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The Scottish Parliament
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13 November 2024

Dear Convener

The Rural Support (Improvement) (Miscellaneous Amendment) (Scotland) Regulations 2024

On 28th October 2024 The Rural Support (Improvement) (Miscellaneous Amendment) (Scotland) Regulations 2024 were laid in Parliament using the powers of the Agriculture (Retained EU Law and Data) (Scotland) Act 2020.

And I now understand that these Regulations will be considered by the Committee on the 20th November at 9.00 am.

These Regulations mark the end of the period of “stability and simplicity”, and the start of the phased transition into our future support framework. In the first instance these Regulations will introduce changes for 2025 on:

- new Cross Compliance requirements as part of Good Agricultural Environmental Conditions (“GAEC”) relating to the protection of peatlands and wetlands, and
- a new eligibility requirement for bovine animals under the Scottish Suckler Beef Support Scheme (“SSBSS”).

These changes were announced in March 2024, with the Agricultural Reform Route Map updated to provide more detail and guidance, and are required to be in force on 1 January 2025:

- www.gov.scot/news/agricultural-support-is-changing
- www.ruralpayments.org/topics/agricultural-reform-programme/arp-route-map/#713227

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They are intended to contribute towards tackling the climate crisis and to address environmental matters of concern as part of the phased transition from existing Common Agricultural Policy legacy schemes to the introduction of new schemes under the Agriculture and Rural Communities (Scotland) Act 2024. They contribute to our commitment to increase conditionality on public payments.

A separate Regulation will follow to introduce the Whole Farm Plan requirement, which will need to be in place for the opening of the Single Application Form (SAF) 2025 window on the 15 March 2025.

I hope this information is helpful . Both I and my supporting officials are looking forward to answering any queries the Committee may have on the 20th November.

Yours sincerely,



JIM FAIRLIE

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