



Policy Insight Report

EDITION 6

ANALYSIS

- The upcoming 10% tariff on UK exports to the US signals potential trade tensions that could significantly impact British agricultural producers, at a time of existing supply chain vulnerabilities and price fluctuations.
- Farmers and food sector leaders have responded with calls for protection of domestic interests, while industry leaders noted cascading effects on rural communities and food security.

POLITICAL INSIGHTS

- UK farming sectors are preparing for a 10% US export tariff, while industry leaders urge protection of British agriculture interests in trade talks. Concerns have been raised over influx of cheaper imports with lower standards, with Henry Dimbleby commenting on implications for rural communities.
- UK officials are reportedly open to EU alignment on meat and dairy regulations, as well as European Court of Justice oversight ahead of May 19 UK-EU summit.
- DEFRA's latest food strategy stakeholder update notes engagement events starting in late May/June, the formation of a Citizens' Advisory Council, and the development of a 'food system outcomes framework' later this year.
- NFU has called for £5.6 billion Treasury investment for food security and border controls ahead of Spending Review.
- Government data shows 28% of children (4 million) in material deprivation with food bank usage rising.
- Public health minister Ashley Dalton clarified the forthcoming 9pm watershed and online restrictions on HFSS product advertising.
- Basic Income for Farmers (BI4Farmers) campaign's open letter co-signed by farmers and MPs, called on DEFRA to reinstate the Sustainable Farming Incentive, and introduce a basic income for agricultural workers.
- Former NFU President Baroness Minette Batters appointed by DEFRA to lead a farm profitability review as part of the government's New Deal for Farmers.
- The EFRA Committee letter to DEFRA minister on 23 April requested clarification on several points related to both the future of farming, and fisheries
- Parliamentary office POST has issued a new briefing on cultivated meat; DEFRA has published updated agricultural data on land use, crops, livestock and workforce.

MEDIA INSIGHTS

- The Guardian exposed how an orchestrated attack to discredit the EAT-Lancet report on sustainable diets sought to ignite culture wars. A new report is due later this year.
- BMJ investigated lobbying related to councils implementing local healthy food advertising policies.
- Guardian reported that large companies' HFSS food/drink advertising spend rose 26% in 2024, ahead of new restrictions set for October 2025.
- LBC published an opinion piece on public institutions' potential to support local food systems, by Julian Boys of the Centre for Local Economic Strategies.
- BBC Panorama aired an investigation into baby food pouches.

CIVIL SOCIETY UPDATES

- A new Nesta report warns the government against shifting obesity strategy focus from HFSS to ultra-processed foods.
- The Food Foundation explores the nature of corporate lobbying on food in this report and podcast.
- Youth activist organisation Bite Back exposed levels of outdoor junk food advertising in several cities, and staged a billboard takeover.
- A National Education Union survey finds that 63% of teachers use personal funds to pay for students' food.
- Riverford's Wicked Leeks blog explores the potential to scale up sustainable public food procurement.

