

David Davis MP  
House of Commons  
London SW1A 0AA

14 July, 2016

Dear David Davis MP (copied to Theresa May PM),

We are writing to you in your role overseeing the new government unit, which will lay the groundwork for a British exit from the European Union.

Our group of 88 signatory organisations works across a wide spectrum of food issues, including farming, countryside, environment, fishing and marine environment, poverty, trade, animal welfare and public health, together representing the interests of millions of people. We met in the last week to discuss the implications of the EU Referendum for food and farming.

A large proportion of the UK's current food, farming and fishery policies is covered by EU competence, and re-thinking this creates many opportunities. Better food, farming and trade policies can help to cut greenhouse gas emissions from farming and food industries by 80% by 2050, and promote healthier diets to combat heart disease, cancers, diabetes and obesity and to promote oral health. Such policies can also support a vibrant and diverse economy, good jobs and working conditions, ethical and sustainable production methods, international development, improved animal welfare, more farmland and marine wildlife and restored farmland biodiversity, as well as enhancing the beauty of the countryside and protecting the environment (in particular fresh water and soils), while providing a safe and traceable food supply.

Crafting good food and farming policies is also essential to help heal the rift that has so far characterised the EU Referendum process, as well as to combat the disenfranchisement and distrust in the political process that so many of our fellow citizens have expressed.

We therefore suggest that the new unit, under your leadership, should:

**Ensure, in concert with the devolved administrations, that fair, healthy, humane and environmentally sustainable food, farming, fishing and land management are central to the post EU Referendum strategy for the UK.**

- Food, farming and fishing policies, and the sectors' compliance with strong environmental protections, designed explicitly to achieve public good, must be the bedrock principle for any post EU Referendum negotiations.
- Public spending on subsidies, research or other support must be directly linked to public goods.
- The role of migrant and seasonal labour in food production needs to be tackled head on.

**Ensure that new trade agreements build on, and do not undermine, progress achieved over several decades and under several governments.**

There are many examples, to name but a few: local and sustainable food in public sector food buying, which can help lead the way in investing in quality British production; environmental legislation that protects natural environments, wildlife and habitats; the living wage and better working conditions; millions of food jobs supported in the world's poorest countries; food labelling and marketing controls; animal welfare standards; tackling food waste; support for organic production methods, and new approaches to reducing farm antibiotic use. While more progress is needed in all of these areas, we are seriously concerned that such considerations may be over-run by a drive for new trade deals at any cost, and pressures to de-regulate. Conducting Environmental and Health Impact Assessments as part of the preparation for new trade deals should be a critical step in the process.

We therefore urge you to ensure that:

- 1) The unit's terms of reference include public health and sustainability.
- 2) Food, farming and fishing makes up one of the Options Papers being developed by your unit.
- 3) The unit includes officials with food, farming and fishing, public health and sustainability expertise, including from e.g. DEFRA, DfID, BIS, FSA, FSS and DH, and from the Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland governments and administrations.
- 4) You draw on expertise outside the civil service to support your fact-finding and development of options. We are ready to support you in this and our networks include some of the UK's best academics on food policy, experts on key issues and other well-informed stakeholders.
- 5) Respect for scientific advice on environmental and public health matters is prioritised, for example when advising on environmental legislation and fishing quotas.
- 6) Consideration is given to the wealth of policy work that our organisations and others have done in recent years, to inform your food and farming Options Paper. Examples include:
  - *Square Meal: Why we need a new recipe for farming, wildlife, food and public health* (Square Meal group) – [www.foodresearch.org.uk/square-meal/](http://www.foodresearch.org.uk/square-meal/)
  - *Plenty: Food, farming and health in a new Scotland* (Scottish Food Alliance) - [www.foodcoalition.scot/uploads/6/2/6/8/62689573/plenty\\_complete.pdf](http://www.foodcoalition.scot/uploads/6/2/6/8/62689573/plenty_complete.pdf)
  - *The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act* (Welsh Government): [www.thewaleswewant.co.uk/about/well-being-future-generations-wales-act-2015/well-being-goals](http://www.thewaleswewant.co.uk/about/well-being-future-generations-wales-act-2015/well-being-goals)
- 7) Important principles, processes and legal requirements that are already enshrined in UK policy or have been upheld in EU negotiations, often with the strong support from the UK, are built upon. For example: the need for policy to further international development objectives; legislation to protect species and habitats and to ensure fishing at sustainable levels (Maximum Sustainable Yields – MSY); drives to reduce waste in commercial fisheries; climate change targets; the precautionary principle, and the Sustainable Development Goals (Agenda 2030 for which the Cabinet Office oversees domestic implementation), especially to support the most economically vulnerable in the UK and internationally.
- 8) Important policy initiatives already underway are not further delayed, nor undermined, such as the Childhood Obesity Strategy; the 25-year Environment Plan; implementation of the national pollinator strategy; and the devolution of power and responsibilities to UK cities and local administrations.
- 9) The highest standards of transparency in policy development are upheld, as this will be key to winning support and building public trust.

