

(2) 20140718 Comments and suggestions sent to BHS draft

From: [Redacted] (DEFRA)

Sent: 18 July 2014 15:24

To: [Redacted]

Cc: [Redacted]; [Redacted] (Defra); [Redacted] (Defra); [Redacted] (Defra); [Redacted] (Defra)

Subject: Ragwort Survey with Defra changes incorporated

Importance: High

[Redacted]

Thanks for making those quick amendments to the survey form. We rather rushed a first look and have now looked through with more reflection and added quite a few more comments and suggestions. We were hoping to improve the clarity, flow through (clearer section titles), reduce some length and repetition and improve analytical potential. The main changes are:

- Add in a new question 1 that can replace a number of the early ones. This aims to provide a more definitive way of stratifying the responses and making the analysis easier i.e. a way of doing cross-tabulations to the responses to other questions and clearly splitting characteristics about horse owning / managing roles. We recommend the next few questions are not included but BHS may have a logical reason for including – please say if so.
- Adding a question about knowledge that again helps with understanding the individual respondent e.g. it may be more worrying if an ‘equine professional’ does not understand ragwort
- Making it clearer that it is not just about owning land but renting / managing – it is the occupier that is responsible
- Being clearer on the difference between prevention and control
- We decided that familiarity with the Acts is not that important, it is about knowing legal responsibilities and think that the table is probably a distraction
- The issue of identifying land ownership is difficult so we think location is probably more relevant
- The horse health questions were complicated and thought it might be clearer in a table form to reduce repetition – we can’t decide the best term for confirmation by vet test so please think what is best, taking on board [Redacted]’ point made previously.
- On Q.8 horse knowledge: although we would assume some interest/knowledge about horses, but it seems odd not to have a “know nothing” option at all.

It does look a bit messy now and we have not attempted to get all the formatting / question numbering and direction correct but I hope you can see the reasoning behind the changes. For surveys, there is no standard / right or wrong way of doing things but see what you think and let us know if you wish to discuss any points. Our comments are more of a recognition of the importance of this work rather than just fiddling for fiddling sake and certainly if you do not agree with any changes then please say. We did know the BHS is in tune with your membership but we have tried to see the form through the perspective of respondents.

In terms of the logo; Comms has advised **not** to insert it in the survey, although the mention of Defra's support is fine, as the intro reads.

I appreciate you bearing with us and sorry this has taken an extra couple of days than anticipated. Hope we can have one final look next week and we don't anticipate making further changes.

Kind regards

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From: [Redacted] [[Redacted]]
Sent: 14 July 2014 15:02
To: [Redacted] (DEFRA)
Cc: [Redacted]; [Redacted] ([Redacted]); [Redacted]; [Redacted]
Subject: FW: Ragwort Survey with Defra changes incorporated

Thank you for your feedback on the survey.

We have gone through the changes suggested and you will see that most have been actioned.

* I do believe we should mention Defra in some way because ultimately the data will belong to Defra and it might be misleading not to acknowledge this. We also believe this gives strength and gravitas to the survey.

* We have made the changes and re-numbered as suggested. A number of the changes will be simply a matter of getting the internal survey logic right when we set it up on line.

* on legal responsibilities, where you suggested a 'box exercise' I would suggest that we ask people to simply write into a box what they think their legal responsibilities are. We could then assess whether they were broadly right - and it would give quite a powerful and robust bit of data. We believe the existing question is still quite useful as it stands - it can be laid out as a grid when we get to the stage of setting it up on survey monkey.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Regards

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Draft questions for the BHS' Survey on Ragwort

Thank you for taking part in the British Horse Society Ragwort Survey produced in association with DEFRA. The aim of this survey is to assess the level of awareness and understanding about ragwort. We are very grateful to you for finding time to complete the survey. The results of the survey will help us to protect horses.

The survey has been tested and will take approximately n minutes to complete. All your answers will be kept completely confidential. Results will be reported later this year at the aggregate level and will not be used for any individual enforcement action.

The first set of questions (Questions 1-8) is about you and will help us understand how well the issues around ragwort are understood by different groups in society.

