



Animal &
Plant Health
Agency

Animal and Plant Health Agency
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Our Ref: ATIC2397

[REDACTED]

{By Email}

20 May 2021

Dear [REDACTED]

PROVISION OF REQUESTED INFORMATION

Thank you for your request for information for badger culling statistics which we received on 27 April 2021. Your request has been handled under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004(EIR).

The information you requested and our response is detailed below:

What percentage of Badgers were tested for TB in last 5 years cull? Answers in individual numbers and percentages per year.

For the purposes of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and the EIRs, Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) and Defra are the same legal entity. We are aware that you have sent a similar request, as above, to Defra to which they have already responded.

What percentage of culled badgers tested positive for TB in the last 5 years? Answers in individual numbers and percentages per year.

This information is not held as not all culled badgers are tested for TB. The information is therefore exempt under regulation 12(4)(a) of the EIRs, which relates to information which is not held at the time when an applicant's request is received. Regulation 12(4)(a) is a qualified exception, which usually means that a public authority is required to conduct a public interest test to determine whether or not information should be disclosed or withheld. However, the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), who is the independent regulator for requests made under the EIRs, takes the view that a public interest test in cases where the information is not held would serve no useful purpose. Therefore, in line with the ICO's view, APHA has not conducted a public interest test in this case.

If at all, what percentage of dairy and cattle farms are randomly tested for TB and how often?

In the High Risk and Edge Area of England almost all cattle herds are tested at least annually, with many herds tested even more frequently. In the low risk area all herds are tested at least every four years.

When testing, are the slurry and other TB breeding grounds in farms tested?

No, slurry is not tested as part of TB surveillance.

What scientific evidence do you base your advice on and from what year is that evidence?

For the purposes of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and the EIRs, APHA and Defra are the same legal entity. We are aware that you have sent this request, as above, to Defra to which they have already responded.

If you say badgers are infected with TB, why are there no controls for the blood which becomes a biohazardous infectious waste upon free shooting?

Individuals who are licensed to cull badgers using controlled shooting must follow Natural England's Best Practice Guidance which specifies which measures should be taken when disposing of culled badgers. The Best Practice Guidance can be found here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/986674/controlled-shooting-of-free-ranging-badgers.pdf

Information disclosed in response to this EIR request is releasable to the public. In keeping with the spirit and effect of the EIR and the government's Transparency Agenda, this letter and the information disclosed to you may be placed on GOV.UK, together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context. No information identifying you will be placed on the GOV.UK website.

An Annex is attached which explains the copyright that applies to the information being released to you and contact details should you be unhappy with the service you have received.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact the Access to Information Team at the email address below. During the current Coronavirus outbreak, our offices will be closed.

Yours sincerely

ACCESS TO INFORMATION TEAM

Email: enquiries@apha.gov.uk

Annex

Copyright

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Complaints

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request, you may make a complaint or appeal against our decision under section 17(7) of the FOIA or under regulation 11 of the EIRs, as applicable, within 40 working days of the date of this letter. Please write to the Access to Information Manager at the address at the top of this letter or email enquiries@apha.gov.uk and the team will arrange for an internal review of your case.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, section 50 of the FOIA and regulation 18 of the EIRs gives you the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) for a decision. Please note that generally the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have first exhausted APHA's own complaints procedure. The ICO can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Coronavirus

If you need to contact the ICO during the Coronavirus pandemic, it's best to do so online. Please click [here](#) for contact details. You can also call them on 0303 123 1113.