

Basic Payments to remain in 2020 to support transition to new Land Management Programme

Speaking at the Hybu Cig Cymru breakfast, the Cabinet Secretary said the decision to keep BPS for a further year will provide reassurance to the industry and give them more time to prepare for the changes to future farm support post-Brexit.

The Cabinet reiterated her commitment to support farmers through a new Land Management Programme, which will provide support in a smarter way than the current BPS.

At the HCC breakfast, the Cabinet Secretary will also announce over 85% of farmers' BPS 2018 claims will be paid on Monday 3 December. Over £181m will be paid into the bank accounts of over 13,200 Welsh farm businesses. This includes nearly 1,000 farmers who applied for the BPS loan scheme but will now get their BPS on day one.

Farmers who have their BPS claims for 2018 still to be validated for payment are urged to apply before 30 November for an opt-in loan scheme, announced in response to the spell of hot and dry weather earlier this summer.

Cabinet Secretary said:

"We had an overwhelming response to our consultation 'Brexit and our Land' and are now considering all the responses in detail.

"We will continue to support farmers post-Brexit but in a smarter way. Maintaining the status quo is not an option and we now have the opportunity to design a new, better system of farm support.

"The BPS is not linked to outcomes, productivity, farmer effort or need. The proposed schemes in the 'Brexit and our Land' Consultation, our new Economic Resilience and Public Goods schemes will do so through providing targeted support.

"I realise this signals big change for the sector at an uncertain time. The transition period is vitally important and is why I am today announcing BPS will remain unchanged for a further year in 2020 to provide certainty and help farmers transition smoothly to a new Land Management Programme.

"This extension will ensure farmers have enough time to prepare and adapt to this new approach. It will ensure a multi-year, managed transition and fulfils our commitment no existing schemes will be removed until replacing schemes are ready. We will also consult further on our proposals next year."

On the payment of Basic Payment Scheme claims, the Cabinet Secretary added:

“I am delighted to announce that over 85% of farmers will receive their BPS payments on the first day. RPW are continuing to validate the remaining claims as quickly as possible and will be contacting farm businesses directly, if their BPS claims are still to be validated.

“This will give farmers every opportunity, if they wish, to apply for the loan scheme I announced in the summer in response to the hot and dry weather. This loan will help ease the pressures on the claimants not receiving their BPS payments early in the payment window.

“I would urge all farmers who are contacted by RPW this week to submit a BPS Loan Application before the deadline on Friday 30 November. All eligible loan applications received by us will be processed and paid by 10th December.”