

Stop illegal poisoning of our wildlife : a joint campaign by government and other concerned organisations / prepared by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food for the agriculture departments, with the Department of the Environment and the Nature Conservancy Council, as part of the Campaign against the illegal poisoning of wildlife.

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**HELP US TO SAFEGUARD THE FUTURE OF OUR
WILDLIFE BY STAMPING OUT ILLEGAL POISONING**

Further copies of this
leaflet can be obtained
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the Illegal Poisoning of Wildlife.

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**STOP ILLEGAL
POISONING
OF OUR WILDLIFE**



*A joint campaign by Government and
other concerned organisations*

LEGAL PEST CONTROL: YES ILLEGAL POISONING: NO!

PESTS NEED TO BE CONTROLLED TO SAFEGUARD STOCKS AND QUALITY OF FOOD AND TO PROTECT ANIMALS, PLANTS AND EVEN BUILDINGS FROM ATTACK. CONTROL MEASURES CAN INCLUDE PESTICIDES AND HUMANE TRAPS.

IN BRITAIN, WE HAVE HIGHLY-DEVELOPED LAWS AND CODES OF PRACTICE ON THE USE OF PESTICIDES FOR ALL PURPOSES, NOT JUST IN FOOD PRODUCTION AND STORAGE. THESE SEEK TO ENSURE THAT PEST CONTROL IS ONLY CARRIED OUT WHEN NEEDED, IS EFFECTIVE, AND POSES MINIMUM RISK TO HUMANS, OTHER CREATURES AND THE ENVIRONMENT. MOST FARMERS AND LAND MANAGERS OBEY THE LAW AND USE THEIR PROFESSIONALISM AND COMMON SENSE TO STRENGTHEN THESE AIMS. GOVERNMENT MONITORING SHOWS THAT PESTICIDES WHEN USED AS APPROVED RARELY CAUSE ACCIDENTAL DAMAGE TO WILDLIFE.

THE PROBLEM

Unfortunately, Government monitoring under the Wildlife Incident Investigation Scheme reveals evidence of the deliberate abuse of poisons. This evidence shows that sometimes pesticides approved for other legal applications are being used illegally, particularly to poison animals which may attack game birds, sheep, or crops.

Illegal poisoning is cruel, dangerous, a threat to wildlife, and unnecessary.

Cruel

Victims of illegal poisoning die a slow and agonised death. Some die unseen in the wild. Others die in full sight of their shocked owners, because they are family pets killed by a tempting bait on a country walk.

Dangerous

Simply handling poisoned baits can damage the health not only of the abusers, but unwary passers-by. Poorly stored poisons can put anyone at risk.



A Threat to Wildlife

Poisoned baits can be eaten by the beautiful or rare species that help make up the precious heritage of our countryside. Badgers, buzzards, kestrels, kites, sparrowhawks and eagles - all need our care. In 1989 alone over a dozen of our rare red kite population died from poisoned baits - a very high proportion since there are only about 50 breeding pairs. Selfish or careless acts of poisoning can deplete protected species and impoverish our countryside.



Unnecessary

People who respect our countryside will recognise there is a need from time to time for pest control - for example foxes and crows can threaten lambs and young game. However, safe and legal alternatives - and advice on them - already exist. The alternatives range from improved husbandry to humane traps.

There is therefore no excuse for breaking the law.

Action to Stamp out Abuse

The Government, in conjunction with other concerned organisations, has therefore launched a long term campaign against illegal poisoning. For its part, the Government will continue to monitor the effects of pesticides by following up reports of suspected wildlife poisoning. Legal controls will be updated whenever necessary. Cases of deliberate abuse are taken seriously by Agriculture Departments. Offenders and

their employers are prosecuted wherever possible. Fines can reach £2000 for each offence or each poisoned animal. Departments will continue to press for severe penalties.



WHAT YOU CAN DO

Government and concerned organisations are working together to draw attention to the evils of illegal poisoning and to encourage everyone to behave responsibly. If you need advice, please contact your local ADAS office on the number you'll find on the back page or, in Scotland, call your local Agricultural College. Gamekeepers can obtain advice on their specific problems from The Game Conservancy, Fordingbridge, Hants SP6 1EF (telephone 0425 652381).

Anyone suspecting poisoning of wildlife or pets by pesticides should **immediately** contact the local office of their Agriculture Department (see back page) asking for the Wildlife Section. If everyone actively opposes illegal poisoning by, for example, reporting suspected poison baits and by testifying in court if necessary, our countryside will become a safer place.