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Shocking scale of pollution from UK farms revealed



Video report by **ITV News** Consumer Editor **Chris Choi**

The shocking scale of pollution from Britain's farms has been revealed in a joint investigation by **ITV News** and the Bureau of Investigative Journalism.

Thousands of gallons of waste, including toxic slurry and rotting animal carcasses, are being dumped in the countryside, badly harming wildlife and the environment.

Authorities say they are dealing with one serious incident per week on average.

There were 5,300 farm pollution incidents between 2010 and 2016, new figures show.

Of these, more than 500 were so serious they had a major impact on the environment.

Although farmers can face unlimited fines, most cases never reach court.



Fish have died after rivers were polluted with toxic sludge from farms.

Many farmers say pollution is accidental and caused by weather or equipment failure.

But some is deliberate, like these trenches near Newark in the East Midlands which were dug to illegally dispose of rotting meat.

When Trading Standards visited they found 10,000 chicken carcasses in the ground.

Claudine White, of Nottinghamshire County Council Trading Standards, told **ITV News**, said: "Trading Standards officers attended the farm.

"There were 10,000 chicken carcasses that had already been buried.

"They had already been decomposing for quite some time so there was a massive potential risk."



10,000 chicken carcasses were found at a farm near Newark. Credit: Trading Standards

The Environment Agency said most farmers act responsibly and officials say they won't hesitate to enforce the rules.

But there is growing concern it highlights an underlying issue with UK farming.

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