

Press release: Ministers host Agri-Tech discussions with key global investors

Attended by ministers from [BEIS](#), [Defra](#) and [DFID](#), the roundtable helped to realise further growth in overseas investment in the UK Agri-Tech industry as ministers reaffirmed their commitment to ensuring the UK becomes a world leader in agricultural technology, innovation and sustainability.

Hosted at 10 Downing Street, the event was the fourth in the government's series of investment roundtables which promote UK industry sector opportunities to a global audience, and drive foreign direct-investment into the UK as we prepare to leave the European Union.

Ministers discussed the government's strategic vision for the UK Agri-Tech sector with senior executives from across the industry, whose companies in total employ 10,000 people across the UK.

Companies who attended include AGCO, Alltech, BASF, Bayer Crop Science, Calysta, Elanco, Marine Harvest, MSD, Syngenta, Vitacress and Zoetis

Dr Fox and his colleagues together highlighted that:

- underpinned by a modern Industrial Strategy, the UK is at the forefront of Agri-Tech innovation and offers an established business-friendly environment for investors
- UK Government's commitment to the future success of the sector is clear: UK Government-funded agencies are investing £400 million in agri-food research, with an internationally competitive R&D tax credits scheme
- the recent [Agriculture Bill](#) also provides an further opportunity for Agri-Tech investors, aiming to help farmers deliver a cleaner and healthier environment through increased productivity and investment in the latest technology
- a new start-up visa, launching in Spring 2019, will also make the visa process faster for entrepreneurs to enter the UK

International Trade Secretary, Dr Liam Fox MP said:

Today's Agri-Tech roundtable is an excellent opportunity for the UK to further build on already strong relationships with investors, and for them to strengthen their ties with the UK science base and farming industry.

As an international economic department, we want to work with investors across the world to embrace technology and make the UK a global leader in agricultural productivity, improve competitiveness and sustainability.

In doing so, these investments will create jobs and prosperity for rural communities across the country.

Environment Secretary, Michael Gove MP, said:

The UK is a world-leader for talent in agriculture and technology, so there are real opportunities for our burgeoning Agri-Tech sector. Harnessing technology enables our hard-working farmers to become even more productive and environmentally efficient.

We are already seeing the rewards of investing in Agri-Tech, with further funding of around £30 million confirmed today for farmers to purchase hi-tech equipment. We know that by embracing technology – such as fruit ripeness spectrometers or calving detectors – farm businesses can become more efficient, productive and resilient.

Business and Industry Minister Richard Harrington said:

Agri-Tech businesses are revolutionising farming, from hands-free harvesting, to driverless vehicles and drones to plant and tend to crops. Through our modern [Industrial Strategy](#), we have already committed £90 million to transform food production, inspiring more innovative farming and boosting productivity and highly skilled jobs for the future.

New investment will put the UK at the forefront of robotics, AI and data science to meet the food demands of a growing population.

The UK's agriculture sector employs half a million people and contributes to the wider agri-food supply chain – valued at £112 billion in 2017 and employing 4 million people.

The roundtable comes at an opportunity moment for the government to engage with the Agri-Tech sector, as the UK looks to contribute to future global food security and international development by ensuring safe, healthy, nutritious food is affordable and accessible to all.

For further information, contact the Department for International Trade media and digital team at newsdesk@trade.gov.uk or on 020 7008 3333.

Press release: Cambridgeshire man sentenced to 8 months for illegal waste sites

On Tuesday 09 October 2018 Michael Newsome was sentenced to a total of 8 months imprisonment (4 months consecutive for each offence) suspended for 24 months. Newsome was also ordered to carry out 240 hours of unpaid work for the benefit of the community, ordered to pay a total of £12,131.90 in compensation to the landowners where he abandoned tyres and a contribution of £1,000 costs after pleading guilty to breaking the law in Peterborough and Whittlesey.

Peterborough Magistrates heard that Newsome, aged 28, of Overwater Close, Stukeley Meadows, Huntingdon, traded as Cambridgeshire Rubber Recycling Ltd and even advertised on Facebook as being licensed.

First he set up in Peterborough having registered an exemption that allowed him a limited number of tyres on site to be stored under set conditions for safety.

Mr Gurjit Bdesha, prosecuting for the Environment Agency, told the court that Newsome leased the Dickens Street site from an 82-year-old man to shred tyres, which he failed to do. Instead, he took well in excess of the number of tyres allowed under the exemption and stored them in a way that had no fire breaks.

