

The Andersons Centre – Latest News Update

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DEFRA Attitude to CAP Reform

In an interview with the Farmers Guardian, the DEFRA Farming Minister, Jim Fitzpatrick, has indicated that the UK will be adopting a more pragmatic stance in the next round of CAP reform. The UK government's stance was set out in the 2005 Treasury paper 'A vision for the CAP'. This called for the phasing-out of direct payments over a relatively short time period, with funding diverted to Rural Development programmes see –

http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/d/A_Vision_for_the_CAP.pdf

Mr Fitzpatrick is quoted as saying “We know where we want to get with CAP reform and we have not changed our view on that.” “But we want to be realistic and pragmatic. We know it is not going to happen overnight and certainly not before 2020, so 2013 will be another milestone, not a transformational change.” The full article can be seen at www.farmersguardian.com/news/business/business-news/we-will-listen-to-europe-on-cap-fitzpatrick/30452.article

There had always been a feeling that DEFRA's dogmatic attitude to farm policy had weakened its voice within EU negotiations – 'let's ignore the British with their nutty ideas' etc With a more practical engagement in the next round of reform, a more favourable outcome from the UK's point of view may result. Of course, with an election in the offing, it may well not be the current administration that ends up doing the negotiation. A change of government looks unlikely to signal a big reversal in policy though. Speaking at the Oxford Farming Conference in January, the Shadow DEFRA Minister, Nick Herbert, said that, while there would be a transfer of funds from the SPS to Rural Development, Single Payments would 'stay in place post 2013'.

For further information on CAP Reform, please contact us

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