



## DEBATE PACK

Number CDP 2018/0024, 30 January 2018

# The policy framework for agriculture after the UK leaves the EU

This pack has been prepared ahead of the debate to be held in Westminster Hall on Thursday 1 February 2018 at 3pm on the policy framework for agriculture after the UK leaves the EU. The debate will be opened by Alistair Carmichael MP and the subject for the debate has been selected by the Backbench Business Committee.

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The House of Commons Library prepares a briefing in hard copy and/or online for most non-legislative debates in the Chamber and Westminster Hall other than half-hour debates. Debate Packs are produced quickly after the announcement of parliamentary business. They are intended to provide a summary or overview of the issue being debated and identify relevant briefings and useful documents, including press and parliamentary material. More detailed briefing can be prepared for Members on request to the Library.

# 1. Commons Library summary

UK agriculture, post-Brexit and, post transition, will be operating outside of the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) under any scenario.

The key questions around a new UK agriculture policy are therefore:

- How will the UK diverge from the CAP and in what way?
- How much financial support will the UK Government continue to offer and how will it be allocated across the UK?
- How will UK agriculture be managed across the devolved nations?

Currently, CAP subsidies can make up anywhere from 50-80% of a UK farmer's income and their practices will be sensitive to fluctuations in support or a change of direction or priorities in this support.

The UK Government has pledged to maintain the same cash funds as currently for CAP until the end of the Parliament, under the expectation that this will be 2022. It has also indicated that it is unlikely to move to any new system of farm support until after 2024.

The [UK Government's 25 Year Environment Plan](#) (January 2018) set out how a new environmental land management system based on providing public money for public goods (such as habitat enhancement) is proposed to replace current direct payments to farmers in England.

Proposals will be set out in a Command Paper later this spring – a precursor to the Agriculture Bill (expected in this session) which will set out post-Brexit support arrangements for farmers.

The **key elements of the emerging new policy for England** (to be consulted on) are:

- The [Basic Payment Scheme \(BPS\)](#) (direct subsidies by area farmed) for 2019 will be paid as normal.
- A five-year transition phase from farming subsidy to a system of public money for public goods over time whilst limiting some of the largest subsidy payments.
- No lower standards for animal welfare or environment in trade deals and a new approach to food labelling with a new "world leading" standard for food and farming quality.

Environment Secretary Michael Gove has also said he is:

- confident of "building a new economic partnership with the EU" that guarantees tariff-free access for agri-food goods between the UK and EU.
- seeking a flexible migration policy overall and post-Brexit wants to ensure "access to seasonal agricultural labour".

Farming unions and environmental groups have broadly welcomed the initial proposals. Farming unions want any new farm support system to be part of a coherent approach to food production with domestic agriculture policy post-Brexit helping farmers to mitigate volatility and enhance productivity as well as delivering environmental benefits.

Environmental groups want to see current funding for farmers maintained to support sustainable land management.

## 2. Key reading

The following reports/briefings provide a good overview of post-Brexit scenarios/issues for agriculture:

- House of Commons Library briefing Paper, [\*25 Year Environment Plan\*](#), January 2018
- Scottish Government, [\*Scotland's Place in Europe: People, Jobs and Investment\*](#), January 2018
- Chatham House, [\*The Implications of Brexit for UK, EU and Global Agricultural Reform in the Next Decade\*](#), November 2017
- Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB), [\*Horizon: Brexit Scenarios – An impact assessment\*](#), Market Intelligence, October 2017
- Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology POSTnote [\*Environmentally sustainable agriculture\*](#), July 2017
- Commons Library briefing, [\*Brexit: Agriculture and Trade\*](#) (June 2017)
- Library Briefing, [\*EU Referendum: Impact on UK agriculture policy\*](#), 26 May 2016 has useful background in addition to the Library's overall [\*Brexit: Impact across policy areas\*](#) (August 2016) which has a section on agriculture.
- The NFU has set out what kind of regime it wants to see in [\*Delivering a bold and ambitious future for farming\*](#) (October 2017)
- Confederation of Forest Industries (CONFOR), [\*A Common Countryside Policy\*](#), September 2017
- Greener UK (incl RSPB) - [\*Agriculture at a crossroads: the need for sustainable farming and land use policies\*](#), February 2017

### 3. News items

Farming Life

**Time for more involvement from local politicians**

20 January 2018

<https://www.farminglife.com/farming-news/time-for-more-involvement-from-local-politicians-1-8339833>

Irish News

**NI agriculture subsidies to fall after Brexit warns report**

16 January 2018

<http://www.irishnews.com/business/2018/01/16/news/ni-agriculture-subsidies-to-fall-after-brexit-warns-report-1232572/>

Farmers' Guardian

**Ministers must set out which farming powers will be devolved post-Brexit, say MPs**

21 November 2017

<https://www.fginsight.com/news/news/ministers-must-set-out-which-farming-powers-will-be-devolved-post-brexit-say-mps-42385>

Farmers' Weekly

**Devolved regions demand greater say on post-Brexit farm policy**

2 April 2017

<http://www.fwi.co.uk/news/devolved-regions-demand-greater-say-on-post-brexit-farm-policy.htm>

