



Submission

Date : 12 March 2008
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CONSULTATION OF DESIGNATION OF NEW AREAS FOR CROFTING

1. NFU Scotland (NFUS) welcomes this opportunity to give our views on the proposed designation of new areas for crofting. Our submission responds to the questions posed in the consultation as well as offering feedback on other related issues raised by our members.

Summary

2. In summary, the NFU Scotland view is:
 - NFUS support the designation of new areas for Crofting.
 - The new boundary should align with the Highlands & Islands Enterprise boundary..
 - We are not aware of any other areas with a stronger claim.
 - The NFUS membership was split on whether the Crofting Community Right to Buy should not be extended to the new areas.

Response to Specific Questions

Do you agree that new areas should be designated for crofting?

3. Crofting is an important factor in retaining and growing the population in remote areas. Therefore we would support the extension of crofting tenure to: Arran, Bute, Greater and Little Cumbrae, The local government area of Highland not currently within the Crofting Counties and the local government area of Moray, with the aim of encouraging vibrant crofting communities in these areas.

Do you agree that the new areas should align with Highland and Islands Enterprise.

4. Aligning the new crofting counties boundary with the boundary of Highlands & Islands Enterprise would be a sensible option for administration purposes..

Is there another area which has a stronger claim? If so, why?

5. NFU Scotland are not aware of any area other than those listed above which has a stronger claim to be designated part of the crofting counties.

Do you agree that the Crofting Community Right to Buy should not be extended to the new area?

6. The NFUS membership was split on their views regarding this subject. Arran Branch were in favour of the Crofting Community Right to Buy being extended to the new Crofting areas and Shetland and Banffshire Branches were not in favour of such an extension. It was the feeling of Banffshire Branch that if the Right to Buy were extended then landlord would not make crofts available for rent and that a pre-emptive right for sitting tenants only would be appropriate.

Do you have any other comments?

7. If the Crofting Counties are to be extended and access to the Crofting Counties Agricultural Grant Scheme is to be opened up to the newly designated areas, it is vital that the budget of CCAGS is increased to accommodate the new areas.
8. We would recommend that the Community trusts or equivalent could be used for local communities to purchase land suitable for conversion to crofting.
9. This extension would create yet another class of crofter be it a tenant, sub-tenant, owner occupier or new tenant, this will be very cumbersome with different legislation needed to administer such a new category.