

One is drawn to the conclusion that Defra has adopted this farmer-led cull essentially for political reasons, partly because it doesn't wish to get its hands dirty and partly because it hasn't any money to do the job properly. So pass it on to the farmers so they can be the fall guys if it doesn't work.

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BOVINE TB

Shooting badgers

WHILE the recent announcement by Caroline Spelman, Secretary of State at Defra, that badgers are to be culled in two pilot areas this year is to be cautiously welcomed, the method chosen is to be regretted for a variety of reasons, not least because shooting is intrinsically fallible. The badger is probably one of the easiest large mammals to cull since it lives underground by day in communal, identifiable setts. Not to exploit this fact can be regarded only as perverse and misguided. Our colleagues in New Zealand and Australia faced with the problem of culling their target species would have welcomed the opportunity to cull them underground by gassing had it been possible.

Shooting badgers

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