

Reference Number: DAERA/26-600



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**

An Roinn

**Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil
agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe**

Department o'

**Fairmin, Environment
an' Kintra Matthers**

www.daera-ni.gov.uk

Veterinary Service Animal Health Group
Information Communications Branch

Via Email:

VSAHG Information Communications Branch
1st Floor
Jubilee House
111 Ballykelly Road
Limavady
BT49 9HP

E-mail: vsinfocommsbranch@daera-ni.gov.uk

25 August 2026

Dear [REDACTED]

Freedom of Information Act 2000

With regard to your request for information received by the Department on 12 August 2026 which sought the following information:

1. What was the rationale for killing 51 cattle and who gave the go ahead
2. Were any of the cattle diseased
3. Were any of the cattle due to give birth
4. Why could the cattle not have been sold instead of shot
5. How many rounds of ammunition were used to kill all the cattle in total
6. Were any of the cattle not killed outright and if so how many
7. How long were the dead cattle left before being removed
8. Were any of the cattle calves
9. How many DAERA staff were involved in the cull
10. Was the Minister aware of the cull before it happened and what date was he informed
11. What was the cost to DAERA to do the cull
12. Did The dead cattle end up in the food chain

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13. How long did the cull last from beginning to end

14. Who gave the final go ahead to cull the cattle

I can confirm that the department has completed its searches and holds information within the scope of your request.

However, the department has decided not to disclose this information, as it is exempt from disclosure under Section 22 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (Information Intended for Future Publication).

A public interest test has been carried out and is attached at **Annex A**.

As you may be aware, Minister Muir has provided a detailed summary of the actions taken by the department and the accompanying context in his Written Ministerial Statement to the Assembly on 06 August and during the Committee for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs meeting held on 10 August 2026. These publications may be of interest to you.

You can read the statement via this link: <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/written-statement-northern-ireland-assembly-6-august-2026>.

Coverage of the Committee for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs meeting on Monday 10 August 2026 can be viewed here: <https://niassembly.tv/committee-for-agriculture-environment-and-rural-affairs-meeting-monday-10-august-2026/>

An independent external review is being taken forward to review the action taken by the department and the terms of reference has been published on the department's website: <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/terms-reference-independent-external-review>. The Minister has also committed to publishing the main findings and recommendations from the review once it has been completed.

If you require any clarification, believe that any part of your request has been overlooked, misunderstood or misinterpreted, please contact me in the first instance to see if it is a matter that can be resolved.

If you are unhappy with the manner in which your request for information has been handled or the decision to release/withhold information, you have the right to request a formal review by the Department. If you wish to do so, please contact The Review Section either by e-mailing daera.informationmanager@daera-ni.gov.uk or by post at The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Data Protection & Information Management Branch, Floor 2, Jubilee House, 111 Ballykelly Road, Ballykelly, Limavady BT49 9HP, within two months from the date of this letter.

If after such an internal review you are still unhappy with the response, you have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner at Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, CHESHIRE SK9 5AF, who will undertake an independent review of the Department's decision.

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Yours sincerely,



Veterinary Service Animal Health Group

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