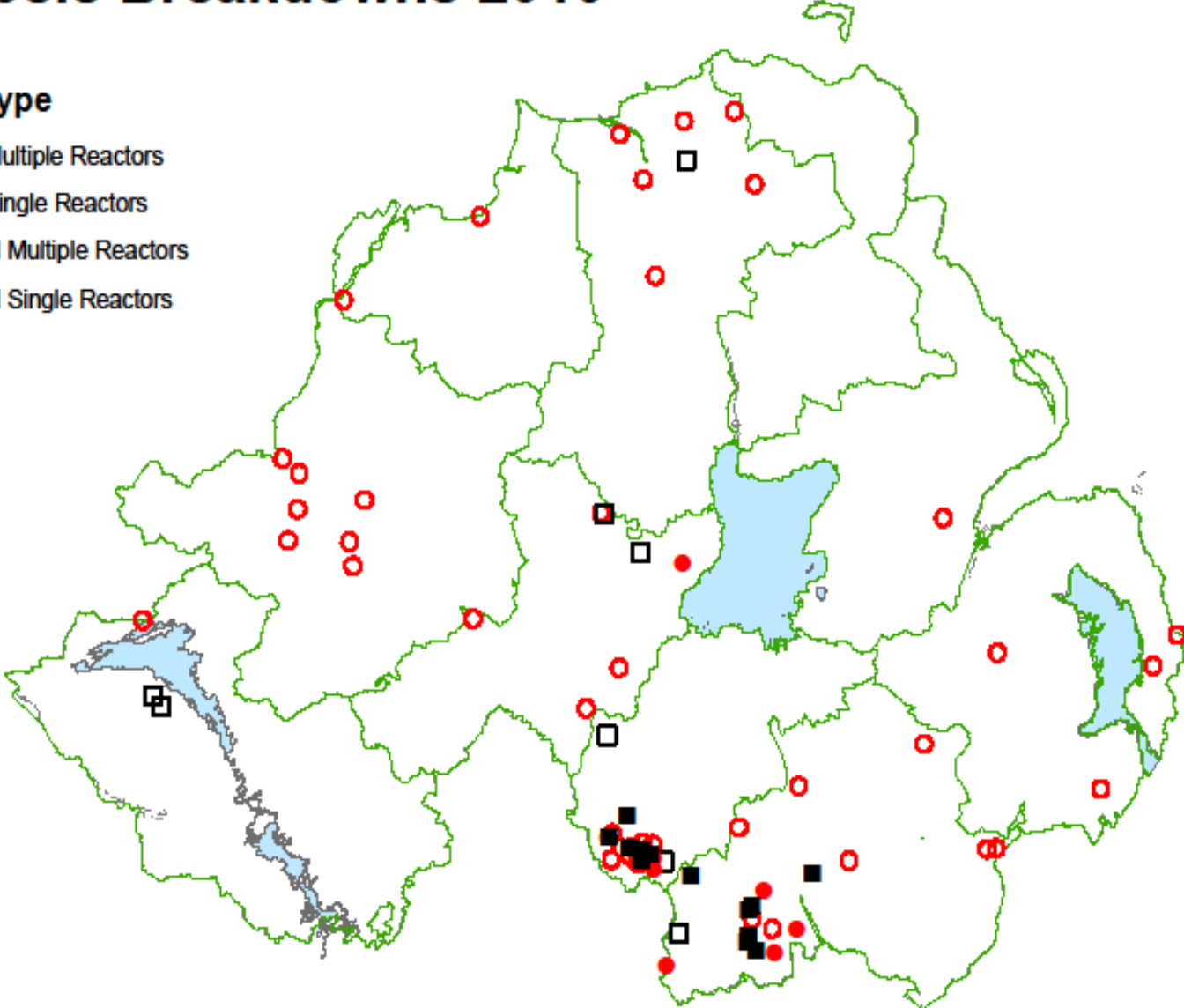
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- Confirmed Single Reactors
- Unconfirmed Multiple Reactors
- Unconfirmed Single Reactors