Mr Bdesha said:

This was especially important as the site is in the middle of a residential area with the nearest home being 13 metres away. Tyres can combust and fire can easily spread.

Despite being asked to move the tyres, Newsome made no effort to clear the site and the landlord ejected him. He later broke into a lockaway on site, damaging the door, to take back equipment belonging to him. He left behind 87 tonnes of tyres (9,050) costing the landlord £8,121.

After being evicted Newsome took on a site at Lazy Acre Farm, Whittlesey and carried on business, failing to even register an exemption.

The landlord became worried at the number of tyres on site with no equipment to process them and asked him to leave.

Mr Bdesha continued:

The landlord was so desperate for Newsome to leave the site and

clear the tyres that he was prepared to waive rent arrears of £3,500 if he removed them. The tyres were left there.

At that site Newsome abandoned 117 tonnes of tyres (14,040).

Mr Bdesha told the court that the site was listed as a High Risk Fire site as the tyres were stored within 70 metres of the mainline railway from Birmingham to Stansted Airport. If there had been a fire due to arson or self-combustion then the impact could have resulted in the closure of the railway and caused significant disruption to the national railway transport network.

He said there had been 2 failed attempts to arrest Newsome, 2 failed attempts to get him to voluntarily attend interview with Environment Agency investigators and since then no communication from him.

After the hearing Enforcement Team Leader Phil Henderson said:

We require operators have an approved fire prevention plan in place before a permit is issued. The Environment Agency seeks to work with operators to ensure compliance with the relevant environmental regulations.

However, as in this case, where those operators fail to take this advice we are compelled to take action, particularly in cases where the storage of waste may risk local residents or our transport infrastructure.'

Newsome pleaded guilty to:

On or before 3 November 2015 on land known as 61 Dickens Street, Peterborough, PE1 5ER, you operated a regulated facility, namely a tyre treatment and disposal facility, without being authorised by an environmental permit granted under Regulation 12 of the Environmental Permitted (England and Wales) Regulations 2010.

Contrary to Regulation 12 and 38(1)(a) Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010.

Between 1 December 2015 and 31 December 2016 on land known as Lazy Acre Farm, Whittlesey, Peterborough PE7 1GR, you operated a regulated facility, namely a tyre treatment and disposal facility, without being authorised by an environmental permit granted under Regulation 12 of the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010. Contrary to Regulation 12 and 38(1)(a) Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010.

Press release: Cambridgeshire man sentenced to 8 months for illegal waste sites

On Tuesday 09 October 2018 Michael Newsome was sentenced to a total of 8 months imprisonment (4 months consecutive for each offence) suspended for 24 months. Newsome was also ordered to carry out 240 hours of unpaid work for the benefit of the community, ordered to pay a total of £12,131.90 in compensation to the landowners where he abandoned tyres and a contribution of £1,000 costs after pleading guilty to breaking the law in Peterborough and Whittlesey.

Peterborough Magistrates heard that Newsome, aged 28, of Overwater Close, Stukeley Meadows, Huntingdon, traded as Cambridgeshire Rubber Recycling Ltd and even advertised on Facebook as being licensed.

First he set up in Peterborough having registered an exemption that allowed him a limited number of tyres on site to be stored under set conditions for safety.

Mr Gurjit Bdesha, prosecuting for the Environment Agency, told the court that Newsome leased the Dickens Street site from an 82-year-old man to shred tyres, which he failed to do. Instead, he took well in excess of the number of tyres allowed under the exemption and stored them in a way that had no fire breaks.

Mr Bdesha said:

This was especially important as the site is in the middle of a residential area with the nearest home being 13 metres away. Tyres can combust and fire can easily spread.

Despite being asked to move the tyres, Newsome made no effort to clear the site and the landlord ejected him. He later broke into a lockaway on site, damaging the door, to take back equipment belonging to him. He left behind 87 tonnes of tyres (9,050) costing the landlord £8,121.

After being evicted Newsome took on a site at Lazy Acre Farm, Whittlesey and carried on business, failing to even register an exemption.

The landlord became worried at the number of tyres on site with no equipment to process them and asked him to leave.

Mr Bdesha continued:

The landlord was so desperate for Newsome to leave the site and

clear the tyres that he was prepared to waive rent arrears of £3,500 if he removed them. The tyres were left there.

At that site Newsome abandoned 117 tonnes of tyres (14,040).

Mr Bdesha told the court that the site was listed as a High Risk Fire site as the tyres were stored within 70 metres of the mainline railway from Birmingham to Stansted Airport. If there had been a fire due to arson or self-combustion then the impact could have resulted in the closure of the railway and caused significant disruption to the national railway transport network.

