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## **TENANT FARMING FORUM LAUNCHES NEW ENTRANTS PAPER**

The Tenant Farming Forum (TFF) has today (Thursday) launched its paper of recommendations on how to assist new entrants into Scottish farming.

In 2007, Richard Lochhead, the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and the Environment, asked the TFF to undertake a consultation with a remit to investigate the barriers to new entrants to farming. They were asked to identify solutions to these barriers and to recommend how these might be implemented in practice.

Today, the TFF has formally submitted its final report to the Cabinet Secretary, outlining nine key recommendations based on the responses to the consultation.

The recommendations focus on those solutions, which in the view of the TFF, will have the greatest potential to provide new entrants access to capital, have equality of opportunity, and enable access to land. Suggested recommendations include; ensuring that new entrants have access to the Single Farm Payment, subsidised interest loans, improving succession planning advice and creating phased entry programmes.

Richard Lochhead, Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Environment said:

“In driving forward the Scottish Government's five strategic objectives, and in particular our desire to make Scotland wealthier and fairer, it is crucial that we secure the long term future of sustainable farming in Scotland. For that reason we asked the Tenant Farming Forum to examine the barriers new entrants face and identify ways in which these could be removed.

“The high level of response generated by the Forum’s investigation demonstrates how important encouraging new entrants into farming is to the industry itself.

“I appreciate all the hard work put in by Forum members and their organisations. The Forum has found the barriers to new entry complex, which has made their task of developing practical recommendations challenging. The recommendations reached will make a central contribution to the debate.

“It is good to see that the Forum supports both the new entrants loans measure that we inserted into the Scottish Rural Development Programme and the work already underway on affordable housing and the relaxation of planning guidance.

“More needs to be done and we will work with the industry and Forum over the coming months to overcome more of the obstacles new entrants face.”

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Speaking at the launch of the report, Jeff Maxwell, TFF Chairman, said:

“For a long while we have had concerns that not enough new entrants are getting started in agriculture. Farming is an ageing industry and it is particularly difficult to get started in farming for those who are not farmers’ sons or daughters.

“We were given the job of investigating what could make it easier for new entrants to get started and we have now developed a series of recommendations which have been presented to the Cabinet Secretary.

“I very much hope that our report will enable the Scottish Government to address some of the key barriers to entry and that the path for new entrants will be made smoother.

“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.”

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

- The TFF is made up of NFU Scotland, Scottish Tenant Farmers Association (STFA), Scottish Estates Business Group (SEBG), Scottish Rural Property and Business 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.
- The launch of the new entrants paper took place at NFU Scotland’s Head Office at Ingliston, Edinburgh. Photographs are available on request by emailing [anna.davies@nfus.org.uk](mailto:anna.davies@nfus.org.uk)
- A full copy of the report can be obtained from [www.tenantfarmingforum.org.uk](http://www.tenantfarmingforum.org.uk)

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