Brucellosis Breakdowns 2010

Breakdown Type

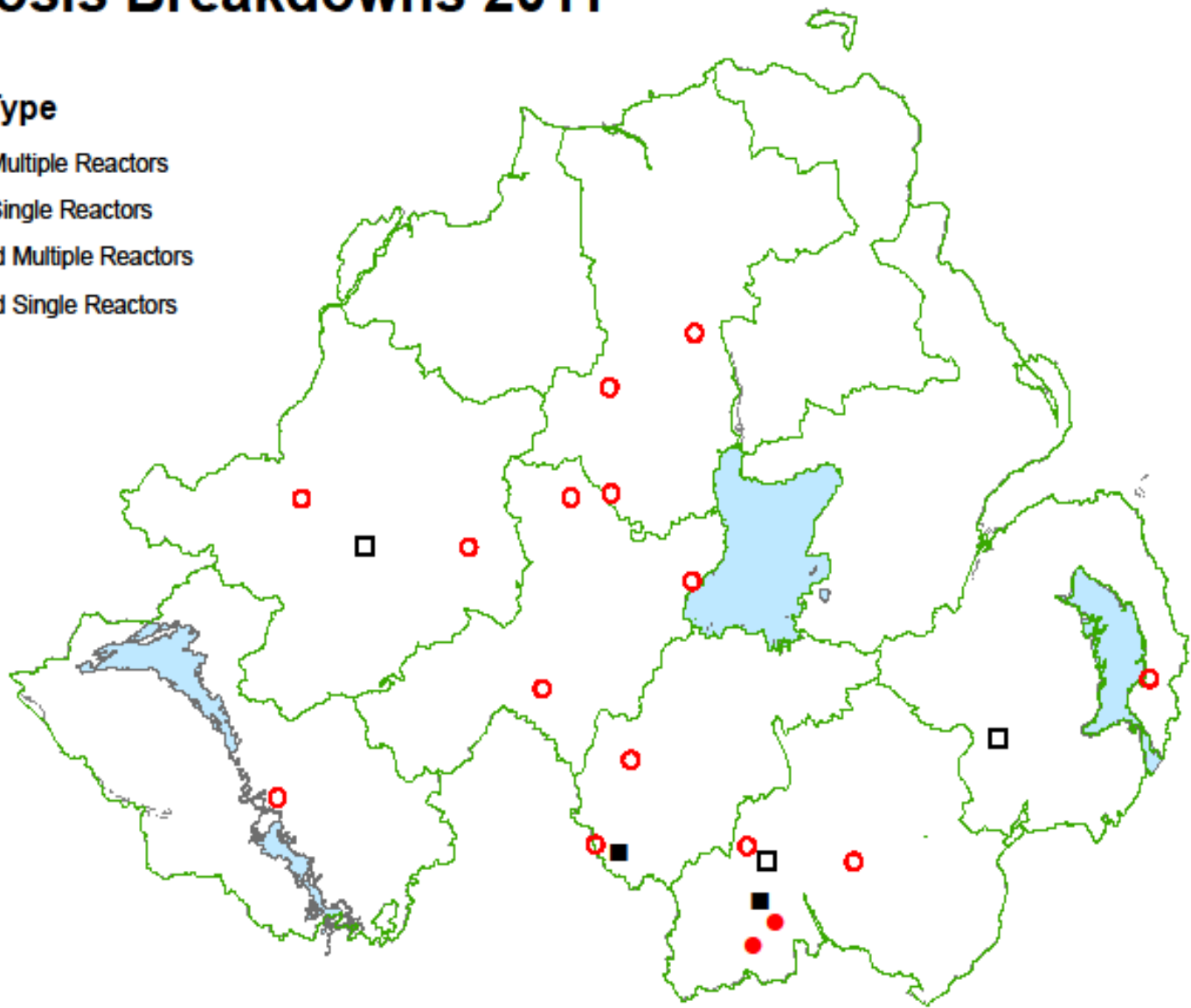
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- Unconfirmed Multiple Reactors
- Unconfirmed Single Reactors



