

Milk sourcing policies of supermarkets, dairies and coffee shop chains

Supermarkets, dairies and coffee shop chains were contacted by Ethical Consumer in May and June 2014. Information on their milk, dairy and meat sourcing policies were requested, as well as position statements on the badger cull. With the exception of Sainsbury's and Yeo Valley, no information could be found on company websites, and position statements published in articles tended to be out of date (2012 or older) or were from during the 2013 culling season.

No company had an explicit policy that stated it would *never* source from the cull zones. All position statements received or found placed companies 'on the fence' in regard to supporting or opposing the badger cull. The badger cull was generally considered a government policy, and the decision to support it was considered to be an issue for farmers, not retailers. All responses considered the importance of supporting all farmers 'through this difficult time' as being greater than procuring products and services based on geographical location. Even those companies which did not source from the cull zones did not explicitly criticise the cull. Not sourcing from the cull zones appeared to be done for logistics or was a coincidence, rather than a conscious effort to avoid sourcing from the badger cull zones.

The similarity in wording between different statements suggests that producers are being offered a pre-prepared statement (possibly by Dairy UK). Anecdotally we hear that the NFU have an immediate response of contacting organisations and using pressure where any statement appearing oppositional to the cull appears.

Table 4. Position statements on sourcing from the Badger Cull Zones

Key:

- ⌚ No information found/ no up-to-date information found (2013 onwards)
- ⌚ Does not source from the cull zones at present (but would not penalise individual farmers even if did).
- ⌚ May not source from the cull zones or does not disclose (but would not penalise individual farmers)
- ⌚ Sources from the cull zones and will not penalise individual farmers

Name	Position Statement on sourcing from the badger cull zones
<p>Tesco</p>	<p><i>“We know that some customers have said they want us to stop sourcing from farms that will continue to take part in the scheme, in the pilot areas. We have considered this very carefully and do not think it would be right to penalise farmers whose farms are in these areas. We believe it is for the Government and farmers to decide how best to tackle the disease and we note that the planned extension of the cull has been dropped by the Government”.</i></p> <p>Laurence Webb, Corporate Responsibility Executive, Email response: 9/6/2014</p>
<p>ASDA</p>	<p>Asda's corporate and consumer websites were searched in June 2014 for a policy or position statement regarding the sourcing of milk, dairy products or meat from the badger cull zones. No information could be found and Asda did not respond to an email or phone enquiry. According to a Guardian article dated June 2013, Asda was named as one of three supermarkets selling 'badger friendly milk'.¹ In 2012 Asda issued a statement saying: “We can confirm that none of our ASDA Dairylink farmers are in the west Gloucestershire Area”.² No up-to-date statement or information relating to the sourcing of products from the cull zones could be found.</p>
<p>Morrison's</p>	<p><i>“We understand the strength of feeling on this issue. Bovine TB is a serious animal health issue, resulting in the slaughter of tens of thousands of cattle each year. Through our direct relationships with farmers we see first-hand the damage the disease is causing. However, we also recognise the unease that exists over a policy of badger control. As you know, the Government has said that it will not expand badger culling, although it will continue in parts of Somerset and Gloucestershire under strict licence. Like other retailers, we will continue to source from farms in these areas”.</i></p> <p>Philippa Hadfield, Corporate Responsibility Manager, Email Response: 13/6/2014</p>
<p>Sainsbury's</p>	<p>According to Jay from Stop the Cull, Sainsbury's had issued a statement that claimed it <i>did</i> source its milk from the cull zones. The Badger Killer's website, badger-killers.co.uk, provided a link to the following statement on Sainsbury's website:</p>

1 <http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2013/jun/05/badger-friendly-milk-supermarkets>

2 <http://www.thegrocer.co.uk/companies/supermarkets/tb-badger-cull-the-supermarkets-have-their-say/232694.article>

