

The Manor Kilbride branch represents farmers from Brittas in south Dublin down to Hollywood in west Wicklow and all areas between. Farmers in this area are at the frontline in dealing with wild deer issues.

We are glad the problems caused by deer has been noted by the relevant Government Departments.

The second draft of the policy document has many positive aspects and we hope it will be developed into concrete measures to deal with the problems urgently as every month that passes puts extra costs on farmers.

We note the range of stakeholders and except their right to a hearing. As the representatives of landowners in an area adversely affected by deer and put in danger both physically on the roads and financially we would welcome being involved in the formulation of policies to reduce numbers on a national basis.

Again the following are some of the points highlighted by our members.

Deer grazing grass being saved for both ewes at lambing and cattle getting out in spring. Grass is the biggest agricultural crop in Ireland. The importance of having grass in spring and autumn has been proven to affect the viability of dairy and dry-stock farms.

Deer grazing and soiling silage being saved.

Fences being knocked and broken which which causes hugh problems with stock management within farm and can be disastrous between neighboring farmers and householders.

Road traffic accidents. We live and travel where deer are crossing roads so our families are in constant danger from deer jumping out onto roads.

The risk of deer spreading T.B.

Again the second draft of the policy document has many positive aspects with which we agree, also there are points which need negotiation, however one point 6.13 "Control of deer involved in damage to crops or forestry should be carried out by professional deer management personnel under the direct control of the Deer Management Unit". which reads that a farmer would be forced to bring in the nominated stalker of the Deer Manage Unit is not acceptable. The landowner must always be able to cull their own land or use a stalker of his choosing, this may be for privacy or security reasons.

This is not to say that everything else is acceptable.

Grants have been available for deer fencing to aid establishment of forestry, this should be there where grass is continuously under threat.

Again the Manor Kilbride lfa, having direct daily experience with wild deer, have much to commend them to any national stakeholder body.