

Richard Irvine appointed as UK's Deputy Chief Veterinary Officer

News story

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Richard Irvine has been named as the new Deputy Chief Veterinary Officer (DCVO) for the United Kingdom following an extensive international recruitment campaign.

Richard is an experienced veterinarian with a background in animal health and welfare policy and science. He currently is Deputy Director for 'Global Animal Health and Trade' in Defra, and has overseen a number of successful market access gains including recent agreements on exporting UK beef to China, the USA and Japan. Prior to this, Richard led the Animal and Plant Health Agency's (APHA's) Surveillance Intelligence Unit and was Head of the National Reference Laboratory for Viral Diseases of Poultry at APHA Weybridge.

Welcoming the appointment, Christine Middlemiss said:

Richard has been successful in securing the DCVO role against a very strong field of candidates. I am confident that he will help meet the challenges we face and provide excellent support to me and others on veterinary and technical issues.

Richard's appointment comes at what is a very important and interesting time for Defra and the UK Government, and he will be a great asset to the veterinary senior leadership team in the Defra group.

Richard started his veterinary career in mixed and farm animal clinical practice in 1997. He first started working for the civil service in 2001 as a Veterinary Investigation Officer at one of the Regional Laboratories of what was at that time the Veterinary Laboratories Agency, now part of the APHA. Since then Richard has worked in several different veterinary and science leadership roles in the Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency and APHA. On joining Defra he has brought this experience and knowledge into his trade policy roles.

Speaking about his appointment Richard said:

I am truly delighted to have been appointed, and to be able to both contribute to the work of maintaining and developing the animal health and welfare status of the UK, and represent these interests internationally. It is a privilege to support our farming and food industry in this role.

I am very much looking forward to working with the team at Defra, its agencies, the devolved administrations, and all the individuals and groups who contribute together to not only cement the UK's place as a world leader on animal welfare at these unique times, but also meet future challenges head-on across the animal health and welfare spectrum. I am delighted to have an opportunity to play a part in that.

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