Brucellosis Breakdowns 2011

Breakdown Type

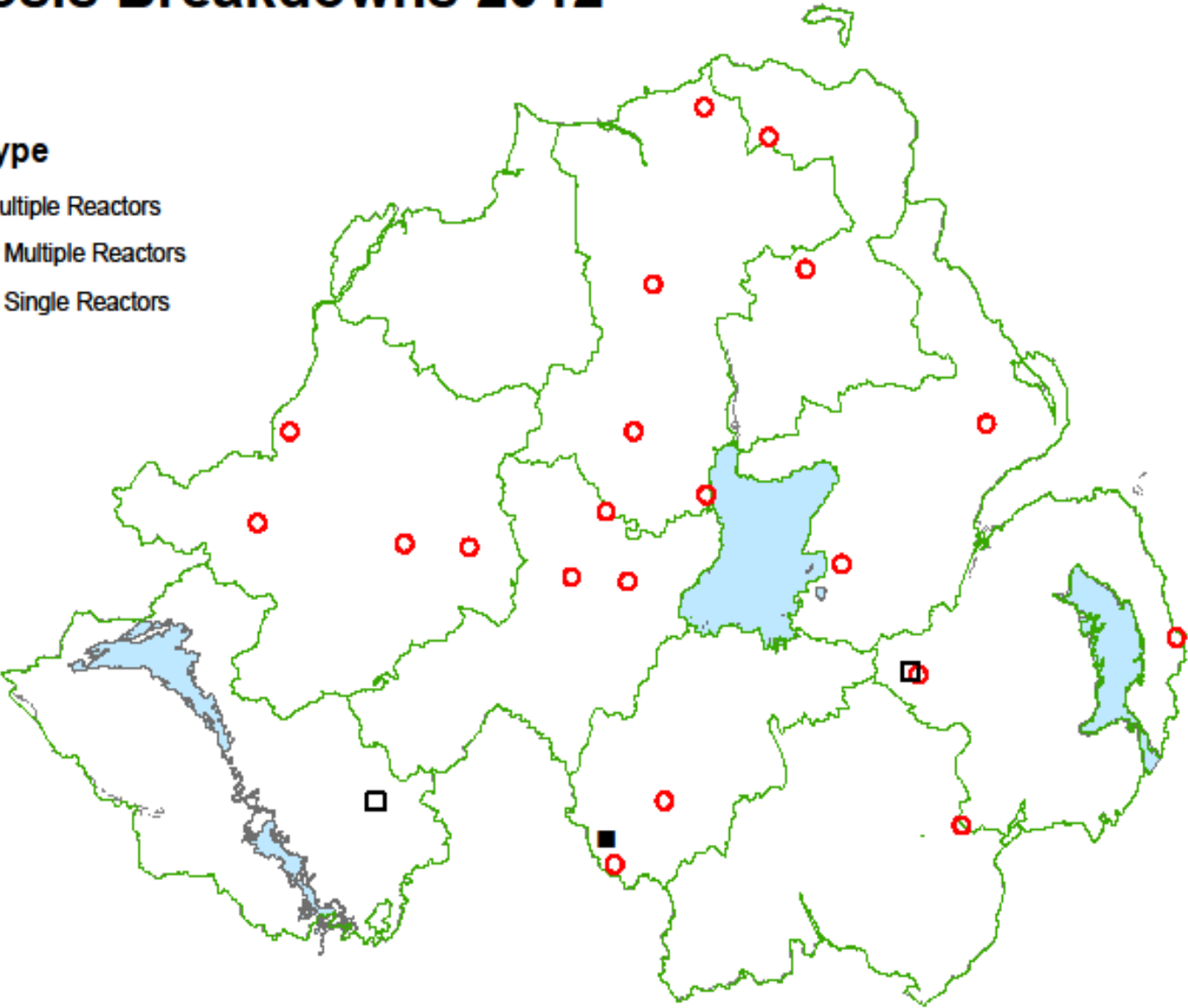
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Brucellosis Breakdowns 2012

