



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

From George Eustice MP
Minister of State for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

Nobel House
17 Smith Square
London SW1P 3JR

T 03459 335577
defra.helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/defra

Peter Chapman MSP
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Our ref: PO2017/06253/BK

22nd February 2018

Dear Peter

Thank you for your letter of 12 September to the Secretary of State about food exports following the UK's departure from the EU. I am replying as the Minister responsible for this policy area and apologise for the delay in doing so.

Trade is vital for the food and drink sector and we want to ensure that UK companies have the freedom to trade with and operate within European markets – and to let European businesses do the same in the UK. We are aware of the issues you have raised, and have also heard these concerns from trade associations. We are preparing for all outcomes of the negotiations, and are engaging directly with businesses and other stakeholders in order to understand the challenges and opportunities that may impact them in the coming months and years, to ensure that disruption for business is minimised once we have left the EU. I would like to assure you that these issues are key to informing our position in the current negotiations.

You raise the issue that UK food production plants will need to be added to the list of EU-approved establishments to continue exporting to the EU after we have left. This is correct, and we are engaging with industry and the devolved administrations, in cooperation with other government agencies, to ensure that the trade in animals and animal products with the EU will continue to flow on day one after the final deal is agreed. Trade rules with third countries require that animal products are accompanied by a Government issued Export Health Certificate (EHC). EHCs are not required for trade in animal products within the EU and EEA. Discussions have begun with our third country trading partners to agree continued recognition of UK EHCs.

To address the final point raised about collagen and registration numbers, collagen establishments, both for human and not-for-human consumption, have unique identifiers provided by the relevant authorities in the UK. The likelihood is that these will not change.

The UK and the EU start from the unique position of regulatory alignment, trust in one another's institutions and a shared spirit of cooperation. We aim to negotiate a regulatory framework which works for industry and consumers, enabling a deep and special economic partnership with the EU and creating new global trade opportunities for British business. In all aspects of preparations for leaving the EU, we remain committed to engaging the devolved administrations fully, as we seek to secure a deal that works for the entire United Kingdom.

GEORGE EUSTICE MP

