



## DEBATE PACK

Number CDP 2017/0018, 16 January 2017

# Effect of the UK leaving the EU on the rural economy

This pack has been produced ahead of the Opposition Day debate to be held in the Commons Chamber on Tuesday 17 January 2017 on the effect of the UK leaving the EU on the rural economy. The debate will be on the motion put forward by the Scottish National Party :

That this House is concerned at the possible impact upon the rural economy of the Government's aim for the UK to leave the EU; and calls upon the Government to present to Parliament a clear statement of its aims for the rural economy in negotiations with the EU prior to triggering Article 50, and to give assurances on the future of agriculture, particularly with regard to funding, and fisheries after 2020.

The House of Commons Library prepares a briefing in hard copy and/or online for most non-legislative debates in the Chamber and Westminster Hall other than half-hour debates. Debate Packs are produced quickly after the announcement of parliamentary business. They are intended to provide a summary or overview of the issue being debated and identify relevant briefings and useful documents, including press and parliamentary material. More detailed briefing can be prepared for Members on request to the Library.

Ed Potton  
Gabrielle Garton  
Grimwood  
Lorna Booth  
Nikki Sutherland

## Contents

<b>1. Overview and summary</b>	<b>2</b>
1.1 Overview	2
1.2 Rural economy – key facts	2
1.3 Rural economy and Brexit	3
1.4 Fishing industry	4
1.5 Financial Support for Rural areas	4
1.6 Agriculture and Brexit	5
1.7 Post-Brexit Agricultural Trade Arrangements	9
<b>2. News Articles</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>3. Press releases</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>4. Parliamentary material</b>	<b>24</b>
Debates	24
PQs	25
Early Day Motion	31
<b>5. Useful links and further reading</b>	<b>33</b>

# 1. Overview and summary

## 1.1 Overview

This briefing provides an overview of some of the issues that may arise in a debate on the rural economy.

### **Box 1: Devolution**

This topic covers both devolved and reserved responsibilities for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Foreign policy is reserved to Westminster, for example, while the implementation of agriculture and fishing support is devolved.

Rural businesses accounted for 25% of all businesses in England in 2014/15 and 30% of those in Scotland in 2016 (note that England and Scotland use different definitions of rural areas); 16% of those in England and 28% of those in Scotland were based on agriculture, forestry and fishing. Tourism is also an important industry for the rural economy.

EU funding through the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is highly relevant to the rural economy. Making up nearly 40% of total EU expenditure, it provides direct payments to farmers, market support measures and rural development programmes to support the wider rural economy. Direct support for the UK has been guaranteed by the Government to 2020 but a new agricultural policy for the UK is expected in the future.

In the year to September 2016, 72% of UK food and non-alcoholic drink exports were to the EU; the UK imports more food and drink than it exports and the EU is a major source. At the current time we do not know what trading arrangement the UK will have with the EU and what farming policy will replace the Common Agricultural Policy. Both are linked – any agricultural subsidies would be highly relevant in the making of alternative trading arrangements.

Some of the agricultural and environmental impacts of Brexit were picked up by the Environmental Audit Committee's recent report [\*The Future of the Natural Environment after the EU Referendum\*](#).

## 1.2 Rural economy – key facts

The rural economy is significant to the UK. In 2015, economic output from predominantly rural areas contributed 16.5% of output in England and was worth an estimated £237 billion.<sup>1</sup> Rural businesses accounted for 25% of all businesses in England in 2014/15 and 30% of those in Scotland in 2016 (note that England and Scotland use different definitions of rural areas).<sup>2</sup>

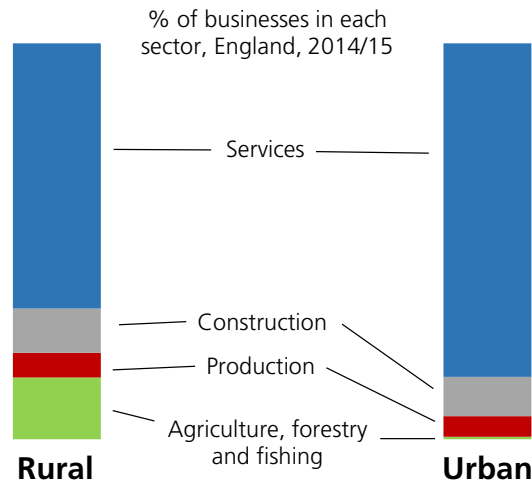
The main difference between the rural economy and that of the economy as a whole is that the rural economy has a much higher

<sup>1</sup> Defra, [Rural productivity and Gross Value Added \(GVA\) statistics](#), December 2016

<sup>2</sup> Defra, [Rural business statistics](#), July 2016; Scottish Government, [Businesses in Scotland - Urban Rural Tables](#) – Table 9

proportion of businesses focussed on agriculture, forestry and fishing: these accounted for 16% of rural businesses in England and 28% in Scotland.<sup>3</sup>

### Businesses in rural and urban areas



Tourism is also important to rural economies. Overseas visitors whose visits included a trip to the countryside or villages spent an estimated £4.2 billion in the UK in 2011.<sup>4</sup>

A higher proportion of employment is in small businesses in rural areas than in urban areas.<sup>5</sup>

While these are significant differences, it is worth noting that many businesses in rural areas have characteristics that are similar to those in urban areas – and face many of the same opportunities and challenges.

The further information section of this note includes links to statistics on the rural economy in each of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

## 1.3 Rural economy and Brexit

The UK's new trading and investment relationships in a post-Brexit world, and their impact on the amount and pattern of trade and investment that takes place, will be important in determining Brexit's impact on economic growth, including in rural areas.

The size and nature of the effect will depend on the type and details of the future trade relationships that will be negotiated, with the EU and outside it.

People's future ability to move between countries also have the potential to affect the economy – for example rural tourism might be

<sup>3</sup> Defra, [Rural business statistics](#), July 2016; Scottish Government, [Businesses in Scotland - Urban Rural Tables](#) – Table 10

<sup>4</sup> Visit Britain, [Inbound countryside & coast research](#) based on International Passenger Survey 2011 [online, accessed 14 Jan 2017] – note that spending covers all activities during trip to the UK, not just those in the countryside and villages.

<sup>5</sup> Defra, [Rural business statistics](#), July 2016; Scottish Government, [Businesses in Scotland - Urban Rural Tables](#) – Table 9

affected by changes to freedom of movement for tourists or tourism workers.

The Government argue that leaving the EU gives us an opportunity to have policies to support the rural economy that are “bespoke to the needs of this country.”<sup>6</sup>

The Scottish Government have said that rural Scotland may face particular issues from a changed relationship with the EU, for example noting that that “the European Single Market and EU funding help to, support investment in superfast broadband, business development, housing investment and measures to address fuel poverty along with other regional initiatives to support inclusive growth” as well as highlighting the reliance of the food and drink sector on EU funding and the single market.<sup>7</sup>

## 1.4 Fishing industry

The fishing industry is important both economically and socially for many coastal towns. In 2015, fishing contributed £604 million to UK GDP and employed just over 12,000 fishers (5,569 were based in England, 851 in Wales, 4,828 in Scotland and 859 in Northern Ireland).<sup>8</sup> While the English fleet has the largest number of vessels, the Scottish fleet has the highest share of capacity and power. In 2015, Scotland’s share of fish landings into the UK was 62% of the total, while the English fleet’s share was 29%.<sup>9</sup>

In the UK, fisheries is a devolved matter. However, the Commons Fisheries Policy (CFP) is the Europe-wide set of rules for managing European fishing fleets and for conserving fish stocks; this is negotiated by the UK Government. The impacts of leaving the EU for the fishing industry are highly uncertain. The implications will depend on future negotiations with the EU and future UK Government policy. You can read more about the impact of Brexit on fisheries in this Library briefing: [Brexit: What next for UK fisheries?](#)

## 1.5 Financial Support for Rural areas

For agriculture, the key impact of Brexit is the departure from the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). This will occur whichever trading arrangement is sought with the EU.

