



Department
for Environment,
Food & Rural Affairs

Baroness Hayman of Ullock
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State

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Tonia Antoniazzi MP
Northern Ireland Affairs Committee
House of Commons
Palace of Westminster
Westminster
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16 July 2025

Dear Tonia

Thank you for your correspondence dated 20 June regarding your committee's inquiry into the operation of the Windsor Framework and 'Not for EU' labelling. I apologise for the delay in responding.

The phases for 'Not for EU' labelling were published in legislation in 2023 and communicated widely. Throughout that period Defra has engaged extensively with industry to understand and address any concerns for all phases of 'Not for EU' labelling. Defra has published detailed guidance to support businesses in identifying which of their goods need to be labelled, as well as providing 1:1 support as necessary.

Defra has heard businesses' concerns around increased costs and has published an Impact Assessment, which sets out the likely costs to businesses. As is set out in the Impact Assessment, the indicative cost to business of applying 'Not for EU' labelling to a subset of product lines is significantly less than the whole scope and will vary depending on the product. Defra made the decision to introduce a targeted power, as opposed to a mandatory requirement for all goods, in order to prevent some of these costs to businesses.

I recognise the clear commitment we have heard from businesses to serve customers across the United Kingdom, and Defra will work with them to tackle any issues that arise. The Marking of Retail Goods Regulations are now in force. As set out in the accompanying guidance, our market monitoring looks at data from sales and trade flows. It will be combined with stakeholder reporting to make sure we are alerted to any product disruption in NI and can respond accordingly.

Labelling is an integral part of ensuring the Windsor Framework operates as intended. This Government has confirmed it will negotiate a UK-EU SPS Agreement, which will remove many of the existing requirements for moving agri-food goods GB-NI under the Framework. Defra expects the requirement to label goods 'not for EU' will reduce significantly. However, achieving such benefits relies on the UK being a reliable partner that delivers on its existing commitments and, to that end, the Government is clear that we must implement the arrangements for the Windsor Framework in a faithful way, even where our ambition is that those arrangements may not be needed in the future.

Defra will continue to work closely with businesses across the United Kingdom to support them in implementing these arrangements.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Suella Brabman'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Suella' written in a larger, more prominent script than the surname 'Brabman'.

BARONESS HAYMAN OF ULLOCK

MINISTER FOR ANIMAL WELFARE AND BIOSECURITY



Northern Ireland Affairs Committee

Baroness Hayman of Ullock,
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

By email only

20 June 2025

From the Chair
Tonia Antoniazzi MP

Dear Baroness Hayman,

Thank you for your letter dated 5 June regarding *The Marking of Retail Goods Regulations 2025* and Not for EU labelling. As you know, this labelling for products marketed in Northern Ireland is being rolled out gradually, with the final phase due to come into force on 1 July.

During my committee's inquiry into the operation of the Windsor Framework we have heard from business representatives with concerns about this roll-out. For example, Government guidance and communication has often been "too little, too late", and stakeholders have been unsure about the extent to which the Government has been monitoring product availability. This has resulted in an additional administrative and cost burdens for those supplying goods to Northern Ireland.¹

Colleagues on my committee have also described these Not for EU labelling requirements as disproportionate and unnecessary. I would be grateful if you could address these concerns from stakeholders and colleagues in your reply.

Yours sincerely,

Tonia Antoniazzi MP
Chair of the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee

¹ [Oral evidence to the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee](#), 12 March 2025