



News Release

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Contact : Bob Carruth
Telephone : 0131 472 4006
Email : bob.carruth@nfus.org.uk

TENANT FARMING FORUM RESPONDS TO HOLDINGS CONSULTATION

Issued on behalf of the Tenant Farming Forum

Scotland's Tenant Farming Forum (TFF), which aims to promote a healthy tenanted farm sector in Scotland, has given its initial response to the publication of the Scottish Government consultation: "Proposals to Amend the Agricultural Holdings Act 1991 and 2003".

The retiring chairman of the influential Forum, made up of organisations representing both landowners and tenants, is Professor Jeff Maxwell. Commenting on the consultation, he said:

"The initial reaction from the TFF is to welcome the proposals in this consultation which have the potential to deliver many of the positive changes to the Agricultural Holdings legislation that we sought. These have been discussed in some detail with Scotland's Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Richard Lochhead.

"However, there is disappointment that some elements of the total package for change as sought by the Forum have not been included in the proposed amendments to current legislation. The omissions are the Forum's proposal to widen the class of beneficiary who may succeed to a tenancy to include a grandchild, and its proposal to amend the rent review provisions to prohibit 'upward only' and 'landlord only' initiated reviews.

"I would expect the TFF to debate the Government's consultation and these omissions from it further in the near future, after which, a more detailed statement will be made."

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NOTES TO EDITORS

- Professor Jeff Maxwell will be succeeded as Chairman of the TFF in October by Professor Phil Thomas
- A copy of the Scottish Government consultation on proposals to change the Agricultural Holdings Act can be found at:
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/09/23140726/0>
- The primary purpose of the Tenant Farming Forum is to help to promote a healthy farm tenanted sector in Scotland. It aims to fulfil this purpose by:
 1. Providing a discussion forum among those representing groups/organisations with a direct involvement in the sector, and who are committed to consensus building through fair and equitable discussion and representation;
 2. Contributing to an understanding of the significance, and the practical implications of implementing current legislation, (for example, at this time, the Agricultural Holdings (Scotland) Act 2003), and any future proposed legislation governing the sector;
 3. Identifying specifically, and raising awareness of issues that may inhibit or act as impediments to achieving effective relationships within the sector;
 4. Formulating views and opinions as to how effective relationships and ‘best practice’ can be developed and secured;
 5. Consulting and liaising with government departments, agencies and other bodies about matters that may directly affect relationships within the sector; and
 6. Having a vision as to how the future well being of the sector can be assured in the context of proposed changes in European and UK agricultural and environmental policies, and their implications for the rural economy; and continually reviewing the implications for the sector of new initiatives, for example, such as contract farming, and rural planning developments.
- The Tenant Farming Forum is made up of the following organisations: Scottish Tenant Farmers Association (STFA), Scottish Estates Business Group (SEBG), Scottish Rural Property and Business Association (SRPBA), Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), and NFU Scotland (NFUS).
- Observers on the group are the Scottish Government, the Law Society and the Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs (SAYFC).
- Details on the TFF can be found at its website: www.tenantfarmingforum.org.uk