



Hybu Cig Cymru Meat Promotion Wales

External Affairs and Additional Legislation Committee

HCC additional response – 21/9/18

Thank you for your letter of 31 July, in which you request HCC's views on the preparedness of the food and drinks sector for Brexit.

On the second of your specific questions (how the Welsh Government is leading efforts to prepare the Welsh food and drinks sector), we feel that given HCC's status as an executive agency of Welsh Government and a statutory body wholly-owned by Welsh ministers, we are not in a position to give an objective view.

On the first question, there remain many challenges to the food and drink sector posed by the UK's exit from the EU.

In our sector, there are a large number of issues regarding the future of Geographical Indications, non-tariff barriers at port, additional administrative requirements for exporters (as laid out in the UK Government's technical notices), potential changes to labelling requirements and export health certificates, and the availability of non-EU labour in the processing sector (particularly qualified veterinary practitioners).

However the central concern of the red meat sector is that of tariff-free trade. The different potential outcomes to current negotiations – from a free trade arrangement between the UK and the EU, a no-deal WTO Tariffs scenario, or other possibilities – are projected to have a hugely different impact on Welsh red meat production, and on different sectors within the industry. Some of these scenarios are laid out here: <https://hccmpw.org.uk/en/news-industry-info/policies-analysis>

Trade in red meat would be subject to extremely high tariffs in the event of a WTO scenario, leading to the potential sudden loss of major export markets. This uncertainty of outcome in terms of trade is the key barrier to developing an appropriate post-Brexit policy.

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