Farmers' Weekly

**NFU Scotland calls for UK-wide agricultural policy**

23 March 2017

<http://www.fwi.co.uk/news/nfu-scotland-calls-uk-wide-agricultural-policy.htm>

Times [subscription]

**May accused of 'Scottish power grab' over Brexit agriculture plans**

21 March 2017

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/may-accused-of-scottish-power-grab-over-brexit-agriculture-plans-px2qfc25z>

## 4. Press releases

### Country Land and Business Association

#### CLA response to the Government's 25-year environment plan

11 January 2018

Responding to the [Government's 25 Year Environment Plan](#), published this morning (11 January 2018), CLA Director of Policy Christopher Price said:

Farmers and landowners across the country will play a crucial role in delivering on this vision set out by the Prime Minister. The plan reflects not only the significant amount these businesses already contribute but also helps us all to understand how much more we can achieve in the future.

The plan acknowledges the range of 'public goods' that are delivered across our countryside. It is farmers and landowners that deliver these goods, from investing in improving soil quality, to reducing flooding risks to homes and businesses and managing woodland. The Government is showing that it is listening to us and the direction of travel set out holds significant potential.

There is however much more work to be done to make these plans more specific and signal where the hard choices will be made. Much of what is proposed will require significant investment from a range of sources consistently delivered over decades.

It also requires us to create market opportunities, whether that be to reward land use that captures carbon, manages water or provides offsets for the environmental impacts of development. This will be a big part of making this successful and sustainable.

We need much greater clarity than this plan provides on the role of the local planning system. If we are to deliver on our environmental ambitions as a nation we have to rethink much of how we live and work. This requires innovation in house building, infrastructure provision and upgrading of business facilities, especially within farming, and that means promoting significant new development. Too often the impulse in the planning system is to interpret environmental responsibilities as a need to slow or hold back development, whereas it is by encouraging and harnessing growth that we are more likely to succeed.

The CLA's proposal for a new Land Management Contract between farmers and society can be found [here](#).

## **Call for Government to support nature friendly farming policies post-Brexit**

**5 January 2018**

A group of more than 100 farmers with a new vision for the future of British agriculture is launching the Nature Friendly Farming Network (NFFN) on Friday 5 January 2018, at the Real Farming Conference in Oxford.

The independent organisation is calling on the UK and devolved governments to create a post-Brexit framework that will help farmers restore British wildlife, reverse declines in soil quality and help manage the impacts of climate change, at the same time as growing affordable, healthy food.

Leaving the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) necessitates a new approach to British farming policy. The NFFN believes the UK should use this opportunity to help farmers across the UK transition towards a nature friendly future.

Thousands of British farmers already use nature friendly farming practices, but NFFN says that the scale of the decline in wildlife and soil quality and the challenges presented by climate change mean that this work needs to be scaled up rapidly with strong policy support.

The NFFN aims to provide a political voice for the thousands of farmers who are committed to managing their land for wildlife and public service, as well as growing and providing food.

Post-Brexit, agricultural policies need to help all British farmers to produce high quality food at the same time as helping our soil, landscapes and wildlife recover and flourish. Among other things this means that farming payments need to be continued and redirected towards mainstreaming nature friendly farming across the UK. The NFFN wants this not just because the farmers care about nature – but because they firmly believe that a more nature friendly approach will be key to the long-term survival and success of British farming.

The Nature Friendly Farming Network believes that post-Brexit agriculture policy should:

1. Help all British farmers to produce safe, healthy food at the same time as helping our soil, landscapes, rivers and wildlife to recover and flourish.
2. Maintain and redirect farming payments towards mainstreaming nature friendly farming across the UK.
3. Recognise that the shift towards a more nature friendly approach is not just good for wildlife but is key to the long-term survival and success of British farming, delivering broader benefits to the public [flood protection, water and air quality, and access to thriving natural landscapes].

The chair of NFFN, Martin Lines, who runs an arable family farm in Cambridgeshire, says:

Brexit presents a once in a generation opportunity to create a new farming policy that will help farms evolve and thrive, at the same time as restoring and protecting our natural heritage. We can use this opportunity to create a long-term, stable policy framework that will drive a mainstream shift towards a sustainable, productive, nature-friendly future for British farming as well as protecting the landscape across the UK.

Britain needs to change its approach to agriculture. Existing farm practices often rely on the heavy use of chemical pesticides and herbicides which have a profound impact on biodiversity and public health. Industrialised farming is responsible for 2.9 million tonnes of topsoil lost each year in the UK alone. Farm birds, a key indicator of the health of wildlife, have declined by 54% since 1970. Over the last 50 years, there has been a marked decline in over 600 farmland species across the UK.

Over 70% of the land in the UK is farmland. The NFFN aims to unite farmers who are passionate about wildlife and sustainable farming and who want to deliver rapid progress towards a future in which wildlife on farmland recovers and thrives. More than 4,000 farmers across the UK are already committed to nature friendly farming with encouraging results for biodiversity, soil health, water quality, air quality and species that were formerly on the brink of extinction.

