



Sea eagles in Suffolk: the NFU perspective

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The NFU champions British farming and provides professional representation and services to its farmer and grower members



I've been touring the country with the NFU Roadshow for more than 10 years letting thousands of children and adults know why farming matters.



Johnny Ball, NFU Roadshow Manager

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Introducing the sea eagle to Suffolk

03 Feb 2010

Natural England, in partnership with the RSPB, has plans to reintroduce the white-tailed, or sea eagle, to parts of the Suffolk coast over the next few years.

The NFU remains opposed to the idea of introducing a top predator into an area of intensive livestock production, but we will work with Natural England and other agencies to ensure that, should the reintroductions go ahead, there are adequate measures in place to ensure the impacts on livestock businesses across East Anglia are minimised and managed.

We have produced a briefing document which looks at the background to, and development of, the project as well as providing information on the benefits and drawbacks to the scheme.

Please click on the document link on the right hand side of the screen to view.

We also want to hear what NFU members think about the proposal. Use the feedback form at the bottom of this article or email regional countryside adviser Alex Dinsdale.



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Sea eagles in Suffolk

- NFU opposition
- but...
- committed to working with NE & FERA





- Agricultural landscape
- Concentrated outdoor livestock
 - Pigs
 - Poultry
 - Lambs
 - Legislation, consumer demand, greater understanding of welfare
- Suffolk coast unique





Hazards identified by NE-commissioned report on potential livestock impacts

- Predation
 - ‘lazy and opportunistic’
 - Large concentrations of outdoor livestock
 - No control
 - Return to indoor production?



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Hazards identified by NE-commissioned report on potential livestock impacts

Indirect losses

– Over-flying and ‘spooking’

- Hens smothering
- Going off lay
- Sows deserting litters
- Sows overlaying
- Stress compromises development and condition – lower yields





Hazards identified by NE-commissioned report on potential livestock impacts

Secondary indirect losses

- Loss of outdoor units – relocation (rotations, soil, socio-economics) or indoor production
- Loss on investment
- Breaching of fences
- Disease





- Food & Environment Research Agency (FERA) Livestock Management Package
 - Farm visits
 - Pig, poultry and sheep
 - Perspectives of range of farmers
 - Practical measures, mitigation and compensation





- Some benefits
- Tourism
 - Few farming beneficiaries
 - Congestion
 - Public access vs. environmental management
 - Tourists vs. local residents



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Sea eagles in Suffolk: the NFU perspective

- Damaging for agriculture
- Inappropriate use of public cash
- Existing species and habitats could benefit from investment





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