

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday 13 January 2021 14:16
To: WildBirdDeclarations
Subject: Control of wild bird species derogation

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Dear Secretary of Department ,
Like so many sectors, the impact of Covid 19 and on going restrictions are becoming more apparent. Because of a reduced control of pigeons prior to and during harvest 2020 the numbers over the winter months on crops like our Oilseed rape, on neighbouring Cabbage crops and Winter Cereals in general have increased to plague proportions.

Currently we are trying to keep these birds moving. Not having the resource available of trained Gamekeepers who understand and can control these very large flocks on an annual basis leaves our crops and income extremely vulnerable.

The two Seasons where we are most vulnerable are July through September and late November through February. Seeing a flock in excess of 300, sometimes in excess of 400 pigeons land on a standing crop of Wheat or Oilseed rape shortly before Harvest is a most unnerving experience . The prospect of huge yield loss a certainty if they remain uncontrolled.

The National Parks and Wildlife Services should understand the importance of Biodiversity, the benefit that a healthy Tillage sector in conjunction with grassland provides. Likewise the danger of one or two wild bird species multiplying , or as happens on occasion migrating to Ireland from Scotland and the UK in general if they can access crops unchecked .

We need to be able to have sensible control of crows and pigeons particularly in the tillage sector. We would ask that the Minister respect and consider the implications for , and financial impact on, those who provide the nationally produced foods for both Humans and Animals of any decision allowing certain species multiply unchecked until at plague proportions.

At a time where food miles, carbon footprint , sustainability are all heightened in consideration , the Tillage sector needs to protect these crops. Any tonne not produced in Ireland will be displaced by a tonne from Brazil or the Eastern Block where production standards or environmental considerations may not be as high as in Ireland .

Yours sincerely
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