

National Sheep Association Cymru Wales Region



Secretary: Helen Davies, The Meadows, Arddleen, Llanymynech, Powys SY22 6RX · Tel/Fax: 01938 590535

Common Agriculture Policy Task and Finish Group

CAP 8 – NSA Cymru

NSA Cymru/Wales response to the
National Assembly for Wales' Environment and
Sustainability Committee
With regard to the
Proposed reforms to the Common Agricultural Policy.

November 2011

HD/CK

*National Sheep Association is an organisation which represents the views and interests of sheep producers throughout the UK.
NSA is funded by its membership of sheep farmers and its activities involve it in every aspect of the sheep industry.*

A Company Limited by Guarantee. Registered in England. Registration No. 37818. Registered Charity No. 249255



**NSA Cymru/Wales response to the National Assembly for Wales’
Environment and Sustainability Committee with regard to the proposed
reforms to the Common Agricultural Policy.**

Introduction:

The National Sheep Association Cymru/Wales Region (NSA Cymru/Wales) is pleased to be able to respond to the National Assembly for Wales’ Environment and Sustainability Committee with regard to **the proposed reforms to the Common Agriculture Policy**. we represent a large number of sheep farmers throughout Wales, the impact of any changes are of great importance to us. Many of our members will be directly and indirectly affected by any proposed changes.

Having read the documents relating to the proposed reforms to the Common Agricultural Policy we would like to make the following comments and hope that you will provide us with an opportunity to discuss these further.

- The recognition of the need to encourage young entrants into farming should be welcomed although the significant investment required in capital will still mean that it is a difficult sector for new entrants to enter.
- The current proposals to 'green' pillar 1 will be severely limiting for many livestock producers.
- In particular the need for 3 crops once a minimum threshold is reached will reduce if not prevent the practice of small scale arable production to supply home produced feed for the livestock sector. This is something which has actively been promoted and is still an important option within Glastir to improve biodiversity.

– Whilst the retention of overall levels of permanent pasture is compatible with livestock production the limitation of the use of short term arable/forage crops will again increase the reliance on purchased feed and reduce the livestock sectors need to improve efficiency of production.

– The requirement of 7% 'set-aside' is less likely to impinge on the majority of sheep producers in Wales provided that all non-productive areas of the farm are able to be included within this area. However this may be of greater significance to more intensive lowland producers and I think that on balance a case should be made to remove/reduce the amount of land that is taken out of production through compulsory measures.

– The move from historic to flat rate payment even with a period of transition will significantly reduce payments to more intensive lowland producers. This seems most likely to affect dairy and intensive beef producers however lowland sheep producers also expressed concern that this would significantly reduce their incomes.

– There is an option within the current package to apply regional variations to the flat rate payment which could help address the reduction in payments to these historically more intensive farms however this may in fact lead to poorer settlements for the predominantly hill and upland sheep sector in Wales

Conclusion

NSA Cymru/Wales hopes that the National Assembly for Wales will be guided by the views contained in this response and that pressures for fundamental change will be resisted.