

Minister for Agriculture and Connectivity
Ministear an Àiteachais agus Ceangal
Jim Fairlie MSP
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Finlay Carson MSP
Convener
Rural Affairs and Islands Committee
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
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23 March 2026

Dear Convener,

The “Rural Support Plan: 2026-2031” was laid in Parliament today alongside the “Rural Support Plan 2026-2031: Support within the Four Tier Framework” and the “Consultation Statement to accompany Rural Support Plan 2026-2031”.

These will be published on 24 March 2026.

The Rural Support Plan sets out Scottish Ministers’ strategic priorities for the plan period, the support available and collates the breadth of the agricultural reform work into a single strategic and coherent package to meet the requirements of the Agriculture and Rural Communities (Scotland) Act 2024 (“the ARC Act”).

It sets out our commitment to provide a period of certainty, investment and preparation. It reinforces our approach of partnership working with rural stakeholders to ensure changes in support work for our farmers, crofters and land managers. It makes plain that it is active farmers and crofters who will receive continued investment and support to deliver Scotland’s Vision for Agriculture.

Laying and publishing the Rural Support Plan enables Scottish Ministers to exercise functions under the ARC Act. This includes enabling the Code of Practice on Sustainable and Regenerative Agriculture (“the Code”) to be laid and published.

The Code is a best practice guide available to all farmers and crofters to help inform business decisions. The purpose of the Code is to provide clear guidance on how farming or crofting businesses can undertake different actions or measures which will help contribute to sustainable and regenerative farming. The key purpose of the Code is to ensure a balance between producing high quality food and doing so in an economically and environmentally positive way.

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The Code will be laid on 24 March and published on 25 March.

Both the Rural Support Plan and the Code are based on significant and detailed co-development and engagement on agricultural reform with stakeholders and user research with farmers and crofters. This will continue as agricultural reform progresses.

Yours sincerely,



JIM FAIRLIE

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