Almost 40% of the EU’s budget is related to agriculture and rural development through the CAP. It provides an EU framework of regulation for direct payments to farmers, market support measures and rural development programmes to support the wider rural economy.

House of Commons Library Briefing Paper [Brexit: UK Funding from the EU](#) (December 2016) provides further detail.

---

<sup>6</sup> [Oral Question on Rural Economy: Leaving the EU](#), HC Deb 24 Nov 2016 c1006

<sup>7</sup> Scottish Government, [Scotland’s Place in Europe](#), December 2016 – Chapter 2

<sup>8</sup> MMO, [UK Sea Fisheries Statistics 2015](#), September 2016

<sup>9</sup> *ibid*

In the UK, EU farm subsidies currently make up around 50-60% of farm income.<sup>10</sup> So the big question for farmers is the nature and scale of any further financial support for their industry.

The CAP gives direct support to UK farmers through the Basic Payment Scheme (Pillar 1 funding) and the wider rural economy through Pillar 2 funding for Rural Development Programmes.

Over 2014-2020 the UK is expected to receive €25.1 billion in direct payments (Pillar 1) and €2.6 billion in rural development funds (Pillar 2) for the environment and rural development.

Across the UK, a large component of these Pillar 2 Rural Development Programmes is directed at agri-environment schemes where farmers receive additional payments for practices which especially protect and enhance the environment. The RDP programmes in the UK also support the wider rural economy with priorities relating to tourism, rural broadband and SMEs.

In August 2016 the Government guaranteed pillar 1 agricultural support through to 2020 at current levels regardless of when the UK leaves the EU.<sup>11</sup>

## 1.6 Agriculture and Brexit

Pages 53-63 of our briefing on Brexit ([Brexit: impact across policy areas](#)) set out key issues in relation to agriculture.

Leaving the EU was discussed in [questions to DEFRA on the rural economy](#) on 24 November 2016.<sup>12</sup>

On 19 October 2016 there was a Westminster Hall debate on the effect of Brexit on agriculture and fisheries in South West England. The Commons Library published a [debate pack](#)<sup>13</sup> in readiness for that [debate](#).<sup>14</sup>

We do not yet know the terms on which the UK will leave the EU or the arrangements that will be agreed for trade, including trade in food and agricultural products. For the time being at least, most commentary and reaction to the UK's decision to leave the EU in the context of food and farming has been expressed in terms of what people hope to achieve in Brexit negotiations.

<sup>10</sup> Defra, [Total Income from Farming 2014 - 2nd estimate United Kingdom](#), 26 November 2015 shows that subsidies made up around 54% of UK Total Farm Income in 2014 and the Government's [Review of the Balance of Competencies between the UK and the EU: Agriculture](#), Summer 2014 paras 2.34 –2.38 indicated that in 2012 this figure had been as much as 68%.

<sup>11</sup> "[Chancellor Philip Hammond guarantees EU funding beyond date UK leaves the EU](#)", gov.uk, 13 August 2016

<sup>12</sup> [HC Deb 24 November 2016 c1006 onwards](#)

<sup>13</sup> CDP 2016-0177, [The effect of Brexit on agriculture and fisheries in South West England](#), 14 October 2016

<sup>14</sup> [HC Deb 19 October 2016 cc376 onwards](#)

## Latest thinking from the Government

On 4 January 2017, the Environment Secretary, Andrea Leadsom, made a speech to a farming conference in Oxford, outlining current Government action on agriculture and Brexit.

On leaving the EU, Andrea Leadsom argued that Brexit presented an opportunity to secure a deal that works for all farmers and said that financial support would remain unchanged until 2020:

But now, we have the chance to design a domestic successor to CAP [Common Agricultural Policy] that works for all of you, rather than the entire European Union.

As we work towards this, it's really important that we've been able to reassure farmers that they will receive the same level of financial support until 2020 – and Pillar 2 payments signed before we leave the EU will be guaranteed for their lifetime.

[...]

I want to reassure you that I am committed to supporting British farming in the short and the long term – and I am confident that leaving the EU gives us an unprecedented opportunity to design a system that's fit for the 21st century.<sup>15</sup>

Reacting to the speech, the National Farmers Union (NFU) and the Country Land and Business Owners' Association were quoted as suggesting that market access, productivity and environmental issues would be important:

NFU president Meurig Raymond said: "Market access to Europe is going to be important, so you have to question how much bureaucracy you can reduce and still have the equivalence that we will still be allowed to export into Europe.

"It will be a fine balance and big debate."

Country Land and Business Association president Ross Murray said: "We can achieve increased productivity and improved environmental outcomes through a new world leading food, farming and environmental policy and we are committed to working with ministers to deliver on this."<sup>16</sup>

## Report from Environmental Audit Committee

The House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee (EAC) reported on [the Future of the Natural Environment after the EU Referendum](#) earlier this month.<sup>17</sup>

The [accompanying press release](#) sums up the EAC's findings relating to Brexit and farming, arguing that, in changing trading relationships, UK farmers might face "triple jeopardy":

First, the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) makes up 50-60% of farm incomes, so leaving the CAP will threaten the viability of some farms. Second, trade agreements which impose tariff or

The report deals with environmental protection as well as agriculture.

<sup>15</sup> DEFRA, [Speech: Environment Secretary sets out ambition for food and farming industry](#), 4 January 2017

<sup>16</sup> "Leadsom: Farmers to get say on post-Brexit policy", *Farmer's Weekly* online, 4 January 2017

<sup>17</sup> EAC, [The Future of the Natural Environment after the EU Referendum](#), 4 January 2017, HC 599 2016-17

non-tariff barriers on UK farm exports threaten farm and food business incomes. Third, new trading relationships with the rest of the world could lead to increased competition from larger economies with lower animal welfare, food safety and environmental standards.<sup>18</sup>

The EAC argued too for greater clarity about financial support for farmers after Brexit:

Any new farm subsidies which the Government introduces to replace CAP should provide a better balance between support to agriculture and environmental protection. New subsidies should have clearly defined objectives linked to the delivery of public goods, like the promotion of biodiversity, preventing flooding and storing carbon, rather than simply providing income support to farmers. [...] <sup>19</sup>

## NFU views on Brexit

In October 2016, the NFU [set out its vision](#) of a "progressive, profitable and competitive future" for British farming after Brexit, with a detailed policy paper to follow in 2017.<sup>20</sup>

In [Farming's offer to Britain](#), the NFU argues that Brexit presents a "huge opportunity for change" and might offer "a new deal with society":

This deal must also deliver for farmers. A fair deal on trade, a secure business environment, fair returns from the market and access to the modern and developing technologies needed to compete on the global stage.

[...]

Our farmers need to produce increasing amounts of safe, high-quality and affordable food to British consumers, as well as to new export markets. This must go alongside high standards of animal health and welfare, and effective environmental protection.<sup>21</sup>

Scottish Farmers have highlighted that they feel they have specific needs under Brexit. A press release from NFU Scotland on 12 December 2016, following a meeting with the Department for Exiting the European Union carried a quote from Allan Bowie, NFU Scotland President:<sup>22</sup>

Speaking from London, Mr Bowie said: "The UK Government is already in the process of establishing its priorities and it is vitally important that we engage with them now and make sure they are clear on what Scottish farmers and crofters want.

"There is strong recognition that Scottish agriculture's needs from Brexit negotiations will differ from the rest of the UK and that this must be a factor under any future arrangements. There are already marked differences between different parts of the UK. In Scotland, for example, we have opted to use part of our existing

<sup>18</sup> EAC, [News: New Environmental Protection Act needed after Brexit](#), 4 January 2017

<sup>19</sup> EAC, [News: New Environmental Protection Act needed after Brexit](#), 4 January 2017

<sup>20</sup> NFU online, [NFU Council's bold vision for post-Brexit farming](#), 11 October 2016. Further comment can be found in "[NFU prepares 'bold and ambitious vision' for farming](#)", *Farmers Weekly* online, 14 October 2016.