Breakdown Type

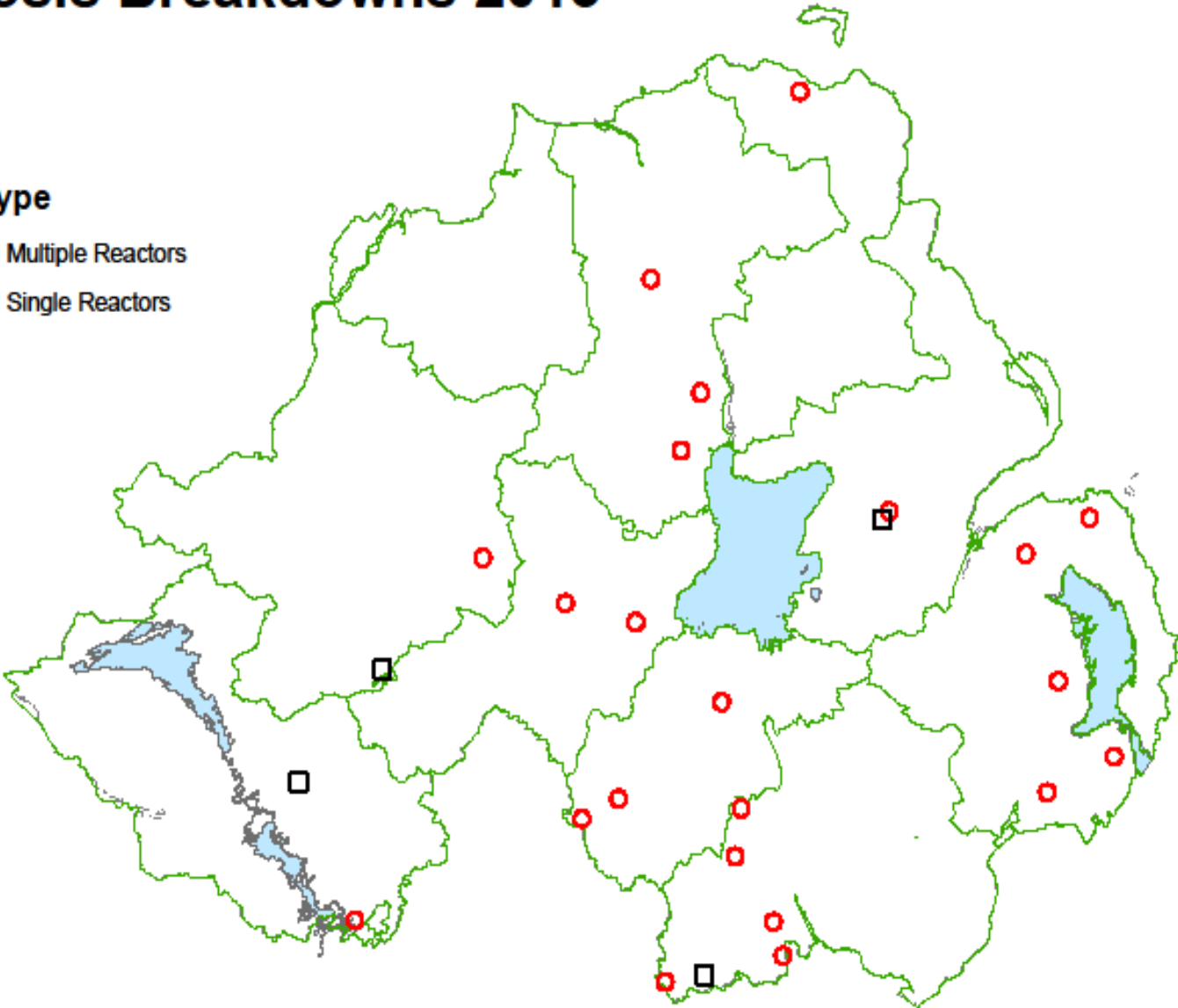
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- Unconfirmed Single Reactors



