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FARMING UNION WELCOMES BIGGER HORTICULTURE BUDGET BUT CALLS FOR MORE SUPPORT FOR SMALLER-SCALE GROWERS

- The '[Blueprint to grow the UK's fruit and veg sector](#)' announced by the PM at yesterday's Food Summit included a commitment to **doubling the budget for horticulture to £80 million** - up from the £40 million budget of the EU legacy Fruit and Vegetable Aid (FVA) Scheme.
- The Landworkers' Alliance (LWA) - a farming union representing thousands of small-scale farmers and growers across the UK - is calling for the new horticulture budget and FVA replacement scheme to **also be accessible to smaller-scale growers**.
- As evidenced in a recent LWA [report](#), small-scale horticulture enterprises and market gardens which operate through farmer-focussed routes to market provide a wealth of public goods in terms of biodiversity, climate, rural regeneration and creating employment.

Rebecca Laughton, Horticulture Campaign Coordinator at the Landworkers' Alliance responded to the announcement:

"The Landworkers' Alliance is encouraged by the announcement yesterday of the new 'Horticulture Resilience and Growth' offer, with double the budget of the previous Fruit and Vegetable Aid Scheme. It is promising to see that the eligibility for the future scheme will be extended beyond Producer Organisations to individual producers, and we look forward to discussing with Defra how it can also include support for smaller-scale agroecological growers selling through farmer focussed routes to market.

While we welcome this additional spending, we still believe that a horticulture strategy is necessary to create a road map for the development of the horticulture sector that will give growers the confidence to invest in the future.

We can't, however, support the investment of £15m into a Genetic Improvement Network. Instead, we urge the Government to look beyond the attraction of technological fixes, such as large glasshouses, automation and genetic improvements, and to invest in new entrant training, basic infrastructure and equipment, and fair distribution systems which would make our UK horticulture sector truly resilient. The LWA also welcomes the announcement that up to £3 million will be spent on small and mobile abattoirs to support British farmers."

ENDS

Notes to editors:

- The Landworkers' Alliance is a union representing over 2,500 small-scale and agroecological farmers and growers across the UK. It is a member organisation of the global movement for peasant rights - La Via Campesina - which represents over 200 million peasants and farmers across the globe.
- The LWA's vision, as set out in "[Horticulture Across Four Nations](#)", shows how shifting 20% of the £2.7 billion we spend on imported vegetables to local, organic produce would bring multiple environmental and social benefits, as well as keeping revenue in the UK economy.