

Government U-Turn on Badger Cull Is Cruel, Unscientific, and Misguided



Sharing our content may mean you also share your personal data with the chosen social media platform. Find out more [here](#).

Posted by [Saskia Fluckiger](#) on September 10, 2020 | [Permalink](#)

After pledging earlier this year to phase out the cruel badger cull in England, the government has made a U-turn and announced that badgers will be killed across the country this autumn. Over 65,000 badgers will be gunned down in 11 new zones – including Derbyshire, Oxfordshire, Shropshire, and Warwickshire – in a misguided effort to control bovine tuberculosis (TB), even though badger vaccination projects are successfully underway in those areas. Many of these sentient, smart animals – who are a protected species – will endure a slow, painful death.



© A Wild Life with Animals / awlwa.org

While some badgers are trapped and then shot, others are killed by “free shooting”, whereby farmers are granted a licence to shoot them at night, with minimal training and supervision. As a result, many animals aren't killed outright and are left to suffer and die slowly in excruciating pain. It's been reported that over 20% of badgers take more than five minutes to die. The practice is so inhumane that it is, rightly, being challenged in the High Court.

Not only is this U-turn cruel, it also flies in the face of scientific research into the cause and spread of bovine TB, which has shown that killing badgers is ineffective in tackling the disease in cows. Both the proportion of cows who had TB and the number of new cases in herds in the Gloucestershire pilot cull zone rose during a five-year cull. In the Dorset pilot cull zone, the number of infected cows increased by 20% over three years of culling. What's more, an independent review commissioned by the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs recommended *over two years ago* that the dairy industry take greater responsibility for on-farm controls, biosecurity, and safe trading practices to stop the spread of the disease, concluding that cows were much more likely to catch TB from other cows than from badgers. Badgers are not even commonly infected with TB – research suggests that in some areas, fewer than 1% of badgers are infected.



The evidence presented by the government to justify the continued killing is unscientific. Its tests for TB in cattle are only about 50% accurate, which means that a herd may be declared TB-free, only for all the animals to remain or become sick and spread the disease to others. Badgers are simply a scapegoat for poor government policy and its failure to tackle the problem at the root: intensive dairy farming.

PETA is working with other UK animal protection groups to put pressure on the government to abandon the badger cull. We recently signed an open letter [appealing to the prime minister](#) to intervene in the decision to expand the cull, and we won't stop until badgers are no longer being shot and killed.

Disease and Cruelty in the Dairy Industry

While vaccinating badgers against bovine TB is a humane option, because outbreaks are predominantly caused by the intensive rearing and movement of cattle, ditching dairy and beef and instead eating vegan foods is the only truly sustainable way to stop the disease from spreading – and doing so would also spare millions of cows, badgers, and other animals suffering.

Milk production is cruel. On dairy farms, cows are forcibly impregnated via artificial insemination, only for their beloved calves to be torn away from them so the milk that nature intended for their babies can instead be consumed by humans. Both mother cows and their calves are traumatised when separated from each other. For days afterwards, the mothers bellow in desperation and the calves bawl in distress – all in vain.

Jo-Anne McArthur / We Animals

Male calves – who are viewed by farmers as “by-products” – are either shot at birth or destined to be raised for veal. Females, like their mothers, face a lifetime of repeated forcible impregnation and anguish over their lost babies. Their bodies are pushed to the limit in order to squeeze out every last drop of milk.

What You Can Do

Sign a petition calling to ban shooting of badgers:

[SIGN NOW](#)

If it weren't for humans' obsession with cows' mammary gland secretions, badgers would never have had to endure barbaric culls – and cows wouldn't have to go through hell every day on dairy farms. The best thing you can do to protect badgers and cows is to go vegan:

[Get Your Free Vegan Starter Kit](#)

RELATED POSTS



CONNECT WITH US



SUBSCRIBE TO E-MAIL UPDATES

All mandatory fields are marked with an asterisk. *

First Name
First Name*

Last Name
Last Name*

E-Mail Address
E-Mail Address*

[Submit](#)

Also of Interest

[The Secret Life of Badgers – Photos and Facts](#) [Badger Cull: 3,656 Animals Killed, No Proven...](#) [#ShootSelfiesNotBadgers](#)



PETA
PO Box 70315
London N1P 2RG
United Kingdom
+44 (0) 20 7837 6327
+44 (0) 20 7923 6242 (fax)

General Info
[About PETA](#)
[Contact PETA](#)
[Contest Terms and Conditions](#)
[Terms of Submission](#)
[Disclaimer](#)
[Texting Terms and Conditions](#)
[Donate Now](#)
[Donation Terms and Conditions](#)
[Donation Frequently Asked Questions](#)
[Privacy Policy](#)
[Data Retention Policy](#)
©2023 PETA. [Read Our Full Policy](#)

Site Tools
[Accessibility](#)
[Subscribe to PETA](#)
[News](#)
[Jobs and Internships](#)
[Volunteer](#)
[About This Website](#)
[Site Map](#)

International Sites
[PETA US](#)
[PETA France](#)
[PETA Germany](#)
[PETA Netherlands](#)
[PETA India](#)
[PETA Australia](#)
[PETA Asia](#)
[PETA Latino](#)