

Britain's favourite fresh produce magazine since 1895



By Luisa Cheshire

Tuesday 24th November 2020, 9:42 GMT

Unions call for funding assurances



Welsh, Scottish and Irish farming unions echo devolved governments' call for Westminster ag-funding assurances

Welsh, Scottish and Northern Irish farmers and their respective rural economies must not be the losers from a battle over funding between devolved governments and Westminster.

That was the strong and unequivocal message from NFU Cymru, NFU Scotland and Ulster Farmers' Union in response to a joint statement made by the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Ministers of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, yesterday (23 November).

The statement follows a joint letter from the Welsh, Scottish and Northern Irish Agriculture and Rural Affairs Ministers to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs George Eustice MP. In their letter, the trio call for assurances from UK Government that all lost EU funding will be fully replaced to provide certainty to the rural economies of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Now NFU Cymru, NFU Scotland and Ulster Farmers' Union, have echoed those calls, stating that previous commitments to fund agriculture should be maintained and honoured.

NFU Cymru President John Davies said: "It is a matter of the utmost concern that just a matter of days before the UK Treasury's Comprehensive Spending Review, we hear that there is the possibility that Welsh farming and our rural communities could lose out to the tune of up to £200m. This is an unacceptable situation and cannot happen.

"At a time of unprecedented uncertainty for the sector we cannot afford to lose this support. We are a matter of weeks away from the ending of the Brexit transition period, with the potential for significant disruption to our markets for agricultural produce. Alongside this we are continuing to deal with the massive disruption in the UK food supply chain

caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and the impact this has had on the food service sector and the buying patterns of the general public.

"At a time where Welsh farming is facing such uncertainty, we look to our governments to provide some stability and certainty. We seek urgent reassurances that Welsh farming will not receive a penny less in funding as we move out of the CAP and into funding arrangements determined by our governments in Cardiff Bay and Westminster."

NFU Scotland President Andrew McCornick said: "NFU Scotland has always been crystal clear that in the post-Brexit era, Scottish farmers and crofters must have access to the same quantum of funding as they had under the CAP. Conservative manifesto pledges in 2017 and 2019 recognised that the sector should not be disadvantaged financially by Brexit. We call on the UK

Government to ensure that this week's

market returns is likely and input costs

Enjoyed this free article from Fresh

<http://www.fruitnet.com/americafruit/article/1474/parts-of-san-diego-quarantined-as-psyllid-count-mounts>

© Copyright Market Intelligence Ltd - Fruitnet.com 2014. The copyright on this article and all content published on Market Intelligence Ltd - Fruitnet.com is held by Market Intelligence Ltd - Fruitnet.com Limited, a joint venture between Market Intelligence Limited and Dr Rolf M Wolf Media GmbH. All rights reserved. Neither this article nor any part of it may be reproduced, stored or transmitted in any form, including print-outs, screen grabs and information retrieval systems, without the prior permission of the copyright owners.

FRUITNET.COM

financial spending review honours that commitment.

“A shortfall of the order of £170 million for Scotland, as indicated in the joint letter from Devolved Administrations to Secretary of State George Eustice, is wholly unacceptable and will significantly disadvantage farmers and crofters as we enter a potentially chaotic and turbulent post-transition period. Greater volatility for

will be unpredictable, so the reliance on promised farm support will increase.

“Any reduced commitment from UK Government would leave Scottish farmers and crofters facing greater uncertainty rather than required stability. It also undermines the crucial delivery of policies to meet climate and biodiversity challenges. Outcomes that are clearly in the public interest will be much harder to achieve under any funding cuts.”

Produce Journal and its team of editors? Don't miss out on even more in-depth analysis, plus all the latest news from the fresh produce business. Subscribe now to [Fresh Produce Journal](#).