

**Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru | National Assembly for Wales**  
**Y Pwyllgor Newid Hinsawdd, Amgylchedd a Materion Gwledig | Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee**  
**Ymchwiliad i ddyfodol Polisiâu Amaethyddol a Datblygu Gwledig yng Nghymru | Inquiry into the Future of Agricultural and Rural Development Policies in Wales**  
**AAB 08**  
**Ymateb gan 'Fairness for the Uplands'**  
**Evidence from 'Fairness for the Uplands'**

- *What are the fundamental outcomes that we want to see from agricultural, land management and rural development policies?*

Overview

Agriculture is presently dependent on financial support from the EU, this response will assume that the same level of support will still be available in the future. Senior Brexit campaigners as well as some Welsh Assembly Members promised that Wales would receive as much financial support for Agriculture after we leave the EU as well as ring fencing this money for agriculture.

Agriculture support payments will need to be more accountable to ensure successful long lasting policies, that will lessen the likelihood of the policies being challenged by other industries and services in Wales also in need of financial support.

The outcome for agriculture in Wales needs to be:

Profitable

For businesses to survive, invest in the future and attract younger people into the industry it is essential that agriculture businesses are viable. Due to money being spent locally agriculture is an unsurpassed method of ensuring vibrant rural communities. Money should go to active farmers, not inactive recipients, this is essential to gain the support of the public.

A Sustainable Environment

Area payments should be focused on compensating vulnerable upland areas because of the extra costs associated with shorter grazing seasons due to poorer quality soil and lower temperatures. Support payments should continue for upland areas focusing on pastoral agriculture producing high quality food alongside meeting strict environmental guidelines.

Payments for creation and maintenance of environmental improvements currently supported by the Glastir should continue. Upland peat management has been proven to be a cost-effective method of increasing carbon sequestration. Land managers should be appropriately compensated for the difficult work of managing grazing on peat land where there are already restrictions on erecting fencing and other management tools. Organic farming is another area that should be financially supported to help Wales meet the greenhouse gas emissions targets set out in the 'Environment (Wales) Bill'.

The Welsh tourism industry relies heavily on the existing farmed landscape and open access for the growing participation of walking, running and cycling in the uplands. Although not quantifiable these all contribute to the health and wellbeing of the public. Payments linked to maintaining these landscapes and the historic element will also benefit the tourism industry as well as the NHS.

Lowland farms have a better capacity to produce food cheaper than upland farmers so are less dependent on support payments. Payments should not be used to support any methods of intensive agriculture which are heavily dependent on imported fertiliser, feed or oil as this might not stand up to public scrutiny.

### Quality Food

The Welsh lamb and Welsh Beef brands are successful Welsh exports, the lighter Welsh Mountain lambs should be promoted and improved even further to reduce the quantity sold unprofitably on commodity markets.

### RDP

Rural Development Policies and financial aid should be limited to agriculture holdings. Capital payments to improve the infrastructure, broadband and mobile phone services will enable businesses to be more innovative and efficient.

Planting and maintaining existing woodlands needs to be encouraged, environmental Impact assessments should be more flexible allowing farmers more choice and opportunity to plant trees on areas of land not suitable for other uses.

Urban projects currently financed from RDP should still be supported by WG through other avenues.

- *What lessons can we learn from current and previous policies? What about policies elsewhere?*

Historic production linked payments distorted the marketplace and stifled improvements in agriculture progress.

- *Should Wales develop its own agricultural, land management and rural development policies or should it be part of a broader UK-wide policy and financial framework?*

Wales should develop all its own policies but easier channels of communication need to be developed for farmers to discuss policies. Historically upland farmers have struggled to communicate with the Welsh Government.