The Network is welcomed by a range of environmental and conservation charities including Soil Association, National Trust, Woodland Trust, RSPB, The Wildlife Trusts, Bumblebee Conservation Trust, Butterfly Conservation, Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust, Bat Conservation Trust, Buglife and Plantlife.

Rob Macklin, Head of Farming at the National Trust, says:

Many of the things we need from the countryside – wildlife, healthy soils, clean water, flood protection and carbon storage are ‘public goods’ that fall outside conventional markets.

Post-Brexit, we need a policy and subsidy framework that rewards farmers to conserve natural resources alongside production. We want Government to offer farmers a joined-up package of support to benefit nature-friendly farming across the UK. We recognise that the most powerful way to make this case is for farmers themselves to champion these ideas. This is exactly what the Nature Friendly Farming Network will be aiming to achieve.

Marian Spain, CEO of Plantlife, added:

All too often, farmers and conservationists are pitched against each other, apparently irreconcilable adversaries. This 'farming versus environment' narrative is holding wildlife-friendly back at a critical moment. It overlooks the vast swathes of common ground between farmers and nature conservationists. It excludes those many farmers who are wildflower lovers and countryside stewards as well as food producers and business owners. As post-Brexit agricultural policy develops, we have the chance of a lifetime to reclaim the common ground – with a shared language and shared expertise. Through ever closer co-operation, we can deliver a bright future for farming that is truly sustainable - environmentally, economically and socially.

NFFN will launch a policy ask to recognise that agriculture across the UK needs to be profitable and sustainable, and that farmers should receive adequate payments for undertaking environmental and nature friendly activities. The farmers behind the network are committed to securing farming policies that support wildlife, sustainable agriculture and fairness for farmers across the UK.

#### *Six-point Framework for Sustainable Farming*

The Nature Friendly Farming Network has focused on six key areas where sustainable farming adds value, asking for recognition and support from UK and devolved governments post-Brexit:

1. Growing healthy nutritious food.
2. Addressing degradation and improving the quality of soil.
3. Helping wildlife to recover and thrive.
4. Reducing greenhouse gases and managing impacts of climate change, such as flooding.
5. Keeping our seas and rivers clean and reducing water born pollution.
6. Being custodians of the British landscape and enabling the public to enjoy and benefit from our natural heritage.

Farmers can join the NFFN by visiting [www.nffn.org.uk](http://www.nffn.org.uk), to read the high level policy ask [click here](#).

## **National Farmers' Union**

### **Secretary of State's speech to Oxford Farming Conference 2018**

**4 January 2018**

Michael Gove has delivered an impressive and comprehensive speech on his vision for the future of British farming to the delegates of the [Oxford Farming Conference](#), titled "Farming for the next Generation".

His speech can be read in full [here](#).

[The NFU has produced a summary of the key elements of his speech here.](#)

Over the course of nearly 45 minutes, the Secretary of State gave a taster of what we can expect to see within the Government's Command Paper on the future of farming, to be published later this Spring.

He set out four areas where he wants to drive change for farming, with subsequent plans:

- To develop a coherent policy on food - integrating the needs of agriculture businesses, other enterprises, consumers, public health and the environment.
- To give farmers and land managers time and the tools to adapt to the future, so as to avoid a precipitate cliff edge but also prepare properly for the changes which are coming.

- To develop a new method of providing financial support for farmers which moves away from “subsidies for inefficiency” to public money for public goods.
- To ensure that natural capital thinking is built into the government’s approach towards land use and management so as to develop a truly sustainable future for our countryside.

In a direct call for action from farming industry leaders he says that there are “*huge opportunities*” for those in agriculture to play the leading role in shaping the future strategy.

He goes on to warn that:

Rather than devoting intellectual energy and political capital to campaigning for policy interventions designed to insulate farming from change, agriculture’s leaders can respond to growing public interest in debates about food, animal welfare, the environment, health and economic justice by demonstrating, as so many are doing, how their innovative and dynamic approaches are enhancing the environment, safeguarding animal welfare, producing food of the highest quality, improving public health and contributing to a fairer society.

This is exactly what the NFU has done in presenting its [Framework for Success document](#) last autumn and there is a great deal of alignment between the SoS’s vision and the proposals set out in that document.

Together we share a commitment for a coherent national food policy and recognition that food production is “*at the heart of all farming businesses*”. We also very much welcome his pledge to champion high quality British food at home and abroad.

Today’s speech has given us a very clear indication that the Secretary of State expects change within the farming industry. He sees the opportunity for a bold and ambitious future that places a coherent food production agenda at the heart of Government thinking. It is a bold vision shared by the NFU.

We look forward to the consultation on the detail later this Spring and will continue to engage with Government and stakeholders on our vision for the future of agricultural policy.

## **NFU Scotland**

### **Food and Trade Commitments Welcomed in Secretary of State’s Oxford Address**

**4 January 2-18**

Themes in NFU Scotland’s Brexit ‘Change’ agenda mirrored in Gove speech

NFU Scotland has welcomed Michael Gove’s support for food production, delivering fairer food supply chains and securing the right trading platforms post-Brexit when the Secretary of State for

Environment, Food and Rural Affairs addressed the Oxford Farming Conference this morning (4 January).