<sup>21</sup> NFU, [Farming's offer to Britain](#) (undated): page 4

<sup>22</sup> "[Union Outlines Brexit Priorities to Department for Exiting the European Union](#)", NFU Scotland, 12 December 2016 [accessed 13 January 2017]

support package to target key sectors like beef and hill sheep and the ability of Scotland to make such decisions will clearly need to be maintained.

“While assurances have been given about support levels during the Brexit negotiating period, we pressed the case for funding levels to be maintained once we are outside of the EU and that they go hand-in-hand with an agricultural policy, focussed on active production, that fits with Scottish agriculture’s needs.

“That requires a future UK agricultural policy that is truly representative of all parts of the UK and recognises the differences and the drivers of the industry in Scotland.

“We must make the most of the opportunities for our farming, food and drink sectors that Brexit presents. We can support jobs and grow income but only if we prioritise the needs of farming.

“The importance of a trade deal with Europe, future trading arrangements with the rest of the world and access to non-UK labour were all issues discussed in our valuable discussions with the Minister.” [...]

## Agricultural labour

A particular concern for farmers in recent months has been access to labour both in the short and long run. There have been calls from the agriculture industry for the reintroduction of the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme. The former scheme was phased out and closed in December 2013. There was a debate in Westminster Hall on 30 November 2016 on the scheme. The background is discussed the [Commons Library debate pack](#) prepared for that debate.<sup>23</sup>

A particular concern for farmers in recent months has been access to labour

Responding to the debate, immigration minister Robert Goodwill argued that there was no evidence yet of an exodus of EU workers and any scheme for seasonal workers had to be set in the context of the Government’s commitment to reducing net migration:

The Government wish to ensure that any decisions we take on the short-term need for seasonal migration schemes do not pre-empt future decisions about how the immigration system will work post-Brexit. As I am sure hon. Members will understand, there are constraints on what I can say about the future arrangements for EU citizens who want to work in the United Kingdom; the way in which we will control migration post-Brexit is yet to be determined.<sup>24</sup>

In her speech to the Oxford farming conference, Andrea Leadsom acknowledged farmers’ concerns about access to labour:

Access to labour is very much an important part of our current discussions – and we’re committed to working with you to make sure you have the right people with the right skills.

A strong, skilled workforce will allow you to focus on how the latest technology can transform your business.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>23</sup> CDP 2016-0233, [Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme](#), 29 November 2016. The debate itself is at [HC Deb 30 November 2016 c555](#) onwards.

<sup>24</sup> [HC Deb 30 November 2016 cc576-7](#)

<sup>25</sup> DEFRA, [Speech: Environment Secretary sets out ambition for food and farming industry](#), 4 January 2017. See also [“British farmers will have access to migrant](#)



## A 25 year plan for food and farming

Defra started work on developing a new 25 year food and farming strategy in conjunction with stakeholders in July 2015.<sup>26</sup>

The strategy was expected in 2016, but has still not been published. Farming minister George Eustice [said in November last year](#) that the Government still intended to publish a 25 year plan but, since the vote to leave the EU, the context was now very different.<sup>27</sup>

Andrea Leadsom in her speech at the Oxford farming conference sketched out the questions that the 25 year plan would seek to answer but, gave no date for the launch of the consultation or the plan:

This is a once in a generation opportunity to look at new ideas and also at how other great farming nations operate, so, for example:

- How do we manage risk, and make the industry more resilient to extreme weather and price volatility?
- How can we prioritise capital investment and boost productivity?
- And how can we increase food production at the same time as enhancing our natural environment?<sup>28</sup>

## 1.7 Post-Brexit Agricultural Trade Arrangements

At the current time we do not know what trading arrangement the UK will have with the EU and what farming policy will replace the Common Agricultural Policy. Both are linked – any agricultural subsidies would be highly relevant in the making of alternative trading arrangements if the UK leaves the EU's customs union. If the UK retains free trading access with the EU in respect of agricultural products, the agricultural support policy in place will likely be part of any agreement.

The Library briefing [Brexit: trade aspects](#) sets out alternative trading arrangements including arrangements with the WTO (pages 12-15).

If the UK left the single market and EU customs union, and without an alternative trading arrangement in place, WTO rules would apply to the tariff levels applied to UK exports and imports, and the rules of trade. The Library briefing contains further detail on this. However, for the EU, tariffs on food products under WTO rules are generally higher than for other products such as manufactured goods, for example.<sup>29</sup>

---

[workers after Brexit, Andrea Leadsom pledges](#)", *Daily Telegraph* online, 4 January 2017

<sup>26</sup> Defra, [News story: Industry kick-starts work on Great British Food and Farming Plan](#), 16 July 2015

<sup>27</sup> [HC Deb 24 November 2016 c1005](#)

<sup>28</sup> DEFRA, [Speech: Environment Secretary sets out ambition for food and farming industry](#), 4 January 2017

<sup>29</sup> World Trade Organization, [WTO Tariff Profiles 2015](#), p75

A recent report from the Environmental Audit Committee noted:<sup>30</sup>

11. Payments to farmers are subject to World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules. The EU has a specific agreement with the WTO covering those CAP payments that are classified as market distorting or potentially market distorting subsidies, which includes aid that is coupled to production. The UK will probably need to negotiate for a share of the current EU allocation of allowable subsidy if it wishes to continue payments such as the Scottish Suckler Beef Support Scheme. More broadly, WTO rules will constrain how any new payments can be made. For example, payments for environmental land management through Pillar 2 of the CAP are currently calculated on the basis of income forgone plus costs so that they can be classified as non-trade distorting. These payments may still need to be subject to the same constraints outside the EU in order to comply with WTO rules.

12. If the UK chooses not to enter into an arrangement with the European Single Market the UK farming industry may face tariffs and non-tariff barriers when exporting produce to the EU. Tim Breitmeyer of the Country, Land and Business Association told us that 95% of UK sheep exports go to the EU, and that:

If we are exposed to a common customs tariff because we do not have free access to Europe, the effect will be significant, in excess of 30% tariffs. For an industry and a sector in the industry that is already in very marginal existence, that then poses huge problems to viability in the uplands, for instance, going forward.

Mr Breitmeyer indicated that beef farms would face even higher tariffs, potentially in excess of 50%. The Wildfowl Wetlands Association highlighted that in 2014, the average Most Favourable Nation (default rate) tariff on dairy imports into the EU was 36%: these tariffs are set by the WTO and would apply to trade between the UK and the EU. Changes in tariffs and subsidies in New Zealand in the 1980s required rapid adjustment by farming businesses to increase specialisation and efficiency.

The Environmental Audit Committee's report also picks up on concerns around how non-tariff barriers such as food and welfare standards will be picked up in any trade negotiations, and the risk of trade offs with other industrial sectors that could be beneficial for the UK impacting on agricultural trade and standards. It summarised some of the concerns overall as regards trade as follows, but with a particular focus on the environment:

16. Leaving the EU will bring significant changes in the relationship between UK farmers and the international market, including risks such as the introduction of tariffs and non-tariff barriers when selling to the EU and a reduction in barriers to entry for other countries selling to the UK. Were this to happen, it would put UK farmers at a competitive disadvantage. If farmers are forced to compete on price alone they may put pressure on Government to reduce environmental standards to help them do this. Such a lowering of standards would not only be environmentally damaging but could make farming itself less sustainable. Changes to trade arrangements risk making it much harder to design a future UK environmental policy capable of achieving the Government's environmental ambitions; management of this risk

---

<sup>30</sup> Environmental Audit Committee, [\*The Future of the Natural Environment after the EU Referendum\*](#), Sixth Report of Session 2016-17, 4 January 2017, HC 599

requires the involvement of both the Department for International Trade and the Department for Exiting the EU, as well as Defra.

