

# European Scrutiny Committee

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From: Sir William Cash MP

26 March 2020

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## **Future of the Common Agricultural Policy<sup>1</sup>**

We considered your Department's earlier letters of 17 July 2019 and 3 October 2019 on the proposals concerning the future of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) at our meeting of xx March 2020. Since then, the UK has withdrawn from the EU based on a Withdrawal Agreement, including a Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland.

We note that the future CAP remains directly relevant to Northern Ireland insofar as the Protocol requires Northern Ireland to apply EU rules on the marketing of agricultural products and links the level of agricultural subsidies that may be paid in Northern Ireland to those available under the CAP. The future CAP is also of indirect relevance to the trading relationship between the EU and the whole of the UK and it pertains to UK strategic interests, such as climate change.

We would welcome your analysis, by the end of April 2020, on:

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<sup>1</sup> Proposals for Regulations on (a) CAP Strategic Plans (b) CAP financing, monitoring and management (c) common organisation of the market in agricultural products; (a) Council document [9645/18](#) + ADD 1, COM(18) 392 (b) Council document [9634/18](#) + ADD 1, COM(18) 393 (c) Council document [9556/18](#), COM(18) 394; Legal base: (a) Articles 42 and 43(2) TFEU, ordinary legislative procedure; QMV (b) Article 43 (2) TFEU, ordinary legislative procedure; QMV (c) Articles 43(2), 114, 118 and 349 TFEU, ordinary legislative procedure; QMV; Department: Environment, Food and Rural Affairs; Devolved Administrations: Consulted; ESC number: (a) 39830 (b) 39831 (c) 39832.

- the implications for Northern Ireland of the proposals in the light of commitments under the Withdrawal Agreement's Ireland/Northern Ireland Protocol;
- how the Government is continuing to represent the interests of Northern Ireland as discussions progress on the future design of the CAP;
- the relevance of the future CAP to the future trading relationship between the EU and the UK, bearing in mind that Norway has been denied duty-free access to the EU market because of the higher support it gives to farmers; and
- the impact of the CAP on the UK's strategic interests such as climate change.

In terms of the future trading relationship, we would be interested to know if the UK will seek some sort of common understanding on the levels of agricultural support available to EU and UK farmers respectively, particularly in the event that the parties agree duty-free access to their markets.

We are copying this letter to the Earl of Kinnoull, Chair of the EU Select Committee in the House of Lords and Christopher Johnson, Clerk of the Lords EU Select Committee; your Departmental EU Scrutiny team; and Les Saunders and Donald Harris in the Cabinet Office.

**CHAIR**