

# National Farmers Union (NFU) Scotland submission of 24 February 2023

## PE1978/D: Allow raw milk to be sold in Scotland

Following your request, received on 27 January, I write to provide the views of NFU Scotland on Petition PE1978: Allow raw milk to be sold in Scotland.

NFU Scotland believes that the risks of selling raw milk significantly outweigh the benefits, therefore raw milk should not be sold in Scotland. If a change is to be further considered by this committee, NFU Scotland would welcome the opportunity to be involved in the discussions going forward.

Our position is based on the fact that there is evidence that there is a risk of raw drinking milk to public health. To mitigate the risk of raw milk's link to diseases such as Salmonella, Campylobacter and E.Coli O157 infection, mandatory pasteurisation of drinking cow's milk was introduced in Scotland in 1983, and was extended to drinking milk from all farmed animals in 2006.

The Scottish policy of mandatory pasteurisation is aligned with the Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food advice, who recommend pasteurisation as the key critical control point in the prevention of milk borne disease. The recommendations of the E.coli task Force Report from 2001 highlighted that the raw milk ban in Scotland is a positive step in protecting consumers from the risks of E.coli O157.

Our view is aligned with Dairy UK's position, who are also against the sale of raw milk. They state that British dairy farmers are proud of their high standards of food safety, and in order to maintain this, pasteurisation of drinking milk is essential.

Food Standards Scotland also set out on their website that there are no plans to lift the ban on direct sales given the historical evidence and weight of expert scientific opinion in favour of mandatory pasteurisation.

We would be happy to provide further information should this be of assistance.