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His Royal Highness
The Duke of Rothesay
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Sir

Thank you for Your Royal Highness's letter of 15 June 2009 regarding the Soil Association's "Food for Life" programme.

We are very excited about the prospects of sustainable procurement in our schools; indeed the Scottish Government has just launched Scotland's National Food and Drink Policy which focuses on the actions we and others will take to create further opportunities for the public sector and food producers in Scotland to work together. I enclose a copy of the Policy for Your Royal Highness's information.

As far as the work of the Soil Association is concerned, we have already provided £148,563 assistance (some 90% support) through the Scottish Rural Development to deliver tailored support as part of the Food for Life programme. This assistance will support the costs of co-ordinating and delivering key elements of a collaborative supply chain programme, will encourage suppliers across Scotland to work together and exploit the market opportunities offered by public institutions, including schools, hospitals and prisons.

I have asked my officials to meet with Soil Association Scotland and discuss scope for further support in respect of the opportunities identified in Your Royal Highness's letter.

I have the honour to be, Sir, Your Royal Highness's most humble and obedient servant

ALEX SALMOND