# Labour peers condemn 76% cuts to farmers’ delinked payments in heated Lords debate



In a heated session in the House of Lords, Labour peers have voiced vehement opposition to the government's draft bill seeking to impose draconian cuts to farmers' delinked payments under the Agriculture (Delinked Payments) (Reductions) bill. This legislation threatens to slash these payments by an alarming 76% effective in 2025, limiting payouts to a meager total of £7,200. These payments are designed to replace the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS), which has historically played a vital role in maintaining food production and ensuring stable incomes for farmers, particularly in the tumultuous aftermath of Brexit.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has revealed that around 42% of farms operate at a loss without the BPS subsidy, underscoring the severe risk these cuts pose to the livelihoods of countless farmers. In a misguided attempt to redirect funds toward various environmental stewardship initiatives, including the Environmental Land Management schemes, the government is preparing to undermine the very backbone of the agricultural sector, all in the name of green rhetoric.

During the debate, Lord Grantchester, a Labour peer, harshly criticized the government’s reckless approach, accusing the Treasury of sabotaging essential programs that support farmers. He warned, “We cannot and must not lose sight of the role of all farms in hitting environmental and sustainability targets,” pointing out that prioritizing abstract sustainability goals over farmers’ livelihoods is not only irresponsible but could leave the agricultural industry in ruins.

Further exacerbating the situation, Lord Rooker, another Labour peer, publicly denounced the proposed amendments from the Liberal Democrats and Conservative peers, highlighting the deep discontent brewing within Labour's ranks over these senseless cuts. “It is only my respect for this House and our procedures that prevents me walking out, because I have not the slightest intention of voting to support these regulations. I will abstain on both amendments. I shall go,” he affirmed, underscoring the fractures within the party itself regarding the government's heavy-handed tactics.

As the debate rages on, the agricultural community is watching these developments with growing alarm. The potential ramifications for farm operations and food production in the UK could be severe, raising urgent questions about the government's ability to balance environmental aspirations with the practical needs of the agricultural sector. With the current administration seemingly indifferent to the struggles of farmers, the call for a more pragmatic and supportive approach to agriculture is louder than ever.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.cla.org.uk/news/farm-business-income-significantly-declines-government-statistics-show/> - This article discusses the significant decline in farm business income, highlighting that core farming activities are loss-making for various farm types, and emphasizes the impact of Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) reductions on farm profitability.
2. <https://www.farmersguardian.com/news/4392313/livestock-farmers-favoured-profits-cut-half-delinked-payments> - This piece reports on the potential halving of profits for livestock farmers in Less Favoured Areas due to new delinked payment schemes, underscoring the financial challenges posed by the government's proposed cuts.
3. <https://www.fwi.co.uk/business/business-management/agricultural-transition/transition-survey-reveals-depth-of-concern-over-policy-and-costs> - The survey reveals that a significant portion of farmers rely heavily on BPS payments, with many expressing deep concern over the government's agricultural policies and the potential impact on their livelihoods.
4. <https://www.nfuonline.com/updates-and-information/underspend-on-agricultural-budget/> - The National Farmers' Union criticizes the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) for a substantial underspend in the agriculture budget, highlighting the government's failure to implement effective support schemes for farmers.
5. <https://www.farminguk.com/news/environmental-schemes-won-t-replace-bps-income-warn-experts_60630.html> - Experts warn that the new environmental schemes will not compensate for the loss of BPS income, indicating that farmers should not rely on these schemes to fill the income gap created by subsidy reductions.
6. <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Lords/2023-03-28/debates/9087BBC2-1365-405C-A02A-16E07F21681A/details> - This Hansard record details a debate in the House of Lords where concerns were raised about the government's proposed reductions in direct payments to farmers, highlighting the potential negative impact on farm businesses and the agricultural sector.
7. <https://news.google.com/rss/articles/CBMimwFBVV95cUxQdEMxVHdDT2NCWGNnMGF3c1h4YWwtWWtEY3JkVGxONHJqVm1jT0JZZExlc0txY29sNktkMXBMNi1hVk5Fb2FPaE1nMHQ4Z1hYSWNjandvU3ZpSUZld1pLVnFPelZ3d2UyMVRBUFdwWVZDbVVGcEY4M1I5Z3d4UTBRZXl1RW1qckVVQ3pDZTNuenpRbXpyOWc1VDdlVQ?oc=5&hl=en-US&gl=US&ceid=US:en> - Please view link - unable to able to access data