

Facts about vaccination of badgers

- **Vaccination will help with TB eradication, culling will not**
About a quarter of adult badgers die each year. Annual vaccination protects an increasing proportion of TB-free badgers and leads to a declining level of infection. In contrast, repeated culling increases infection among badgers, and causes the disease to spread.
- **Vaccination works to control bTB**
The Assembly Government has commissioned studies which specifically said that vaccination is a viable alternative to culling for TB control.
- **Vaccination by injection is now licensed and will be used this year**
Injectable vaccines will be used very shortly in the Badger Vaccine

Deployment Project in England. In contrast, Dr Glossop, WAG's Chief Vet, says only that vaccination may "eventually" be useful.

- **The proven method of vaccination by injection is cheaper than culling**
In 2008, the Assembly Government estimated a cost of £2,710 per km² per year for vaccination, compared with £2,830 for culling. They now say the cost of the cull has risen to £4,200 per km² per year.
- **Oral badger vaccines are expected to be available in 2014, before the end of the cull**
The Assembly Government and the NFU have suggested that this could be an "exit strategy" from culling. So why make the problem worse with a cull beforehand?

These are the facts.

Pembrokeshire Against the Cull believe that taken together, they present a compelling case against a badger cull, and in favour of vaccination.

We also believe it is critical that farmers and landowners realise the implications for the bovine TB problem if this cull goes ahead.

IT IS OVER TO YOU.

See www.pembrokeshireagainstthecull.org.uk
for full factsheet and references.

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A message from Pembrokeshire Against the Cull to farmers, landowners and residents in the badger cull area of West Wales

Pembrokeshire Against the Cull is a group of landowners, farmers and residents living in the vicinity of the proposed badger cull area (what the Welsh Assembly Government calls the Intensive Action Pilot Area, IAPA). We take bovine TB very seriously and recognise its impact on the farming community. However, we oppose killing badgers as scientific trials have shown that it will not help and could make the TB situation worse. The following facts will help you make a more informed decision about the wisdom of the proposed badger cull. They are all based on rock-solid science, much of which has been laid out in open court. PAC has also produced a fully referenced, longer fact sheet, which explains in detail the information below.

It is vital that landowners, before giving consent to the Assembly Government to cull badgers on their land, realise the true implications of this programme.

Facts about the cull

- **A badger cull will not cause an absolute reduction in cattle TB in the pilot area, only slow the increase slightly for a very short time**
- **Within the cull area, killing badgers is likely to make only a small and very temporary impact on cattle TB**
During a 5 year badger cull, in a perfectly circular 150km² area, only 17 confirmed herd breakdowns would apparently be prevented. One third of breakdowns are unconfirmed, so even this figure is an overestimate. 2½ years after the cull finishes, this benefit disappears.
- **Overall, trial culls have caused almost as much cattle TB as they prevented. Farmers at the boundary and outside the area are at much increased risk of TB**
In trials, cattle TB rose by a massive 43% on surrounding land between the first and second badger culls. These detrimental effects continue to be observed in all culling years.



- **Badgers will not be killed all at once. This will spread TB within and around the cull area**

Previous culling trials took place over 100km² areas. The IAPA is nearly three times larger. If you are a farmer in the cull area, and anyone around you has suffered a TB outbreak, you will be at much higher risk yourself as soon as the cull commences.

- **The IAPA is far from “ideal” – putting even more farmers at risk**

The IAPA is a peculiar shape. The entire southern boundary is open farmland. The concept of “soft” boundaries, such as sheep farms, has been rejected by the experts, who say the IAPA is not consistent with scientific advice. Previous culling trials used barriers like coastlines and major rivers where possible, yet detrimental effects were highly consistent across areas.

- **Repeated culling causes the prevalence of TB infection among badgers to rise**

This, combined with badgers’ expanded ranging, has led the scientists responsible for the English trials to fear that cattle in the culled areas could face an increased risk of badger-transmitted TB infection, compared to before the cull started.

- **A cull costs far more than the savings achieved through reduced cattle TB**

The cost of the Pembrokeshire cull has been given by WAG as between 9 and

10 million pounds, and a full cost benefit analysis has not been undertaken! The science shows culling costs up to 3.5 times what it would save. Culling is a highly expensive option and will not benefit the taxpayer or the farming industry.

- **There is no evidence that the Assembly Government’s “package” of measures will achieve any better results than a badger cull on its own**

WAG’s cattle measures are inadequate (see later), and it has signally failed to address the most important route of infection, cattle-to-cattle. An opportunity for scientific research that could genuinely help farmers is being lost.

- **A badger cull is planned every year for five years – at least**

Every year, you will have anonymous armed contractors trapping and killing badgers on your land in the spring and summer.



Facts about the cattle measures

- **Farmers will be subject to restrictions that will not help them with the TB problem**

The measures identified are less stringent than those recommended by the experts. Farmers will suffer the burden of increased restrictions, but there will be no TB benefits after the cull ends.

- **The cattle testing in the cull area is inadequate**

Despite scientific recommendation, there is no commitment to wider use of the more sensitive Gamma Interferon cattle test. 6 monthly testing will be introduced, but mainly for “frequent movers” of cattle. Some herds may not show up infection for many months, at a time when the cull will increase the TB risk. In Australia, where there was no wildlife reservoir, they insisted on 4 follow-up tests following a breakdown yet it took 27 years to eradicate bTB. Only 2 follow up tests are proposed for the IAPA (no change from existing practice).

- **The cattle movement controls are inadequate**

Again, despite scientific advice, there are no plans to control the movements of cattle within, into, or out of the area based on TB risk. The Assembly Government only say this is an idea for the future – after a badger cull could have made the problem worse.

- **The biosecurity measures are illogical and unenforceable**

Biosecurity is only voluntary, subjective, and unlikely to be effectively implemented or monitored. The Assembly Government’s advice on crucial matters is very poor – for example, bTB can survive in the soil for up to 21 months, and in stored slurry for up to 6 months. WAG only “recommends” that cattle do not graze pasture for only 2 months after slurry, manure, or dirty water has been applied on it. But farmers could still be penalised if their “biosecurity score” is too high, through reduced compensation.

- **Herd breakdowns will not be “traceable”**

bTB can remain latent in cattle for their lifetime, and become infectious at any time. This can account for closed herds experiencing breakdowns after 12 years clear of the disease. As few as 5 bacteria can infect an animal (usually in aerosol form). Given the chaotic nature of a poorly designed badger cull, causation of herd breakdowns will be impossible to ascertain.

