



Department
for Environment,
Food & Rural Affairs

Baroness Hayman of Ullock
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State

Seacole Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

T: +44 (0) 3459 335577
E: correspondence.section@defra.gov.uk
W: gov.uk/defra

Baroness Sheehan
House of Lords
London
SW1A 0PW

Our ref: PO2026/01138/EBT

1 June 2026

Dear Baroness Sheehan,

Thank you for your letter of 14 January about the Farming Profitability Review. I apologise for the delay in sending our response.

I address your questions in turn:

Could you outline in more detail the remit and intended scope of the new Farming and Food Partnership Board?

The objective of the new Farming and Food Partnership Board (FFPB) is to increase farming profitability, improve productivity, and strengthen the contribution of domestically produced food to national food security. Chaired by Environment Secretary Emma Reynolds, with Farming Minister Dame Angela Eagle as deputy, the Board brings together senior leaders from farming, food, retail, out of home markets and government to take a practical, partnership-led approach from to strengthen our food production.

Sector Growth Plans will be a core mechanism for driving progress towards the Board's mission. Sector expert groups will be responsible for producing Sector Growth Plans. These plans will identify bespoke recommendations that will deliver growth for each sector. The Board has now met twice, in March and May, and commissioned the sector expert groups to start work on the horticulture and poultry Sector Growth Plans.

You note that the new board will complement the work of the existing Food Strategy Advisory Board. Could you explain how this relationship will operate in practice? In particular, will the two bodies be integrated or operate independently, with distinct functions?

The two bodies are separate but will maintain close links. The Food Strategy Advisory Board (FSAB) takes a holistic view of the whole food supply chain and provides on-going direction for the UK Government's food strategy. Its members are selected for their individual expertise in whole food system thinking and do not formally represent the businesses they work for. FSAB's membership is time limited.

In contrast, though its membership reflects the whole food supply chain, the FFPB is squarely focussed on improving the productivity and profitability of our farmers and growers. Through that there will be scope for growth and strengthening the contribution of

our domestic food sector to national food security. FFPB members are there to represent the interests of their sectors rather than as individual experts. FFPB is an enduring Board, designed to maintain a strong farming voice at the heart of government.

As the two boards will have distinct functions, they will operate in tandem to support shared objectives across the food system.

Regarding the change in planning rules to make food production a priority for councils, how have councils responded to this change? Does the opportunity to build infrastructure include water infrastructure like reservoirs and other water storage facilities?

Between 16 December 2025 and 10 March 2026 the Government consulted on changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). That consultation, which can be found on gov.uk [here](#), included proposals which support the sustainable growth of business in rural areas, including through development to maintain and enhance farm viability and sustainability and support domestic food production, such as on-farm reservoirs. The government is currently analysing the feedback received and will publish the government response in due course.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in grey ink, appearing to read 'Suella Brabman', is centered on the page.

BARONESS HAYMAN OF ULLOCK

MINISTER FOR ANIMAL WELFARE AND BIOSECURITY