He said there had been 2 failed attempts to arrest Newsome, 2 failed attempts to get him to voluntarily attend interview with Environment Agency investigators and since then no communication from him.

After the hearing Enforcement Team Leader Phil Henderson said:

We require operators have an approved fire prevention plan in place before a permit is issued. The Environment Agency seeks to work with operators to ensure compliance with the relevant environmental regulations.

However, as in this case, where those operators fail to take this advice we are compelled to take action, particularly in cases where the storage of waste may risk local residents or our transport infrastructure.'

Newsome pleaded guilty to:

On or before 3 November 2015 on land known as 61 Dickens Street, Peterborough, PE1 5ER, you operated a regulated facility, namely a tyre treatment and disposal facility, without being authorised by an environmental permit granted under Regulation 12 of the Environmental Permitted (England and Wales) Regulations 2010.

Contrary to Regulation 12 and 38(1)(a) Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010.

Between 1 December 2015 and 31 December 2016 on land known as Lazy Acre Farm, Whittlesey, Peterborough PE7 1GR, you operated a regulated facility, namely a tyre treatment and disposal facility, without being authorised by an environmental permit granted under Regulation 12 of the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010. Contrary to Regulation 12 and 38(1)(a) Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010.

News story: Increase to Immigration Health Surcharge gives NHS extra funding

The IHS allows anyone in the UK on a work, study or family visa for longer than 6 months to access NHS services in the same way as UK citizens.

The proposals would see the surcharge increase from £200 to £400 per year for non-EU nationals, with students and those on the [Youth Mobility Scheme](#) on the discounted rate of £300 per year.

Since the surcharge was introduced in 2015 it has raised over £600m which the Department of Health and Social Care and the health ministries in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have invested back into their health budgets.

Immigration Minister Caroline Nokes said:

Our NHS is always there when you need it, paid for by British taxpayers. We welcome long-term migrants using the NHS, but the NHS is a national, not international health service and we believe it is right that they make a fair contribution to its long-term sustainability.

I am pleased that we are a step closer to implementing the changes to the health surcharge, and the extra money raised will go directly towards sustaining and protecting our world-class healthcare system.

It is only fair that people who come to the UK make a contribution to the running of the NHS, and even with the increase we still continue to offer a good deal on healthcare for those seeking to live in the UK temporarily.

The changes better reflect the cost to the NHS of treating those who pay the surcharge, as the DHSC estimates that the NHS spends £470 on average per person per year on treating those required to pay the surcharge.

These changes do not affect permanent residents, who are not required to pay the surcharge. Certain vulnerable groups such as asylum seekers and modern slavery victims are also exempt.

Short-term migrants, including those on visitor visas, are generally charged for secondary care treatment by the NHS at the point of access.

The increase is set to come into effect in December 2018 subject to Parliamentary approval.

[News story: Steve Rowan appointed EPO Vice-President for Patent Granting Process](#)

The IPO welcomes the announcement that Steve Rowan, Director Registered Rights (IPO) has been appointed as [Vice-President of the European Patent Office Directorate-General Patent Granting Process](#).

Tim Moss, IPO Chief Executive said:

Congratulations to Steve on his well deserved appointment. I'm very proud that the UK has been able to field such a strong candidate and the IPO wishes him all the best in his future role.

Steve joined the IPO in 1991 and has held a number of operational and tribunal roles within the IPO. As Director of Registered Rights he is responsible for the patent, trade mark and design application and examination processes and the management of those rights and the Office's tribunal functions.

He has also worked on a wide range of IP policy issues as Deputy Director of the International and Copyright and IP Enforcement Directorates. He has extensive experience of EU and international negotiations and was Head of the UK Delegation to the Beijing and Marrakesh Diplomatic Conferences. He was seconded to the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit (2004) and HM Treasury (2006), working on the Gowers Review of IP.

The Administrative Council of the EPO comprises delegations from the 38 member states and is responsible for supervising the activities of the European Patent Office, the Organisation's executive branch. The Council also approves the Office's budget, and appoints its senior managers, including the President and vice-presidents.

The EPO's Directorate-General Patent Granting Process is responsible for the entire patent granting process from end to end. This includes search, examination, publication, opposition and all related formalities, and for delivering support for the patent granting process to internal and external users of EPO services.

Steve's appointment will take effect on 1 January 2019 and is for five years. He will succeed Alberto Casado Cerviño of Spain, who will retire at the end of 2018.

The UK IPO has started the process of recruiting for Steve's role and further

details will follow soon.