- 1) Do you own or manage land that is used by horses?
 - a) If yes, in what capacity? (tick all that apply)
 - i) Riding school
 - ii) Livery yard
 - iii) Agricultural
 - iv) Private land/home
 - v) Other – (please write in
- 2) Do you own or manage land that is adjacent to land used by horses?
 - a) If yes, what is your land used for?
 - i) Arable for fodder
 - ii) Other arable
 - iii) Livestock
 - iv) Housing/gardens
 - v) Unused
 - vi) Other – (please write in)
- 3) Are you a horse owner?
 - a) If yes, in what capacity?
 - i) Sporting
 - ii) Agricultural
 - iii) Breeding
 - iv) Recreational
 - v) Other – (please write in)
- 4) Are you a horse rider?
 - a) If yes, what sorts of horse riding do you do? (tick all that apply)
 - i) Recreational horse riding
 - ii) Competitive horse riding
 - iii) Professional horse riding
- 5) Are you a member or active supporter of any of the following organisations (tick all that apply)

The British Horse Society
British Riding Clubs
Blue Cross Animal Welfare Charity
Bransby Home of Rest for Horses
Donkey Sanctuary (The)
Equine Grass Sickness Fund
Horses4Heros
Horses and Ponies Protection Association (HAPPA)
Horse Trust (The)
HorseWorld
Pony Club (The)
Rare Breeds Survival Trust (RBST)
Redwings Horse Sanctuary
Riding for the Disabled Association
RSPCA
Society for the Welfare of Horses and Ponies
Veteran Horse Welfare (The)
Working Horse Trust (The)
World Horse Welfare
British Carriagedriving
British Dressage
British Dressage Supporters Club
British Equestrian Federation
British Equestrian Trade Association (The)
British Equestrian Vaulting
British Equestrian Veterinary Association (The)
British Eventing
British Harness Racing Club (The)
British Horseball Association (The)
British Horse Driving Trials Association
British Horseracing Authority
British Paralympic Association
British Showjumping
British Show Pony Society
British Young Riders Dressage Scheme
Byeways and Bridleways Trust (The)
Countryside Alliance
Country Gentlemen's Association (The)
Country Land and Business Association (The)
Endurance GB
Horse Driving Trials Supporters Club
Horse Trials Support Group
Hurlingham Polo Association
JumpCross
Mounted Games Association of Great Britain (The)
National Farmers Union (The)
National Trainers Federation (The)
Open Spaces Society
Ponies Association (UK)
Pony Riders Association
Racehorse Owners' Association
Side Saddle Association (The)

Thoroughbred Breeders Association (The)
UK Polocrosse Association
Western Equestrian Society
Western Horsemen's Association of Great Britain

- 6) Your postcode
- 7) Please tick the box that applies to you.
- a) Male
 - b) Female
- 8) Please tick the box that applies to you.
- a) Under 18
 - b) 18 to 29 years
 - c) 30 to 49 years
 - d) 50 to 64 years
 - e) 65 and over

The following batch of questions (Questions 9 – 13) concerns your general awareness of ragwort.

- 9) How confident are you that you would recognise ragwort if you saw it growing?
- a) Very confident
 - b) Fairly confident
 - c) Not very confident
 - d) Not at all confident
- 10) Which, if any, of the following images contains ragwort? (tick any or all that you think contain ragwort)



(ragwort)



(common fleabane)



(European goldenrod)



(Ragwort, rosette stage)

- 11) Which of the following phrases most accurately reflects your understanding of the effects of ragwort on horses:
- a) I am fully aware of the effect that ragwort can have on horses
 - b) I am reasonably aware of the effect that ragwort can have on horses but without knowing all the details
 - c) I am aware that ragwort has some effect on horses but I am not certain of the details
 - d) I am vaguely aware that ragwort has some effect on horses but I have little detailed knowledge
 - e) I have no knowledge of the effect that ragwort can have on horses
- 12) Before you began taking part in this survey, to what extent were you aware of the following facts about ragwort?

Facts about ragwort	I was fully aware of this fact	I was vaguely aware of this fact	I was not aware of this fact	I believed something that would contradict with this fact
Ragwort is extremely toxic to horses.				
A horse can consume small amounts of ragwort over a long period of time with no apparent ill effects.				
If enough ragwort is consumed, no matter over how long a period, ragwort will cause irreversible liver damage in horses that leads to death.				
Ragwort is controlled under the Weeds Act (1959) and Ragwort Control Act (2003).				
Cattle, pigs and chickens are also highly sensitive to ragwort.				
Dead and dying ragwort remains poisonous to livestock.				
Ragwort can contaminate feedstuff (hay, silage).				

