Scottish Crofting Foundation
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NEWS RELEASE

Use: Immediate **Date: 24/1/08**

WELCOME FOR IMMINENT PAYMENT OF DELAYED LFASS

Scottish Crofting Foundation Chairman Norman Leask, described as 'very good news', the commitment to pay delayed support payments to Less Favoured Areas within two weeks. This follows favourable discussions in Europe yesterday of the Scottish Rural Development Programme, which is likely to see approval for the whole programme within a few weeks.

Norman said, "LFASS is a support payment of absolutely critical importance to those crofting and farming in upland, island and remote mainland areas. It is a significant proportion of household income for many people and following a difficult year, especially for hill sheep producers, it has been long-awaited. It is of continuing fundamental importance in ensuring agricultural activity in the hills and on the islands. With other stakeholder organisations, we are currently entering into discussion with the government to ensure that the link with agricultural activity through this scheme can be maintained. We are of course continuing to press for the support to be better targeted at the most disadvantaged areas which it is intended to help and for it to reflect the real costs associated with agriculture in our areas."

The wider Rural Development Plan contains many useful measures – however, apart from the options scheme, with which we are familiar, the majority of support will be competitive. The significance of LFASS, in supporting ongoing low-intensity land management cannot be understated and we must ensure that this scheme achieves it aims."

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Notes to editors

Picture can be found at: http://www.croftingfoundation.co.uk/index.php/contact_headoffice