Brucellosis Breakdowns 2013

Breakdown Type

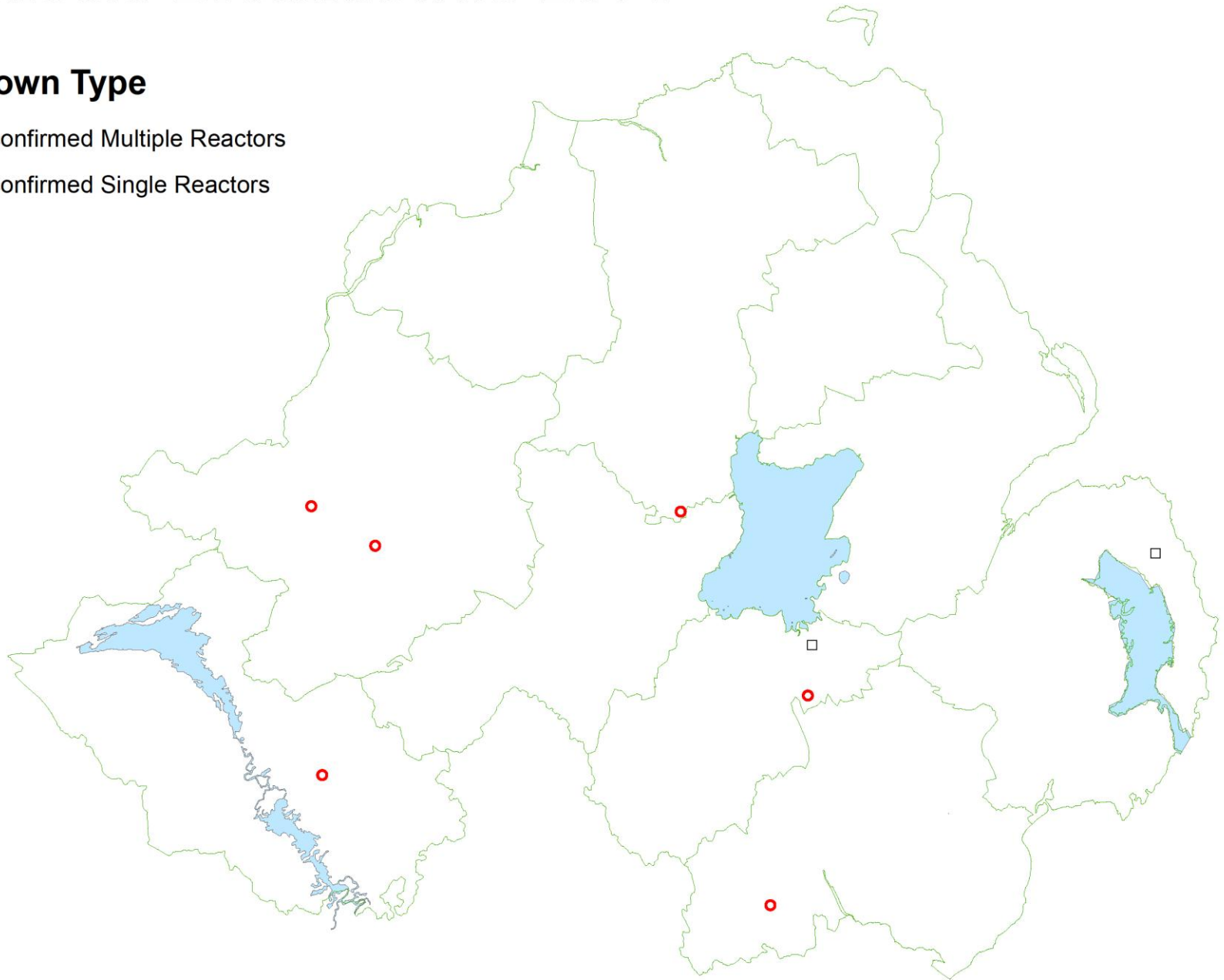
- Unconfirmed Multiple Reactors
- Unconfirmed Single Reactors



