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TENANT FORUM LAUNCHES NEW ENTRANTS CONSULTATION

The Tenant Farming Forum (TFF) has today (Thursday) launched a consultation on developing options that will help new entrants get started in agriculture.

The TFF is made up of NFU Scotland, Scottish Tenant Farmers Association (STFA), Scottish Estates Business Group (SEBG), Scottish Rural Business and Property Association (SRPBA), Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) Scotland and Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs (SAYFC). The primary purpose of the Tenant Farming Forum is to help to promote a healthy farm tenanted sector in Scotland. A key part of a healthy tenanted farm sector is mobility allowing for new entrants and retirements.

The Cabinet Secretary, Richard Lochhead, has requested that the TFF develops options to assist new entrants to get started in farming and so a consultation has today been launched to ascertain views on what practical solutions can be offered to overcome the barriers to entry.

Jeff Maxwell, TFF Chairman, said:

“There are concerns that not enough new entrants are getting started in agriculture. Central to this is the breakdown of the traditional entry route. The TFF has been given a job by the Scottish Government to develop options that make it easier for new entrants to get started.

“Farming is an ageing industry and it is particularly difficult to get started in farming for those who are not a farmer’s son or daughter. Farming is no easy occupation and is not for the faint hearted but we must ensure that all those who wish to enter into what is ultimately a hugely satisfying and rewarding career, are given as many opportunities as possible.”

Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs Richard Lochhead said:

“I am pleased to support today’s launch of the Tenant Farming Forum’s consultation into barriers experienced by new entrants to farming. I have asked the forum, which represents a wide spectrum of interests within the farm tenancy sector, to take this consultation forward. As who better than the farming community itself can identify and come forward with pragmatic, practical solutions and recommendations, including how these might be implemented in practice. I am grateful to the forum for agreeing to undergo this important task.

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“I would encourage all interested parties to respond fully to the consultation and to attend the road shows taking place over the next few weeks. This is an important opportunity for individuals to make their views known.

“This is in line with the Scottish Government’s commitment to support young entrants into farming and we have allocated £10 million through our new Rural Development Programme for a dedicated new entrants scheme. I look forward to working with the forum to help more young people enter farming in the coming years.”

NOTES TO EDITORS

- There are a set of questions which make up the consultation document.
- All members of the six TFF membership organisations will be sent a copy.
- Others can obtain a copy by visiting the TFF website on www.tenantfarmingforum.org.uk
- The form should then be returned to:

Prof Bill Slee
Macauley Institute
Craigiebuckler
Aberdeen
AB15 8QH

by the deadline of **Friday 16 November**

- Queries can be directed to Prof Bill Slee on 01224 498200 or Peter Cook on 01467 642802
- The dates of the roadshows will be confirmed at a later date.