



# Irish Deer Management Forum

Fóram Bainistíochta Fianna na hÉireann

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine  
Agriculture House,  
Dublin 2.

Wednesday, July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

**RE: Recommendation 1 from the Irish Deer Management Forum to the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht 29/07/15.**

Dear Minister,

**With reference to O’Keeffe, J. Report of Deer Removed under Licence C123/2014 covering areas in Wicklow East. Interim Internal Report. Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, 2015.**

Thank you for referring the findings of the interim report on incidence of Bovine Tuberculosis infection in deer in the Calary area of County Wicklow to the Irish Deer Management Forum.

We convened a special meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup> June 2015 to consider the findings and prior to this Mr. Barry Coad of Coillte and Dr Tim Burkitt of the National Parks and Wildlife Service had kindly carried out research on our behalf into the density of deer on State lands within the Roundwood area including areas adjacent to farmland in the Calary area. This density was found to be high with over 32 animals per 100 hectare.

The IFA, through its representative on the Forum Mr. Tom Shortt, also carried out research on the economic losses to the Calary study area attributable to the continuing TB issue with an estimate of some Euro 1 million being presented.

The recommendations of the Forum to the Departments in respect of the interim report are:

1. On the grounds of deer welfare both the Department of Agriculture and the Environment should work with landowners, land managers, hunters and wildlife interests **to reduce both the density of deer** (namely Sika- *Cervus Nippon*) in the Calary area of County Wicklow **and the incidence of Bovine TB infection within the deer herd in that area.**
2. A deer management plan should be developed urgently for the area of the study and implemented within **normal deer management seasons.**
3. Tom Shortt IFA has agreed to convene a **TB in Deer Subcommittee** of the Forum to provide integrated guidance and advice on this topic in Ireland, including on a plan for the Calary area, in conjunction with the Wicklow Deer Management Partnership.
4. The Irish Deer Management Forum considers that **the incidence of Bovine TB in deer in the Calary area of County Wicklow area is a special case.** It should not be taken as an indicator of Bovine TB levels within deer elsewhere in Ireland.
5. Some members of the Forum are concerned that in other areas of high incidence of Bovine TB in cattle there may also be infection within the deer herd and research should be directed by the Departments to a small number of other areas in consultation with the Forum.

6. The IDMF's recently formed Data Sub-committee has confirmed that **there is no evidence to link Bovine TB incidence in deer in Ireland or the UK to Bovine TB outbreaks or persistence in cattle herds.**
7. The Forum considers however that **if deer and cattle share feeders for example the potential for transfer exists** and this should be avoided.

Issued on behalf of  
Judith A Annett  
Chair IDMF