Whilst there are concerns over the potential impact trade agreements could have on agriculture, the Government have stated they wish to grow food exports following Brexit. For example, in her speech to the Oxford Farming Conference, Andrea Leadsom identified this as a key priority and highlighted some of the areas of current and future growth for UK food exports around the world.<sup>31</sup>

## Food and drink exports

In the year to September 2016, 72% of UK food and non-alcoholic drink exports were to the EU (worth £7.2 billion) and 28% were to other countries (worth £2.9 billion). Over the past decade the proportion of exports that go to non-EU countries has risen.<sup>32</sup>

The UK imports more food and non-alcoholic drink than it exports – in 2015, it imported almost three times as much, with the majority of imports from the EU.<sup>33</sup>

---

<sup>31</sup> "[Environment Secretary sets out ambition for food and farming industry](#)", DEFRA, 4 January 2017

<sup>32</sup> Food and Drink Federation, [Q3 2016 Export Statistics](#) (last reviewed 21 Nov 2016)

<sup>33</sup> Food and Drink Federation, [UK-EU food and drink statistics](#) (last reviewed 8 July 2016)

## 2. News Articles

Guardian

### **Of course farmers fear Brexit, but it could save the British countryside**

George Monbiot 11 January 2017

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/jan/11/farmers-fear-brexit-save-british-countryside-european-subsidy-wildlife-agriculture>

BBC News Online

### **Number of Scottish tourism workers rises by 11%**

11 January 2017

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-edinburgh-east-fife-38586977>

Scotsman

### **Brexit vote sends shock waves through rural Scotland**

Brian Henderson 30 November 2016

<http://www.scotsman.com/business/companies/farming/brexit-vote-sends-shock-waves-through-rural-scotland-1-4304728>

Independent

### **Brexit is a 'once-in-a-generation' chance to restore our green and pleasant land, conservationists say**

Ian Johnston 30 September 2016

<http://www.independent.co.uk/environment/brexit-save-wildlife-nature-rspb-wwf-farming-agriculture-a7340161.html>

Guardian

### **Theresa May announces £40m fund to boost post-Brexit UK tourism**

Jessica Elgot 26 August 2016

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/aug/26/theresa-may-announces-40m-fund-to-boost-post-brexit-uk-tourism>

Telegraph

**Farmers and rural business in limbo amid Brexit cash freeze**

John Bingham 2 August 2016

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/08/02/farmers-and-rural-business-in-limbo-amid-brexit-cash-freeze/>

## 3. Press releases

### National Farmers' Union

#### 'A prosperous countryside for all the post-Brexit aim'

11 December 2016

President Meurig Raymond looks at the current farming landscape, and the work the NFU is doing on behalf of members.

He writes:

As I write the High Court has ruled that Parliament must vote on the formal process of the UK leaving the EU. Theresa May's Government is appealing to the Supreme Court and the Prime Minister insists that Article 50 will be invoked by the end of March.

There is no doubt that the political wheels are turning with a ferocious intensity. But we must not lose sight of our clear goal for British farming – a competitive, profitable and progressive sector that delivers for the nation and beyond on food, jobs, the environment, as well as energy, plant and animal health.

The NFU's [position on essential access to labour, to the single market and future trading relationships beyond the EU](#), were formalised last month by NFU Council after our 55,000 members were consulted.

Our commodity boards are now working with the NFU's policy board to define the detail that will form the basis for our negotiations with Defra on the new domestic agricultural policy.

A prosperous countryside for all, one based on farming with food production at its core, must be the ambition as the UK looks to exit the EU. We will be focusing on a strong trade deal for UK farming, horticulture and food sectors, one that does not disadvantage us from our EU competitors, and one that will enable the government of the day to play its part in sustaining a competitive farming industry within the UK.

We have held numerous meetings with the UK farming unions along with other farm organisations, food processors and retailers, seeking to build alliances which will enable us all to deliver a single, strong message on trade and labour.

And we are looking to build meaningful coalitions with partners who share these common goals. Our focus will be fierce as we strive to get the best deal for our members. A prosperous countryside for all, one based on farming with food production at its core, must be the ambition as the UK looks to exit the EU. [You can visit our Brexit news pages on NFUonline here.](#)

*"A prosperous countryside for all, one based on farming with food production at its core, must be the ambition as the UK looks to exit the EU"*

Working with you, the message from NFU members is clear.

Our work must reflect and run in tandem to the machinations of government. That is why [we have built a new directorate to shadow the Government's Brexit department](#) and I am delighted to welcome back to the NFU as director of this department Nick Von Westenholz. We are also making further investment to strengthen our London office to

ensure that our lobbying in Westminster reaches the right people with the right power and at the right time. These further measures will enhance the capability of the NFU to better argue the case for a profitable and innovative farming sector for the future.

Beyond Brexit, there is much on my mind, as I am sure there is for many of you. [In December it is imperative that farmers receive their farm payments to ease the considerable cash flow pressures that are on the industry at this time.](#) We will continue to hold the RPA to account if it does not deliver on its promise of 90% of farmers to be paid by the end of December.

I must thank and congratulate everyone who has been involved in a highly successful badger cull in the ten areas over the previous few months. Your success acts as a clear example to others in areas where TB remains persistent and high to organise and apply for licences for next year. I remain absolutely convinced that this policy, as part of the Government's wider TB strategy, is the only way that we are going to eradicate this terrible disease which threatens to destroy so many of our members' livelihoods.

And with the re-registration for glyphosate only 14 months away, [the NFU is developing an economic and environmental impact assessment to make the case for re-licensing.](#) We will be looking to our membership to lobby MPs and MEPs and repeat what you did so brilliantly during the last debate on this issue. Farming without glyphosate has been likened to farming without tractors. We must continue to make our voices heard.

I am delighted to see so many members playing their part in shaping our industry and also promoting the best of British farming to the general public. The NFU again took to the streets of London with [a group of young farmers for the Lord Mayor's Show.](#) In the past two years the NFU has featured live on the BBC's coverage, putting our industry in a positive spotlight in front of millions of viewers.

Our young farmers did us proud again this year, ensuring those watching heard our calls as to why and how they can back British farming.

## **National Farmers' Union**

### **UK's food industry: 'Access to single market and labour vital'**

**6 December 2016**

*In brief...*

*- UK's largest food producers call for continued access to labour and best possible Single Market access after Brexit*

*- 75 of the UK's largest food producing organisations – with a turnover of more than £92 billion and employing almost a million people – come together for the first time*

*- Letter to the Prime Minister calls on Government to realise the opportunities of Brexit for UK's largest manufacturing sector*

The largest-ever coalition of UK food producers has come together to call for tariff-free access to the Single Market and continued access to a

competent and reliable workforce, in order for British food and farming to flourish post-Brexit.

[In a letter to the Prime Minister coordinated by the UK's farming unions](#), 75 organisations have pledged support for a positive, bold and ambitious vision for the sector post-Brexit. But they also signal that food security, food safety and hygiene, stewardship of the countryside and affordable food is at risk if Ministers fail to deliver continued access to labour and the best possible Single Market access. [Read the letter here](#).

[See how the coalition made media waves today here](#).

[Read our vision for post-Brexit agriculture here](#).

The organisations represent some of the UK's best known companies, with a turnover of more than £92 billion and employing almost a million people. Signatories include Sainsbury's, Marks and Spencer, Dairy Crest, Morrisons, Müller and Weetabix, and scores of other organisations representing food production from farm to fork.

Food production is the UK's largest manufacturing sector, bigger than the automotive and aerospace sectors combined. The letter argues that a Brexit settlement which recognises the critical role of the UK food chain will demonstrate how Brexit can be beneficial for the UK economy as well as UK food production.

The letter makes clear that Britain's farmers and food producers stand ready to work with the Government and calls on the Prime Minister to put Britain's food at the centre of Brexit negotiations.

Commenting on the letter, NFU President Meurig Raymond said: "Brexit creates an enormous opportunity for farming, food production and for Britain. But to deliver this new future, we must secure the best possible access to the Single Market and continued access to a competent and reliable workforce. Getting this right will set the foundations for a successful new British agricultural policy.

"Agriculture is a litmus-test for the Government's Brexit negotiations. As the sector most heavily impacted by the referendum outcome, if the Government can make British farming a success post-Brexit then it will be the clearest indication that the country can succeed outside Europe."

[The NFU's vision for the sector has also been published. Read it here](#).

