

Press release: China lifts ban on exports of British beef

China has today lifted its longstanding ban on exports of beef from the UK, in a landmark move for British producers estimated to be worth £250 million in the first five years alone.

More than 20 years after the Chinese government first imposed a ban on British beef in the wake of the BSE outbreak, today's milestone is the culmination of several years of site inspections and negotiations between UK and Chinese government officials.

China is currently the UK's eighth largest export market for agri-food, with over £560 million worth of food and drink bought by Chinese consumers last year.

Environment Secretary Michael Gove said:

This is fantastic news for our world-class food and farming industry and shows we can be a truly outward looking Britain outside the European Union. It is the result of painstaking and collaborative work by industry and the Defra team over many years.

Today's milestone will help to unlock UK agriculture's full potential and is a major step to forging new trading relationships around the globe.

The Government, and its team of trade specialists, continues to encourage and support UK businesses as they consider launching into overseas markets or expanding their current global customer base.

Food exports from the UK continue to soar with [record exports](#) of over £22 billion in 2017. Our food and drink businesses are now selling their products to 217 markets.

Today's announcement will allow official market access negotiations to begin, a process which typically takes around three years.

It follows the Prime Minister's trade mission to China earlier this year, where she agreed new measures to improve market access to China.

It also follows a successful inspection visit in April 2018 hosted by Defra and the Animal Plant Health Agency, the Food Standards Agency, Food Standards Scotland, DAERA, the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board and the UK Export Certification Partnership.

AHDB International Market Development Director Dr Phil Hadley said:

We are delighted that China has lifted the ban on UK beef. This marks an important milestone in growing our meat exports to this all-important market.

Today's news follows years of collaboration between AHDB, government and industry to make this a reality and we now look forward to seeing UK beef exported to the country for the first time in over 20 years. We will now begin the work on the export protocols and approvals to allow commercial shipments to begin.