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From:

Sent: 20 December 2014 00:15

To: Nature Conservation

Subject: HEDGE REMOVAL AND CUTTING

Agriculture in Ireland is of Paramount importance to the economy, it has to be able to compete on an equal basis with other countries in the developed World. The Farming scene is changing rapidly. Food prices to the farmer are at an all time low and still falling. This means he cannot employ labour and has to rely on more modern machines to increase output or compensate for poor prices. Modern Tractors and machines are getting bigger and more expensive. Gateways have to be widened, because the roads are narrow, hedges will have to be removed where possible, in a land of fragmented holdings, is farming going to survive? Farm yards and Livestock Sheds and slurry storage will have to expand. The amount of money needed to accomplish this necessary change, will cost the Farmer millions of euro if he is to survive, and he will need full co operation from all Government departments. The last thing he needs is an obstacle course. If this country is going to retain its abundant wildlife there are lots of action we can take to achieve this, without crucifying the farmer. First a massive drive to plant non productive Mountain sides, Bogs, and difficult land, in a Public and Private investment, this will insure a secure habitat for the wild life and a sound commercial decision for the country. Oblige the Farmer to allow naturally occurring native trees to grow on existing hedges where possible. Ban the mounted Fox Hunts from productive farm land as in the U K. The last thing a hard working Farmer needs is criminal damage to his crops and livestock, his electric fences are fundamental to the control of livestock in modern agriculture and must not be cut or vandalised. Get on the right side of the most productive farmers in the country and he will co operate with you.