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The following questions (Questions 13 to the end) focus on your personal experiences with ragwort and your opinions

If participant answered yes to questions 1 or 2 (own land used by horses or adjacent to land used by horses):

13) To what extent are you aware of your legal responsibilities to remove ragwort from land that you own?

- a) I am fully aware of my legal responsibilities to remove ragwort from land that I own.
- b) I am generally aware of my legal responsibilities to remove ragwort from land that I own although not certain of the details.
- c) I am vaguely aware of my legal responsibilities to remove ragwort from land that I own
- d) I am unaware of my legal responsibilities to remove ragwort from land that I own
- e) I do not believe that I have any legal responsibility to remove ragwort from land that I own

Comment [jmd1]: Maybe a box exercise asking what people think their responsibilities are?

Comment [SG2]: Have added question 14 which will give us a good idea of how accurate people's knowledge is unprompted

14) What do you understand your legal responsibilities regarding ragwort to be? (please write in)

15) Do you take any preventative measures to reduce the risk of ragwort on land that you own?

16) Which of the following preventative measures to reduce the risk of ragwort do you take?

- a) Chemical spraying
- b) Hand pulling ragwort
- c) Making sure that there are no bare patches in pasture
- d) Removing droppings on a regular basis
- e) Making sure not to overstock or overgraze paddocks
- f) Topping/mowing
- g) Other preventative measures (please write in)

17) Have you ever had ragwort on land that you own?

If the participant answered yes to question 17

18) Was this in the last 12 months?

19) What steps, if any, did you take to remove the ragwort from the land that you own?

- a) Pulling up the ragwort
- b) Mowing or cutting down the ragwort
- c) Chemical spraying
- d) Other steps (please write in)
- e) No steps taken

If participant answers e to question 19

20) Why did you not take action to remove the ragwort from the land that you own? (tick any that apply)

- a) Was not aware that ragwort was harmful to horses
- b) Was not aware that I had a legal obligation to remove ragwort

- c) The ragwort was in an area more than 50 metres away from any land used by horses
- d) Was unaware that the ragwort needed to be removed
- e) Did not feel that any effort to remove the ragwort would be successful
- f) Prefer to retain the ragwort for other reasons
- g) Could not afford to pay for the ragwort to be professionally removed
- h) Other (please write in)

(if the participant answered a to question 19)

21) What safety precautions did you take when pulling up ragwort from land that you own?

- a) Wearing thick safety gloves
- b) Wearing goggles
- c) Burning all removed ragwort plant material
- d) Other precautions (please write in)
- e) No safety precautions taken

Comment [TP3]: It will depend on what method – if you are mowing in a tractor then you might not wear gloves but if you were spraying then I guess you would be wearing gloves and goggles (to follow HSE requirements) Please suggest some amends. The issue is not around spraying – and therefore needing to wear protective clothing due the chemicals, it is because it has been advised and is common practice to wear gloves and sometimes goggles when pulling ragwort

Comment [TP4]: What about combining into ‘appropriate safety wear for the control method e.g. thick gloves, eye protection’

Comment [SG5]: Would suggest then that we only make the question applicable if people have indicated earlier in the survey that they have removed ragwort by pulling it up

22) Have you sought advice about ragwort from any of the following organisations (tick all that apply)

- a) British Horse Society
- b) Your Local Authority
- c) Government department
- d) Natural England
- e) Other organisations (please write in)

If any of a – d ticked in question 22:

23) How helpful or unhelpful was that advice?

- a) Very helpful
- b) Fairly helpful
- c) Fairly unhelpful
- d) Very unhelpful

24) Please provide an estimate of how much time you have personally spent dealing with ragwort on land that you own over the last 12 months

25) Please provide an estimate of how much money you have spent on dealing with ragwort on land that you own over the last 12 months.

26) Please state what this comprised e.g. contractor, spray etc.

27) To what extent are you familiar or unfamiliar with any of the following:

Advice	Very familiar	Fairly familiar	Fairly unfamiliar	Very unfamiliar
The Ragwort Control Act				
The DEFRA Code of Practice on Ragwort				

The British Horse Society's advice on ragwort				
The Animal Welfare Act				
The Weeds Act				

The following questions (Questions 28 – 37) are about your experience of ragwort on land owned or managed by other people.

