



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

## **RURAL AFFAIRS, CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

Richard Lochhead MSP

Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Food  
and Environment

c/o Clerk to the Committee  
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28 October 2015

Dear Richard

### **The Common Agricultural Policy basic payments schedule**

On 3 June 2015 the Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment Committee took evidence from farmers, crofters, land managers, and agents, on their experiences of applying for pillar 1 basic payment Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) funds and Scottish Rural Development Payment (SRDP) schemes via the Scottish Government's online system and Single Application Form (SAF). We subsequently wrote to you outlining the detailed concerns raised with the Committee and recommended that a number of actions were taken as a matter of urgency.

The Committee subsequently received a letter from Allan Bowie, President of NFU Scotland, dated 13 October 2015, expressing severe concerns about the Scottish Government's ability to deliver CAP basic payments in December 2015.

The Committee, farmers and crofters understood that the payment schedule would deliver payments in early December. However, whilst recognising that the payment window has previously been for the period December to June with early payment so far achieved by the Scottish Government, there is increasing concern that the claim verification process may delay payments to late December or into 2016.

The Committee shares the concerns, expressed by the NFUS, on the potential direct impact of any delay to the traditional payment timescale and the downstream impact of this on rural communities. The Committee asks that you provide clarity on the timeframe for payment as a matter of urgency and provide confirmation that we can expect payment to be made in full at this time (as is usually the case).

Yours sincerely

Rob Gibson MSP  
Convener