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Deputy Minister for Farming and Food



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref MB/RE/3703/15

Assembly Members

29 September 2015

Dear Members,

BASIC PAYMENT SCHEME – TIMING OF PAYMENTS

The EU Council of Farm Ministers approved European Commission proposals to relax some controls before advance payments can be made from 16 October, but they do not go far enough to allow the Welsh Government to utilise this provision. The rules concerning on the spot controls have been relaxed, but all administrative checks and controls must be completed before any advance payments are released. These administrative controls will not be completed in time to allow us to make advance payments.

Our focus is to make a significant partial payment to as many farmers as possible early in the payment window, which opens 1 December 2015 and closes 30 June 2016. The part payments will commence during December and we expect the part payments will be around 70 or 80% of the anticipated entitlement value. The balance payment will be paid between April and June 2016. We have consistently told farmers about this approach and I have recently met bank representatives to explain when farmers can expect to receive their payments.

The new Basic Payment Scheme is moving direct payments from historic to area based payments and this requires significantly more controls to be completed, which lengthens the time taken to complete the processing of each application. On top of that payment entitlements cannot be calculated until the spring, when we will know exactly how much eligible land there is. This is why we cannot make full payments to farmers from the start.

I understand no other part of the United Kingdom is making advance payments in October. Each country is focused on paying as many farmers as possible from December 2015.

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