

## Written evidence submitted by the National Pig Association (SME0039)

March 2021

### **NPA response to the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Select Committee Inquiry: “Brexit border delays for meat and seafood exports – supplementary evidence on import checks”**

The National Pig Association (NPA) is the representative trade association for British commercial pig producers, is affiliated to the National Farmers Union (NFU) and represents the interests of NFU members that produce pigs and the pig industry interests of its Allied Industry members.

The UK pig industry is worth £1.6 billion at the farm-gate, £5 billion at retail and, considering foodservice, external sales and export values, over £14 billion in total. In 2019, over 378,000 tonnes of British pork was exported around the globe, to over 40 export markets, a trade worth £610 million.

### **On 11 March the Government announced further revisions to the timetable for the introduction of health certificates and physical checks at the border for imports of seafood and meat and other products of animal origin, as well as live animals, from the EU.**

While we understand the approach taken by the UK Government to phase in checks over an extended period, the NPA is concerned that this further delay to implementation perpetuates the imbalance between import and exports, giving EU companies a competitive advantage.

Furthermore, there is very little urgency in Brussels to resolve the export issues highlighted previously to the Committee by the NPA when EU products can flow freely into the UK. If pork imports into the UK were facing the same stringent checks as exports, we would have more leverage to resolve immediate problems and there would be more impetus to work together to design streamlined and modern trading processes, which in turn would help to reduce paperwork, delays and the associated costs.

A level playing field between imports and exports is very important to the British pig industry because we import around 60% of the pork we consume in the UK, and 99% of those imports come from the EU. If EU products can be imported without checks and therefore at a lower cost, it ultimately impacts on the price British farmers will receive for their pigs.

**END**