The Secretary of State also reiterated his previous commitment on maintaining support levels to agriculture until the end of the current parliament in 2022 and mapped out his vision for how support and policy in England may develop beyond that date.

NFU Scotland now looks to Westminster for guarantees on the financial framework and the flexibility for Scotland to develop agricultural policies bespoke to the needs of Scotland's farmers and crofters.

It also looks to the Scottish Government to expand its policy vision for Scottish food and farming in the weeks ahead. Scotland's Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy and Connectivity, Fergus Ewing will address members and stakeholders when he attends the NFUS annual conference in Glasgow in February.

NFU Scotland President Andrew McCornick said:

In calling for agricultural organisations to show leadership in embracing the change that Brexit will bring, it was reassuring that many of the themes addressed by the Secretary of State today have already been captured by the Union in the 'Change' documents we published in 2017 and the nation-wide series of roadshows that we held in November last year.

With food and drink now Scotland and the UK's biggest manufacturing sector, we welcome Mr Gove's recognition that any new, agricultural policy must have food production at its core.

Initiatives that enable farmers and crofters to deliver on the requirement to produce safe, nutritious food would go hand in hand with NFU Scotland's post-Brexit vision.

There was also a welcome commitment that securing tariff-free trade with the EU is an imperative and that all future trade deals recognise and protect the exceptional production and welfare standards being delivered across the UK.

While the speech focussed on how Defra will deliver for England, Scottish farmers and crofters now need to hear more about what the future holds for them. Reiteration of the funding commitment to 2022 provides some certainty through what will continue to be an uncertain era for Scotland's farmers and crofters.

That period must be fully utilised to develop and implement a new support regime that fits Scotland's agricultural landscape and which rewards activity, incentivises innovation and productivity, and recognises good stewardship of a flourishing environment, allowing farmers and crofters the opportunity to manage and adapt to change.

Scrutiny of NFU Scotland's Brexit 'CHANGE' documents; the recent interim report from Scotland's Agri-Champions on future strategy and the publication from the National Council of Rural Advisors shows a clear consensus emerging on rural Scotland's post-Brexit needs.

We look forward to Scottish Government building on that momentum and expanding on its own post-Brexit vision for Scottish food and farming in the weeks ahead.

*Notes to Editors*

- NFU Scotland's AGM, conference and annual dinner will take place in the Radisson Blu Hotel, Glasgow on 8 and 9 February.
- To read NFU Scotland's Brexit CHANGE documents follow links below: <https://www.nfus.org.uk/userfiles/images/Policy/Brexit/Brexit%20Doc%20-%20pages.pdf> and <https://www.nfus.org.uk/userfiles/images/News%20Release/Change%20Document%20August%202017%20website.pdf>

**NFU Scotland**

**Seasonal Workers Still Vital to Scottish Agriculture as Brexit Approaches**

**18 December 2017**

NFU Scotland is highlighting the vital role seasonal and migrant workers play in the production of food and drink in Scotland, the country's largest export industry

In the appropriate setting of Craigie's Farm and Food Shop on the outskirts of Edinburgh, NFUS used its Christmas Press Briefing to reiterate the push for politicians to allow foreign workers access to seasonal work in Scotland post Brexit.

Access to workers during the busy harvest season is a serious issue for many farmers and growers in Scotland whose businesses rely on seasonal workers at their busy times of year.

The fruit and vegetable sector in particular needs access to seasonal workers if businesses are not to be critically short of people to harvest fruit and vegetables during the harvesting season.

Access to seasonal workers remains a key priority for NFUS. The Union continues to press the UK Government to act swiftly to put in place the mechanisms to allow access to seasonal workers, and which operates very much along the lines of the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme (SAWS) which came to an end in 2012.

John Sinclair, farmer and owner of Craigies, can testify to the importance of seasonal labour when it comes to running his fruit and vegetable, livestock, shop, restaurant, and visitors centre.

Mr Sinclair said:

We are already starting to see the number of EU nationals wanting to work in the industry declining. If we don't get access to a sizeable and dependable source of workers, then high value fruit and vegetables will be left unharvested. If not addressed, this will lead to production shifting to other places where the labour supply is more secure and will lead to the country importing more instead of growing what we can here.

Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) is currently gathering data on migrant workers in Scotland's Fruit and Vegetable Sectors. Whilst the findings of that work have not yet been published, NFUS expects that it will show that between 5,000 and 15,000 seasonal workers are employed within Scottish agriculture at any one time, with a significant number employed for more than six months at a time.

If there were no access to migrant labour, few farm businesses in the valuable fruit and vegetable sectors could continue to grow for key markets.

We believe that a new seasonal workers scheme should be introduced for next season. This would allow a new system to be trialled and tested. We can't afford to wait until the point that crops are not harvested. The UK Government needs to act on this issue urgently.

## **Landworkers' Alliance**

### **Landworkers' Alliance launch new horticulture policy proposals**

**30 October 2017**

To meet the UK demand for fruit and vegetables a massive scaling up of production is required. Currently UK production represents 58% of vegetables consumed and only 11% of fruit. Only 1% of Pillar 1 direct agricultural payments are offered to the horticultural sector, despite public health advice to increase consumption of fruit and vegetables, and reduce meat, dairy and sugar.

