

FAIR DEAL FOR ENGLISH FARMERS



Joint position statement from the National Farmers' Union (NFU), The Country Land and Business Association (CLA) and Tenant Farmers Association (TFA) on the proposals for the "Greening" of the Common Agricultural Policy.

The current negotiations for a reform of the Common Agricultural Policy provide an important opportunity to ensure that the principles of competitiveness and sustainability are fully embedded so that British farmers can continue to provide high-quality food for consumers and excellent environmental management of the land they farm.

The NFU, CLA and TFA are increasingly concerned that Defra will seek to impose on English farmers a sole delivery method for "Greening" under pillar 1 of the reformed CAP, thereby closing off options available to farmers in other parts of the UK and across the EU. With this in mind, the NFU, CLA and TFA have agreed the following principles which we would encourage Defra to adopt in designing the delivery of Greening at an English level:

- English farmers, like farmers in the rest of Europe, must have a choice of greening options, including access to all the applicable categories deemed "green by definition" which grant farmers automatic entitlement to the greening aid envisaged within the reform package.
- Greening should not impose higher standards, or compliance costs, on English farmers than those in other UK regions or Member States of the EU.
- Given food security and economic concerns Greening must be implemented in a way that does not require the land in question to be taken out of production and avoids unjustifiable loss in farm income; a point that has already been endorsed by the EU Heads of Government.
- Farmers should be able to opt out of participation in the specific Greening measures and as a consequence forego the 30% of the new payment envisaged for Greening within the new pillar one framework but without further penalty.
- We believe that our current combination of statutory and voluntary measures produces levels of environmental protection and improvement that are well above the European average.
- Introducing a Greening element into Pillar 1 removes the need for the Government to switch funds from Pillar 1 to Pillar 2. The outcome of the EU Budget negotiations 2014-2020 means that there must be a radical rethink of Government policy, matching the ambition of the next programme with the level of funds available. Measures to promote jobs and growth must be prioritised.
- The Campaign for the Farmed Environment will play a central role in enhancing environmental outcomes from farmed land in England by providing valuable guidance for the 'intelligent' selection and location of greening measures on farm, and reducing the need for prescriptive regulation.

