



BRITISH GAME ASSURANCE

ANNUAL REPORT

2022

WELCOME

Liam Stokes, Chief Executive

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- **1 Game is being served in the NHS**
- **2 Eat Wild is now selling direct to the public**
- **3 Our presence at shows this year was groundbreaking**
- **4 We have perfected roast-pheasant-to-go**
- **5 Pioneered Plan for the Plate**

UPDATE

At BGA we enjoyed another year of triumph in the face of adversity, battling through a third cycle of anxiety across the shooting and food business worlds in which we operate. We are breaking new ground in two industries, bringing farm-assurance to game shooting and wild shot game to consumers and outlets that have never tried it, and people are always keen to cling to the familiar when times are uncertain. Despite it all, armed with our fierce commitment to the idea of assured game taking its rightful place on the British dinner table, we have fought and secured new wins.

As the final bell rings on the 22/23 season, a great many people will heave a sigh of relief. There were times over the last 12 months when it felt like there would be hardly any season at all. Global events conspired to produce shortages of feed, diesel, gas, labour and ammunition. Then as we were all reeling on the ropes, along came bird flu with a gut punch that looked like it might put us on the mat.

Happily, the sector proved it was made of the sternest stuff. Through early concerns over AI-imposed restrictions on chick and egg imports, into late summer worry over migratory sea birds bringing in the disease itself, the shooting community persevered and as we reflect on the season that was, we can see our worst fears have remained largely unrealised. This is a joy not only for guns and gamekeepers, but for the myriad of habitats, species, small businesses and individuals that rely on game shooting for irreplaceable support.

Following so closely behind two seasons of COVID, this year of bird flu could have been a disaster for those of us trying to drive much needed change. Yet we can count many successes. BGA is now synonymous with game meat in the minds of the wider press and public, as we saw when the Times mentioned British Game Assurance in an article about avoiding heart disease, of all things. We fought back against uncertainty with our springtime Plan for the Plate initiative, the first time anyone has tried to weld the link between game dealers and shoots so early in the year. BGA believes shoots must see themselves as food producers if they want game dealers to collect and pay for their produce, and this process begins with communication.

We have maintained and improved our industry-leading shoot assurance scheme throughout two years of COVID and the 2022 bird flu outbreak. British Game Assurance is the only scheme to provide the certified, farm-assurance equivalent auditing that is demanded by so much of the food sector. The scheme allows us to pioneer new outlets for game, growing the exposure and support for our community. We can only win by getting game on more plates.

Obviously the success that stole the headlines this year was the fruition of our work with the NHS, a project that was years in the making. It has been a delight to see headlines

surfacing all year, noting progress being made by game dealers and chefs who are now able to work with NHS thanks to our project. The next phase is well underway, and can only be realised with a steady supply of BGA game from BGA shoots.

Of course we aren't simply developing our previous innovations. We are always looking for the next big thing, the next breakthrough to bring game to even more people, to help them see wild shot meat as part of their normal food shop. We have been perfecting a roast-pheasant-to-go, and will now spend 2023 working to see which supermarket hot cupboard will be the first to stock it.

It is good marketing to make sure there is game for sale wherever people shop for food. It is good PR to make sure that when they see it, they think only good things. That is the work of Eat Wild. Our public-facing campaign for game has hit new heights this year, launching a range of super easy to cook game meat and pioneering rubs, the perfect stress free way to season game dishes and create some really stunning flavours with very little effort. We launched the rubs at this year's Game Fair, and blew the doors off the place. We had queues of excited punters throughout the fair, many of whom were new to game, all drawn in by the smells of the Eat Wild rubs.

I know how much the shooting community values our work, because I was so personally moved by the £100,000 raised at our Lord Botham clay day in August and because I am so grateful for every penny of levy we receive. Your support for all we do is so appreciated. BGA grew from the shooting community, it belongs to the shooting community, and every win of ours is a win of yours.

