



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Agriculture (Wales) White Paper

Consultation

Agriculture Wales White Paper

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Context

- Leaving the EU (and the Common Agriculture Policy) presents a challenge and an opportunity for Wales.
- We want to support Welsh farmers to thrive, produce sustainable food and contribute to the fight against climate / ecological emergency.
- Future trade deals could increase market competition - many will need to compete on something other than cost
- *Brexit and our Land* and *Sustainable Farming and our Land* explored and developed proposals for a new system of agricultural support. This White Paper is the next step in the process.

Sustainable Land Management

- The White Paper sets out Sustainable Land Management (SLM) as the framework for future funding.
- SLM is derived from the legal framework created by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Environmental (Wales) Act 2016.
- SLM is an internationally recognised concept which reflects the use of land resources in a way that the needs of the current generation are balanced with our obligations to the next.

Proposals for the Agriculture (Wales) Bill

- Strategic in scope, setting a support framework which can accommodate the development of agriculture and forestry within Wales for the next fifteen to twenty years.
- A Sustainable Farming Scheme to replace previous EU funded schemes for farmers.
- The introduction of National Minimum Standards applicable to all farmers and backed by civil sanctions.
- UK Agriculture Act – Time limited powers to ensure the effective operation of the agricultural sector.

Sustainable Farming Scheme

- Sustainable food production, responding to the climate emergency and reversing the decline of biodiversity are three of today's most significant challenges.
- We propose to pay farmers appropriately for the production of additional non-market goods at levels above those set by regulation.
- The payment approach will go beyond the previous income foregone costs incurred model and reflect the value of environmental goods provided.

Sustainable Farming Scheme

- Welsh farmers will continue producing high quality food whilst maintaining high production standards.
- We propose asking Welsh farmers to go further, by providing support through the SFS – both financial and advisory – which will be targeted at outcomes not currently rewarded by the market, such as:
 - i. improved soils
 - ii. clean air & water
 - iii. ecosystem resilience
 - iv. animal health & welfare

National Minimum Standards

- To protect the environment upon which we all depend and to maintain Welsh standards, it is important we have appropriate regulation that is proportionate and effective.
- Consolidation of existing agricultural regulations into a set of National Minimum Standards will make it easier for farmers to understand the legal requirements with which they must comply.
- It is proposed the National Minimum Standards would be applicable to all farmers in Wales and operate on the principle of proportionate enforcement.

Evidence

- A range of analyses are underway to support scheme design ; this is an ongoing iterative process
- These analyses include modelling the potential economic impacts and environmental benefits.
- We expect to publish a report on findings of the economic analysis in the Autumn.

Co-design

- First round of Co- design has finished and almost 2,000 people fed in their view on our proposals.
- The findings will be published when the report is finalised.
- Keen to continue working in partnership with the sector and farmers and developing plans for the next phase.

Transition

- Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) will continue in 2021 and it is our intention for this to continue in 2022 subject to funding.
- No changes will be made until we can demonstrate a new system is adequately designed, we have undertaken the relevant impact assessments and we are confident it is administratively practicable.
- It is our intention to introduce an Agriculture (Wales) Bill in the first year of the next Senedd - these powers are needed to start a transition to proposed scheme – we are aiming start transition in 2024.
- Farmers will be supported through the transition process.

Consultation

- The consultation closes on 25th March 2021 – the responses will inform our long term policy and legislative approach.
- A summary of consultation responses and the WG policy response will be published after the election.
- Result of economic analysis will be expected in the Autumn.
- Co-design – Second phase will be launched towards the end 2021.

