

# Lochaber MP calls on Chancellor to meet farmers

LOCHABER TIMES News Feb 11, 2025 by Jamie Wills

Angus MacDonald, MP for Inverness, Skye and West Ross-shire, has called on Chancellor Rachel Reeves to meet farmers after a mass protest at Westminster this week.



Angus MacDonald MP took this photograph of yesterday's rally from his office window.

Hundreds of farmers took tractors to central London on Monday in protest against proposed changes to inheritance tax that would make farms with a value over £1 million subject to 20 per cent inheritance tax, starting in April 2026.

Critics of the change say that while farms have land value, the majority of farmers are working with limited capital and would therefore need to sell up if hit by the tax.

They also say that the tax is another example of the rural economy being taken for granted.

Mr MacDonald, who became an MP in 2024, said he had heard from many constituents who were concerned about the issue, and that the government needed to make more efforts to meet farming representatives.

"I think it is important that the Chancellor meets the National Farmers Union, which she has failed to do so far, and that the government takes heed of the long-term damage this is likely to cause on family-owned farms in Britain," Mr MacDonald said.

"Farming as an industry has not had a great time due to high fertilizer prices, high fuel costs, and competing against countries who don't have the same environmental requirements that British farmers have got, so it's not a great time to hit the industry. There are very few farmers who make even one per cent return on capital a year, so it's a vocational job where people don't mind getting up very early and working seven days a week."

He added that the West Highlands has an older demographic of farmers which could be difficult to replace, which could weaken food security and increase depopulation.

Claims on how many farms will be affected by the inheritance tax change vary significantly, from the government saying it is under 500 estates, to the Country Land and Business Association saying 70,000 farms.

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