

HELP SAVE OUR WILDLIFE



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Badgers are being made a scapegoat for modern intensive farming

The Welsh Assembly are currently considering plans for the mass slaughter of badgers over huge areas. They have caved in to massive pressure from the farming unions, who do not want to look at their own responsibility for the spread of disease.

Public opinion has been shown to be overwhelmingly against a cull (96% in the UK government's own consultation last year).

PLEASE DO ALL YOU CAN TO MAKE YOUR OPPOSITION CLEAR:

- donate to our fighting fund
- write to Elin Jones at the Welsh Assembly Government, Cathays Park, Cardiff, CF10 3NQ

DYFI BADGER GROUP
MOCH DAEAR BRO DDYFI
www.dyfibadgergroup.org

The farming unions say bovine TB is rife in badger social groups; that they are responsible for infecting cattle; that badger numbers have exploded; that their killing field solution of mass slaughter is based in part on compassion for these sick badgers; that, given the green light, they could and would only take out diseased badgers.

THIS IS NONSENSE

The facts speak for themselves:

*Bovine TB is a cattle disease, and (as the name suggests) is primarily spread amongst, and by, cattle. The vast majority of badgers are completely disease free. Even in the small percentage who have been infected, only a tiny proportion (less than 1%) go on to develop the active stage of the disease, and most live completely normal lives. Scientific studies have shown that where badgers are culled, their infection rate goes UP; when left alone and measures are focused on controlling the disease in cattle, the infection rate goes DOWN.

* Far from being based on emotion, the case against culling is based on the best science we have. The ISG report was the result of 10 years of research and cost 11,000 badger lives and £50 million to the taxpayer. It concluded unequivocally that "badger culling can make no meaningful contribution to TB control in Britain", and would probably make the situation worse. The report stressed that TB control must be based on improved and accurate cattle movement controls and testing, and better biosecurity on farms.

*There is no method of detecting which badgers are infected and ALL badgers would be killed within huge areas - most of whom would be perfectly healthy. There is no humane killing method available.

*What the NFU etc. don't tell us is how modern intensive farming leads to the spread of many diseases. 30,000 cattle are culled annually for TB - but 125,000 are culled each year for infertility, 90,000 for mastitis and 32,000 for lameness alone. Conditions on many farms are perfect for the spread of TB infection amongst cattle.

*In Northern Ireland, where no badgers have been killed but proper cattle controls introduced, TB infection has gone DOWN every year... In the Republic of Ireland, where badgers have been virtually exterminated from huge areas over 16 years, TB infection was UP by 13% last year alone.

"Intensive industrial farming of livestock is now an opportunity for emerging diseases.... animal farming and man's intrusion into the environment are major factors in the spread of diseases... Keeping ecosystems intact could be the best protection humankind has ... The best security against (these diseases) is conservation." (UN Food and Agriculture Organisation).

Badgers have been around for 80,000 years - longer than us. Numbers in the UK have recovered since they were given legal protection in the 90s. But they are declining or absent in much of mainland Europe, and we are their last stronghold. But even now 50,000 are killed each year on our roads, and another 10,000+ by illegal digging and baiting.

Dyfi Badger Group

We formed in 2007 partly because we are all fascinated by badgers - and several of us have already been badger-watching for some time - but also in response to the terrible threat of wholesale slaughter, as a shockingly misguided reaction to the spread of bovine TB amongst cattle.

It looks as if the Welsh Assembly Government, and in particular Elin Jones of Plaid Cymru (Minister for Rural Affairs) have allowed themselves to be swayed by intense pressure from the farming unions and will next week announce yet another 'trial' 'cull' of badgers in one area of Wales as an 'experiment' (but without testing the badgers and without any scientific 'control' area so that it will be impossible to assess the results, or put a halt to the process).

This is in spite of the fact that the Independent Scientific Group's report of last year - based on 10 years of scientific research and costing the taxpayer £50 million, as well as the lives of 12,000 badgers - concluded **UNEQUIVOCALLY** that "badger culling can make no meaningful contribution to TB control in Britain" - anywhere, or by any conceivable means.

It is vital that the public let Elin Jones, and the WAG, know that we do not accept this wholesale and barbaric local eradication of one of our most important native wildlife species. It goes against our best science, and refuses to acknowledge the central role that modern intensive farming itself plays in spreading disease amongst the national herd.

The natural world is our common heritage. Please help us to defend our wildlife.

**PLEASE DO ALL YOU CAN TO
MAKE YOUR OPPOSITION CLEAR.**

donate to our fighting fund
And
write to Elin Jones at the
Welsh Assembly Government,
Cathays Park,
Cardiff,
CF10 3NQ

and to Hilary Benn at
Westminster

For more information Contact us
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