We would really value an opportunity to meet with you, at your earliest convenience, to discuss these issues and to explore how we can support the new unit in its important work.

Yours sincerely (in alphabetical order by organisation),

**Contact for correspondence:** Kath Dalmeny, Coordinator of Sustain: The alliance for better food and farming, email: [kath@sustainweb.org](mailto:kath@sustainweb.org); telephone: 020 7065 0902; mobile: 07989 557982

Jenny Rosborough	Campaigns Manager	Action on Sugar
Christopher Jones MBE	Coordinator	Agricultural Christian Fellowship
Jonathan Pauling	Chief Executive	Alexandra Rose Charity
Baroness Sue Miller	Chair	All Party Parliamentary Group: Agroecology
Sharon Hodgson MP	Chair	All Party Parliamentary Group: School Food
Emma Rose	Coordinator	Alliance to Save Our Antibiotics
Patti Rundall OBE	Policy Director	Baby Milk Action
Jacqui Mackay	National Coordinator	Banana Link
Dr Elizabeth Mitchell	Chair	Belfast Food Network

Dr Sue Christie	Vice Chair	Belfast Food Network
Pat Thomas	Founder Director	Beyond GM
Peter Brown	Director	Biodynamic Association
Katharine Jenner	Chief Executive	Blood Pressure UK
Shaun Spiers	Chief Executive	Campaign for the Protection of Rural England
James Treasure-Evans	International Policy Manager	Concern Universal
Professor Graham MacGregor,	Chair	Consensus Action on Salt and Health
Philip Lymbery	Chief Executive	Compassion in World Farming
Sue Dibb	Coordinator	Eating Better Alliance
Ricarda A Steinbrecher	Co-Director	Econexus
Barbara Young	Co-Chair	Environmentalists for Europe
Stanley Johnson	Co-Chair	Environmentalists for Europe, and Former Conservative MEP
Dr Mick Horton	Dean	Faculty of General Dental Practice (UK)
Professor Simon Capewell	Vice President for Policy	Faculty of Public Health
Barbara Crowther	Director, Policy & Public Affairs	Fairtrade Foundation
Pippa Woods CBE	Chair	Family Farmers' Association
Ian Eggington-Metters	Interim Director	Federation of City Farms & Community Gardens
Niki Charalampopoulou	Managing Director	Feedback: The global food waste campaign
Helen Crawley	Coordinator	First Steps Nutrition Trust
Katie Palmer	Sustainable Food Cities Coordinator	Food Cardiff
Dan Crossley	Executive Director	Food Ethics Council
Anna Taylor	Executive Director	Food Foundation
Victoria Williams	Director	Food Matters
Professor Tim Lang	Founder	Food Research Collaboration, City University
Professor Corinna Hawkes	Chair	Food Research Collaboration, City University
Geoff Tansey	Curator	Food Systems Academy
Mark Driscoll	Head of Food	Forum for the Future
Jonathan Porritt	Co-Founder	Forum for the Future
Clare Oxborrow	Senior Food and Farming Campaigner	Friends of the Earth (England, Wales and Northern Ireland)
Gareth Clubb	Director	Friends of the Earth Cymru
Joe Mann	Director and Food Teacher	Fun Kitchen
Lawrence Woodward	Director	Future Sustainability
James Campbell	Chief Executive	Garden Organic
Nick Dearden	Director	Global Justice Now
Liz O'Neill	Director	GM Freeze
John Sauven	Executive Director	Greenpeace
Oliver Dowding	Agricultural Spokesperson	Green Party of England and Wales
Professor Ralph Early	Professor of Food Industry	Harper Adams University (Food Science & Agri-Food Supply Chain Management)
Robin Ireland	Chief Executive	Health Equalities Group
Dr Richard Marsh	Chief Executive	Institute for Food, Brain and Behaviour
Professor Sylvia Tilford	President Elect	Institute of Health Promotion and Education
Emily Howgate	Coordinating Director	International Pole & Line Foundation
Allison Ogden-Newton	Chief Executive	Keep Britain Tidy
Ed Hamer	Spokesperson	Landworkers Alliance
Rosie Boycott	Chair	London Food Board, Greater London Authority
Jerry Percy	Executive Director and Chief Executive	Low Impact Fishers of Europe (LIFE) New Under Ten Fishermen's Association

