



**FUTURE
ADVOCACY**



**TRANSFORMING
UK FOOD
SYSTEMS**
Strategic Priorities Fund



Policy Insight Report

EDITION 7

OVERVIEW

- Two significant trade agreements mark a shift in UK food policy, with the UK-EU deal addressing post-Brexit Northern Ireland barriers and the UK-US agreement establishing new agricultural market access arrangements.

POLITICAL INSIGHTS

- UK-EU agri-food deal aims to reduce Northern Ireland-Great Britain trade barriers, enabling food products to "flow freely again". Government projects lower food prices and increased supermarket choice, and NFU welcomes the development whilst noting that "detail is king".
- US-UK trade agreement grants mutual agricultural market access, including beef and ethanol quotas, whilst preserving UK food standards. Farming sector concerned about "shouldering the burden" of trade concessions.
- DEFRA partially reopens the Sustainable Farming Incentive, allowing farmers who began applications within two months of 11 March to complete processes for grants up to £9,300. DEFRA also announced £30 million investment to increase Higher Level Stewardship payment rates.
- DEFRA announced new £360 million fund to support the growth of fishing and coastal sectors.
- HFSS food advertising restrictions delayed until January 2026, with new clause exempting brand advertising to be introduced, following confusion over enforcement guidelines.
- EFRA committee report on the Future of Farming recommends delaying agricultural inheritance tax reforms until 2027, calling for alternative approaches to protecting family farms.
- DEFRA appoints Nottingham food policy expert Paul Wilson to Farm Profitability Review, and AFN+ policy fellow Emily Norton as Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board Chair.
- Wales releases Community Food Strategy, recognising Local Food Partnerships as vital, committing over £2 million to local food initiatives and healthy food access.
- Wales launches healthy school food consultation, deadline for submission is 29 July.

MEDIA INSIGHTS

- Guardian investigation reveals food industry pressure removed references to ultra-processed foods from official guidance for retailers on healthier promotions.
- Chef Taz Khan MBE argues in the Independent that Britain's food system is at risk of rising food insecurity and import dependency, calling for urgent policy changes supporting British farmers and local production.
- New Nature.com mapping of country food self-sufficiency shows UK very low on fruit, vegetables, fish, legumes and starchy staples, but adequate for meat and dairy.
- Health Foundation CEO argues in the Financial Times about correlation between areas with poor health outcomes (including factors like UPF) and Reform UK's vote share, suggesting health inequalities may drive political disaffection.

CIVIL SOCIETY UPDATES

- NGO coalition wrote an open letter to Health Secretary Wes Streeting, demanding action on healthy, affordable food access following House of Lords Committee on Diet, Health and Obesity recommendations.
- A two-year survey from the Food, Farming and Countryside Commission shows strong public mandate for food system transformation.
- The Food Foundation early years nutrition report shows over one-third of parents cite price as a barrier to feeding 1-4 year olds preferred foods – with recommendations for action ahead of Child Poverty Strategy publication.
- Nesta analysis finds that UK statistics underestimate England's obesity rate, and minority ethnic group risks.
- CPRE publishes Farming on the Edge report on urban fringe farming.

