RURAL AFFAIRS, CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Jim Paice, Chairman, and Mike Gallacher, Chief Executive
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Dear Mr Paice and Mr Gallacher

Invitation to appear before the Scottish Parliament’s Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment Committee

As you may be aware, the Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment Committee in the Scottish Parliament recently held an urgent inquiry into the dairy industry and milk pricing in the face of the problems faced by dairy farmers in Scotland. Details of the inquiry, including the evidence submitted to it, the final report made by the Committee, and the Scottish Government’s response, can be found on our webpage.¹ On 31 March 2015 the Committee also debated the issue in the Chamber of the Parliament, which included debate on the Scottish Government’s recently published Dairy Action Plan², which adopted many of the recommendations made by the Committee in its report.

The Dairy Action Plan endorsed the action recommended by the Committee for tackling the problems faced by First Milk which placed so many Scottish dairy farmers in hardship recently. However, the Committee is aware that First Milk has recently announced its intention to introduce end product pricing which could see the price being paid to many Scottish dairy farmers, particularly those in our island communities, falling by as much as 1.2p per litre.

The Committee is extremely concerned by these developments and the potential impact these may have on those farming in many of our most fragile communities, and that these may threaten the sustainability and recovery of the dairy industry in Scotland.

We therefore invite you both to appear before the Committee at its meeting on Wednesday 13 May 2015, at the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh.

I would be grateful if you contact the Clerks to the Committee, on the contact details outlined above, to make the necessary arrangements.

Yours sincerely

Rob Gibson MSP
Convener