And so I commend to you this annual update on the goings on at BGA over the past 12 months. I hope you can find a post-season moment to sit and digest everything the team has achieved. We are small group of four committed individuals, supported by some of the most dedicated people in shooting. We work from home. We are a guerrilla insurgency for game. With our message of healthy, assured, ethical game for all, we can reach audiences no shooting organisation can. Thanks to your extraordinary support, we will go on delivering that message in new and creative ways throughout 2023 and beyond.

MARKETING & PR

Zambuni Communications

EXTERNAL AGENCY – COMMUNICATIONS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

April - December 2022

From April 2022, BGA aimed to reach a wider audience, promoting the value of game in regional circles across the UK, through communications and social media. BGA have since featured in 86 pieces of coverage across national, regional, print, and online publications..

SHOOTING INDUSTRY

- In April 2022, Greg Smith MP stood in the House of Commons to congratulate BGA on its work to introduce game to the NHS. This came one week after Defra Minister Lord Benyon addressed the House of Lords on behalf of the Government, recommending that 'every shooting interest should sign up' to British Game Assurance. A Press Release was distributed and picked up by publications such as; Western Morning News, Fieldsports Channel TV, London TV, Shooting Times, The Game Fair and Gun Trade News, which amounts to a total known readership of 350,701.
- The Plan for the Plate Campaign was featured in regional Shropshire publication, Oswestry & Border Counties Advertiser which has 5,469 weekly readers.
- The success of the BGA Clay Day hosted by Lord Botham and Allan Lamb was covered across the shooting press, including Sporting Gun, Shooting UK, Country Life, and Fieldsports Journal (94,815 total readers)
- The support shown by the shooting community in donating £280,000 to the levy raised in the 2021/22 season was picked up by the Countryman's Weekly (22,000 weekly readers).
- The details of the new BGA Associate membership was sent to press in order to spread the word and encourage people to sign up for the first step of assurance. Publications who covered the news include Shooting Times & Country Magazine (12,406 weekly readers), Countryman's Weekly (22,000 weekly readers), and Sporting Gun (22,718 monthly readers).
- The achievement of BGA's Louisa Clutterbuck in completing the Three Peaks Challenge gave a positive story to share, particularly as she raised funds for the Gamekeepers Welfare Trust. The story was shared by the Yorkshire Times (21,817 daily readers and a key focus area for BGA), Scottish Field (16,317 monthly readers), the Countryman's Weekly (22,000 weekly readers), and Sporting Gun (Facebook, 11,998 followers).
- The Times (365,880 daily readers) featured a spontaneous mention of BGA, as part of a wider piece on heart health, which was particularly well received when shared across social media and showed BGA is now a central part of the general public's view of game meat.
- In response to animal rights organisation PETA's opposition to BGA's collaboration with the NGS, BGA put out a press release which proactively explained the initiative.
- The 'sell out success' of Eat Wild at The Game Fair 2022 and the launch of the Eat Wild shop was celebrated in print by Scottish Field (16,317 monthly readers).
- BGA encouraged people to swap turkey for game over Christmas 2022 and issued a press release supported on social media and the BGA website. So far, this has been well received by Scribhound, The Game Fair, Countryman's Weekly (22,000

weekly readers), and regional Devon publication Western Morning News (15,295 daily readers)

- BGA launched a Countryside Appeal as Louisa travelled to Ukraine delivering aid early in the New Year 2023. This has been supported by sharing a press release and fundraising information with shooting press and agents, the results of which are currently incoming.
- Liam Stokes has a monthly column in the Shooting Times, reaching 12,406 weekly readers.
- Further to this, Sporting Agents such as William Powell have demonstrated support of BGA in their newsletters and across social media.

