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UK opts out of school fruit scheme

Press Release from Alyn Smith MEP

Alyn Smith MEP, Scottish full member of the European Parliament's Agriculture and Rural Development Committee, has expressed his disappointment with the decision of the UK Government to opt out of the EU's School Fruit Scheme for another year.

The scheme, worth 90m EUR a year and in its fourth year of application, supports programmes providing free fruits and vegetables to school children and promoting healthy eating habits at a young age. More than 8 million school children benefitted from the scheme in 2010/11. The UK is one of just three Member States to not participate.

Alyn said:

"It's disappointing, but I can't say that I'm surprised. On issue after issue, from supporting workers laid off by globalisation, to stabilising the Euro, to helping school children adopt healthy diets, the UK Government just doesn't get it - they have shown a shocking unwillingness to engage in partnership with its neighbours to find mutually beneficial solutions, an attitude which has grown worse under David Cameron.

"We have known for some time, and this point was reinforced last week by the report of Olivier de Schutter (UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food), that promoting healthy eating habits is a vital component not just of health policy but of food security as well, and the earlier we start, the better. I'm fed up of hearing about the UK Government's "splendid isolation", and it just underlines the critical importance of gaining specific Scottish representation in European circles, through independence."

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Opinion

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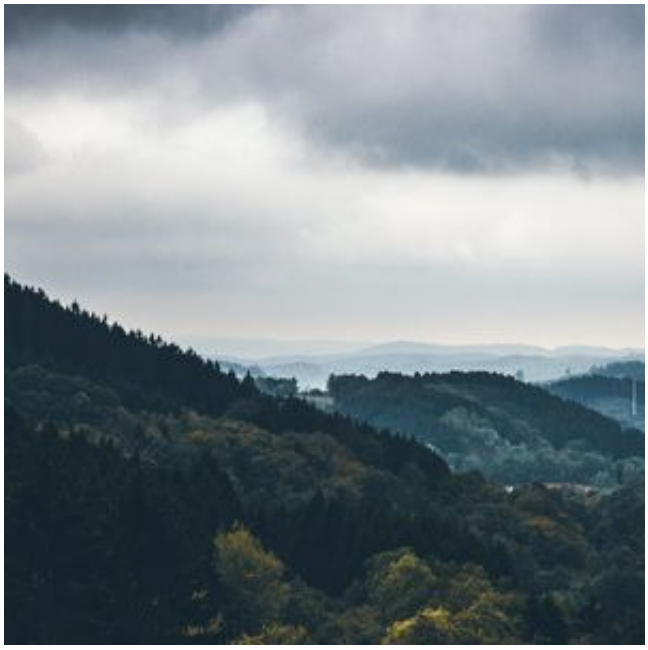


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