

Press release: £230M boost for British beef as China agrees market access

British beef could be served on Chinese dinner plates by the end of the year, following an agreement reached today between China and the UK.

The move could be worth an estimated £230 million for British producers in the first five years alone, and comes more than 20 years after the Chinese government imposed a ban on UK imports of beef in 1996.

The UK-China Beef Protocol was signed today by Farming Minister Robert Goodwill and the Chinese Ambassador to the UK Liu Xiaoming as part of the tenth Economic and Financial Dialogue (EFD) between the UK and China, securing market access for UK beef exporters by the end of 2019.

International Trade Secretary Dr Liam Fox said:

Today's step is welcome progress for our world-leading British beef producers, who will soon be able to export their products to one of the world's largest economies, supporting local jobs and bringing millions of pounds to the UK economy each year.

This comes as a result of years of hard work across Government, including at the Department for International Trade, and marks the next step in realising our global trading ambitions with unbeatable British food.

As we leave the European Union, we will continue to break down market access barriers to make it easier for UK businesses to trade across the world.

Farming Minister Robert Goodwill said:

This is a major coup for our world-class food and farming industry, and a landmark move which could be worth £230 million for British business in the next five years alone.

Today's milestone reflects our ambition to maximise new trading opportunities across the world and become a truly Global Britain as we leave the EU.

The announcement comes after China recently approved five British pork plants to export products to China, which will build on a market which is already worth £70 million per year. We look forward to further approval of qualified UK pork plants by the end of the 2019.

China is currently the UK's eighth largest export market for food and drink, with more than £610 million worth of products bought by Chinese consumers last year.

The UK-China Beef Protocol is the culmination of several years of site inspections and engagement between UK and Chinese government officials. China's ban was lifted in June last year when market access engagement for UK beef exports began.

The announcement follows a successful inspection hosted last week by Defra, the Animal and Plant Health Agency, the Veterinary Medicines Directorate, the Food Standards Agency, DAERA in Northern Ireland, the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB) and the UK Export Certification Partnership (UKECP), in conjunction with beef farmers and food business operators. This effort was facilitated by policy and trade teams at the Department for International Trade, both in assisting talks with Chinese officials, and supporting Chinese delegations visiting the UK.

AHDB's International Market Development Director Dr Phil Hadley said:

Today's announcement is fantastic news for our meat processors, who are set to benefit massively from the opportunities this new agreement presents.

It comes after many years spent working tirelessly to reopen access for our beef exports and it's a real testament to the work of government and other industry bodies to make this happen. We look forward to seeing the first shipments leave the UK bound for China in the near future.

The UK-China Beef Protocol reflects the strength of Britain's relationship with China, and a mutual commitment to trade.

The UK's food exports continue to soar, with food and drink exports worth more than £22 billion last year. Our food and drink businesses are now selling their products to 217 markets.

The Government continues to encourage and support businesses through its 'Food is Great' campaign as they consider launching into overseas markets or expanding their current global customer base.

Press release: APPOINTMENTS TO THE EQUALITY COMMISSION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

APPOINTMENTS TO THE EQUALITY COMMISSION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Rt. Hon Karen Bradley MP, has today announced the appointment of Geraldine McGahey to be the new Deputy Chief Commissioner and Neil Anderson, June Best, Theresa Donaldson, Hazel Francey, Stephen Mathews, Joe McVey, Dawn Purvis and Katy Radford as Commissioners. The appointments will be for a period of three years ending on 31 May 2022.

These appointees will replace Lesley Carroll (Deputy Chief Commissioner) and William Gamble, Judith Gillespie, Tom Hartley, David Rose who have completed their terms of office, and William McKee (Commissioner) who sadly passed away in December last year.

Equality Commission for Northern Ireland

The Equality Commission was established in 1999, as part of the implementation of the Good Friday Agreement. It took over the functions of the Fair Employment Commission, Equal Opportunities Commission, and Council for Racial Equality and Northern Ireland Disability Council.

