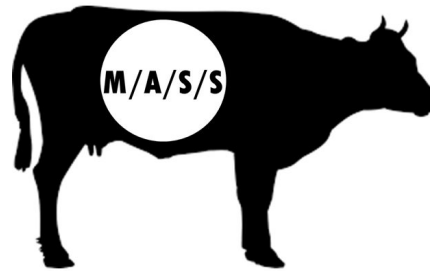


**MYCOPLASMA
BOVIS
ACTION &
SUPPORT
SOUTHLAND**



FRIDAY 19th JANUARY 2018
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MYCOPLASMA BOVIS ACTION GROUP FORMED IN SOUTHLAND

Farmers, Veterinarians and industry stakeholders from around the Southland region have come together to form *MASS (Mycoplasma bovis Action & Support Southland)*. The objective is to provide a voice to those in Southland and assist the Southland farming community in understanding and dealing with the *mycoplasma bovis* outbreak.

“Farming practices in our region are different from other parts of the country” says Mass Spokesperson Bevan Collie. “We move our stock more often and we know stock movements to be one of the main ways *M bovis* is spread. We urgently need information to help assess and manage this risk. This means rapid testing and being kept informed of testing results”.

Mr Collie states that *MASS* supports the *Ministry for Primary Industries* current response strategy of ‘Contain, Survey, Eradicate’. “Eradication has to be the goal. This disease can have a terrible effect on the well-being of cattle, will require an increase in antibiotic use at a time when we know antimicrobial resistance to be a huge threat to the planet; and is significantly cheaper than the cost of living with, and treating, cattle for infection” says Mr Collie.

Further to the above, *MASS* is keen to point out that not eradicating will could lead to the demise of the sharemilking industry in New Zealand. The unique structure of Dairy Milking in New Zealand provides opportunities for young farmers to move into ownership. Removing sharemilking, or contract milking, removes this opportunity and threatens the death of something unique to New Zealand.

There is a strong call for swift action in eradicating the disease, which *MASS* wishes to convey to the Government. It is believed *M bovis* has been in NZ for less than 12 months so now is the time to

eradicate. TB was introduced to NZ some 40 years ago and NZ is not predicted to be TB free for another 10 years. This is at a huge cost.

MASS has issued an invitation to all affected parties in the Southland region to get in touch with them so they can offer support, information and share resources. They also encourage everyone to use the resources available at the dedicated website: www.mbovis.co.nz

For further information and contact:

Bevan Collie, Spokesperson, MASS
massspokesperson@gmail.com