



## **National Sheep Association**

NSA policy position on funding structures for land-based renewable energy production

- NSA sees farm based renewable energy sources as an important part of the global work to combat climate change – but believes funding support and financial incentives for renewable energy should be structured in a way that does not adversely affect the UK countryside, and sheep farming specifically.
- NSA does not support dual-funding of renewable energy, specifically where crops are grown on land eligible for area-based agricultural support payments and are then funded again when they go into anaerobic digestion plants or large-scale biomass burners.
- NSA actively encourages the grazing of sheep beneath solar panels, as it allows land to produce a primary agricultural output as well as renewable energy. Despite having a dual role, solar panels are not dual funded as land with solar panels is not eligible for area-based agricultural support payments. NSA believes this makes it even more important to implement a workable system to prevent dual-funding on other renewable energy activities. For example, where inputs for anaerobic digesters have been grown on land claimed an area-based agricultural support scheme, renewable energy funding such as feed-in tariffs should be reduced or removed.
- NSA believes ill-conceived funding incentives for land-based renewable energy production, such as dual-funding of land, is of particular concern due to increasing concern over food supply and sustainable land management. Growing crops for anaerobic digestion plants and large-scale biomass burners takes land out of agricultural production, impacts sheep grazing and distorts land values. It is a problem that is exacerbated when extreme weather patterns, such as drought, puts pressure on land availability and feed stocks.

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