

SNP 'putting nationalism before farming' by snubbing UK-wide approach

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The SNP has been accused of “putting nationalism before farming” with its refusal to join all other parts of the UK in a post-Brexit agricultural plan.

The UK Government has revealed that while Wales and Northern Ireland are on board with the Agricultural Bill, the SNP government has “chosen not to take part”.

The bill’s extension allows devolved administrations to develop their own support systems to replace the EU’s Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

Despite the snub from SNP ministers, the UK Government said the offer “remains on the table”.

The Scottish Conservatives have criticised the move, saying the SNP was simply trying to be different to avoid co-operation with political colleagues in England.

Shadow rural economy secretary Donald Cameron said farmers here could be left behind as a result, particularly as the SNP had failed to come up with any of its own plans.

Scottish Conservative shadow rural economy secretary Donald Cameron said:

“The SNP are simply creating further uncertainty and confusion for Scotland’s farmers and crofters.

“This decision not to follow other devolved administrations is simply a case of putting nationalism before the interests of agriculture.

“The short-sighted refusal of the SNP to include Scotland in the UK Agriculture Bill will mean that Scotland’s farmers are left behind in comparison to those in Wales, Northern Ireland and England.

“The SNP’s blinkered ideological stance flies in the face of organisations like the NFUS who are concerned that as a result Scotland may be unable to participate in designing a new agricultural policy after Brexit alongside the rest of the nations of the UK.

“Given the SNP government has yet to set out any substantive policy for

future farming support, Scotland's farmers are being kept in the dark at the very time when they need clarity.

"It's high time the SNP took a pragmatic and constructive approach on post-Brexit agriculture which puts the interests of Scotland's farmers and crofters first."