The Equality Commission is a non-departmental public body established by the Northern Ireland Act 1998. Its powers and duties derive from a number of statutes which have been enacted over the last decades, providing protection against discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, race, religion and political opinion, sex and sexual orientation. It also has responsibilities arising from the Northern Ireland Act 1998 in respect of the statutory equality and good relations duties which apply to public authorities.

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland is responsible under the Northern Ireland Act 1998 for making appointments to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

More information can be found on the Equality Commission's website.

Terms of appointment

The positions are part-time appointments.

The position of Deputy Chief Commissioner attracts a fixed remuneration of £10,000 per annum, while the Commissioner roles attract a fixed remuneration of £5,000 per annum for a commitment of approximately two days a month.

Biography of Appointees

Geraldine McGahey: Former Chief Executive of Larne Borough Council, and SOLACE gender champion. She is currently an Equality Commissioner and a Parades Commissioner.

Neil Anderson: Currently head of NSPCC in Northern Ireland, with a career based in HR across a variety of organisations and sectors.

June Best: Retired head teacher with extensive experience in disability rights. Advocate for Guide Dogs for the Blind and ambassador for Disability NI. She was awarded an MBE in 2018 for services to people with a disability.

Theresa Donaldson: Former Chief Executive of Craigavon Borough Council and Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council. She is currently Vice Chair of Eirgrid and a member of the Probation Board.

Hazel Francey: Retired former Good Relations Manager for Belfast City Council. She holds roles on the National Museums Board, and is chair of its Finance Committee and has served as an Equality Commissioner for Northern Ireland.

Stephen Mathews: Chief Executive of Cedar Foundation, a charity supporting children, young people and adults with disabilities.

Joe McVey: Chief Executive of Brain Injury Matters, having been previously managing partner in a Consultancy business and has served as Equality Commissioner for Northern Ireland.

Dawn Purvis: Chief Executive of a Victoria Housing Estates (VHE). She is a former Northern Ireland Programme Director for Marie Stopes and previously served as an MLA and leader of the PUP.

Katy Radford: Social anthropologist currently employed at the Institute for Conflict Research. Vice Chair of Arts Council of Northern Ireland, member of the Commission for Flags, Identity, Culture and Tradition and member of the Executive Council of the Northern Ireland Jewish Community.

Political Activity

All appointments are made on merit and with regards to the statutory requirements. Political activity plays no part in the selection process. However, in accordance with the original Nolan recommendations, there is a requirement for appointees' political activity in defined categories to be made public.

As noted in the biographies, only one of the appointees, Dawn Purvis, has declared political activity in the past ten years.

Regulatory Requirements

The appointments process has been regulated by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointment (OCPA) and all stages of the process were overseen by

an independent panel member.

Statutory Requirements

These appointments are made by the Secretary of State in accordance with the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

Press release: Measures to end unequal mental health treatment kickstarted by PM

New measures to overhaul urgently mental health laws and end the unequal treatment faced by ethnic minority groups have been set out by Prime Minister Theresa May today.

The government will take forward key recommendations from Sir Simon Wessely's independent review of the Mental Health Act, which found black adults are approximately four times more likely than white adults to be detained under the Act.

The Prime Minister also confirmed that a White Paper will be published by DHSC and MoJ before the end of the year in response to the review. This will set out the steps necessary to provide greater dignity and better care for all those treated under the Mental Health Act, and to tackle inequalities in the mental health care system.

