



Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1378  
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/00680/23

Jack Sargeant MS  
Chair - Petitions committee

23 November 2023

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your letter of 24 October, regarding Petition P-06-1378 titled 'We want farm subsidies to be extended to small scale and market gardeners.'

The Welsh Government recognises the importance of this sector and already provides support to enable its development. The Horticulture Start Up and Development schemes, launched in 2022, are designed to help growers with investment in new equipment and technology. They enable horticultural businesses to sustainably expand production, diversify into new crops, improve production efficiency and enhance product quality. The awarding of these grants has not been subject to a minimum cultivated area, so they have benefitted small-scale and market gardeners.

The future Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS) is being designed to be applicable to the majority of farming businesses across multiple sectors in Wales. Feedback to previous consultations confirms the industries agreement with the fundamental scheme structure comprising of a set of Universal Actions applicable to all in exchange for a Baseline Payment, with Optional and Collaborative Options available to those who wish to go further.

The proposed eligibility for the SFS includes a minimum of three eligible hectares, reduced from five hectares under the Basic Payment scheme to make the scheme accessible for smaller scale producers such as market gardeners. For businesses which can meet these criteria, proposals for Optional Actions includes *support for the start up of new horticultural businesses or new horticultural enterprises within established farm businesses*. This Optional Action is unlikely to be available immediately when the SFS commences in 2025, however will be integrated in the scheme during the transition period.

Anecdotal feedback from horticultural stakeholders suggest some would not be able to meet the SFS Universal Actions other businesses would be required to meet as it would not be feasible to deliver actions on habitat or woodland creation on small plots. We have advised

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

the horticultural sector to respond to SFS consultation with suggestions of how their sector could be supported within the SFS model, or if there is potential for clusters of horticultural businesses to be supported via the Collaborative layer of the SFS.

No final design decisions will be made on the SFS until the conclusion of the final consultation due to be published shortly.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Lesley Griffiths".

**Lesley Griffiths AS/MS**

**Y Gweinidog Materion Gwledig a Gogledd Cymru, a'r Trefnydd  
Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd**