



media release

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**SCIENTIST PRESENTED WITH PRESTIGIOUS BRITISH HORSE SOCIETY AWARD
Dr Andrew Waller of the Animal Health Trust, receives welfare award for
excellent service**

The prestigious British Horse Society (BHS) Awards are presented to individuals and organisations who have given outstanding service to the cause of equestrianism and equine welfare. Awards were presented by the Society's President Martin Clunes, on Friday 2 November at Saddlers Hall, in the City of London.

Dr Andrew Waller, Head of Bacteriology at the Animal Health Trust (AHT), was presented with the Welfare Award for Excellent Service in the Cause of Equine Welfare, in recognition of his dedication to combat Strangles, the most commonly diagnosed infectious disease of horses worldwide.

Strangles, caused by *Streptococcus equi*, is of major welfare and economic importance as the disease can have complicated side effects and can lead to death. It is extremely disruptive to the horse industry as horses can carry the Strangles bacteria but show no clinical signs.

Andrew has been instrumental in the development of blood and DNA tests to diagnose infected horses, both launched in 2008, as well as working toward the launch of a new Strangles vaccine. He has also collaborated with the BHS on Strangles education for many years and helped develop STEPS, the Strategy to Eradicate and Prevent Strangles.

Upon receiving this award Andrew has said: "I am extremely honoured and humbled to receive this award for our work towards the eradication of Strangles.

“It is so important that our new diagnostic tests meet the needs of the horse-owning public and we are delighted that they are already having an important impact in preventing and controlling this devastating disease.”

Lee Hackett, BHS Senior Executive (Welfare) said: “Strangles is a horrible disease that can have devastating effects on horse health and lead to financial ruin for some equestrian businesses. The incredible work done by Andrew and his colleagues at the AHT has advanced our understanding of Strangles enormously and there is no doubt that many horses, and indeed people, have benefited greatly from their research.

“The BHS has been privileged to work closely with Andrew and his team and there is no more deserving recipient of this award.”

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For further information, please contact:

Katherine Lawson, AHT Press Office, 01638 751000 ext 1572

Additional notes:

- The **Animal Health Trust** is an independent charity, employing over 200 scientists, vets and support workers. It aims to improve the health and welfare of horses, dogs and cats through research. It also provides specialist referral services and continuous education to vets. Visit our website at www.aht.org.uk
- The AHT was awarded a £15,000 bursary from the Land Rover Burghley Horse Trials in 2011 to help fund the development of a rapid result blood test to identify horses infected with Strangles. Work on this is still on-going.