



**Dr Ian Duncan**  
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Dear Mr Gibson,

You will be aware of the concerns that have been raised by NFU Scotland regarding the Scottish Government's CAP (Common Agricultural Policy) payments due to farmers. I have been contacted by a number of farmers who are increasingly troubled by the Scottish Government's unwillingness to tell them how much money they can expect to receive and the date by which they can expect payment. This lack of information is directly contributing to the ongoing problems facing farmers, such as the crash in the price of milk and poor weather conditions.

As Chair of the ECR Policy Group on the Rural Economy, I have taken evidence from farmers and Commission officials regarding the CAP payment system. I believe this information would be of value to the Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment Committee, notably on the approach taken by other Member States, including Ireland, France and Germany, who already have a payment schedule to their farmers. Indeed, you will be aware that Ireland has already started payments under EU flexibility rules. In England, DEFRA has committed to making the bulk of payments by the end of December. I would be happy to appear before your committee to present this evidence in person.

I note that your committee will take evidence from the Cabinet Secretary for the Environment on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of November in Dumfries. This will be a sensible opportunity to ask Mr Lochhead when he will provide the information on funds and allocation dates so desperately needed by Scottish farmers.

Ian Duncan MEP