Brucellosis Breakdowns 2014

Breakdown Type

- Unconfirmed Multiple Reactors
- Unconfirmed Single Reactors



Summary of UK Programme

Test and slaughter policy, aiming for eradication (prohibition of vaccination in the NI cattle population)

Individual identification of animals, movement control, computer recording system (APHIS)

EU co-financing

Involvement of herd owners, stakeholders, laboratories, abattoirs, hauliers and milk processors in testing; dedicated implementation staff

Collaboration with human health authorities.

Political will – “Programme for Government” target - Maintain Brucellosis incidence at 0.0% and achieve OBF status.

Control Measures - Testing

In accordance with Council Directive 64/432/EEC:

Annual testing of herds, except some dairy herds (on Biennial testing)

Bulk Milk ELISA testing applied to all dairy herds

Pre-movement testing for all eligible cattle over 12 months

- relaxation implemented on 03/11/2014 changing age of eligibility to 24 months and application period to 60 days

Abortions follow up, abattoir surveillance, Laboratory submissions,

Parallel testing using ELISA test in conjunction with SAT; use of CFT test

Options retained but not necessary in 2014:

Brucellin skin test use, sheep sampling (*EU Task Force Recommendations*)

Temporary Control Areas with increased testing and controls



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Programme Management in 2014

Brucellosis audits of field offices by HQ staff

Publicity Campaign – Ministerial Press Releases - emphasis on abortion reporting - posters, leaflets

Staff training and Private Veterinary Practitioner communications to update personnel

Options retained but not necessary in 2014:

Treatment of slurry with lime in breakdown herds

Tracing and purchase of the progeny of confirmed reactors

Strain typing of all cultures to assist with epidemiological investigation



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Programme developments in 2014

Focus on targets:

- test delivery
- enhancing abattoir surveillance through extended sampling of older cattle
- biosecurity communications with herd keepers and stakeholders

Ongoing training of Private Veterinary Practitioners, Veterinary Officers, Animal Health and Welfare Inspectors and administrative staff.

Updated staff instructions.

Maintained high level of Brucellosis programme audits.

Programme results in 2014

No cases of confirmed infection since 2012.

Low level of unconfirmed breakdowns as expected.

Quick removal and detailed follow up of unconfirmed reactors.

Continued implementation of all aspects of approved programme:

- expected level of testing achieved
- successful application of parallel testing
- high level of communications within and without the programme, including with ROI



