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## EXPLANATORY NOTE

*(This note is not part of the Scheme)*

This Scheme replaces the Crofting Counties Agricultural Grants (Scotland) Scheme 1988, the Crofting Counties Agricultural Grants (Scotland) Amendment Scheme 1992 and the Crofting Counties Agricultural Grants (Scotland) Amendment Scheme 1994. It provides that the Scottish Ministers may make grants to crofters and to certain other occupiers of land in the crofting counties—

- (a) in respect of specified operations carried out by them for the purpose of aiding and developing agricultural production on crofts or holdings (paragraphs 3–7 and the Schedule); and
- (b) in respect of contributions made by them under such agreements as are referred to in section 47 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 towards the expenses of providing cattle grids for the said purpose (paragraphs 8–10).

This Scheme differs from the 1998 Scheme in that it sets grant rates at 50% in Less Favoured Areas and 40% in other areas of the Crofting Counties. It also provides that the maximum amount of grant is £25,000 for an individual and £125,000 for groups of individuals, in any two year period.

All applications have to be made and approved before work on the project commences and the Scottish Ministers have been given the power to specify in approvals of Schemes the relevant dates by which work may start and grant payments may be claimed.

The Scottish Ministers are given the additional power to set budgets nationally or for specific activities and also the power to refuse applications if the national or specific activity budget limit has been reached.