

FAO Ms Charlotte Moore, Director, BBC Content and  
Mr Tom McDonald, Head of Commissioning, Specialist Factual  
BBC Complaints  
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Darlington  
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National Beef Association  
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Dear Ms Moore and Mr McDonald,

I am writing to you on behalf of the National Beef Association, regarding your programme aired on BBC One last night (Meat: A Threat to Our Planet?).

The National Beef Association is bitterly disappointed by the BBC's failure to acknowledge that the beef production systems shown in the documentary are vastly different to those in the UK, which is primarily a grass-based system, with an average herd size of 135 cattle. We take issue with this, as this point was not made clear in any way to viewers, whose agricultural knowledge is not the same as those working in the industry.

The hour-long documentary featured a five-minute focus on a Welsh smallholding, which although represented some balance, is not representative of UK livestock farming on the whole. This lack of comparison to UK farming methods has a potentially damaging public perception of all red meat (Liz Bonnan even said at the end of the show she had given up eating all red meat as a result of her findings).

We hoped that, as the British Broadcasting Corporation, you would want to use your findings on the environmental devastation caused by beef production overseas to highlight and hone in on the fact that consumers should choose sustainably produced British beef if they want to make an environmentally friendly choice as part of a balanced meat based diet.

The failure to take a comparative view to UK beef production has naturally caused great upset throughout the agricultural industry. As an organisation, we would like to know if there will be a follow-up programme focusing on British agriculture and beef farming practices in the UK, and how this differs to the systems covered in your programme.

Being the sole membership organisation for British beef farmers, we would be more than happy to put you in touch with our members who would welcome the opportunity to showcase how British beef farming produces nutritious, high-welfare sustainable beef.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Mallon  
NBA National Director