

# **“Absolute Madness”: Ireland Proposes Culling 200,000 Cows to Meet “Climate Goals”, Farmers Push Back**

By [Taylor Leach](#)

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*Countries across Europe are working to fulfill their commitment to shift to a climate-neutral economy. Under the [European Green Deal](#), the climate neutrality objective becomes a legal commitment for the 27 agreeing countries to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by at least 55% by 2030. However, some countries are finding this goal might be harder to achieve than originally thought.*

Recently, [Agriculture Minister Charlie McConalogue told RTE Morning Ireland](#) he has been looking into various ways to reduce methane emissions, including culling 200,000 cows over the next three years.

According to [The Trumpet](#), the Irish government estimates the plan would cost the nation \$640 million and assist the agricultural industry in reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 25% over the next seven years. [The Telegraph](#), the national British newspaper, goes on to report the Irish Department of Agriculture would initiate a cull of 65,000 cows a year for three years, effectively reducing the national dairy herd by 10%. The proposal reportedly would be offered as a voluntary option to aging farmers as a “retirement exit scheme.”

“We’re the one industry with a significant road map, and, to be quite honest with you, our herd isn’t any larger than it was 25 to 30 years ago,” Pat McCormack, president of the Irish Creamery Milk Suppliers Association, told The Telegraph. “Can the same be said for the transport industry, can the same be said for the aviation industry?”

Farmers, ag industry representatives and some politicians are in an uproar with one Irish politician describing the plan as “absolute madness,” according to [MSN](#).

“Reports like this only serve to further fuel the view that the government is working behind the scenes to undermine our dairy and livestock sectors,” Tim Cullinan, president of the Irish Farmers’ Association, told The Telegraph. “While there may well be some farmers who wish to exit the sector, we should all be focusing on providing a pathway for the next generation to get into farming.”

The proposal’s announcement also caught the attention of Elon Musk, Tesla’s CEO.

“This really needs to stop. Killing some cows doesn’t matter for climate change,” he wrote in a recent tweet.

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— Elon Musk (@elonmusk) [June 3, 2023](#)

In response to the backlash, the Irish Department of Agriculture has since said reports were referring to a “modeling document” included in a “deliberative process,” but no final plans have been agreed upon, according to [Yahoo Finance](#).

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