

23 November 2015

## BANK STANDS READY TO HELP FARMERS WITH WINTER CASHFLOW ISSUES

Bank of Scotland is ready to help farmers who may face delays in receiving their Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) payments which are due to be paid at the beginning of next month.

The BPS replaces the Single Farm Payment, which though has a payment window of up to June, has historically been made at the start of December.

With December just a few weeks away there is concern across the Scottish farming community about the impact of delayed payments.

To help with this, Bank of Scotland launched a new multi-million pound fund earlier this year to help Scottish farmers manage the financial impact of any delay and has called on customers who need to make use of the provision to get in contact as quickly as possible.

The Scottish Government this week published its timetable and confirmed that farmers are to receive their payments in two parts. The majority should receive their initial payment, which will be worth a minimum of 70 per cent of the total payment by the end of January. All first instalments are expected to be paid by the end of March with the balance of payments due to be settled in April.

Any of the Bank's farming customers, who are recipients of the Basic Payment, will be entitled to request support from the fund. Farmers will be offered the support in anticipation of their Basic Payment – the value of which varies widely based on a range of factors including the size and type of farm in question.

Although the support will be offered on a commercial basis, with interest charged on any sums borrowed, all facilities set up for farmers to access the fund will be free of any arrangement fees.

Sandy Hay, head of agriculture, Bank of Scotland said:

“Winter is often a challenging time for farmers as cold weather and cashflow issues bite, and we know that many farm businesses rely on a December payment and have it built into their financial plans. We created a contingency fund to ensure that no farmers are financially disadvantaged by this delay and we would encourage any farmers who think they may require support to come and speak to us now.

“The Bank has a proven track record of supporting farmers through challenging periods and we will ensure they continue to get the support they need through this period of uncertainty.”

**-Ends-**

**For further information:**

Andrew McIntyre, Bank of Scotland Press Office

0131 655 5397

[andrew.mcintyre@lloydsbanking.com](mailto:andrew.mcintyre@lloydsbanking.com)