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TB CULL PILOT SHOULD BE IN PEMBROKESHIRE, SAYS AM

Preseli Pembrokeshire AM Paul Davies has called for the TB badger cull to be held in Pembrokeshire.

The Welsh Assembly Government has announced a package of measures, including the culling of badgers from a TB hotspot, to try to prevent the spread of the disease.

Pembrokeshire is one of the worst TB hotspots in Britain and many farmers have been affected time and time again by the disease.

“I hope the Minister will consider setting up the initial pilot area in west Wales, in a part of my constituency, where the problems have been prolonged for far too long,” he told the Senedd.

“This disease has also been having serious animal health consequences, due to the fact that farmers are unable to sell their livestock and it becomes difficult to house all of their animals.”

In 2007, 7,905 cattle were culled as part of TB controls in Wales, compared with fewer than 700 in 1997. The cost of compensation for the 2007-08 financial year was £15.2 million, compared with £1.8 million in the 2000-01 financial year.

“None of us is advocating the wholesale culling of badgers,” continued Mr Davies. “But it is clear that the current policy of culling cattle without controlling wildlife is not working. This cull is essential because it is obvious that TB is transferred from wildlife to cattle as well as from

cattle to cattle. There is no other explanation for the way in which closed herds contract the disease. Something in the wildlife population must carry it onto the farm in the first place.”