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Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs
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Date: 9th February 2021

Dear Minister

We are writing to you on behalf of our respective membership organisations who represent the majority of active farming businesses within Wales regarding the recently published *Welsh Government Agriculture (Wales) White Paper Consultation document*.

Since the decision to leave the European Union was made our organisations have sought to actively engage in a constructive and positive manner at every opportunity as Wales seeks to develop a new domestic agricultural policy for the post CAP world.

We have throughout this process recognised and embraced the need for change on the belief that the main opportunity from Brexit was to develop an agricultural policy in Wales for Wales that had its people, the land they farm, and the food they produce at its heart. Collectively we are ambitious for Wales and passionately believe that our sector can play a leading role in the major challenges facing society, not least climate change, all whilst feeding an ever-growing population with the highest quality food and drink produced by the best farmers in the world. Put simply our ambition is for Wales to be recognised as a world leading country of excellence for climate friendly farming and food production.

Over the last 4 years our organisations have regularly consulted with our respective memberships in order to formulate our own policy positions which has enabled us to respond to the two main Welsh Government consultations; *Brexit and our land* and *Sustainable Farming and our Land*. Collectively we have engaged with many thousands of farming and rural businesses and a huge amount of time and effort has gone into responding to these consultations and we certainly feel that we have engaged in an open minded and constructive manner.

As a collective however, we are extremely concerned about the direction of travel following the publication of the *White Paper*. It appears that very little has changed since the first consultation was published in July 2018. The direction of travel proposed does not appear to reflect the uniqueness of Welsh farming, built around family farms delivering for our economy, our landscape, language and culture. Instead, and most worryingly it looks as though we are implementing a policy based on a very narrow definition of public goods, policy thinking very similar to what we have seen emanate from DEFRA and their advisers rather than a policy 'Made in Wales'.

The proposals as laid out do not appear to secure the supply of safe, high quality affordable food for all in society or adequately underpin jobs reliant on a productive food and farming sector. The proposals set out changes for fundamental reform of the way that Welsh Government propose to

regulate in future, proposals that appear to significantly increase the regulatory baseline and could render Welsh farming uncompetitive in an increasingly global marketplace.

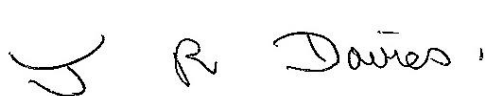
We are at a crucial juncture in the future of our country and the farming sector which defines the majority of our land. The decisions made in the coming months will dictate the future of rural Wales and our identity in the world. We urge you to pause and reconsider the direction of travel the policy is taking us down and listen to the thousands of farming businesses whose very future and existence is at stake.

We are committed to working with you and Welsh Government to develop an ambitious policy that puts people and food production at its heart whilst maintaining and enhancing the environment for all.

A policy based on the unique qualities of farming in Wales, recognising farming families as the backbone to our rural and wider communities, supported by policies from our Government that provide stability in a world of uncertainty. Ensuring that these businesses can continue to produce top quality food whilst having the ability to invest in measures to drive productivity, improve efficiency and increase market potential whilst meeting environmental and climate change obligations. A policy that fairly and equally recognises the economic, environmental and social pillars of sustainability. A comprehensive and fully integrated food and farming policy that allows us to be world leaders in climate friendly food production.

We have a once in a generation opportunity to get this right and enable rural Wales, its people, communities, language, landscape and environment to thrive and as such we urge you to reconsider the direction of travel and work with us to develop a policy that is ambitious and enables us to reach our potential.

Yours sincerely



John Davies
President/Llywydd
NFU Cymru



Glyn Roberts
President/Llywydd
FUW



Katie Davies
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