CONSUMER FACING

- Press was used to support consumer facing events in order to raise awareness of BGA, Eat Wild and the events to various audiences.
- Great British Game Week was featured as an event on online events pages such as Events for London, There is a Day for That, and London TV. This was further supported by separate events listings of the Celebration of Game dinners in Finzean, Aberdeenshire, and Westminster Kingsway College, London.
- A Save the Date message for Great British Game Week was issued ahead of the event (the first piece of coverage was secured in Scottish Field on 06/07/22) across national, regional, print and online publications to create an ongoing narrative and ensure a wide audience was reached. Press Releases were distributed before, during, and after the event(s).
- Particular focus was drawn on the Rotherham 'Game Evening' as this is a focus area for BGA. Press coverage was achieved in the Yorkshire Post (21,817 daily readers).
- Further Game Week coverage was secured with Gazette & Herald (Ryedale, 11, 797 weekly readers), The Field (24,380 monthly readers), Scottish Field (16,317 monthly readers), Countryman's Weekly (22,000 weekly readers), Chef's Forum (6,400 monthly visitors), The Game Fair (readership not disclosed), and The Great Game Guide (readership not disclosed).
- This coverage was amplified by content that was created to convey how BGA are taking a modern approach towards promoting game, which was shared on the BGA website, newsletter, and social media.

SOCIAL MEDIA

- Social media has been used to further the communications mentioned above, to raise awareness of the work of the BGA, and to share shooting community news.
- Regular social media posts have included promotion of BGA monthly newsletters, podcast discussions, and a Meet the Team series.
- In the lead up to Great British Game Week, we teamed up with "foodie influencers" on social media and sent them different game products from our Eat Wild shop to try. These 'influencers', many of which are from outside the traditional game shooting and cooking community, had a combined following of 464, 136 people. On average, each individual post shared by these influencers has had an impression on 24, 077 people.
- Throughout the lead up and during Game Week, from the Eat Wild account, we reached 37.1K accounts, 32K of which were non-followers.
- Influencers were invited to Game Week events, where positive reviews were shared in person, across social media, and in press releases surrounding the events.

DEVELOP: COMMERCIAL UPDATE

Mark Staples, Commercial Director

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- **1 NHS**
- **2 Aldi**
- **3 Roast Pheasant to Go**
- **4 Menu Partners**
- **5 Peach Pubs**

UPDATE

During the **pandemic**, commercially the focus shifted to online and retail, as in effect these were the only outlets operating.

With the subsequent lifting of restrictions and hospitality reopening, contacts were re-established to get game at the forefront of Hospitality focus.

The subsequent challenges with staffing across all areas of **hospitality** have led to a demand for fully finished products, so establishing relationships and working in partnership with a variety of manufacturers, we are continuing to develop a range of fully finished game meals within Eat Wild and with producers.

NHS- after working on this project for over 2 years and the challenges that the pandemic thrust upon the NHS, it was great to finally get the project underway for NHS England in early 2022. The project covers both feather and fur, and will roll out progressively to potentially all 223 NHS trusts in England.

Game recipes were provided for the NHS team, as well as training at Westminster Kingsway College, on game and how it is butchered. The education of the NHS England teams will continue, as they need to understand game cookery and how to get the best out of it.

In addition, we will be working in early 2023 with the providers of the 'ready meals' for the NHS, as some trusts, purchase in these for their food offer.

Aldi- used various feather and fur throughout the Aldi Christmas range, with the Partridge Wellington a particular highlight.

Roast Pheasant to go-

We have recently perfected the cooking of game birds for rotisserie ovens, and teamed up with Fri Jado who provide the ovens for most of the supermarkets, we have successfully found the ideal cooking and holding temperatures, and can hold with no deterioration for over 2 hours- **watch this space for 2023!**

Menu Partners-

A recent relationship that shows a huge potential, one of the country's leading suppliers of produce to the hospitality industry. This will open up game to a variety of new market potentials, including Airline and Travel Catering.

Peach Pubs-

Peach has supported BGA game since Autumn 2021, and continues to offer game, working with the BGA and some of their suppliers in developing Game products, such as a Venison Pie and Pheasant Pie.

Eat Wild is used extensively when meeting new and potential clients, so they can see the flexibility and creativity that can be had with game meat, as well as developing a new range of products, such as game meat rubs.

Non Lead Shot, the transition to non-lead shot was dealt a number of blows this year, the net result of which has been a significant slowing down in the number of shoots moving to non lead shot. This has meant that dealers have not been able to capitalise on the demand from retailers for game, and had to cap the number sold into retail.