The Landworkers' Alliance propose that a dramatic increase in the number of small and medium scale horticultural enterprises producing fruit and vegetables for local and regional markets would bring benefits, including:

- Fresher produce, often bought within hours of harvest, brings greater nutritional benefit and better flavour, encouraging increased consumption.
- Diverse market gardens provide fulfilling, varied and attractive career/employment opportunities for UK workers, whereas large scale, industrial production often struggles to attract local labour.
- Spreads production risks over a much larger number of businesses in different geographic areas, insuring against problems of poor business management, spread of pests and diseases, and climatic extremes, compared with dependency on a handful of large businesses.

Author of the "A Matter of Scale" report, Rebecca Laughton says,

Contrary to popular belief, for labour intensive crops such as peas, kale, green beans and salad leaves, small-scale ecological growers often produce higher yields than industrial systems, while generating multiple environmental and social benefits. If every village, town and city was served by a network of these diverse and productive market gardens, which provide attractive opportunities for work, training and connection to the

countryside, as well as fresh and tasty produce, the UK population would be healthier and happier.

Today, the Landworkers' Alliance outlines their proposals for how this increase in market gardens could be achieved in their new policy document, "A New Deal for Horticulture". Seven specific measures are outlined, including:

- A coupled support scheme to incentivise domestic production and reward delivery of public goods, until the sector has strengthened sufficiently to meet a high percentage of UK demand.
- A programme to rapidly increase the number of growers, recruitment, training and access to land and start-up capital.
- A "Mixed Farms" scheme, supporting creation of horticultural units on larger farms.
- An orchard planting and maintenance scheme to encourage long term investment in fruit production.

The policy proposals are being launched on the eve of the Food Foundation's Vegetable Summit, at which a number of leading figures in public health, agricultural policy and retail will be making pledges about measures they will take to increase fruit and vegetable consumption. The Landworkers' Alliance supports this initiative to promote the production and consumption of UK fruit and vegetables, and believes that given an appropriate policy framework, agroecological horticulture could play a significant role in meeting the UK's need for fresh produce.

[Download A New Deal for Horticulture](#)

[Download Making Food Sovereignty a Reality](#)

## **Landworkers' Alliance**

### **Landworkers' Alliance launch new entrants policy position paper**

**1 August 2017**

[\*The Landworkers' Alliance New Entrants policy paper\*](#) announces a number of targeted policies to support New Entrants in post-Brexit UK agriculture. The proposals include increased funding for training and apprenticeships, a new-entrant capital grant scheme and an immediate halt to the sell-off of council owned farm estates. As an agricultural union representing a young and emerging demographic the LWA is acutely aware that the current subsidy regime undermines the ability of a new generation to gain a foothold in farming.

Since the introduction of area-payments in 2005 the price of farmland has more than doubled<sup>1</sup>, 35,000 farmers have left the land<sup>2</sup> and the average age of UK farmers has risen to over 60<sup>3</sup>. Although there has been a welcome resurgence of students enrolling in the UK's agricultural colleges and universities over recent years, the challenges of

accessing land, skills and capital have ensured that very few first-generation farmers have been able to successfully enter the industry.

It's a common misconception that there is a lack of motivation and ambition among a younger generation to engage with farming as a livelihood, however, for a growing number of young people farming represents a positive response to the challenges of climate change, globalisation and social inequality,

says LWA spokesperson Jyoti Fernandes.

As we enter a period of unprecedented uncertainty regarding both UK agricultural policy and food security it is essential that we recognise and encourage this demographic to bring new ideas and innovation to the agriculture sector.

The policy proposals we are announcing today are based on successful and established models of new-entrant support already operating across Scotland and elsewhere in Europe. These policies have not only facilitated a significant increase in the numbers of first-generation farmers entering the industry but have also led to improvements in efficiency and productivity as new entrants bring new ideas and innovative thinking.

The LWA has recently launched a 20-page manifesto; *Making Food Sovereignty a Reality: Recommendations for Post-Brexit Agricultural Policy*, that outlines a clear vision for delivering high quality food to local, regional & national markets while supporting truly resilient farming.

[Download \*Landworkers Alliance New Entrants policy paper\*](#)

[Download \*Making Food Sovereignty a reality: post-Brexit Agriculture Policy\*](#)

#### *References*

1: DEFRA (2013) The Common Agricultural Policy after 2013. UK Parliament Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Select Committee report: <https://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmselect/cmenvfru/671/67104.htm>

2: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/557993/AUK-2015-05oct16.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/557993/AUK-2015-05oct16.pdf)

3: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/557993/AUK-2015-05oct16.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/557993/AUK-2015-05oct16.pdf)

## **National Farmers' Union**

### **UK farm unions press for common financial framework post-Brexit**

**31 March 2017**

The leaders of the UK farm unions have agreed to press the farming ministers to work for a common financial framework post-Brexit.

During their Brexit Summit in Newcastle, Northern Ireland, the presidents of the NFU, NFUS, NFU Cymru and the Ulster Farmers' Union challenged the UK ministers to establish a well-funded, refreshed agricultural policy that suits the different farming conditions across the UK and allows farms to prosper.