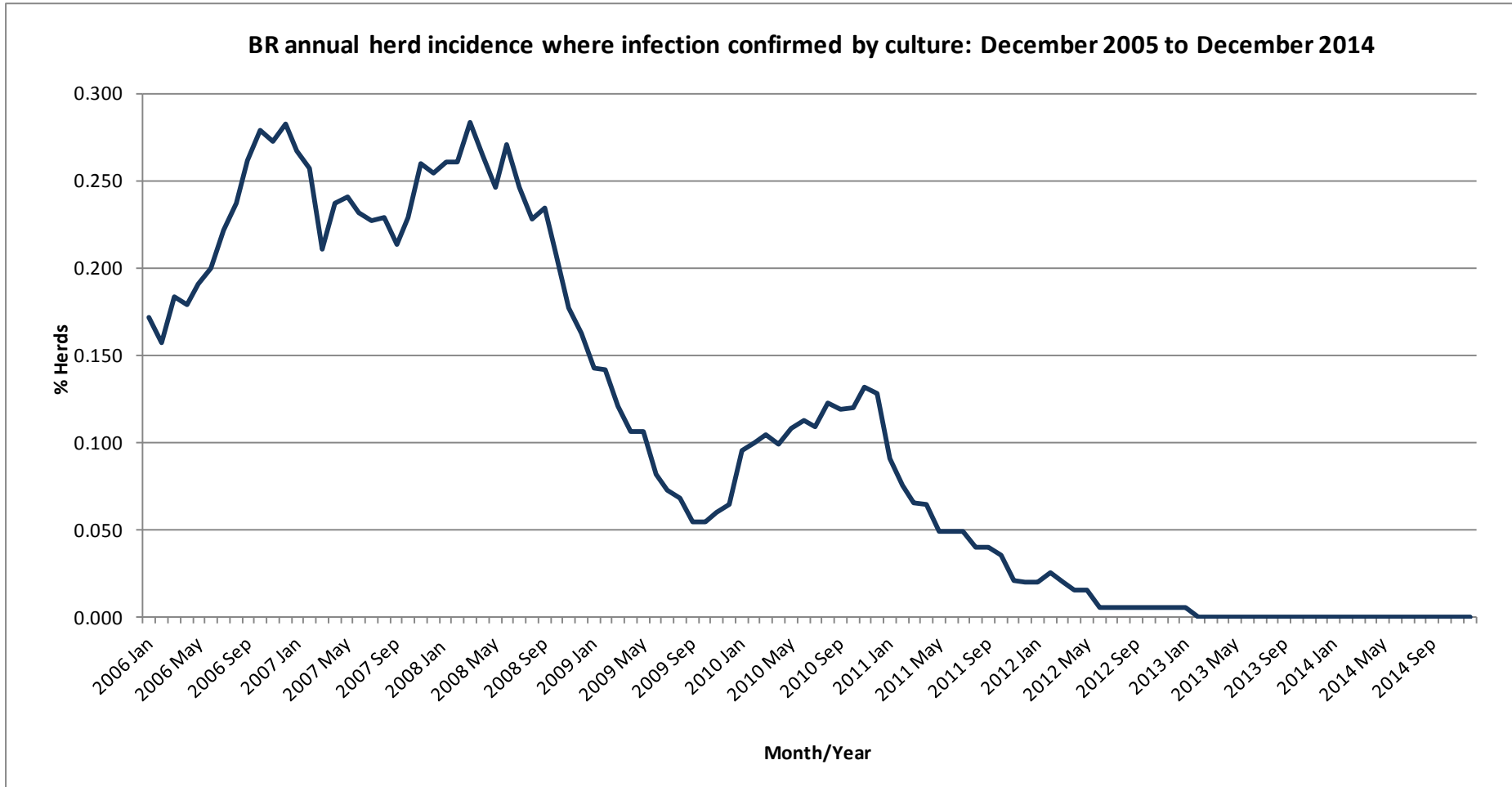
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Confirmed Brucellosis breakdowns 2005- 2014



UK (NI): Test and Disease Statistics: 2007-2014

Year	Number of cattle tested	Herd incidence	Confirmed herd incidence
2007	911,394	0.72	0.25
2008	908,811	1.12	0.16
2009	888,898	0.35	0.05
2010	867,402	0.38	0.10
2011	890,263	0.10	0.02
2012	879,831	0.12	0.005
2013	848,811	0.13	0.000
2014	803,309	0.04	0.000

Herds restricted for disease reasons

Date	Herds restricted for disease reasons, excluding associated herds	Herds under surveillance, excluding associated herds	Restricted herds with confirmed disease	Percentage of herds with OBF status
31/12/09	32	22,607	16	99.86
31/12/10	38	22,303	18	99.83
31/12/11	11	22,083	9	99.9
31/12/12	18	22,168	1	99.92
31/12/13	10	22,155	0	99.95
31/12/14	1	22,691	0	100.0

Conclusion, next steps and 2015 strategy

There have been no cases of abortion due to *Brucella* and no isolation of *Brucella abortus* in Northern Ireland (UK) from samples taken since the February 2012 case (see Annex II).

At least 99.8% of herds have achieved officially brucellosis-free status each year consecutively since 2009 (see Annex I).

Maintain focus on testing and disease management processes

Apply for and attain OBF status

- Communications strategy:
 - emphasise abortions reporting and biosecurity awareness
 - Brucellosis Stakeholders' Group, co-operation with ROI

Thank you

