

Dear Prime Minister,

We are writing to you as a broad coalition of major farming, environment, animal welfare and public health organisations who share and support your government's stated commitment to ensuring the environmental, animal welfare and safety standards of UK food production are not undermined after we leave the EU and develop our own independent trade policy.

We are all agreed that Brexit provides an opportunity to foster a sustainable, carbon neutral model of farming in the UK building on our reputation for high quality, safe and affordable food. There may be differences of opinion as to the best way of achieving that outcome, but we are all agreed that without the right domestic policy, supported by a progressive and ambitious trade policy, none of us will realise this shared vision.

You have pledged "not to in any way prejudice or jeopardise our standards of animal welfare or food hygiene", and the Secretary of State for Defra recently promised to "defend our national interests and our values, including our high standards of animal welfare." Along with your party's manifesto commitment that, "in all of our trade negotiations, we will not compromise on our high environmental protection, animal welfare and food standards," we are increasingly reassured that you are as committed as us to making the UK a world leader in food, farming and environmental standards.

However, we also recognise that this is a complex issue that goes beyond just the negotiating position of the UK government in any potential trade deals, and that there will be intense pressure on British negotiators to make significant concessions on this issue. Furthermore, as an independent member of the WTO the UK will also need to consider how it manages its trading relationships outside the terms of bilateral trade deals. It is vital that we have more than just verbal assurances to ensure our standards are properly safeguarded. In light of this, we urge you to take some specific actions we believe will enable you to ensure that the UK government can achieve its commitment to safeguard the standards of UK production, now and in the future:

The government should enshrine its manifesto commitment in law. The Agriculture Bill provides a good opportunity to do so for some key standards. We would be pleased to work with the government to draft legislative provisions that meet the government's commitment to safeguard standards while allowing sufficient flexibility to conduct meaningful trade negotiations.

Formal processes are vital to allow government and stakeholders to engage openly on this issue. As Secretary of State for Defra, Michael Gove committed to establishing a trade and standards commission. A body such as this could undertake such a role, bringing together a wide variety of stakeholders to engage on the UK's trade policy and how it affects our standards.

Finally, we believe that Brexit provides a vital opportunity for the UK to lead the way in devising a global trading system fit for the 21st Century. While the liberalisation of global trade in recent decades has been successful in growing economies, providing jobs and lowering prices for consumers, it has failed to deal with the negative impacts of such growth – most evident today in the challenges of climate change, loss of biodiversity and concerns over the welfare of the farm animals we rear. Brexit means the UK can show leadership in pioneering a new type of global trading system; one that moves away from the narrow and dated focus on ever cheaper goods, regardless of how they are produced, to one that rises to the challenges of climate change and promotes more sustainable models of production and consumption across the world. In the year that the UK hosts the COP26 climate change summit, we are ready to work with you in pushing forward this agenda with energy and vision.

With the enactment of the European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill and our formal departure from the EU just days away, we believe these measures must be pursued as a priority. We believe that with the right policy framework and the establishment of a clear understanding of our shared vision for the future, Brexit can be a catalyst for UK farming not just to be the envy of the world, but to provide gold-standard model for high standard, high quality, sustainable food production. We would welcome the chance for a delegation of the signatories to this letter to meet with you as soon as possible to discuss how we can work in partnership to achieve this vision.

Yours sincerely, *[names continued overleaf]*

- **Minette Batters, President, NFU**
- Mark Bridgeman, President, CLA
- Helen Browning, Soil Association
- John Davies, President, NFU Cymru

- Caroline Drummond, Chief Executive, LEAF
- George Dunn, Chief Executive, Tenant Farmers Association
- Ivor Ferguson, President, Ulster Farmers Union
- David Goodwin, NFYFC AGRI Chairman
- Richard Griffiths, Chief Executive, British Poultry Council
- David Johnstone, Scottish Land & Estates
- Richard Lister, Chair, National Pig Association
- Andrew McCornick, President, NFU Scotland
- Phil Stocker, Chief Executive, National Sheep Association
- Mark Williams, Chief Executive, British Egg Industry Council
- Beccy Speight, Chief Executive, RSPB
- Katie White – Executive Director of Advocacy and Campaigns, WWF-UK
- Hilary McGrady – Director General, National Trust
- Patience Thody – Acting Chief Executive, The Wildlife Trusts
- Chris Sherwood – Chief Executive, RSPCA
- Shirley Cramer CBE, Chief Executive, Royal Society for Public Health
- Dr Darren Moorcroft, Chief Executive, The Woodland Trust
- John Sauven – Executive Director, Greenpeace UK
- Kath Dalmeny, Chief Executive, Sustain: the alliance for better food and farming
- Shaun Spiers, Executive Director, Green Alliance
- Crispin Truman, Chief Executive, CPRE: The countryside charity
- Jyoti Fernandes MBE, Chief Executive, Landworkers Alliance
- Richard Benwell – Chief Executive, Wildlife and Countryside Link
- Roger Kerr, Chief Executive, Organic Farmers and Growers
- Michael Krause – Acting Chief Executive, Plantlife
- James Thornton, Chief Executive Officer, ClientEarth
- Steve Andrews – Chief Executive, Earthwatch Europe
- Will Travers OBE – Executive President, Born Free Foundation
- Paula Sparks – Chairperson, UK Centre for Animal Law (A-Law)
- Dr Mark Avery – Co-Founder, Wild Justice
- Christopher Price – Chief Executive, Rare Breeds Survival Trust
- Prof. Alastair Driver – Director, Rewilding Britain
- Chris Fegan – Director, Catholic Concern for Animals
- Georgina Groves – Executive Director, Wild Welfare
- Caroline Yates – Chief Executive, Mayhew
- Bob Elliott – Director, OneKind
- Matt Shardlow – Chief Executive, Buglife
- Stephen Sibbald – UK Country Director, World Animal Protection
- Andy Knott – Chief Executive, League Against Cruel Sports
- Andy Atkins – Chief Executive, A Rocha UK
- Caroline Ruane – Chief Executive, Naturewatch Foundation
- Dr Nick Palmer – Head of Compassion UK, Compassion in World Farming
- Julie Williams – Chief Executive, Butterfly Conservation
- Fiona Matthews – Chair, The Mammal Society
- Jill Nelson – Chief Executive, People’s Trust for Endangered Species
- Dominic Dyer – Chief Executive, Badger Trust
- Brian Da Cal – Director, Four Paws UK
- Lucy MacLennan – Chief Executive, Organic Research Centre
- Dr Keith Tyrell, Director, Pesticides Action Network
- Dan Crossley, Executive Director, the Food Ethics Council
- Simon Billing, Executive Director, Eating Better
- Prof Tim Lang, founder Food Research Collaboration, City, University of London
- Colin Tudge, Director, The Real Farming Trust
- John Turner, Coordinator, Farm Transition Pathways
- James Morford, Chairman, Family Farmers Association
- Miles King, Director, People Need Nature
- Jan Creamer – President, Animal Defenders International
- Andrew Laughton, Chairman, National Beef Association
- Mark Williams – CEO, British Egg Industry Council (BEIC)