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- Farmer income plummeted as SNP botched CAP payments

27 Apr 2017



Farming income across Scotland decreased by almost half as rural communities struggled amid the SNP's chaotic approach to CAP payments.

Figures released today revealed, in 2015/16, the average income fell by £11,500 to £12,600.

The decrease came as rural communities were forced to wait months extra for hundreds of millions in CAP payments.

The Scottish Conservatives said today the statistics confirmed the SNP was letting down rural Scotland when it needed help the most.

And shadow rural affairs secretary Peter Chapman said it underlined just how important it was for the Scottish Government to get the farming payments right in future.

Scottish Conservative shadow rural affairs secretary Peter Chapman said:

“This goes to show that when farmers across Scotland were enduring huge falls in income, the SNP was nowhere to be seen.

“Instead of supporting them when they needed it most, the Scottish Government was starving the rural economy of hundreds of millions of pounds after messing up the CAP payments system.

“This will have made life for the country's farming communities all the more difficult.

“This drop in income is significant, and the Scottish Government needs to spell out exactly what it's going to do to help.

“It is extremely worrying that while Scotland's food and drink is recording record sales and exports our farmers are not sharing in any of this success.

“Farmers desperately need a fairer share of consumer spending for providing quality food reared to the highest standards of animal welfare and environmental conditions.”

For more information, visit:

<https://news.gov.scot/news/scottish-farm-incomes>

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27 Apr 2017



Nicola Sturgeon has been accused of “treating the electorate like fools” after failing to clarify her party’s position on fishing and the EU.

Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson challenged the First Minister after splits emerged within the SNP over the controversial Common Fisheries Policy.

At the weekend, Angus Robertson said the party wanted to stay in the EU and, as a consequence, the CFP.

But days later, two SNP MPs signed a pledge describing Brexit as a “sea of opportunity”, promising to ensure Scotland – independent or not – would never be returned to the CFP.

However, at First Minister’s Questions today, Ms Sturgeon failed to clarify the party’s position on the CFP, or whether or not full EU membership would be in the SNP’s General Election manifesto.

Ruth also challenged the SNP leader on why she said this upcoming election has nothing to do with separation, a claim directly contradicted by her predecessor Alex Salmond on radio yesterday.

Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson said:

“Nicola Sturgeon is treating the electorate like fools.

“She thinks she can face both ways on fishing, the EU and independence, promising all things to all people.

“But Scotland’s fishing communities can see straight through this approach,

and won't forgive the SNP for trying to ignore the EU referendum and force them back into the hated CFP.

"The Scottish Conservatives are clear – Brexit means being out of the CFP for good.

"In addition, no-one believes her when she says this upcoming referendum has nothing to do with independence, even before Alex Salmond confirmed this as a lie.

"The SNP's position on both is nothing short of absurd."

Angus Robertson's appearance on Sunday Politics Scotland at link below. He is asked about EU membership and the Common Fisheries Policy at 48.21:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b08mh836/sunday-politics-scotland-23042017>

The Scottish Fishermen's Federation issued a challenge to all UK election candidates yesterday to sign its pledge to exit the EU and the CFP:

<http://www.sff.co.uk/industry-challenges-election-candidates-sign-brexit-pledge/>

Eilidh Whiteford and Mike Weir both signed the pledge yesterday:

<https://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/fp/business/1229521/snp-mps-accused-of-hypo-crisy-for-signing-fishing-pledge/>

[Dugdale: Brexit just as bad as independence](#)

26 Apr 2017



Labour's leader in Scotland has been again criticised for her weakness on Scotland's place in the UK, after saying Brexit was just as bad as independence.

Speaking at the STUC conference in Aviemore, Kezia Dugdale compared the two scenarios, even though Scotland's trade with the rest of the UK is four times greater than with the EU.

She said: "Threatening to walk away from the EU without a deal is no worse than Nicola Sturgeon's threat to walk away from the UK with independence."

It's the latest indication that Labour are prepared to sell-out pro-UK Scots

in a post-election deal with the SNP.

Last week, sources within Labour said they wanted a “progressive alliance” with the nationalists to keep the Conservatives out of Downing Street.

And just days ago, it was revealed that two SNP MPs stated they needed such a pact with Labour to act as a “midwife” for independence.

Scottish Conservative candidate for Edinburgh South West Miles Briggs said:

“This shows you exactly where Kezia Dugdale’s priorities lie.

