



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Rural Affairs and Islands Committee

Jim Fairlie
Minister for Agriculture and Connectivity

13 November 2025

Dear Minister,

Future Farming Investment Scheme

The Rural Affairs and Islands Committee agreed to write to you asking for further information following complaints that the latest round of the Future Farming Investment Scheme (FFIS) has been inconsistent, with only 1672 successful applicants out of 7584 applications.

Farmers and organisations who have contacted members have claimed that there have been inconsistencies in how applications were assessed. They highlight that applicants with seemingly similar or stronger cases have received different outcomes.

- **What were the criteria and scoring system that were used to evaluate applications?**
- **What oversight process was in place to ensure fairness and prevent bias?**

It appears some groups did not receive as much funding as others. Less than 3% of funds from the scheme have been allocated to islands. The [Scottish Crofting Federation has pointed out](#) there was a very low success rate for crofters which demonstrates a mismatch between policy intent and outcomes. [The scheme guidelines](#) state that priority will be given to island-based agricultural businesses. We have similar concerns that small agricultural businesses may also have been disadvantaged. It has been reported that only 19% of those small agricultural businesses that applied were offered a grant and only 22% of island-based businesses. Only 29% of tenant farmers' applications were successful.

- **Why did crofters, tenant farmers, island-based and small agricultural businesses receive such a low amount of funding?**
- **Were larger well-established farms given preferential treatment?**
- **Were the additional weightings or priority measures applied fairly to island-based businesses?**

Contact: Rural Affairs and Islands Committee, The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP. Email: rural.committee@parliament.scot. We welcome calls through Relay UK and in BSL through Contact Scotland BSL.

- **How will the review address regional disparities in future funding rounds?**

It [has been reported](#) that some of these applicants paid for professional help with the applications but still failed. This suggests a potential for inconsistent interpretation or application of guidance.

- **What feedback mechanisms are available for unsuccessful applicants?**
- **Is there an appeal or review process for unsuccessful applicants?**

We note media reports that the fund is under review. **The Committee would welcome further information about the terms and timescale for this review and the Scottish Government's plans for future rounds of funding.**

It would be helpful if you could respond by 13 December.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Finlay Carson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Finlay Carson MSP
Convener
Rural Affairs and Islands Committee