A statement said:

Ministers must avoid an abrupt cliff edge for farmers following the exit from the EU. So it's vital governments across the UK cooperate to ensure a funding transition from the current CAP to policies best suited to circumstances of different parts of the UK. In doing so each administration must avoid disruptive differences across the UK and between sectors.

In order to achieve this, the presidents proposed a ministerial Brexit Summit.

Joining the meeting today was the UK unions' permanent representative in Brussels, Maeve Whyte. She updated the meeting on the European Commission guidance on the Article 50 negotiations and the BAB office's continued work on issues such as glyphosate and veterinary medicinal product legislation. She emphasised the importance of maintaining our excellent links to food and farming partners in Brussels and the importance of maintaining these relationships over the Brexit period and beyond.

The UK farming union Presidents reaffirmed the importance of their organisations remaining firmly engaged with EU policy development in the run-up to Brexit and also agreed the vital on-going role representation and presence in Brussels will have after the UK leaves the EU.

## **Farmers' Union Wales**

### **FUW welcomes recognition of devolved administrations in Brexit speech**

**17 January 2017**

The Farmers' Union of Wales has welcomed the recognition of the role devolved administrations should play in planning for our departure from the European Union.

As Prime Minister Theresa May outlined her 12 point Brexit plan, providing more clarity, she said: "I have also been determined from the start that the devolved administrations should be fully engaged in this process [...] Part of that will mean working very carefully to ensure that – as powers are repatriated from Brussels back to Britain – the right powers are returned to Westminster, and the right powers are passed to the devolved administrations of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland."

Responding to the announcement, FUW President Glyn Roberts said: "Today's announcement offers us more clarity. That's something we

have been asking for since the referendum result. Now we know what we are dealing with and what our starting position is.

“Devolution should be respected within an overarching UK support framework in the context of making our withdrawal from the European Union and as such we welcome Theresa May’s commitment to work with the devolved administrations and her recognition that Wales is different to the rest of the UK.

“With this in mind and irrespective of what trade deals are in place post-Brexit, within the UK, Welsh farmers will compete against their counterparts in other devolved regions. We therefore need a common framework across the UK which minimises unfair competition and market distortion.”

Mr Roberts added that a UK agricultural framework should therefore be put in place which prevents unfair competition between devolved regions and secures and protects adequate long term funding for agriculture, while also respecting devolved powers over agriculture.

He however stressed that there needs to be flexibility within that framework to allow devolved governments to make decisions which are appropriate for their regions and that specific ring-fenced funding for agriculture should be allocated to Wales outside the Barnett Formula, and should be administered by the Welsh Government.

“The FUW will continue in its close working relationship with the UK and Welsh Government to find solutions to the problems agriculture is facing and work together to exploit the opportunities that present themselves to us,” added Mr Roberts

## **Country Land and Business Association**

### **CLA reaction to the Prime Minister’s speech on Brexit**

**17 January 2017**

The Prime Minister set out three key positions on UK Brexit policy today (17 January):

- The UK will not seek to be a member of the single market, but instead seek the best possible access through a bilateral free trade agreement.
- The UK will not seek to remain a full member of the EU customs union to allow the UK to pursue new free trade deals with other countries around the world, but it will seek new customs arrangements.
- The deal should include phased implementation to avoid economic cliff edges and allow reorganisation.

CLA President Ross Murray said:

It is important that we take these three positions as the basis for the next phase of discussions on Brexit policy and how it affects

the rural economy. We must move on from some of the arguments that have been a hangover of the referendum.

The Prime Minister has set out clearly her trade ambitions. We fully support her plan to secure the best possible free trade agreement with the EU. Our aim must be to retain tariff free access for all products and all parts of the agri-food supply chain. We will continue to provide whatever support we can to help in securing this vital outcome.

We are more cautious about the consequences of new trade deals with other countries and markets. We understand and support the principle that post-Brexit, the Government will pursue a range of trade agreements that can bring benefits to the UK economy as a whole. However, we will urge the Government to consider closely the balance of opportunity and risk for the agri-food sector that is specific to each and every potential deal available to the UK post-Brexit.

The type of Brexit the Prime Minister has set out is a dramatic change and it will have a particularly major impact on UK farming. We therefore welcome the Prime Minister's reassurances about avoiding economic cliff edges and the importance of a phased implementation. Getting this implementation phase right will be critical to the livelihoods of farmers and the future of rural communities across Britain.

## 5. Parliamentary material

### Committee Inquiry

Commons Welsh Affairs Committee current inquiry: Brexit: Agriculture, Trade and the repatriation of powers

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/welsh-affairs-committee/inquiries/parliament-2017/brexit-agriculture-trade-repatriation-powers-17-19/>

### PQs

[Hill Farming](#)

**Asked by: Stone, Jamie**

What plans he has to support the livelihood of English and Welsh upland farmers in the event that the UK leaves the EU.

**Answering member: George Eustice | Department: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs**

Leaving the EU presents a major opportunity for us to design new policies which are based on public money for public goods. Traditional upland landscapes provide many environmental and cultural benefits which we value. The Government is looking at the implications of proposed policy changes and will consult before the introduction of the Agriculture Bill.