“For her to say Brexit – which was backed by more than a million Scots – would be as bad as the SNP’s break-up plan is beyond belief.

“Scotland’s relationship with the rest of Britain is four times more important than its trading links with Europe.

“Scots want to move on and make the best of Brexit, with Scotland remaining as a key part of the UK.

“Instead, Labour want to continue moaning from the sidelines, revealing they have no interest in standing up for Scotland’s place in the UK in the process.”

Kezia Dugdale was speaking at the STUC conference in Aviemore today.

Earlier this week, two SNP MPs wrote an alliance with Labour would act as a “midwife” for independence:

<http://www.scottishconservatives.com/2017/04/snp-says-it-wants-corbyn-alliance-to-act-as-midwife-for-independence/>

Before that, Labour sources agreed they were pursuing a post-election pact with the SNP:

<http://www.scottishconservatives.com/2017/04/reports-state-labour-will-pursue-election-deal-with-snp/>

[Sturgeon must set out next steps of her separation plan](#)

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26 Apr 2017



Nicola Sturgeon has a duty to spell out her so-called 'next steps' on independence before people vote on June 8, the Scottish Conservatives have said today.

It comes after the First Minister responded to a slump in support for separation this week by saying she would not publish her proposals before the election.

This is despite promising before the Easter break that she would set these plans out as soon as the Scottish Parliament returned.

Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson said:

"The First Minister could not have been clearer last month – she told the people of Scotland she would set out her next steps on her unwanted referendum plan after Easter and keep us all informed.

"Yet now that a General Election has been called she has gone back on her word.

"The reason is obvious: as always with the SNP they desperately try to play down independence in an election campaign because they know it's unpopular.

"Her claim earlier this week that her campaign isn't about independence is a joke. But her refusal to set out her position clearly before we vote is deadly serious.

"The Prime Minister and I have set our own position on this matter very clearly and people can have their say on our judgement on June 8.

"How can it be right that people should vote on June 8 without a clue what the First Minister plans to say on the single biggest issue facing Scotland come June 9.

"Don't we all have a right to know? Nicola Sturgeon has a duty to set out her position as promised so we can all take a view.

"The position of the Scottish Conservatives is crystal clear.

"A second referendum isn't needed and it isn't wanted. We will continue to stand up against the SNP's plans – which is why more and more people are turning to us at this election."

[SNP says it wants Corbyn alliance to act as 'midwife' for independence](#)

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24 Apr 2017



Two SNP MPs have said they want a “progressive alliance” with Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn to act as a “midwife” for Scottish independence.

Writing in a document earlier this month, Tommy Sheppard and Anne McLaughlin admitted a Westminster pact involving Labour “can allow us to explain and promote the progressive case for Scottish independence and help build support for the proposition in Scotland and beyond”.

The paper, entitled ‘The Progressive Alliance: why the SNP needs it’, goes onto state: “The midwife of that process will be our progressive alliance.”

The revelation comes as both Corbyn and SNP leader Nicola Sturgeon prepare to share a stage at the STUC conference in Aviemore.

And it follows reports last week that – despite denials in Edinburgh from Kezia Dugdale – the Labour party is very much preparing to strike a deal with the SNP in a bid to keep the Conservatives out of Downing Street.

Scottish Conservative MSP and candidate for Moray, Douglas Ross, said:

“Nicola Sturgeon wants to use this election to take Scotland back to the division of a second independence referendum.

“Astonishingly, Jeremy Corbyn has said he is ‘absolutely fine’ with her plans.

“We therefore face the clear and present danger of the SNP using Corbyn to push her obsession with independence.

“Now we know exactly why the SNP wants this so-called ‘progressive alliance’.

“As Nicola Sturgeon’s own MPs make clear in this document, they want it to ‘help build support’ for separation and act as the ‘midwife’ for independence.

“That is the truth behind this alliance – it is being proposed by the SNP in order to tear our country in two.

“It is staggering that, despite knowing this, Jeremy Corbyn’s team are still

prepared to do a deal with the SNP.

“It’s yet more proof that Corbyn would sell out pro-UK Scots in a heartbeat.”

To see the document, visit:

<http://www.compassonline.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/SNP-PA.pdf>

It was reported last week that Labour is preparing a deal with the SNP following June’s General Election:

<http://www.scottishconservatives.com/2017/04/reports-state-labour-will-pursue-election-deal-with-snp/>