*Who signed the letter?*

2 Sisters Food group  
AB Connect part of AB Agri  
ABP Food Group UK  
AH Worth & Co Ltd  
Apetito  
Arla Foods UK plc  
Baileys Turkeys Ltd  
Berry Gardens  
BerryWorld Ltd  
Branston Holdings Ltd  
Bumble Hole Foods Ltd



C&J Meats  
Capestone Organic Poultry Ltd  
Cargill, Incorporated.  
Chippindale Foods  
Cobb Vantress Europe Ltd  
Cobrey Farms  
Country Land and Business Association Ltd  
Crosse & Blackwell  
Dairy Crest Ltd  
Dawn Meats  
Dovecote Park Ltd  
Dunbia  
Euro Quality Lambs Ltd  
  
Eurostock Food Group  
Fayrefield Foods  
Foyle Food Group Ltd  
Fresca Group Ltd  
Graham's Family Dairy  
G's Growers Ltd  
Hewitts' Wholesales  
Hillier Nurseries Ltd  
Humphrey Farms Ltd  
Hy-line UK Ltd  
Joice and Hill  
J Sainsbury PLC  
Kelly Turkeys  
Lactalis McLelland UK  
Linden Food Group  
Marks and Spencer plc  
Mash Direct Ltd  
Meadow Foods Ltd  
M.H. Poskitt Ltd  
Monaghan Mushrooms  
Müller UK & Ireland  
Muntons plc  
Natures Way Foods Ltd  
Neame Lea Nursery Ltd  
  
Noble Foods Ltd  
Northern Ireland Meat Exporters' Association  
NIMEA Ltd  
Oakland Farm Eggs Ltd  
OMSCo  
PD Hook / Hook 2 Sisters  
Poupart Produce  
Produce World Group Ltd  
Puffin Produce Ltd  
Randall Parker Food Group  
Riviera Produce Ltd  
Scotbeef Ltd  
South Caernarfon Creameries Ltd

Sunrise Poultry Farms Ltd  
The Newey Group  
Traditional Norfolk Poultry Ltd  
Valefresco Ltd  
WD Meats  
Weetabix Ltd  
Withers Farm  
Wm Morrisons Supermarkets plc (inconjunction with Woodheads)  
Wyke Farms

### **Scottish Fishermen's Federation**

#### **SFF lays out Brexit fishing requirements to Commons Select Committee on exiting the EU**

**December 19, 2016**

At an evidence session of the Commons Brexit Select Committee today (19 December) at Aberdeen University, Bertie Armstrong from the Scottish Fishermen's Federation and Michael Bates from the Scottish Seafood Association together laid out the considerable prize that Brexit will bring for sustainable food production and the revitalisation of coastal communities.

The principal points made in response to questioning were:

- A return to the normal condition, under International Law, of beneficial stewardship of the seafood resource in the extensive and very rich Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) surrounding our nation. Presently, 58% of the fish and shellfish caught in our EEZ are taken by non-UK EU boats. As explained to the committee, this is far from normal when compared with Coastal States such as Norway. Rebalancing this would simply be a return to normality that would produce real increases in economic activity for both catching and the shore-side processing sector and beyond.
- Regarding access to the EU single market – the proven ability of the industry to secure new markets was explained to the committee, using the example of market loss and replacement when EU sanctions were applied to Russia. Change will present challenges, for sure, but also opportunities. The possibility of tariffs shouldn't terrify – the average WTO seafood tariff is 5 – 10%, whereas we have seen currency fluctuations of up to 20% to our exporting advantage over the last six months.
- "We need access to other EU members' waters". This myth was laid to rest at the committee meeting. We do not need such access as we catch only around 15% of our fish elsewhere. In any case, mutual access can be negotiated, but only on beneficial terms to our nation, as is the case with other Coastal States such as Norway, Iceland and the Faroes.

- “Fish know no boundaries”. Myth number two was laid to rest at the committee meeting. Fish have no idea about geo-political boundaries, but do know all about biological and ecological ones. That’s why other EU Member States want access to our waters; that’s where the fish are.
- EU manpower – this was particularly relevant to the processing sector and both industry representatives recognised the challenge but made it clear that increased opportunity will mean increased security. It is a challenge that can be met.

In a joint statement after the select committee meeting, Bertie Armstrong and Michael Bates said: “The point most strongly made was that the seafood in our EEZ is a fundamental natural resource which, unlike oil, gas and coal is a wholly renewable resource if looked after. It will still be there in 500 years’ time and is therefore something permanent that should not to be traded away for short-term expediency.

“Markets and manpower are challenges to be met, not stoppers. Give us the increased raw material and we will deliver the rest.”

## **NFU Scotland**

### **Union Outlines Brexit Priorities to Department for Exiting the European Union**

**12 December 2016**

With three months to go until Brexit is triggered, NFU Scotland has used a Westminster meeting to reaffirm its priorities as the UK looks to negotiate an exit from the European Union.

A team from NFU Scotland, including President Allan Bowie; Chief Executive Scott Walker; Director of Policy Jonnie Hall and Parliamentary Officer Clare Slipper met today (12 December) with David Jones MP, Minister of State at the recently created Department for Exiting the European Union.

At the meeting in London, the Union laid out what it believes needs to be done to secure productive agriculture in Scotland.

Speaking from London, Mr Bowie said: “The UK Government is already in the process of establishing its priorities and it is vitally important that we engage with them now and make sure they are clear on what Scottish farmers and crofters want.

“There is strong recognition that Scottish agriculture’s needs from Brexit negotiations will differ from the rest of the UK and that this must be a factor under any future arrangements. There are already marked differences between different parts of the UK. In Scotland, for example,

we have opted to use part of our existing support package to target key sectors like beef and hill sheep and the ability of Scotland to make such decisions will clearly need to be maintained.

“While assurances have been given about support levels during the Brexit negotiating period, we pressed the case for funding levels to be maintained once we are outside of the EU and that they go hand-in-hand with an agricultural policy, focussed on active production, that fits with Scottish agriculture’s needs.

“That requires a future UK agricultural policy that is truly representative of all parts of the UK and recognises the differences and the drivers of the industry in Scotland.

“We must make the most of the opportunities for our farming, food and drink sectors that Brexit presents. We can support jobs and grow income but only if we prioritise the needs of farming.

“The importance of a trade deal with Europe, future trading arrangements with the rest of the world and access to non-UK labour were all issues discussed in our valuable discussions with the Minister.

“And Scotland’s requirements go further, stretching into research funding and capacity to underpin innovation; the protection of branding for renowned Scottish products, and the regulatory framework that governs standards.

“We thank the Minister for his time today. Speaking to the right people at the right time is going to be key in the months ahead. Big decisions will be taken that will determine the future of agriculture for generations to come. NFUS will make sure that the people deciding our future will hear what we need and want.”

## **Scotland’s Rural College**

### **Brexit fears may lead to farmers’ early retirement says new SRUC report**

**29th November 2016**

One in five Scottish farmers and crofters may retire early due to fears over Brexit, according to a Scotland’s Rural College (SRUC) survey.

Over half of those surveyed say Brexit increases business uncertainty – this may lead to lower on-farm investment that will have negative consequences for the wider rural economy.

The survey findings were revealed today in *Rural Scotland in Focus 2016* - the fourth edition of the biennial report produced by SRUC’s Rural Policy Centre. The report argues that in an ageing industry more control

must be passed to younger people who may be more ready to adopt the new approaches that often drive business improvements.

Steven Thomson, Senior Agricultural Economist with SRUC, said: “Brexit is clearly causing uncertainty – and some farmers have told us that means they are thinking of retiring earlier than planned. Scottish agriculture is used to change. Some of that has been in response to market demands and environmental pressure, but a key driver has been the various CAP regimes. Our report shows how vital that support has been - and still is - to the industry, especially the beef and sheep sectors.

“Under Brexit, we don’t know what will replace it yet but assume there will be budgetary pressures - meaning innovation and new approaches will be key to making farming more resilient. Being traditionally unsupported by the CAP, soft fruit growers, pig producers and others have shown the way. It is no coincidence they tend to be run by a younger generation – ready and able to grab opportunities, adopting new technologies and research ideas.”

