

Success

SUPERMARKET POLICEMAN

Aim: NFUS began campaigning for the establishment of an independent policeman, to ensure fair trade between supermarkets and their suppliers, in 2004. The Union has been arguing vociferously that the Office of Fair Trading's Supermarket Code of Practice, introduced in 2003 and designed to protect suppliers from exploitation, has been completely ineffective because suppliers are too afraid to complain of mistreatment. Hence NFUS, together with a coalition of organisations, is proposing an independent adjudicator to proactively police a strengthened Code.

Result: The campaign is close to paying off. NFU Scotland welcomed the publication in mid February of the Competition Commission's proposed action, as the two-year long inquiry into the big supermarkets nears its end. Amongst the suggested remedies is the introduction of a supermarket adjudicator.

Welcome to the first Success document of 2008. Following what was, for many, an horrific year in 2007, I am now extremely optimistic about the future of our industry.

Agriculture is being thrust back to the forefront of politics by global factors which are unstoppable.

The world is becoming more populous and more demanding in what it consumes. At the same time, global factors are reducing the land from which we must meet this demand. Our time has come once again.



Jim McLaren - NFUS President

NFU Scotland has as important a role now as at any time I can think of during its 95-year history. This document shows you just a fraction of the reasons why.

FOOT & MOUTH EMERGENCY AID

Aim: The FMD outbreak, which originated from the government-controlled laboratory at Pirbright, Surrey, led to a financial crisis in Scotland's red meat sector and associated industries, the effects of which are still being felt. NFU Scotland aims to ensure that farmers are fully compensated for their losses.

Result: Following discussions with NFUS, the Scottish Government stepped in to provide crucial emergency aid of around £25 million which was a lifesaver for many.

However this represented just a fraction of the losses suffered by farmers, hauliers, auctioneers, processors and other rural businesses.

We continue to push the UK Treasury for compensation and delivered a petition to the door of number 10 Downing Street calling for full compensation for all those in rural Scotland affected by the outbreak.

SUBSIDY APPEALS REVIEW

Aim: In 2007, NFUS campaigned for a new appeals system for farmers who suffer financial penalties as a result of mistakes made when completing government paperwork.

NFU Scotland's main concern is that the current appeals system does not distinguish between the vast majority of mistakes which are the result of innocent error and the very small minority of cases involving deliberate misinformation.

The Union believes the current appeals system lacks common sense and has not introduced the independence it was designed to.

Result: The Union therefore warmly welcomed the Scottish Government's announcement that a review is to be undertaken into the current system.

The review is to be chaired by former NFU Scotland President, John Kinnaird.

EU COMMISSIONER MEETING

Aim: NFU Scotland always endeavours to ensure that those in the corridors of power in Brussels are kept up to date with the requirements of Scottish agriculture and that the needs of our members are continually put forward. During the current CAP Health Check, it is particularly important to outline how Europe's farm policy could be tailored to deliver maximum food production, environmental and economic benefits both to the public and to farmers.

Result: The Union met the EU Agriculture Commissioner, Mariann Fischer Boel, in late January and stressed the potential of Scottish farming to deliver huge benefits if the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) provides the flexibility and support required.

During the meeting with the Commissioner, NFUS outlined Scotland's priorities for this year's 'health-check' of the CAP and also its long-term vision for the support system beyond 2013. The Union has also invited the Commissioner to Scotland to continue discussions.



BRAZILIAN BEEF

Aim: An inspection by Brussels vets in November 2007 identified a number of serious and repeated deficiencies in Brazil's animal health and traceability systems.

NFU Scotland and others therefore demanded that strict controls be placed on imports of beef from Brazil into Europe.

Result: The European Commission announced that it would increase the restrictions on Brazilian beef imports in order to maintain a high level of protection for animal health in the EU.

Member States agreed that, from 31 January 2008, beef would only be allowed to be imported from an approved and restricted list of holdings in Brazil which are fully in line with EU import requirements and which meet strict criteria. It is estimated that imports from 97% of beef units in Brazil will be banned under these new restrictions.

BVD LUING CATTLE SOCIETY

Aim: Bovine Virus Diarrhoea (BVD) is a serious illness of cattle.

An all-industry group was put together in 2007, chaired by NFUS and comprising the main farmer representative bodies, breed societies, health scheme providers and government. The aim of the group was to develop a health declaration scheme to demonstrate that cattle being consigned to a sale have been tested for and then vaccinated against the virus.

Result: The group designed an easy to use form for those selling stock based on simple standards of certification.

In January, NFU Scotland warmly welcomed the news that the Luing Cattle Society was hosting its first BVD-free sale. This directly followed the work of the new group, co-ordinated by NFUS.

Contact NFUS for more details.

NATIONAL FOOD POLICY

Aim: For the last year, NFU Scotland has been running its own What's on Your Plate? (WOYP) campaign to highlight the benefits of buying local food and drink. We aimed to gain confirmation from Government that food issues will be placed at the very top of the national agenda.

Result: The national food policy recently launched by the Scottish Government has massive potential to boost the nation's health, environment and rural communities. The policy document itself makes specific mention of NFU Scotland and the WOYP campaign and the importance of working with industry to ensure a viable future for farming.

Improved provision of high quality, local food and drink could be amongst the most valuable of government initiatives and NFU Scotland continues to be involved in the evolution of food policy within Scotland.



LIVESTOCK MEETINGS

Aim: To keep members well informed on two of the current livestock 'hot topics'; Bluetongue and Electronic Sheep ID, and outline the Union's position and ongoing work in each regard.

Result: NFU Scotland held a series of very successful meetings around the country inviting members to come along and learn more about Bluetongue and EID.



WHAT'S ON YOUR PLATE?

Aim: NFU Scotland designed its What's on Your Plate? campaign in June 2007. The ultimate aim of the campaign was to persuade consumers to buy Scottish food and drink.

The launch of the campaign was a great success, as were a number of summer events. Therefore, a special Christmas themed branch of the campaign was launched.

Result: The festive branch of the campaign followed a 12 Days of Christmas theme and farmers from around the country got out and about prior to Christmas to promote 12 of the high quality food and drink items that they help produce for Christmas meals, from brussels sprouts to a nip of whisky for Santa!

The 12 events collected many thousands of pledges of support for Scottish food and farming and helped us to achieve over 120 pieces of media coverage for the campaign.

In 2008, the campaign will continue to raise awareness amongst consumers and persuade them to 'Back Scotland, Buy Scottish'.



Keep in touch with events as they happen. For more information on any topic covered in this leaflet, call 0131 472 4000.

You can also register your e-mail address with webmaster@nfus.org.uk to receive our bi-weekly bulletins and parliamentary updates.