



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Crofting Federation calls the Brexit deal an inadequate stitch-up**

The Scottish Crofting Federation (SCF) has given its support to the Scottish Government and Scottish Parliament's stance which declines to consent to the UK government's Brexit trade deal.

Chair of the SCF, Yvonne White, said, "It is clear that there is a 'hard Brexit' deal which is significantly inadequate and will have a detrimental impact on Scottish food-growing, a very EU-dependant sector. For example negative impacts on live animal sales are predicted, with an increase in paperwork for buyers and hauliers. The producer will bear the brunt of the increased cost of sale, which could make hill lamb totally uneconomic. We are worried about supplies of inputs such as pharmaceuticals, and vegetable seed suppliers are already warning of shortages, which will affect croft vegetable production.

"We are very relieved that UK did not crash out of the EU with no deal at all, as nearly happened," Ms White continued, "but it is very important to compare this deal to what we had in place when we were a member of the EU, not compare it to the no-deal chaos predicted. Is this deal better for us? Whilst recognising the UK would leave the EU, the Scottish government proposed staying in the single market and customs union. This has been ignored. Northern Ireland has special status - "the best of both worlds" as Minister for the Cabinet Office Michael Gove put it. So why not Scotland?

"What we have, four and a half years after the referendum, is a last-minute stitch-up that scraped through at the eleventh hour. Is this the right footing for the future relationship with our most important partner? The deal undoubtedly has a myriad of hidden concessions that will take time to come out of the woodwork. It is clear that it has missed crucial areas of trade and will cause a massive amount of new 'red tape' – ironic that lessening bureaucracy was one of the promises given by the Leave campaign.

"As the deal was delivered so late on, the impact on agriculture has not been fully assessed, but we have concerns about maintaining standards. The UK government has the right to deviate from EU standards (animal welfare, environmental, use of hormones and chemicals, food hygiene etc) even if UK nations don't, but if we do the EU has the right to impose tariffs. And under the Internal Market bill Scotland could not ban or discriminate sales of the inferior product."

Ms White concluded, "MSPs have backed the Scottish Government's Legislative Consent Memorandum, which means that the UK Government's Brexit trade deal does not have the consent of the Scottish Parliament. SCF supports this. Scottish Government says it will now do everything it can to mitigate the damage that will be caused by the deal. We wait to see what this means with regards to support to rural development, agriculture and to trade of agricultural produce."

END

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