**HC Deb 26 January 2018 | PQ 903548**

[Agriculture: Subsidies](#)

**Asked by: Lamont, John**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to support schemes which provide non-basic payment funding for farmers through the Common Agricultural Policy after the UK leaves the EU and during the time basic payments are to be maintained until 2022.

**Answering member: George Eustice | Department: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs**

The Government understands the importance of providing stability to farmers as we leave the European Union.

The same cash total in funds for farm support has been committed for the duration of this Parliament.

We have also committed to fund Pillar II agreements, including agri-environment schemes, signed from within the current Multi-Annual Financial Framework (MFF) allocation before the UK leaves the EU. These will be funded for their lifetime, as long as they are in line with domestic priorities and are good value for money.

**HC Deb 22 January 2018 | PQ 122002**

[Agriculture: Scotland](#)

**Asked by: Lamont, John**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions his Department has had with (a) the Scottish Government and (b) Scottish representative organisations about the replacement of common agricultural policy payments when the UK leaves the EU.

**Answering member: George Eustice | Department: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs**

Since taking office the Secretary of State has met the Scottish Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy and Connectivity, Fergus Ewing, five times. I have also met Mr Ewing. Defra officials talk regularly to the Scottish Government, along with their counterparts in Wales and Northern Ireland.

Ministers and officials are in regular contact with stakeholders from all of the devolved administrations. In September last year, the Secretary of State attended a roundtable with representatives from key agricultural stakeholders in Aberdeen, and meetings between Ministers and Scottish stakeholders took place in December.

The Government has committed to work closely with the devolved administrations and stakeholders to deliver an approach that works for the whole of the UK and reflects the individual needs of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

**HC Deb 16 January 2018 | PQ 122004**

[Food Safety Standards: Brexit](#)

**Asked by: Baroness Jones of Whitchurch**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that, after Brexit, current United Kingdom food safety standards are not undermined by the import of poorer quality food produced to lower animal welfare standards from the United States and other potential trading partners.

**Answering member: The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Lord Gardiner of Kimble)**

My Lords, I declare my farming interests as set out in the register. We want to advance the consumption of great British food both at home

and abroad. Our food is held in high repute thanks to our animal welfare and food safety standards. The withdrawal Bill will transfer on to the UK statute book all EU food safety and animal welfare standards. Our current high standards, including import requirements, will apply when we leave the EU.

**HL Deb 11 January 2018 | Vol 788 c306**

[Agriculture: Vacancies](#)

**Asked by: Lord Roberts of Llandudno**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have held with representatives of the horticulture and agriculture industries concerning possible staff shortages leading up to, and following, Brexit; and what support they are giving to those industries to help them train and recruit new staff.

**Answering member: Lord Gardiner of Kimble | Department: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs**

We are closely engaged with industry to ensure that we are informed of the latest intelligence on labour supply and demand, now and in the future. Ministers meet with representatives from the food and farming industry to discuss a range of issues, including securing the workforce that they need.

In September, the Farming Minister met representatives of the horticulture and agriculture industries at Defra's Seasonal Workforce Working Group. This meeting explored future access to seasonal labour for the agricultural industry and best practice of attracting and retaining workers. On 5<sup>th</sup> December he attended the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Fruit and Vegetable Growers where he heard sector's experience of the 2017 season. Government keeps its position on seasonal workers under ongoing review.

Agriculture needs to attract entrepreneurial, talented new entrants who can rise to the challenges and opportunities that will occur in the sector in coming years. The Government provides grant support to the National Federation of Young Farmers Clubs (NFYFC) to provide training opportunities and promote and support entry into the farming sector. The Government's reforms to technical education will provide clear routes to skilled employment in agriculture and other sectors. The Chancellor announced over £500 million of additional funding a year will be invested once routes across all sectors are fully implemented.

With regards to the EU nationals living in the UK already, the Government has been clear from the beginning of our negotiations that protecting their rights is our priority, and on 8<sup>th</sup> December agreement on this was reached with the EU. After we leave the EU, we must have an immigration system which works in the best interests of the UK – controlling immigration whilst continuing to welcome those who make an invaluable contribution. The Government is considering the options carefully, and will ensure that businesses and communities, including

representatives from across the food chain, have the opportunity to contribute their views. We encouraged industry to contribute to the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) call for evidence, as this will inform the future immigration framework.

**HL Deb 21 December 2017 | PQ HL4060**

[Leaving the EU: Alignment](#)

**Asked by: Owen Smith**

As you know, Mr Speaker, agriculture is more important in Northern Ireland than in any other part of the UK, and Northern Ireland is more reliant on EU farm payments than any other part of the UK, so 30,000 Ulster farmers need certainty about what Brexit is going to mean for them. In her Florence speech, the Prime Minister reassured them that transition would occur under

“the existing structure of EU rules and regulations”—

including, I presume, the common agricultural policy—but on Monday she said the opposite. She said that on 29 March 2019, we will be leaving the common agricultural policy. Which one is right?

