

## Ten red lines for UK trade deals for food, farming and fishing

Trade discussions are already underway, with little indication of the parameters and little parliamentary scrutiny. Sustain and our members are deeply concerned that in the race to secure international trade deals, the UK may come under severe pressure to compromise our standards for food, farming and fishing – with implications for safety, health, animal welfare and the environment – a damaging race to the bottom. Sustain is backing calls for food trade transparency, democracy and accountability. The specialists in our alliance also highlight trade concerns specific to the safety and sustainability of our food, farming and fishing. Put simply, under the terms of any trade deals we expect our food, farming and fishing standards to guarantee provision of a reliable and affordable supply of food that is:

1. **Under democratic control**
2. **Safe**
3. **Healthy**
4. **Respectful of UK consumer and health priorities**
5. **Good for people**
6. **Good for the planet**
7. **Good for animals**
8. **Fair**
9. **High quality**
10. **Specified in public sector contracts**

These are not barriers to trade, nor do they seek to promote a protectionist approach – they are ground rules for the benefit of everyone. Under the terms of any trade deals, we expect our food, farming and fishing standards to guarantee provision of a reliable and affordable supply of food that is:

### 1. Under democratic control

Trade deals must deliver on national priorities for food and be open to public debate, scientific review and parliamentary scrutiny and consent, including the devolved administrations. Trade deals must also deliver on achieving objectives to which the UK has signed up, such as the Paris Climate Change Agreement, International Labour Organisation conventions and UN Sustainable Development Goals.

### 2. Safe

The British public expects their food to be safe. Trade deals must not undermine this. They must not expose us to increased risk of food poisoning from pathogens like Salmonella, Campylobacter and E.coli O157. The UK is also committed to reducing farm antibiotic use, reducing pesticides and promoting healthier children's and baby food. We expect trade deals to help achieve these.

The people who police our food also need to have enough staff, funding, resources and strict laws in order to do their job properly. They have been subject to heavy cutbacks over recent years and many are already signalling they will struggle to meet the additional workload after Brexit.

### 3. Healthy

We want trade deals to enable the prioritisation of the production, availability, affordability and promotion of healthy food, rather than sugary, calorie-laden food and soft drinks. Junk food and sugary drinks contribute to the increased risks of obesity, diabetes, heart disease and diet-related cancers and trade deals promoting such products would put additional pressure and costs on our NHS.

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Sustain is encouraging responses to MPs via: [https://sustainweb.eaction.org.uk/lobby/brexit\\_trade](https://sustainweb.eaction.org.uk/lobby/brexit_trade)

#### 4. Respectful of UK consumer and health priorities

Trade deals must ensure our food is, for example:

- Produced from healthy animals naturally healthy and resistant to disease; not with overuse of antibiotics.
- Processed in ways that are safe and meet UK consumer expectations.
- Produced in full consideration of the needs of babies, children and others with special nutritional needs.
- Promoted and advertised to support healthy diets, especially in marketing targeted at children.
- Produced without chemicals and pesticides currently banned in the UK; and within permissible limits.
- Labelled in a way that UK consumers can recognise and understand, with standard information.
- Overseen by a decent system for consumer protection.

#### 5. Good for people

International trade deals must ensure that our food comes from farmers and food workers who have been paid and treated fairly in line with International Labour Organisation conventions, and with opportunities for people to make progress and earn more over time, in an enforceable way. Trade deals must not enable the food and farming industries to compete on a 'race to the bottom' in terms of worker pay and conditions.

#### 6. Good for the planet

Trade deals must ensure that our food is produced in a way that is environmentally friendly and meets national priorities for conservation and enhancement of nature, as well as national targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. It should not be produced using excessive chemicals and damaging techniques that harm pollinators such as bees, soil, air quality and clean water, as well as precious and irreplaceable wildlife and ecosystems at home and abroad.

Trade deals must also help protect our seas, coasts and marine life, prioritising sustainable fishery management, marine protection areas and ecosystem regeneration, as well as sustainable fish buying. Trade deals must not undermine the efforts of UK farmers and fishers to protect and enhance the natural environment and must not force our UK farmers and fishers to lower their standards in order to compete.

#### 7. Good for animals

Any meat, dairy or other livestock products we import should come from animals that have been treated well and transported and killed as humanely as possible, to at least UK animal welfare standards.

#### 8. Fair

We want our trade deals to make life easier for people living in poverty or in developing nations. We want people to enjoy food security and for trade with the UK to help them earn enough money to build better lives. We also want to retain the UK's freedom to provide non-reciprocal access to our markets for poorer nations. Specific measures to support smaller farm businesses must also be allowed – at home and abroad.

#### 9. High quality

Everyone needs to know what they're eating and where it comes from, so country of origin and 'protected name' labelling for traditional foods needs to be protected in trade deals. We know this has been highly contentious in previous trade negotiations.

#### 10. Specified in public sector contracts

Trade deals must not in any way undermine the ability of our public institutions – schools, hospitals and the armed forces – to buy well produced, healthy and sustainable food. We must be free to use public sector contracts to favour producers who abide by high standards that can demonstrably provide public benefits.

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Sustain is the UK alliance for better food and farming. We represent around 100 not-for-profit national organisations and many more at local level, working together to achieve a prosperous, healthy, ethical and sustainable system for food, farming and fishing.

[www.sustainweb.org/brexit](http://www.sustainweb.org/brexit)

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