

## NACC Media Release

### **Draft Guidance from DEFRA on the Control of Johne's Disease in Dairy Herds.**

**29<sup>th</sup> April 2004:** NACC (National Association for Colitis and Crohn's Disease) welcomes the proposed publication by DEFRA of guidance to reduce the presence of MAP (mycobacterium paratuberculosis) in dairy herds.

Richard Driscoll, Director of NACC, commented:

'Although there is no proof at present that MAP can cause Crohn's Disease, NACC welcomes the new guidance proposed by DEFRA and considers that it should be implemented as a matter of priority.'

Earlier this year, NACC published the findings of an Expert Group it set up to review the evidence linking MAP and Crohn's Disease.

The Group concluded that:

1. On the basis of the current evidence a causative association between MAP and CD is unproven.
2. MAP is present in a proportion of patients who have Crohn's Disease, though whether this is a cause or a consequence of the disease process has yet to be established.
3. Proposals from the Food Standards Agency and DEFRA directed towards eliminating MAP from milk supplies should be supported.
4. The results of a current trial in Australia in which Crohn's patients are being treated with antibiotics targeted at MAP will become available later this year. If these show prolonged remission from Crohn's in substantial numbers of patients this would support the existence of a causative association between MAP and Crohn's Disease.
5. Well-designed epidemiological studies need to be undertaken, which should include data on clinical and genetic subsets and other key factors. This would address the possibility that Crohn's is a collection of different conditions with differing genetic or environmental aetiologies. If MAP is causing Crohn's Disease, then it could be causative to only one subset of the disease and perhaps only to one genetic sub-type.

*The Report of the NACC Expert Review Group into the evidence linking Mycobacterium paratuberculosis (MAP) and Crohn's Disease* can be obtained from the NACC website at [www.nacc.org.uk](http://www.nacc.org.uk)

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