	<p><i>“Animal welfare issues are of great concern to us and our customers. We appreciate there are strong feelings on both sides of the debate which makes this a difficult issue for all concerned. The government has decided to go ahead with their trial based on scientific evidence and we will continue to remind them to keep the evidence under review...Our key focus is to support our farmers to help them make their operations more sustainable in the long term, whilst ensuring everything they produce is of the best quality for our customers. We have made significant strides on animal welfare and environmental stewardship and we do not think it fair to penalise farmers who by geographic circumstance are within the official DEFRA cull area.”</i> Sainsbury's website, June 2014</p>
Waitrose	<p>Waitrose's corporate and consumer websites were searched in June 2014 for a policy or position statement regarding the sourcing of milk, dairy products or meat from the badger cull zones. No information could be found and Waitrose did not respond to an email enquiry. According to a Guardian article dated June 2013, Waitrose was named as one of three supermarkets selling 'badger friendly milk'.²⁴ In 2012, Waitrose issued a statement saying “We fully understand the strength of feeling on both sides of this debate, but this is a government-led initiative and participation is entirely at the discretion of farmers themselves. Waitrose also pointed out that it did not have any dairy farmers in the pilot cull regions”.²⁵</p>
Marks & Spencers	<p><i>“We source some meat and dairy from farms in the trial areas- our priority is to maintain the long standing relationships we have with our suppliers and we have no plans to change our sourcing policy”.</i> Michael Rogers, Executive Office, Email response: 30/5/2014</p> <p>However in June 2013, Marks & Spencer was named as one of three supermarkets selling 'badger friendly milk'²⁴ and in 2012 M&S stated that they had no milk pool suppliers in the pilot areas.²⁵</p>
Lidl	<p>Lidl's corporate and consumer websites were searched in June 2014 for a policy or position statement regarding the sourcing of milk, dairy products or meat from the badger cull zones. No information could be found and Lidl did not respond to an email enquiry. In 2012 Lidl issued the following statement: <i>“We recognise that the badger culling trial, proposed in order to tackle the increasingly serious issue of Bovine TB infections in dairy herds, is a controversial and emotive subject for dairy farmers, consumers and retailers alike. As a business we work closely with various dairies throughout the country in order to source our products as locally as possible. This means that the majority of dairy farms that produce dairy products for Lidl are not affected by this trial. For the other dairy farmers this is however a very serious issue, which needs to be treated as such...It is entirely at the farmers' discretion as to whether they participate and we will follow the outcome of this government-driven trial and continue to monitor the situation.”</i>³</p>
Aldi	<p>Aldi's corporate and consumer websites were searched in June 2014 for a policy or position statement regarding the sourcing of milk, dairy products or meat from the badger cull zones. No information could be found and Aldi did not respond to an email enquiry. In 2012 Aldi issued a statement: <i>“Animal welfare and the livelihoods of UK farmers are very important to us and we take our responsibilities in these areas extremely seriously...The badger cull pilot is a Government-led initiative and</i></p>

3 <http://www.talking-naturally.co.uk/aldi-and-the-badger-cull/>

	<i>it is up to the Government and individual farmers to decide whether or not to participate in this initiative.”²⁶</i>
Booths	According to the Booth's website, www.booths.co.uk/fairmilk , viewed in June 2014, Booths only sourced milk from Lancashire and Yorkshire. No further information could be found and Booths did not respond to an email enquiry.
The cooperative	<i>“None of the farmers within The Co-operative Dairy Group are located in the proposed trial areas, however, as we do not operate a segregated milk supply chain, in common with other retailers, a small proportion of our milk may have come from farms in the proposed trial areas”.</i> Brian Moses, 30/5/2014
Yeo Valley	The Yeo Valley website was viewed in June 2014. A statement was found, dated May 2013, which said: <i>“...Yeo Valley does not and would prefer to not cull badgers unless we legally have to...We are committed to supporting British family dairy farmers through this challenging time and we would not stop sourcing milk from any of our supplying farms. We source all of the milk for the Yeo Valley brand from The Organic Milk Suppliers Co-operative. At this moment we are not aware that any of the farmers supplying us with milk are within the proposed pilot cull area...We neither oppose nor support a cull. It is for the government to decide the best solution on how to control the spread of bTB based on research, facts and advice from the experts”.</i>
Arla	Arla's website was searched in June 2014 for a policy or position statement regarding the sourcing of milk and dairy products from the badger cull zones. No information could be found and Arla did not respond to an email or phone enquiry. According to Jay from 'Stop the Cull', Arla supplied dairy products to Starbucks, and he believed that the contract was agreed on the condition that Arla stopped sourcing from the cull zones. (According to Jay, Arla had previously sourced from one farm within the cull zones). In May 2013, Starbucks switched supplier from Dairy Crest (a company criticised for sourcing from the cull zones) to Arla, which coincided with a statement appearing on Arla's website stating 'badger friendly milk'. This statement soon disappeared, which Jay believed was due to pressure from the NFU.
Dairy Crest	Dairy Crest's website was searched in June 2014 for a policy or position statement regarding the sourcing of milk, dairy products or meat from the badger cull zones. No information could be found and Dairy Crest did not respond to an email enquiry. According to Jay from 'Stop the Cull', Dairy Crest had issued a statement that claimed it sourced milk from the cull zones, and was also the main dairy supplier for Nero. The most recent position statement found, was a blog post dated August 2013, which stated: <i>“as the UK's leading dairy company, processing around 15 per cent of British milk production, Dairy Crest may well source milk from farms in the pilot area for the trial. However, we want to help our farmers to ensure the long-term sustainability of a British dairy industry and to do this we need to tackle bTB head on. We therefore support the science-based controlled approach proposed by the Government. It is up to each individual farmer if they participate but we are committed to supporting all of our farmers through this challenging time.”</i> (The Answers blog, viewed June 2014)