Aramark MOD-

The use of game, again both feather and fur has continued in the Army, and we continue to work with the Combined Services Culinary Armed Services Team, who will be featuring Game in the upcoming World Culinary Championship in Luxembourg where they won 2 Silver medals.

Booths-

They continue to be very supportive in Game, across all lines, and stocked a very impressive range of game for Christmas.

Sainsburys-

Have been promoting Game since 2020, and included a range for their Christmas collection.

Thwaites Hotels-

The Daniel Thwaites Hotel collection have been supporting British Game by incorporating onto their menus across the areas since 2021.

Young's Pubs-

Have been a consistent provider to their customers of great British Game, and continue to grow and develop their offer.

Drake and Morgan-

Continue to innovate and support British Game, including developing the Pheasant "BLT", a great twist on the classic.

British Premium Sausage Company-

Are going to be producing a range of game sausages, both utilising pheasant, partridge, and Venison.

For 2023 and beyond-

With the availability of game in chilled for all year round, we have been working with dealers/processors to develop a range of products that can be supplied all year round, to all areas of business, hospitality as well as retail. This includes a variety of Game Sausages, Game Burgers, Game 'Sausage' Rolls, Game Pies. In early 2023 the focus will be on getting these ranges into outlets for the 2023 BBQ season, and in hospitality for mainstream menus. We are also working with various potential manufacturers to produce game dishes 'sous vide' style that can be used in a range of outlets, in particular Hospitality.

PROMOTE - Eat Wild

Louisa Clutterbuck, Director of Operations

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Food demonstrations throughout the country & stand alone shows
- Created and launched a range of Spice Mixes
- Launched an Eat Wild product range to sell direct to the public
- Created at home cookery videos for social media
- Over twenty five new recipes created

UPDATE

The last year has been an incredibly exciting time for the Eat Wild campaign which has only grown from strength to strength. 2022 saw the expansion of the campaign growing from mainly online to now exhibiting at events independently of BGA, allowing us to present a message directed entirely at the potential new game consumer.

Shows & Cookery Demonstrations

We exhibited Eat Wild at Highclere Country Show, Open Farm Sunday, The Game Fair, Weston Park Country Show and also did British Shooting Show and the Northern Shooting Show in tandem with BGA messaging. At each show we did food demos on our stand showcasing game in all its glory; slow-cooked mixed game curry, pheasant and wild mushroom risotto and pheasant fajitas to name a few. We also did cookery demonstrations on stage in front of large crowds. Next year we plan to expand our calendar even further, attending many more country shows as well as food festivals where there is not normally any game present. It is incredibly rewarding to introduce people to game at these shows, where so many people have never tried it and only ever seen it on TV. Demonstrations are a great opportunity to dispel negative perception of game and myth-bust people's preconceptions. We also attended The Royal Welsh show, Ludlow Food Festival, BBC Good Food Show and an event at the Senedd to promote game meat to new audiences.

We had three pop up dinner events throughout the year. The first was hosted at Rotherham College, we teamed up to showcase game in a five course 'British Game' dinner cooked by students and served to local people, many of whom had never tasted game before. As the canapés were served, I gave a brief presentation highlighting the health benefits and environmental value of choosing game. This was a great opportunity to discuss game with the chefs of the future but we also invited along two social media influencers who had never eaten game before.

Game Week 2022 was a delight after several years only being able to do online events. Game Dinners in Aberdeenshire and London and took our social media following on the road to BGA stockists to show everyone where they can go and buy game. We collaborated on a spectacular celebration of game at Holland and Holland's Shooting Grounds, and showcased recipes people could cook up at home. We directed our followers to 24 restaurants across the country actively participating in Great British Game Week. Across social media, a huge, brand-new audience engaged with enticing game recipes. On the EatWild account alone we reached 37.1K accounts throughout the lead up and during Game Week.

