

# 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 CAP reform supported by 30 other organisations.

The coalition's message to Government is simple:

**"WE SUPPORT POLICIES THAT ENSURE ENGLISH FARMERS CAN CONTINUE TO PRODUCE HIGH QUALITY FOOD FOR THE BRITISH PUBLIC."**

Defra has been granted the flexibility to implement new environmental conditions, known as "greening" through a National Certification Scheme. It has also stated its firm intention to reduce English farm payments by up to 15% through modulation.

With these two concerns in mind, the NFU, CLA and TFA have agreed the following principles which we would encourage Defra to adopt in the design and delivery of the future CAP in England:

- 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 recognise those already providing environmental benefit at least equivalent to the greening requirements in other ways.
- 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 endorsed by the EU Heads of Government.
- We, like Defra, believe that our current combination of statutory and voluntary measures produces levels of environmental protection and improvement that are well above the European average.
- English farmers recognise their obligation to the natural environment and, as a result, founded the Campaign for the Farmed Environment, which will play a central role in enhancing environmental outcomes from farmed land in England. We remain focused on actively promoting its message.
- The outcome of the EU Budget negotiations 2014-2020 means that there must be a strategic review of Government policy that ensures the objectives of the next programme can be fulfilled with the monies that are made available.
- For a Government which rightly emphasises the importance of budgetary discipline, we believe that it is wrong to start from the premise that the maximum amount must be transferred from pillar 1 to pillar 2. What is required is a quantifiable analysis that establishes how any transfer of monies to pillar 2 will impact on English farmers and if transferred, how monies can remain accessible to active farmers before any rate of modulation is set.
- Defra has the flexibility to set the modulation rate initially to less than the maximum 15%. There would then be the option of reviewing the rate upwards in 2017, if a further analysis demonstrates it be necessary.