First Milk	<p><i>"We want to help our farmers to ensure the long-term sustainability of the British dairy industry and to do this, we need to tackle bTB head on. We therefore support science-based controlled initiatives as proposed by the Government. It is up to each individual farmer if they participate in the current trials and we are committed to supporting all of our farmers through these challenging times."</i> Lee Truelove, Head of Communication, Email Response: 12/6/2014.</p>
Meadow Foods	<p>Meadow Food's website was searched in June 2014 for a policy or position statement regarding the sourcing of milk, dairy products or meat from the badger cull zones. No information could be found and Meadow Foods did not respond to an email enquiry.</p>
Muller Wiseman	<p><i>"We support the position taken by Dairy UK who represent all major dairy processors in the UK, in relation to the science-based controlled approach proposed by the Government. It is up to each individual farmer if they participate but we are committed to supporting all of our farmers through this challenging time. All of our farmers meet the Red Tractor farm assurance standards in relation to animal husbandry, welfare, environmental protection and traceability. It is not our policy to divulge the names, locations or details of the farmers who supply us".</i> Samantha Wallace, Customer Service Department, email response 30/5/2014</p>
Lactalis	<p>In June 2014, Lactalis' website was searched for information regarding the company's position on sourcing from the cull zones. Although no specific statement could be found, according to a map of Lactalis' locations within the UK, no processing plants or dairies were located within the cull zones.</p>
Crediton Dairy Ltd	<p>Crediton Dairy's website was searched in June 2014 for a policy or position statement regarding the sourcing of milk or dairy products from the badger cull zones. No information could be found and Crediton Dairy did not respond to an email enquiry.</p>
United Dairy Farmers	<p>The United Dairy Farmer's website was searched in June 2014 for a policy or position statement regarding the sourcing of milk or dairy products from the badger cull zones. No information could be found and United Dairy Farmers did not respond to an email enquiry.</p>
Barber A.J & R.G	<p>According to the address provided on the company's website, they were not based within the cull zones. http://www.packaging-gateway.com/projects/ajbarber/</p>
Payne's Dairies	<p>Payne's Dairies website was searched in June 2014 for a policy or position statement regarding the sourcing of milk and dairy products from the badger cull zones. No information could be found and Payne's Dairies did not respond to an email enquiry.</p>
Wensleydale	<p>Wensleydale's website was searched in June 2014 for a policy or position statement regarding the sourcing of milk and dairy products from the badger cull zones. No information could be found and Wensleydale did not respond to an email enquiry.</p>
	<p>In June 2014, Parkjam Farm's website was searched for a policy or position</p>

Parkham Farms	statement regarding the sourcing of milk and dairy products from the badger cull zones. According to the website, 'every drop of milk was sourced within a 14 mile radius from their base- in north Devon. No further information could be found.
Wyke Farms	<i>"Wyke Farms is not included in any of the areas proposed for the badger cull, we are therefore unaffected by this issue. We do not have a problem with badgers on the farm here at Wyke. Like all UK business we rely on government scientific guidance on all issues relating to control of animal and zoonotic diseases and we follow the guidelines and advice as well as complying with legislation. Wyke Farms is committed to sustainable farming and we encourage the prolific wildlife in the Brue Valley."</i> Lucy Francis, Marketing Assistant, email response: May 2014
Grahams Dairies	<i>"Graham's The Family Dairy source wherever possible from 70 Scottish Farmers. [As] the badger cull is not being proposed for Scotland, it is not an issue for our business. In addition, we are supplied by a large number of farmers who may have varying views and it would be wrong for us to try to represent them."</i> Stephen Jardine, Founder, Email response: 4/6/2014
Caffè Nero	Caffè Nero's website was searched in June 2014 for information on its dairy suppliers and a policy or position statement regarding the sourcing of milk and dairy products from the badger cull zones. No information could be found. According to Jay from Stop the Cull, Caffè Nero was supplied by Dairy Crest who sourced their milk from the cull zones.
Starbucks	<i>"The amount of milk Starbucks purchases is not great enough for us to have our own producer pools, which is why we purchase our milk through an intermediary supplier. Earlier this year, after a routine review of our relationships with our suppliers we entered into a deal with Arla to supply our milk. We did this for two reasons: to give our customers the best quality milk we can get; and because we believe that this new contract secures a better deal for British farmers, particularly through Arla's cooperative model where farmers co-own the business and share in the profits."</i> Stefania C, customer care senior specialist UK, Email Response: 17/6/2014 According to Jay from 'Stop the Cull' Arla didn't appear to source milk from the cull zones at it had placed a statement on its website in 2013 claiming to be 'badger friendly'. However, this statement was later removed, possibly due to pressure from the National Framers Union (NFU), and no recent statement had been issued.
Costa	Costa's website was searched in June 2014 for information on its dairy suppliers and a policy or position statement regarding the sourcing of milk and dairy products from the badger cull zones. No information could be found.
Coffee Republic	Coffee Republic's website was searched in June 2014 for information on its dairy suppliers and a policy or position statement regarding the sourcing of milk and dairy products from the badger cull zones. No information could be found.