

**Supplementary written evidence submitted by the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board
(AHDB) (TFA0033)**

Sir Robert Goodwill MP
Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Select Committee
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

27 November 2023

Dear Sir Robert

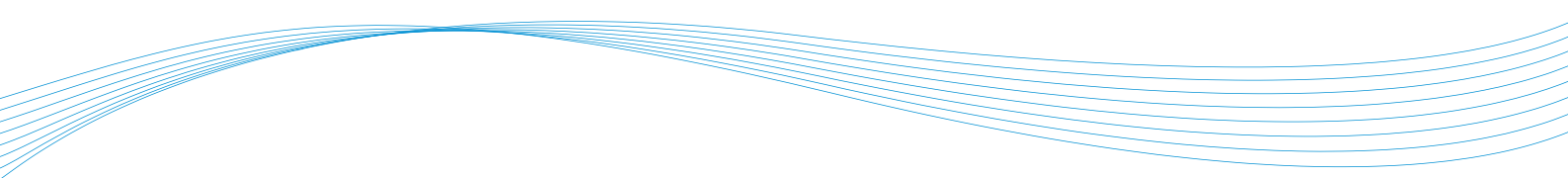
Thank you for the opportunity last week to appear as a witness on behalf of the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB) for the committee's inquiry into UK Trade Policy: Food and Agriculture.

I hope you found our evidence helpful, in addition to the written evidence we submitted in July, in shaping the committee's final report and recommendations.

During the session I raised several key points which I am happy to summarise:

- With threats and challenges posed by a more liberalised market, Europe remains a critical market, particularly for the lamb and dairy sectors.
- While Government has had made a number of clear statements relating to trade policy, it needs to be more clearly communicated to industry.
- The industry would perhaps benefit from greater interplay between Government departments regarding market access and promotional activity.
- As the trade strategy develops further, there needs to be greater transparency and engagement to ensure it is fully thought out, with consideration given to the broader implications of costs of production and competition on a level playing field.
- While UK farmers may feel threatened by some trade deals, they are happy to compete with those that have equivalent standards of production. We cannot become a net importer of food produced to lower standards.
- The creation of Agricultural attachés is a step in the right direction but there needs to be a continued focus, resource and budgets in this area.
- AHDB's independent evidence on impact assessment and analysis of FTAs is fed into and recognised by Government departments eg the implications of Australia and NZ FTAs
- For Beef & Lamb, under the current market dynamic there would be limited impact from Aus/NZ imports into the UK. This is unlikely to change as long as production in both countries does not alter markedly and they continue have access to more lucrative markets elsewhere such as China and the wider Asia region.
- In response to FTAs that have been negotiated setting a precedent, other countries will see a bar that has been set and look to negotiate something as good or better with the UK.
- The key to future FTA negotiations is to ensure business and industry is well consulted to give every chance of coming out of them with something commercially meaningful.
- Government departments are reaching out for views on the Border Target Operating model, sending a clear message around the importance of equivalence and equitable trade.

As you are aware the AHDB is an arm's length body which reports to Parliament through Defra and plays a critical role in helping UK agricultural businesses sustainably improve productivity and remain competitive. You will also be aware that AHDB works collaboratively with other Government departments (mainly DBT and the



Devolved Governments) and industry on export market certification and development for red meat and dairy. AHDB's independent evidence is also a key area of our work and you may find our [FTA analysis](#) and [Prospects for agri-food exports](#) helpful in providing further insight into global trade opportunities and challenges.

We look forward to continuing supporting the work of the committee and would be delighted to host a Strategic or Monitor farm visit for you and other committee members. Please do not hesitate to contact me regarding any of the topics raised this week or for additional discussions on matters relating to international market opportunities for red meat and dairy products.

Kind regards

Dr Phil Hadley

AHDB International Trade Development Director