

Brussels,
D/1033

10. 08. 2006

Dear Dr Lucas,

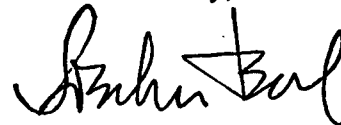
Thank you for your letter of 23 May 2006 requesting that an extension of the deadline for payments for the single farm payment scheme is refused to the British Government.

You will wish to be informed that the Commission is well aware of the problematic situation that the farmers and the administration in England are facing for the time being. In such a situation, all parties involved need to do their very best to achieve the best possible result.

As I am sure you are aware, however, it is of importance for the Commission that payment deadlines are respected. The beneficiaries have legitimate expectations to receive payments on time and the Commission must ensure respect of annual budgets. In this respect, according to Council Regulation (EC) No 1782/2003, beneficiaries must be paid by 30 June at the latest and the Commission has refused requests for a deadline extension.

In case the beneficiaries have not been paid by the said deadline, they have the possibility to use the legal remedies in force at national level and the Member State will be subject to the reductions of advances according to EC rules.

Yours sincerely,



Mariann Fischer Boel

Ms Caroline Lucas, MEP
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