



NEWS RELEASE

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Crofting Federation welcomes government loan

Scottish Crofting Federation (SCF) has welcomed the advance loan for less favoured areas provided by Scottish Government and urges crofters to take advantage of it.

“Crofters rely on the Less Favoured Areas Support Scheme,” said Chair of the SCF, Russell Smith, “in fact the scheme was designed specifically to help marginalised areas of Europe that typically are inhabited by crofters or hill farmers. It is therefore helpful that the Scottish Government have again provided a loan scheme to ensure that payments are made quickly and the benefits of money circulating in the local economy are felt as soon as possible.”

Delays have been experienced in getting the Less Favoured Areas payments out in previous years, which has caused hardship to some crofters. Owing to specific EU rules around governments making advance payments on EU schemes, Scottish Government are making the offer of loans from domestic funding, which is not controlled by EU rules, in order to ensure that money is available.

Mr Smith again, “The delays experienced in receiving this life-line payment left many crofters in dire straits so the fact that Scottish Government is using a creative mechanism to ensure that cash-flow is more predictable for these small business is to be applauded. I therefore urge crofters to take advantage of this opportunity. We could think of it not as a loan, but as an advance payment on what we are due.”

END

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Notes to editors

- A picture can be found at: <http://www.crofting.org>