Rural Scotland in Focus 2016 presents evidence and analysis around topics including the variety of land ownership models, forestry and woodland, the increasing economic significance of other rural businesses the success or otherwise of community-focused policies. It was launched today at the Macdonald Hotel, Holyrood before an invited audience of rural stakeholders and MSPs.

The opening chapter on Scottish farming and crofting gives a revealing insight into the readiness of that industry’s sectors for the challenges faced. One third of farmers surveyed as part of a customer satisfaction survey indicated that with Brexit they are likely to need to increase off-farm income or diversify their businesses.

That theme links to later chapters including the future for woodland and forestry in Scotland. Against a shortfall in meeting vital planting targets there are tensions between ensuring forestry remains commercially productive while contributing to significant social and environmental objectives.

The report argues many farmers and landowners still don’t see the value of integrating more woodland into their farming businesses while some foresters don’t see the need to increase the resilience of their woodland for the long term and calls for more leadership to change attitudes.

Farming and forestry often tend to dominate rural policy discussion but the report urges policy-makers to look beyond the land-based sector to the 37,000 small and medium sized enterprises in rural Scotland which operate outside the primary sector.

The authors argue: “With Brexit we need to understand the characteristics, needs and contributions of all of Scotland’s businesses more than ever.” They stress a lack of evidence and knowledge has fed false assumptions that the rural economy means agriculture, and that cities are the only engines for growth. Yet the success of businesses involved wildlife tourism, food and drink, energy production or a wide range of service-related activities all challenge these assumptions.

Report editor Professor Sarah Skerratt believes documents like the Scottish Government's Future of Scottish Agriculture could provide a starting point for establishing a rural strategy post Brexit, but not at the expense of communities or SMEs.

She said: "Rural communities and businesses are resourceful, innovative and co-operative. These are qualities all those involved in the rural economy must adopt. But to be effective that must be within a coherent, overarching strategy, taking account of the possible conflicts and properly monitored so it can be adapted based on real evidence. That way we can have a greener, smarter and more prosperous Scotland."

[Download the full RSiF 2016 report](#)

## **CLA (Country Land and Business Association)**

### **Brexit risks for British countryside must be addressed in bespoke tourism plan**

**02 September 2016**

Tourism businesses in the countryside are being held back due to the uncertainty of Brexit, leading to fears of under-investment in rural areas just as the Prime Minister suggests Brits 'staycation', according to the CLA.

In response to the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Efra) Select Committee inquiry into tourism's role in supporting rural growth in England, the CLA which represents landowners, farmers and rural businesses has called for a bespoke plan to address the challenges faced by rural tourism businesses such as poor broadband and lack of investment. The submission comes in the week after the Prime Minister announced a national tourism plan.

The CLA has criticised the National Tourism Action Plan for failing to address core concerns specific to rural areas or address concerns about funding currently provided through the EU for economic development initiatives that support tourism in rural Britain.

CLA President Ross Murray said: "We want to encourage more visitors to stay in the beautiful British countryside and enjoy all the activities it has to offer. Tourism supports rural businesses and local communities and already provides around £11 billion a year to the English economy, but investment will be lost if barriers are not broken down to ensure rural tourism is sustained through Brexit and beyond.

"Rural tourism is unique and must have bespoke policies which meet its needs. We recommend the introduction of a new rural-focussed policy which complements the current government agenda on tourism. The Government has to recognise that rural tourism is different from urban, and encourage greater collaboration between the industry, DCMS and Defra."

Mr Murray added that that the current level of funding to develop rural tourism in a post-Brexit world must be retained to give confidence to rural businesses to invest in the future.

He said: "Industry and Government need to start work now on establishing how vital funding that supports tourism across the countryside, and is currently provided under EU funding streams, will be replaced up to and beyond the UK's exit from the EU."

The CLA's own Five Point Plan for rural tourism intended to complement the Tourism Action Plan by DCMS includes:

1. *Removing fragmentation*: a new structure that encourages and fosters greater collaboration between the rural tourism industry and government that promotes growth, innovation and productivity.
2. *Boosting apprenticeships and skills*: development and implementation of a dedicated apprenticeship programme that can actually meet the needs of rural business.
3. *Creating a dedicated rural funding mechanism*: post-Brexit it will be crucial for the Government to put in place a definitive, long-term funding programme that can work with the private sector to increase levels of investment.
4. *Improving digital connectivity*: access to a range of alternative options and technologies that suit the needs of these businesses, exploring community and business collaboration and a dedicated training and skills programme to allow businesses to exploit the advantages of the digital revolution.
5. *Clear and far-sighted intelligence*: creation of a rural tourism intelligence function between government and the industry so the right business decisions can be made based on the most up to date statistical evidence that can reinforce economic growth.

Read the CLA's submission response in full [here](#)

## 4. Parliamentary material

### Debates

#### **Westminster Hall debate: Leaving the EU: European Social Funding in Scotland and the UK**

HC Deb 10 January 2016 | Vol 619cc26-31WH

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2017-01-10/debates/17011053000002/LeavingTheEUEuropeanSocialFundingInScotlandAndTheUK>

#### **Opposition Day debate: The Government's plan for Brexit**

HC Deb 7 December 2016 | Vol 618 cc220-336

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2016-12-07/debates/CA09D9B2-9634-41C8-8979-8B9CD82DBB8F/TheGovernmentSPlanForBrexit>

#### **Commons debate: UK Fishing Industry**

HC Deb 1 December 2016 | Vol 617 cc1727-1775

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2016-12-01/debates/FCB2C57B-CC9B-4B52-9470-0585114E3AF5/UKFishingIndustry>

#### **Westminster Hall debate: Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme**

HC Deb 30 November 2016 | Vol 617 cc555-578WH

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2016-11-30/debates/9F85AF34-B112-4AA8-BBF7-6ECB4542EC14/SeasonalAgriculturalWorkersScheme>

**Lords debate That this House takes note of the Report from the European Union Committee *Responding to Price Volatility: Creating a More Resilient Agricultural Sector* (15th Report, Session 2015–16, HL Paper 146).**

HL Deb 22 November 2016 | Vol 776 cc1905-1930

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/Lords/2016-11-22/debates/436AB8F4-5557-457E-9768-CD01D2B8F98A/AgriculturalSector\(EUCReport\)](https://hansard.parliament.uk/Lords/2016-11-22/debates/436AB8F4-5557-457E-9768-CD01D2B8F98A/AgriculturalSector(EUCReport))



**Westminster Hall debate Leaving the EU – UK Tourism****HC Deb 12 October 2016 | Vol 615 cc147-164 WH**

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2016-10-12/debates/AFBF940F-0A01-4D8F-8ED4-2FA7C14D01C0/LeavingTheEUUKTourism>

**PQs**

[Brexit: Support for Farming](#)

**Asked by: Baroness McIntosh of Pickering**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the remarks by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs at the Oxford Farming Conference on 4 January, when they intend to publish their proposals for the support to be given to farming following the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union.

**Answered by: The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Lord Gardiner of Kimble)**

My Lords, I declare my farming interests as set out in the register. Farming is uniquely important in producing food, to the environment, for supporting the rural economy and in shaping the countryside. My department is carrying out detailed analysis on future agricultural policy. Before issuing detailed proposals, we will shortly be publishing for consultation two Green Papers setting out our ambitions for food and farming and for the environment. This will be a crucial stage in the ongoing discussion on policy options with our stakeholders as we shape future arrangements.

**HL Deb 11 January 2017 | Vol 777 cc1954-7**

[EU Grants and Loans](#)

**Asked by: Shannon, Jim**

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what his policy is on matching funding from the EU for community and farming purposes as part of the negotiations on the UK leaving the EU.