**Answered by: James Brokenshire | Department: Northern Ireland**

They are both right. We have said clearly that yes, we are leaving the common agricultural policy, but we have also said that we will maintain payments in relation to those arrangements through to 2020. Indeed, if the hon. Gentleman wants to look back at what the Prime Minister said about maintaining the same arrangements during the implementation period, that will answer his question.

**HC Deb 20 December 2017 | Vol 633 c1046**

[Agriculture: Subsidies](#)

**Asked by: Drew, Dr David**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether the current funding system for farm payments will remain in place during the transition period after the UK leaves the EU.

**Answering member: George Eustice | Department: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs**

The Government has pledged to continue to commit the same cash total in funds for farm support until the end of this Parliament, expected in 2022. This provides a greater level of security and certainty for farmers and landowners than anywhere else in the EU, where funding is guaranteed only until 2020.

Any changes made to agricultural funding would reflect the Government’s aim of securing a better future for UK agriculture and for the environment.

**HC Deb 20 December 2017 | PQ 120121**

[Agriculture: Devolution](#)

**Asked by: McCarthy, Kerry**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he will be taking to align the devolved administrations' agri-food production targets and enforcement of nitrates water quality standards with each other and those of the Westminster Government, after the UK leaves the EU.

**Answering member: George Eustice | Department: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs**

Agri-food policy and the enforcement of nitrates water quality standards are devolved matters where decision making rests with each of the devolved administrations (DAs).

Outside the Common Agricultural Policy, we can develop policies that enhance the environment, support innovation and improve agricultural productivity. The Government set out plans to consult on a new, independent body to regulate environment policy and hold us to account on environmental commitments once the UK has left the EU. One of the key questions which we will explore with the DAs is whether Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland wish to take a different or similar approach.

We have committed to work closely with the DAs and the Secretary of State holds regular meetings with DA Ministers to discuss the issues around leaving the EU.

Defra also has strong working relationships at official level with each of the DAs where the need for common frameworks is scrutinised. This is in addition to the business as usual engagement taking place between Defra and DAs across a broad range of policy and operational issues.

**HC Deb 19 December 2017 | PQ 119205**

[Agriculture: Subsidies](#)

**Asked by: Lord Greaves**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to change the operation of (1) the environmental stewardship schemes, and (2) other aspects of the farm payment regime, in England in (a) 2018, and (b) subsequent years.

**Answering member: Lord Gardiner of Kimble | Department: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs**

We are making four new simple Countryside Stewardship packages available in 2018 for agreements starting in 2019. Farmers applying for one of these packages will only need to select a small number of core options (a minimum of 2 or 3) from between 7 and 14 options, depending on the offer. Every farmer who applies for one of these packages and who meets the basic criteria will receive an agreement.

We have significantly simplified the application form for these packages. The paper forms for the new offers are half the size of the current form. Arable farmers will be able to apply for the Arable package online. We have also increased the maximum grant available for Hedgerows and Boundaries from £5,000 to £10,000. We will continue to look for further simplification of the schemes for 2019.

Leaving the EU will allow us to take back control of our policies on agriculture and the environment. The Government has pledged to work with farmers, food producers and environmental experts to devise a new environmental land management system to be introduced in the following Parliament. This will include working together to inform scheme design and to test and pilot new scheme elements.

**HC Deb 19 December 2017 | PQ HL3970**

[Agriculture: Trade Agreements](#)

**Asked by: McMorris, Anna**

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what assessment his Department has made of the effect on agricultural trade with the EU of the UK not having a trade agreement with the EU when the UK leaves the EU.

**Answering member: Mr Robin Walker | Department: Department for Exiting the European Union**

As part of our work preparing to make a success of our departure from the European Union, we are carrying out a broad range of sectoral analysis, as you would expect a responsible Government to do. Our sector report on Agriculture covers: a detailed description of the sector; the current EU regulatory regime and a summary of sector views. The report has been made available for members of both Houses to read in a secure reading room.

The Government's Agriculture Bill will enable us to support a thriving and self-reliant farming sector that is more competitive, productive and profitable; to protect our precious natural environment for future generations; and to deliver on the manifesto commitment to provide stability for farmers as we exit the EU.

We are committed to getting the best possible deal for the United Kingdom - a deal that works for all sectors of the UK economy. We believe that a future partnership deal is in the interests of both sides, so we approach these negotiations anticipating success. We do not want or expect an outcome where no trade agreement is agreed.

**HC Deb 18 December 2017 | PQ 118411**

[Horticulture](#)

**Asked by: Robertson, Mr Laurence**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to ensure that farmers have access to a sufficient number of workers to work in the horticultural industry after the UK leaves the EU.

**Answering member: George Eustice | Department: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs**

It is a key priority of this Government to enable an innovative, productive and competitive food supply chain which invests in its people and skills.

Defra Ministers have ongoing discussions with a range of government departments, including the Home Office, about securing the workforce that the farming industry, needs for the future.

After we leave the EU, we must have an immigration system which works in the best interests of the UK – controlling immigration whilst continuing to welcome those who make an invaluable contribution.

For the longer-term the Government has commissioned the independent Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) to assess the role that EU citizens play in the UK economy and society.

**HC Deb 15 December 2017 | PQ 117865**

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