



Department for International Trade

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Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

Rt Hon George Eustice MP
Secretary of State for Environment,
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30 June 2020

To: All MPs

Dear Colleague,

Formation of Trade and Agriculture Commission

Any trade deal the UK strikes must be fair and reciprocal to our farmers, and must not compromise on our high environmental protection, animal welfare and food safety standards. We have been clear on these points and will continue to fight for the interests of our farming industry in all trade agreements we negotiate.

We are pleased therefore, on behalf of the Government, to agree in principle to the establishment of a Trade and Agriculture Commission under Department for International Trade auspices. The Commission's terms of reference will be published in due course.

This is the first time in over 40 years that the UK has pursued its own independent trade policy. In forming this Commission, we will ensure the importance of close engagement with the agriculture industry to help inform, shape and guide agricultural trade policy, so that this is recognised throughout our trade negotiations.

The Commission will not be another quango or regulator, and its role will be strictly time-limited. Once the Commission has finished its work, it will produce a report in line with its terms of reference that will be presented to Parliament by the Department for International Trade. Its recommendations will be advisory only.

Support for this Commission has come from the National Farmers' Unions in Scotland and Wales, as well as from Northern Ireland's Ulster Farmers' Union.

The report, and the work of the Commission, will focus on four areas:

1. What policies the Government could adopt in free trade agreements to ensure UK farmers do not face unfair competition and that their high animal welfare and production standards are not undermined.
2. How best to reflect both consumer interests and those of developing countries.
3. How the UK engages international organisations to advance higher animal welfare and environmental protection standards across the world.

4. How trade policy identifies and opens up new export opportunities for the UK agriculture industry – in particular for small and medium sized businesses – that benefit the UK economy as a whole.

We look forward to continuing to work constructively with colleagues in this area.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Elizabeth Truss'.

THE RT HON ELIZABETH TRUSS MP
Secretary of State for International Trade
& President of the Board of Trade

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'George Eustice'.

THE RT HON GEORGE EUSTICE MP
Secretary of State for the Environment,
Food and Rural Affairs