**Answering member: Mr David Jones | Department: Department for Exiting the European Union**

This Government understands our rural and agricultural communities' need for clarity and certainty, and has provided commitments to continue funding. On 13 August, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that the UK Government would guarantee CAP Pillar 1 payments throughout the UK until 2020. On the 3rd October, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that the UK Government would

guarantee CAP Pillar 2 funding for rural development policies, including agri-environment schemes signed before the Autumn Statement and those signed after the Autumn Statement providing they are in line with strategic domestic priorities and are good value for money. Defra will be engaging widely on future policy options in due course.

**HC Deb 15 December 2016 | PQ 56851**

[Leaving the EU: Tariffs](#)

**Asked by: Kate Green (Stretford and Urmston) (Lab)**

Food production and food processing is an important part of the north-west economy that is not necessarily susceptible to export beyond the European Union because of different consumer tastes and preferences in the rest of the world. What negotiations are the Government considering or already undertaking to protect this important industry? Can the Minister confirm that specialist negotiators who understand the industry are in place to carry out those negotiations?

**Answering member: Jesse Norman | Department: Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy**

That question is really as much for the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs as for us. Nevertheless, it is true that tastes are expanding around the world, and therefore one sees every opportunity for British food producers to expand their world markets in the days to come.

**HC Deb 13 December 2016 | Vol 618 c598**

[Agriculture: Skilled Workers](#)

**Asked by: Robertson, Mr Laurence**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps she is taking to ensure that there is no shortfall in the number of people with adequate skills to take up jobs in agriculture after the UK leaves the EU; and if she will make a statement.

**Answering member: George Eustice | Department: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs**

The agriculture sector offers a range of exciting careers, including for people with scientific, technical and engineering skills. It is vital that the industry invests in attracting and developing the workforce it needs for the future. We are working closely with industry and the Department for Education to ensure that reforms to apprenticeships and Post-16 Technical Education provide clear pathways into agricultural careers and equip people with the skills businesses need.

**HC Deb 12 December 2016 | PQ 56473**

[Beaches: Standards](#)

**Asked by: Thomas, Derek**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what her plans are for replacing the EU Blue Flag Scheme to ensure the cleanliness of beaches, protection of wildlife and the enforcement of sea regulations after the UK has left the EU.

**Answering member: Dr Thérèse Coffey | Department: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs**

Blue Flag is an international award certified by the Foundation for Environmental Education and is independent of the UK Government and the EU.

The Secretary of State has made clear that we will keep working to improve our environment and make sure it is protected for future generations.

**HC Deb 29 November 2016 | PQ 54862**

[Fisheries: Patrol Craft](#)

**Asked by: Moon, Mrs Madeleine**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment she has made of the need for offshore patrol vessels capable of patrolling the UK's Exclusive Economic Zone once the UK leaves the EU; and if she will make a statement.

**Answering member: George Eustice | Department: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs**

The Royal Navy provides up to three vessels for the purposes of fisheries control, including the enforcement of EU fishing quotas in the offshore waters of England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Fisheries control in the waters off Scotland is the responsibility of the Scottish Government.

Cefas has one vessel which undertakes scientific research in offshore waters, including the monitoring of fish stocks.

Work is also being conducted to scope the utility of using other vessels, such as those owned and operated by Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities, for offshore monitoring.

Operating outside the Common Fisheries Policy will give us the opportunity to establish a new fisheries regime that better meets the UK's needs. We are reviewing all aspects of fisheries management, including the future requirements for patrol vessels, and will work with stakeholders, Devolved Administrations and other Government Departments to agree the most effective way to achieve this.

**HC Deb 29 November 2016 | PQ 54226**

[Waste Disposal: Seas and Oceans](#)

**Asked by: Coyle, Neil**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps her Department plans to take to maintain protection for coastal towns from the sea dumping of waste after the UK leaves the EU.

**Answering member: Dr Thérèse Coffey | Department: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs**

The UK's Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (MCAA) includes a marine licensing regime, under Part 4, for most marine activities. The Act regulates dumping of waste at sea including navigational dredging and disposal under the Waste Framework Directive.

The Prime Minister has announced a Repeal Bill to convert EU law into domestic British law, to provide certainty for consumers, workers and businesses by maintaining existing laws.

As domestic legislation the MCAA will continue to be in place when the UK has left the EU. There is no current intention to change the regulatory framework in respect of the dumping of waste in the marine environment.

In Scotland this is covered by the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010.

**HC Deb 25 November 2016 | PQ 53931**

[Farmers and Environmental Groups \(Funding\)](#)

**Asked by: Lucy Frazer (South East Cambridgeshire) (Con)**

What steps her Department is taking to ensure that the level of funding for (a) farmers and (b) environmental groups is maintained after the UK leaves the EU.

**Answering member: The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Andrea Leadsom) | Department: Environment, Food and Rural Affairs**

My top priority on becoming DEFRA Secretary was agreeing with the Treasury continuity of support for farmers. We are guaranteeing that the agricultural sector will receive the same level of pillar one funding until 2020, which has provided vital certainty, but we are also guaranteeing agri-environment and rural development schemes under pillar two, which are vital to making sure we take every opportunity to improve our environment.

**HC Deb 24 November 2016 | Vol 617 c1012**

[Rural Economy: Leaving the EU](#)**Asked by: Neil Carmichael (Stroud) (Con)**

Does the Minister agree that if we are to make a realistic attempt at becoming economically productive, we have to make sure that our infrastructure works—and that includes the internet? Small businesses in rural areas would be able to thrive if it did.

**Answering member: Dr Coffey | Department: Environment, Food and Rural Affairs**

My hon. Friend is right to stress the importance of access to the internet, and to other mobile network operators. That is why the universal service obligation has been enshrined in law through the Digital Economy Bill, and will be in place by the end of this Parliament.

**HC Deb 24 November 2016 | Vol 617 c1008**

[Rural Economy: Leaving the EU](#)**Asked by: Ms Ahmed-Sheikh**

Scotland's food and drink exports are worth more than £2 billion to our national economy, and businesses in my constituency of Ochil and South Perthshire contribute significantly to that total. However, many in the agricultural workforce are seasonal workers from other EU states who take advantage of the single market's free movement policy. Given that, can the Minister provide a guarantee to rural businesses in my constituency and beyond that those seasonal workers who come to Scotland for produce-picking and food and fish processing will still be able to work here after the UK has left the EU?

**Answered by: Dr Coffey | Department: Environment, Food and Rural Affairs**

My right hon. and hon. Friends are well aware of this issue, which is not unique to the hon. Lady's constituency. She will recognise that this will be part of ongoing discussions within Government and, of course, with the EU.

**HC Deb 24 November 2016 | Vol 617 c1006**

**Asked by: Ms Tasmina Ahmed-Sheikh (Ochil and South Perthshire) (SNP)**

What assessment she has made of the potential effect of the UK's decision to leave the EU on the rural economy.

**Answering member: The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Dr Thérèse Coffey) | Department: Environment, Food and Rural Affairs**

Rural areas account for a quarter of all registered businesses in England. Small businesses continue to be an important part of the rural economy, with 29% of those employed in rural areas employed in small

businesses that have one to nine employees. Leaving the EU gives us an opportunity to have policies to support the rural economy that are bespoke to the needs of this country.

**HC Deb 24 November 2016 | Vol 617 c1006**

[Agriculture: Scotland](#)

**Asked by: Gethins, Stephen**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will make it her policy to seek access to the EU market under existing terms for Scottish agricultural firms after the UK leaves the EU.

**Answering member: George Eustice | Department: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs**

The Government is now preparing to negotiate our exit from the European Union. Defra is working with the Department for Exiting the European Union to look at future arrangements including for the UK's agri-food sector. As part of this, the Government will be working with the devolved administrations, including the Scottish Government, to take their needs and considerations into account as we negotiate and deliver the best possible deal for this country in leaving the European Union.

**HC Deb 08 November 2016 | PQ 51651**

[Fisheries](#)

**Asked by: Mann, Scott**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she plans to support fishing communities to take advantage of British territorial fishing waters after the UK leaves the EU.

**Answering member: George Eustice | Department: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs**

Our fishing industry is of vital importance to coastal communities and leaving the EU creates the opportunity to improve the management of UK industry in the future.

Defra officials will be working with the Department for Exiting the European Union to look at future policies for fisheries. We will continue to work closely with industry and other key stakeholders to develop these new arrangements.

HC Deb 25 October 2016 | PQ 48885

[Common Agricultural Policy and Common Fisheries Policy](#)

**Asked by: Johnson, Diana**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether it is her policy to negotiate to participate in the (a) Common

Agricultural Policy and (b) Common Fisheries Policy after the UK leaves the EU.

**Answering member: George Eustice | Department: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs**

Exit from the EU presents us with a unique opportunity to review the way we manage our farming and fisheries sectors and design a set of policies tailored to the needs of the UK. These sectors are immensely valuable and supporting them will form an important part of our exit from the EU. The Secretary of State, and her ministerial team and cross-Whitehall colleagues, are therefore working with industry, rural and coastal communities, and the wider public to shape our plans for farming and fisheries outside the EU.

**HC Deb 25 October 2016 | PQ 49339**

[Fisheries: Subsidies](#)

**Asked by: Gethins, Stephen**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will make it her policy to maintain the level of UK and EU funding for the fishing industry and communities as part of the UK's negotiations on leaving the EU.

**Answering member: George Eustice | Department: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs**

The Chancellor has set out that the guarantee for European Structural and Investment Fund projects announced in August will be extended to the point at which the UK departs the EU. This guarantee includes the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) and provides further certainty to those fishers, seafood businesses and other organisations seeking support. Where projects secure EMFF funding before we exit, payments will be guaranteed even after the UK has left the EU.

Defra officials will be working with the Department for Exiting the EU to look at future policies for fisheries. We will continue to work closely with relevant industry and other key stakeholders to develop these new arrangements.

**HC Deb 17 October 2016 | PQ 47549**

## Early Day Motion

**EDM 593 (session 2016-17) 25 Oct 2016 |**

**Primary sponsor: Carmichael, Alistair |**

[AGRICULTURAL AND TRADE POLICY AFTER THE UK LEAVES THE EU](#)

That this House notes the importance of agriculture to Scotland's economy, especially to rural communities; further notes the current

uncertainty for farmers and crofters in Scotland caused by the decision for the UK to leave the EU; commends the positive and constructive efforts made by the National Farmers' Union of Scotland (NFUS) in giving leadership for the future direction of its industry and the communities that depend on it; welcomes the publication by the NFUS of *Beyond Brexit: A policy framework for Scottish agriculture* and *Beyond Brexit: A future trading framework for Scottish agriculture*; and calls on the Government to respond as quickly as possible to those publications and to engage directly with the NFUS and other farming and crofting representatives to design an agricultural policy for the future.



## 5. Useful links and further reading

### Further reading on fisheries:

MMO, [UK Sea Fisheries Statistics 2015](#), September 2016

Sea Fish, [The economic impacts of the UK sea fishing and fish processing sectors: An input-output analysis](#), 2014

House of Lords European Union Select Committee *Brexit: Fisheries* HL78 2016-17 17 December 2016

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201617/ldselect/ldeucom/78/78.pdf>

### Figures on the rural economy

Note that different parts of the UK use different definitions of “rural” and “urban”, so care should be taken in comparing figures.

Lords Library Note [Rural Economy: Key Statistics and Recent Developments](#) (April 2016)

Centre for Cities, [Trading Places: Why firms locate where they do](#), August 2016

Defra, [Rural economy - statistical indicators](#) (England)

Visit Britain, [Analysis by destination type](#) – covers rural and countryside tourism in England

Scottish Government, [Rural Scotland Key Facts](#)

Visit Scotland, [Nature based tourism](#)

Statistics for Wales, [Industrial sector of workers by size of Built Up Area, 2011](#), May 2015

Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, [Income and economy](#) – statistics for Northern Ireland, including on tourism

### Policy on the rural economy

Defra, [Economic growth in rural areas](#)

Scottish Government, [Farming and Rural Development](#)

Welsh Government, [Environment and countryside](#)

Northern Ireland Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, [Rural Development](#)

### Information on Brexit and the economy

House of Commons Library, [Brexit: trade aspects](#), September 2016

House of Commons Library, [Productivity in the UK](#), November 2016 – see section 6, Implications of Brexit

House of Commons Library, [Brexit: the next steps for the UK's withdrawal from the EU](#) – collection of resources including on the economy and trade

*The Implications of Brexit for Rural Scotland* John A Mitchell, Partner Anderson Strathern LLP 28 September 2016

[http://www.sruc.ac.uk/download/downloads/id/3158/the\\_implications\\_of\\_brexit\\_for\\_rural\\_scotland\\_-\\_john\\_mitchell\\_rural\\_partner\\_anderson\\_strathern](http://www.sruc.ac.uk/download/downloads/id/3158/the_implications_of_brexit_for_rural_scotland_-_john_mitchell_rural_partner_anderson_strathern)

*Rural Scotland in Focus 2016* Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) 29 November 2016

[http://www.sruc.ac.uk/downloads/download/1202/rural\\_scotland\\_in\\_focus\\_2016](http://www.sruc.ac.uk/downloads/download/1202/rural_scotland_in_focus_2016)

## Further reading (Agriculture)

House of Lords European Union Committee *Responding to Price Volatility: Creating a More Resilient Agricultural Sector* HL146 2015-16 16 May 2016

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201516/ldselect/ldeucom/146/146.pdf>

HM Treasury announcement *Chancellor Philip Hammond guarantees EU funding beyond date UK leaves the EU* 13 August 2016

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/chancellor-philip-hammond-guarantees-eu-funding-beyond-date-uk-leaves-the-eu>

HM Treasury announcement *Further certainty on EU funding for hundreds of British projects* 3 October 2016

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/further-certainty-on-eu-funding-for-hundreds-of-british-projects>

## Parliamentary briefings

- Briefings on the referendum decision to leave the EU and its aftermath are available via the regularly updated Commons Library webpage, [Brexit: the next steps for the UK's withdrawal from the EU](#).
- Commons Library briefing: [Brexit: Impact across policy areas](#)<sup>34</sup>
- Commons Library briefing: [EU Referendum: Impact on UK Agriculture Policy](#)<sup>35</sup>
- Commons Library briefing: [Sources of Statistics: Agriculture and Fisheries](#)<sup>36</sup>
- Commons Library *Second Reading* blog: [Troubled waters? Negotiating fish quotas post-Brexit](#)<sup>37</sup>

---

<sup>34</sup> CBP 07213, 26 August 2016

<sup>35</sup> CBP 07602, 26 May 2016

<sup>36</sup> SN 03835, 13 July 2016

<sup>37</sup> 7 October 2016

- Lords Library briefing: [\*British Farmers: Impact of Leaving the European Union\*](#)<sup>38</sup>

**From the Food and Drink Federation (a body representing the UK food industry)**

- [Post-referendum EU toolkit page](#)
- [Manifesto on a new UK-EU relationship](#)

H

## About the Library

The House of Commons Library research service provides MPs and their staff with the impartial briefing and evidence base they need to do their work in scrutinising Government, proposing legislation, and supporting constituents.

As well as providing MPs with a confidential service we publish open briefing papers, which are available on the Parliament website.

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in these publically available research briefings is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware however that briefings are not necessarily updated or otherwise amended to reflect subsequent changes.

If you have any comments on our briefings please email [papers@parliament.uk](mailto:papers@parliament.uk). Authors are available to discuss the content of this briefing only with Members and their staff.

If you have any general questions about the work of the House of Commons you can email [hcinfo@parliament.uk](mailto:hcinfo@parliament.uk).

## Disclaimer

This information is provided to Members of Parliament in support of their parliamentary duties. It is a general briefing only and should not be relied on as a substitute for specific advice. The House of Commons or the author(s) shall not be liable for any errors or omissions, or for any loss or damage of any kind arising from its use, and may remove, vary or amend any information at any time without prior notice.

The House of Commons accepts no responsibility for any references or links to, or the content of, information maintained by third parties. This information is provided subject to the [conditions of the Open Parliament Licence](#).