

# European Scrutiny Committee

House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA

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From: Sir William Cash MP

24 March 2021

Lord Gardiner of Kimble  
Minister for Rural Affairs and Biosecurity  
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs  
Seacole Building  
2 Marsham Street  
London SW1P 4DF

**(a) COM(20) 852: Proposal for a Decision amending Council Decision 2008/971/EC as regards the equivalence of forest reproductive material produced in the UK to such material produced in the Union (41765)**

**(b) 5004/21: Proposal for a Decision amending Council Decisions 2003/17/EC and 2005/834/EC as regards the equivalence of field inspections and the equivalence of checks on practices for the maintenance of varieties of agricultural plant species carried out in the UK (41769)**

We considered the Explanatory Memoranda on the above documents at our meeting of 24 March 2021.

We note that, despite Great Britain's plant health regulations remaining largely aligned with those of the European Union and Northern Ireland, the Government has encountered problems in securing equivalence for the following plant products:

- "Tested" Forest Reproductive Material
- Seed potatoes
- Vegetable seed

It would be helpful if you could set out the obstacles encountered, the reasons for them and the latest state of play in resolving them.

We would welcome a response within ten working days.

We are copying this letter to Neil Parish, Chair of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee and Ian Bradshaw, Clerk of the Committee; Simon Hoare MP, Chair of the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee and Stephen

Habberley, Clerk of the Committee; the Earl of Kinnoull, Chair of the EU Select Committee in the House of Lords and Christopher Johnson, Clerk of the Committee; your Departmental EU Scrutiny team; and Les Saunders and Donald Harris in the Cabinet Office.

**CHAIR**