



38,010 CATTLE  
**CULLED**  
IN BRITAIN IN 2012 DUE TO  
**BOVINE TB**

Bovine TB. Let's focus on the facts.



# Some facts can't be ignored.

38,010 British cattle were culled in 2012 because of bovine TB. The spread of the disease is increasing – last year an additional 5,109 farms got the devastating news that their business had been struck down by the disease. Bovine TB takes a terrible toll on cows, wildlife, farming families and rural communities. We urgently need to control its spread in badgers and other wildlife – and prevent it moving to other parts of the country.

## Bovine TB and badgers – what's the link?

Science has proven there is a link between badgers, cattle and bovine TB. Therefore scientists accept that culling badgers can reduce TB in cattle. Evidence from culling trials carried out in England in 1997 demonstrates that if badgers are culled in controlled areas, over a period of years, it can make a significant impact on levels of the disease. Evidence from other countries, such as Ireland and New Zealand, also shows that tackling the disease on all fronts, including in wildlife population, can help reduce the spread of TB.

## What are the pilot culls I've heard about?

The pilot badger culls will take place in two areas where TB is widespread – one in Somerset, the other in Gloucestershire. They have been licenced by Natural England and will be carried out by trained professionals to see if a targeted cull can be carried out humanely, safely and effectively.

## So, will the culls be carried out across the country?

If they prove successful, there could be additional badger controls carried out only in areas of the country where TB is widespread and needs to be tackled urgently. There is no plan for a nationwide cull of badgers.

## Can't you just vaccinate cattle and badgers?

Unfortunately, there is no vaccine available to protect cattle. In fact, best estimates from the European Commission suggest it will be ten years before a workable vaccine is available. The NFU supports badger vaccination but this is not a viable alternative at the moment either, as a vaccine only helps prevent disease, it doesn't cure it. It would have little impact in areas where TB is rife in the badger population.

## What are farmers doing to protect their cattle from TB?

There are strict tests on cattle for TB before they are allowed to move from their farm to ensure the disease isn't spread around the country. Cows in areas where TB is widespread are also tested annually. Farmers double-fence areas where cattle graze so their cows do not come into contact with animals from other farms. Plus, to try and prevent the spread of TB, they raise feed and water troughs off the ground, fit badger-proof gates, store feed in secure bins and fence off areas where there are badger setts.

*In the last decade, 305,000 cattle have been taken off British farms for slaughter because of bovine TB.*

*"The rapid spread of this disease is one of the biggest threats to our dairy and cattle farmers."*

*Defra's Chief Scientific Adviser Professor Ian Boyd*

## Want to know how TB affects British farmers?

Farmers Angela and Barry are proud to have reared their 80 cattle from birth on their Derbyshire farm.

So when they found that one of their newly born calves would have her mother taken from her because of bovine TB, they were devastated.

At a TB test on their farm, one cow tested positive – and that cow was pregnant. She gave birth to a calf less than a week after the positive test came back. The ten-year-old mother, which was born and bred on the farm, was taken away from the calf and sent to slaughter.

Aside from the emotional heartache, it also meant their farm would be closed down for a minimum of four months. This is because stringent Government regulations say that a farm must fully pass two TB tests after 60 days and 120 days before restrictions can be lifted.

For more information on bovine TB and how it affects British farming, visit:

**[tbfreeengland.co.uk](http://tbfreeengland.co.uk)**

#tbfree



### In Angela's words:

*It is very sad that the calf, which was less than a week old, will be without its mother because of TB. We've put our whole working lives into what we thought was best and still we've come down with TB.*

*We've been more than careful and taken the necessary precautions like double-fencing boundaries and giving the herd no contact with other cattle. And we even grow our own feed, so we know exactly what they are eating. What more can we do? It's so difficult not to feel angry about it. We worry that the rest of the herd could contract TB – it's beyond our control.*

Watch a video of Angela's story – visit [www.tbfreeengland.co.uk/thecalf](http://www.tbfreeengland.co.uk/thecalf)

