



Client: The Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust Yellow News  
Source: Countryman's Weekly  
Date: 01/03/2018

Keyword: Auchnerran  
Page: 3  
Reach: 22000  
Size: 142  
Value: 93.72

## Laser trials to deter rats



**THE Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust (GWCT) is testing a novel laser system for potential use as a deterrent for pest species of mammals.**



The system is based on the existing Agrilaser which is manufactured by Bird Control Group as a bird scaring device and currently offers managers a non-lethal, automated means of keeping pest birds away from vulnerable crops, or potentially dangerous areas such as runways, but is untested on mammals.

As part of the LaserFence project led by Liverpool John Moores University, the low-powered system is being tested at the GWCT's Scottish demonstration farm at Auchnerran.

Dave Parish, GWCT head of Scottish lowland research, said: "We have been designing trials to look at a number of species to the LaserFence system, including rabbits, deer and predatory species, but we are now in a position to formally test this on rats.

"This is a key species for the project because

there is a push to reduce rodenticide use across Europe, so if LaserFence can deter rats from designated areas, it may offer an alternative to poisons in some circumstances.

"This in turn could help reduce accidental poisoning of non-target species and contamination of the food chain, which can then harm predatory species."

The trials will be conducted within two disused buildings which have been fenced off to keep people out, but which are being used by the local rats.

"We have been monitoring small piles of grain for a couple of weeks now to quantify rat activity in these areas and will shortly be turning the lasers on. If they work, we hope to record a significant drop in activity within the buildings," said Mr Parish.