Spice Mixes & Eat Wild Product Line

Early in 2022 Eat Wild launched its first spice mixes, a game barbecue mix to marinate meat for the barbecue and a Mexican mix designed for fajitas and chillies and optimised to work especially well with the mixed game sold in Sainsburys. The mixes were created to make cooking game simple and quick, breaking down the idea that game is intimidating and challenging. These spices have been ground-breaking in helping open game to new consumers. Following the extraordinary success of the Mexican mix at The Game Fair, we expanded the range to include an Indian mix to compliment grouse and venison. Weston Park was filled with the smells of slow-cooking game and our Indian spice mix, bringing in new consumers from across the showground.

We soon discovered that people wanted to take home game products from the shows as well. So we decided to launch a basic game range, available online to anyone who finds our Eat Wild website or meets us at shows.

Guide To Cooking Game

From talking to members of the public at events we realised that one of the biggest stumbling blocks with introducing people to game is that they are intimidated by cooking it; so we teamed up with The Wild Meat Company to create a Guide To Cooking Game. This innovative leaflet gives a brief description of flavours that compliment the varying types of game, along with cooking timings and how game should appear once cooked. Exactly what new cooks need to get to grips with game for the first time.

Press & Online Presence

This year has been a stellar year talking to press with recipes and interviews featuring in over twenty magazines as well as participating on podcasts and YouTube channels promoting the benefits of eating and cooking with game.

The Eat Wild social media presence has increased with new channels on TikTok and LinkedIn, targeting two very different demographics. Tiktok holds a lot of untapped potential for us as an easy way to directly promote to new consumers of game. This year we started to create game cooking videos at home, these seem to get a lot more traction than professional videos and we have received a lot of feedback saying they are very honest videos that make it seem achievable for anyone to cook. A video of slow cooked pheasant thighs got 12,200 views. In total our game recipes videos have had 173,536 views this year across the Eat Wild TikTok, Twitter and Instagram alone.

We collaborated with several high profile influencers including Gizzi Erskine who created two new recipes for us; Persian Yogurt and Saffron Pheasant Kebabs and Korean Fried Pheasant Tenders. These went down a storm with her followers and illustrated the versatility of game to her urban following of 194,000 people. At the start of the pheasant season,, we teamed up with foodie social media influencers and sent them different game products from our Eat Wild shop to try. These influencers, many of whom are from outside the traditional game shooting and cooking community, had a combined following of 464,136 people.

It has been an exciting year but 2022 will only bring more game inspiration, cookery events and much much more.

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT BGA

“Cooking with and eating game isn’t just a sensible, sustainable and natural way of life, it’s a delicious, exciting approach to food with endless and wonderful possibilities. I wish more of us could understand and share this great source of nutrition and pleasure, so I’m delighted that BGA are championing game with the help of Eat Wild; they are the invaluable go-to people for stockists and fabulous ideas.”

William Sitwell, Restaurant Critic, Broadcaster and Author.

“News of six NHS hospitals set to trial pheasant, partridge and venison on their menus is extremely welcome” and invited the House “to join me in congratulating British Game Assurance on helping make this possible.”

Greg Smith MP.

“Before BGA came along, who would have thought that we would have supermarkets wanting to put more game on the shelves, and the NHS wanting to put game on the menu? It is an ongoing battle and we need all the help to get game back where it belongs – in hospitals, restaurants and importantly, supermarkets. We also need to all pull together and police ourselves. Please support British Game Assurance.”

Lord Ian Botham.

“I would say to any shoot that is not signed up to British Game Assurance, they are very stupid and they should, because they [BGA] are proving they are getting shooting’s act in order and I really do encourage every single shooting interest to sign up.”

Lord Benyon speaking for the Government in the House of Lords.

“British Game is one of the most sustainable healthy meats that a chef could possibly use and the arrival of the game season is something we relish so it is only right that working together with the BGA we highlight how good our fantastic British game is.”

Jose Souto, Senior Chef Lecturer at Westminster Kingsway College.

“For us to plan a route to market for every bird next season, now is the time we need to know the days and bag sizes that shoots are planning. That is why we are supporting this initiative from BGA. Every shoot day is an exercise in harvesting food, and we need everyone involved to be thinking that way, right from the start.”

Will Oakley, Sales & Operations Director of Willo Game.