Carmel McConnell MBE	Founder	Magic Breakfast
Carrie Hume	Director of Conservation and Campaigns	Marine Conservation Society (MCS)
Professor David Haslam	Chair	National Obesity Forum
Marc Stears	Chief Executive	New Economics Foundation
Pete Ritchie	Director	Nourish Scotland
Pip Nicholas-Davies	Co-organiser	Organic Centre Wales
Alan Schofield	Chairman	Organic Growers Alliance
Nic Lampkin	Director	Organic Research Centre
Paul Moore	Director	Organic Trade Board
John Meadley	Chair	Pasture Fed Livestock Association
Keith Tyrell	Director	Pesticides Action Network UK
Ruth West	Co-Founder / Director	Real Farming Trust
Sara Jayne Stanes	Chief Executive	Royal Academy of Culinary Arts
Alison Swan Parente	Chair	School of Artisan Food
Stephanie Wood	Director	School Food Matters
Dr Jonathan Rae	Head of College	Schumacher College at Dartington Hall Trust
Professor Annie Anderson	Chair	Scottish Cancer Prevention Network
Patrick Krause	Chief Executive	Scottish Crofting Federation
Paul Stuart	Interim Chief Executive	Send a Cow
Helen Browning	Chief Executive	Soil Association
Laura Stewart	Director	Soil Association Scotland
Caroline Bennett	Founder / Director	Sole of Discretion
Shane Holland	Executive Chairman	Slow Food in the UK
Rend Platings	Coordinator	Sugarwise
Kath Dalmeny	Coordinator	Sustain: The alliance for better food and farming
<i>...Sustain coordinates the following alliance activities, involving many national and community organisations:</i>		
		Better Jobs for Better Farming and Land Use
		Campaign for Better Hospital Food
		Campaign for a Sugary Drinks Duty
		Children's Food Campaign
		Sustainable Fish Cities
Tom Andrews	Programme Manager	Sustainable Food Cities Network
Patrick Holden	Chief Executive / Founder	Sustainable Food Trust
Tom Wills	Policy Officer	Traidcraft
Richie Alford	Co-Chair	UK Food Group
Dr Angela Wright	Co-Chair	UK Food Group
Modi Mwatsama	Director, Policy & Global Health	UK Health Forum
Diana Holland	Assistant General Secretary for Food & Agriculture	Unite the Union
Dave Prentis	General Secretary	UNISON
Professor Kevin Morgan	Professor of Governance & Development	University of Cardiff, Geography & Planning
Vicki Hird	Director of Policy & Campaigns	War on Want
Kate Allen	Executive Director, Science and Public Affairs	World Cancer Research Fund
Stephen Trotter	Director for England	Wildlife Trusts