



Department  
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The Rt Hon Andrea Leadsom MP  
From the Secretary of State

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The Rt Hon George Howarth MP  
House of Commons  
London  
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Our ref: MC411077/SF

22 September 2016

Dear George,

Thank you for your email of 25 August on behalf of a number of your constituents about bovine TB.

I am grateful to receive your constituent's views on bovine TB.

Bovine TB is the greatest animal health threat to the UK. Dealing with the disease is costing the taxpayer over £100 million each year. Last year alone over 28,000 cattle had to be slaughtered in England to control the disease, causing devastation and distress for farmers and rural communities, where often their herds have been built over many generations.

The UK Government is taking strong action to deliver a long-term plan to eradicate the disease in England and protect the future of the UK's dairy and beef industries. The comprehensive strategy includes strengthening cattle testing and movement controls, improving biosecurity on farm and when trading, and badger control in areas where TB is rife.

The approach of tackling the disease in cattle and in wildlife has worked in Australia, is working in New Zealand and Ireland and is supported by the Government and Defra Chief Scientists, the UK Chief Veterinary Officer and other leading vets.

I enclose a briefing note setting out the key points relating to Government policy and action in this area.

I hope that this reply is helpful.

Best wishes,

**Andrea Leadsom MP**  
Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs