

CPG on Rural Growth, 25.07.2023.

Minutes

Attending: Sam Kurtz MS (Chair)
Sam Rowlands MS
Mike Bryan, assistant for Sam Kurtz MS
Peter Fox MS
Llyr Griffith MS

Secretariat: Nigel Hollett (CLA)
Robert Dangerfield (CLA)
Fraser McAuley (CLA)
Emily Thomas (CLA)

Witnesses for the inquiry into rural productivity:

Iain Hill-Trevor, Chair CLA Cymru and Estate Owner Brynkinalt Estate
NFU – Dylan Morgan, Deputy Director and Head of Policy
FUW – Gareth Parry, Senior Policy and Communications Officer
Tesco – Alice Ritchie, Lead Nature and Forests Manager
Duncan Fisher – Project Co-manager at Our Food 1200

Appointments

Sam Kurtz MS confirmed as Chair.
CLA confirmed as secretariat.

Key points:

- Arbitrary targets do not work for farmers, there must be flexibility.
- The SFS has to work for farmers and be designed with farmers.
- The lack of subsidies for small horticultural holdings makes the food more expensive, which causes means it's harder for consumers to eat local produce. Subsidy system needs to promote local and seasonal food.
- For food security to be achieved, a lot more data is needed to understand how and where to scale and understand the need.
- There needs to be access to R&D funding now that it is not coming from the EU.
- Welsh Government needs to prioritise market access to keep food production profitable.
- Localising food supply must be a priority to reduce environmental damage. Changing climates will also threaten existing food supplies.
- Paris Agreement states that adaptation to climate change must ensure food production is not threatened. Wales should be ambitious and aim to be sustainable and climate friendly and be competitive in international markets as a result.
- The lack of specific details on SFS make it hard to evaluate, but WG needs to go to UK Government and ask for more money and justify why.

Food production in SFS

- FUW – food production must be at the heart of the scheme. Set targets are not flexible enough to suit every single farm.
- NFU – the SFS only works if the universal actions are accessible to all.

- Tesco – agree that the schemes need to work for food production and for farmers. Consumers want local produce.
- Our Food 1200 – holdings are too small to qualify for subsidies, which means that a whole sector is missing out on subsidies.

Launch of the CPG on Rural Growth report: November 15th 2023, to be held in the Senedd.