28) At any point over the last 12 months have you seen ragwort on land that is used by horses?

29) At any point over the last 12 months have you seen ragwort on land that is adjacent to that used by horses?

30) At any point in the last 7 days have you seen ragwort on land that is used by horses?

31) At any point in the last 7 days have you seen ragwort on land that is adjacent to that used by horses?

If the participant answers yes to questions 28-31 – Q32 to follow each question above when answered positively)

32) How much ragwort was present on the land at its most prolific?

- a) A few isolated plants
- b) Covered around a quarter of the land
- c) Covered around a half of the land
- d) Covered around three quarters of the land
- e) Covered most of the land

If the participant answered yes to questions 28 or 30:

33) Where you have seen ragwort on land adjacent to that used by horses, who owned the land?

- a) Network Rail
- b) Highways Agency
- c) A Local Council
- d) Utility Companies
- e) Other public organisations – (please write in)
- f) Private individuals or Businesses
- g) Don't know...

If the participant answered yes to any of questions 27 – 31:

34) What steps have you taken when you have seen ragwort growing on land that you do not own? (tick all that apply)

- a) Reported the presence of ragwort to the landowner
- b) Removed the ragwort by pulling it out by hand

- c) Removed the ragwort by digging it out
- d) Carried out chemical spraying on the area affected
- e) Reported the ragwort to a local council
- f) Reported the ragwort to the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs
- g) Reported to the BHS or other charity
- h) Reported to Natural England
- i) Other action – (write in)
- j) No action taken

If the participant answered 'a' to question 33:

- 35) Where you have reported the presence of ragwort to a landowner how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the action that was taken as a result?
- a) Totally satisfied
 - b) Fairly satisfied
 - c) Fairly dissatisfied
 - d) Very dissatisfied

If the participant answered 'j' to question 33:

- 36) Were there any particular reasons why you did not take any action? (please write in)

- 37) To the best of your knowledge was the ragwort fully removed?

If the participant answered yes to any horse ownership questions:

- 38) Has any horse you have owned had health problems where ragwort poisoning was suspected?
- 39) Has any horse you have owned had health problems where ragwort poisoning was confirmed by a vet on a full histopathological test?
- 40) Have any of any of your friends, neighbours or immediate family owned or kept horses that have had health problems where ragwort poisoning was suspected?
- 41) Have any of any of your friends, neighbours or immediate family owned or kept horses that have had health problems where ragwort poisoning was confirmed by a vet on a full histopathological test?
- 42) Has any horse you have owned ever died in circumstances where ragwort poisoning was suspected?
- 43) Has any horse you have owned ever died in circumstances where ragwort poisoning was confirmed by a vet on a full histopathological test?
- 44) Have any of any of your friends, neighbours or immediate family owned or kept horses that have ever died in circumstances where ragwort poisoning was suspected?
- 45) Have any of any of your friends, neighbours or immediate family owned or kept horses that have ever died in circumstances where ragwort poisoning was confirmed by a vet on a full histopathological test?

If the participant answered yes to any of questions 38 – 45 – Q46 to follow each time the question is answered positively :

46) Was this at any time during the last 12 months?

47) Do you check the forage that you buy for the presence of ragwort?

(if the participant answered no to 47)

48) What reasons did you have for not checking forage for the presence of ragwort? (please write in)

49) Have you ever purchased contaminated forage?

(If the participant answered yes to 49)

49. Did you report the contaminated forage that you found?

- a. Yes - to the supplier
- b. Yes – to another organisation (please write in)
- c. No

(If the participant answered a) or b) to 48)

50. Where you have reported the presence of ragwort in forage how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the action that was taken as a result?

- a. Totally satisfied
- b. Fairly satisfied
- c. Fairly dissatisfied
- d. Very dissatisfied

51. The following is a list of some of the different public policy responses that are used in relation to ragwort. To what extent do you think there should be more or less of the activity shown?

Statement	much more needed	more needed	about right	less needed	much less needed
Enforcement of ragwort control regulations					
Ragwort control action by owners of all land					
Provision of information to let people know what they need to do about ragwort if they see it growing					
Local councils monitoring ragwort					

52. Do you have any other comments that you would like to make on this subject? (please write in)

Thank you very much for taking part in the survey. If you would like to receive an email with a link to the survey results when they are published please enter your email here: