

21 senators urge UK to reject 'antiquated' EU food safety, biotech rules in new US trade deal

Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, and Science and member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture – sent a letter with 20 other senators to U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer, urging the administration to reach a U.S.-UK trade agreement that addresses the UK's unfair barriers to U.S. food producers.

Ambassador Robert Lighthizer
Office of the United States Trade Representative
600 17th Street NW
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Ambassador Lighthizer,

We support the administration's effort to negotiate a trade agreement with the United Kingdom (UK). Increasing economic commerce between our nations by reducing trade barriers, increasing investments and modernizing our trading relationship will benefit American producers and consumers.

U.S. food and agricultural producers face unfair barriers to market access in the UK largely as a result of the UK's former membership in the European Union (EU). The UK's decision to leave the EU offers a unique opportunity to address these trade barriers in a bilateral U.S.-UK trade agreement. In negotiations with the UK, we urge you to uphold and promote U.S. science-based food standards and work to address tariff and non-tariff barriers for U.S. agriculture.

American farmers and ranchers are committed to producing safe, nutritious, high quality food products. Our nation's food standards and regulations are among the highest in the world as a result of being developed on the principles of sound science, data and facts. The modern food production system in the United States has led to a safe and sustainable food supply depended upon by consumers around the world.

The science-based standards met by food producers, processors and manufacturers in our country ought to be reflected in each trade agreement negotiated by the U.S., including with the UK. Trade positions held by the EU that are based on antiquated and unscientific food standards should be rejected in an agreement with the UK, including those standards that block significant segments of U.S. beef, pork, dairy and poultry exports and discourage the use of biotechnology. Commonsense reforms to geographical indications policies and safeguards regarding the use of common food names should also be included in an agreement.

We are pleased the UK's negotiating objectives include improving trade on agricultural products as both nations stand to benefit from a trade agreement that recognizes modern food production methods. Basing food standards on sound science and addressing tariff and non-tariff barriers will ensure a level playing field for U.S. farmers, ranchers and food manufacturers, while also resulting in greater access to safe and

affordable food for UK consumers.

Thank you for your continued efforts to reach a U.S.-UK trade agreement that addresses trade barriers for U.S. agriculture.

Sincerely,

Sens. Pat Roberts (R-Kan.), Mike Enzi (R-Wyo.), John Cornyn (R-Texas), Richard Burr (R-N.C.), John Barrasso (R-Wyo.), John Boozman (R-Ark.), John Hoeven (R-N.D.), Deb Fischer (R-Neb.), Tom Cotton (R-Ark.), Steve Daines (R-Mont.), Mike Rounds (R-S.D.), Thom Tillis (R-N.C.), Joni Ernst (R-Iowa), Ben Sasse (R-Neb.), Todd Young (R-Ind.), Doug Jones (D-Ala.), Cindy Hyde-Smith (R-Miss.), Mike Bruan (R-Ind.), Josh Hawley (R-Miss.), and Kelly Loeffler (R-Ga.) joined the letter to Ambassador Lighthizer.

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