Healthcare bosses and senior members of the Independent Review of the Mental Health Act attended a roundtable with the Prime Minister at Number 10 Downing Street this afternoon. They discussed the government's plans for early action to reform mental health legislation and services to particularly benefit ethnic minority groups, which include:

- the first ever Race Equality Framework will ensure NHS mental healthcare providers work with their local communities to improve the ways in which patients access and experience treatment, and ensure data on equality of access is monitored at board level and acted on
- working with Black African and Caribbean community groups alongside others to develop a White Paper formally setting out a response to Sir Simon's review
- further work towards eradicating the use of police cells as a place to detain people experiencing mental illness ahead of banning it in law, building on the Prime Minister's work to end this practice for under-18s
- launching a pilot programme of culturally-sensitive advocates in partnership with local authorities and others, to identify how best to represent the mental health needs of ethnic minority groups

- a partnership between the Care Quality Commission and Equality and Human Rights Commission to review how they can use their regulatory powers to better support equality of access to mental health services
- an open call for research into how different ethnic minority groups experience mental health treatment and how this can be improved – to be launched later this year by the National Institute for Health Research

Prime Minister Theresa May said:

Mental illness can affect us all, but the shocking evidence that black people are much more likely to be detained under the Mental Health Act shows that we need urgent action to address inequalities in our healthcare system.

Today's measures will drive forward an important conversation about how we best look after people from ethnic minority backgrounds living with mental health conditions and make sure their needs are met.

These commitments come alongside a wide-ranging series of prevention measures announced today by the Prime Minister to make sure people have the support they need to look after their mental health. The package includes training for all new teachers so they can spot the signs of mental health issues and updated professional standards for social workers across England to increase their knowledge and skills when dealing with mental illness.

Today marks one year since the Prime Minister announced a historic cash funding boost for the health service, driving the largest expansion of mental health services in a generation under the NHS Long-Term Plan.

Attending today's roundtable were:

Speech: Escalation is not in the long-term interest of any of the parties

Thank you very much Mr President and as it's the first time that I personally take the floor during your Presidency, I'd like to welcome you to the position and pledge the United Kingdom's support for Kuwait during this month and to thank your predecessor.

This is a very difficult set of issues as we've heard very graphically today. I want to start by making crystal clear how much we support the UN. We support the Special Envoy Martin Griffiths. We support General Lollesgaard.

We support the head of OCHA and we support the head of the World Food Program. And I think I speak for all the Council when I say that based on our discussions so far. So when things don't happen on the ground that ought to happen on the ground, the people responsible for that, the people responsible for not moving forward, for blocking access, for preventing aid getting through to starving people, need to know that they're not just acting against the people of Yemen and against the United Nations, they're acting against this Council in its manifestation in New York and the fact that the Council is charged with the maintenance of international peace and security. So I really do call on all the parties to redouble their efforts to work with these representatives of all of us, of the United Nations, on the ground. And I would draw the audience's attention to the fact that the Council was able to speak with one voice to this effect in its 10th of June statement. So I repeat all parties have a duty to cooperate with the manifestations of the United Nations on the ground. I'll come back to the aid question and diversion later if I may.

I wanted to talk about the military escalation. At one level, it's remarkable that the Hodeidah agreement has held as long as it has. And we need it to continue to hold, so we need Martin Griffiths and General Lollobrigida to be able to continue their very important work because whatever the problems in Yemen, the fact that the agreement holds is very important to us. But the recent escalation in tension is extremely worrying. I want to condemn the Houthi attack on Abha airport. Twenty six civilians were injured. And I want to express concern about the seeming link between the Houthis and Iran. And I'd like to use this occasion also to urge all parties to show restraint from retaliatory military actions. Escalations are not in the long-term interest of any of the parties. It's not in the interests of regional stability and security. And it's certainly not in the interests of the people of Yemen.

On Hodeidah, the initial redeployment of Houthi forces from the ports of Hodeidah, Salif and Ras Issa is very welcome. But we do need the Houthis to complete the process by clearing mines and removing military manifestations. But we need both parties to engage constructively with the UN, as I said earlier, on expediting implementation of the Hodeidah Agreement. And a return to military operations really will be catastrophic for the Yemeni people.

We all know, I think the Council has been very clear that a political settlement is the only way to bring long term stability to Yemen. And we mustn't lose sight of how to enable these broader political efforts. I think we all know that a resumption of the political process needs to take place in parallel to further implementation of the Stockholm agreement. I was very interested in what Martin had to say about the prisoner exchanges and detainees. And given the importance of this single issue to overall progress, I have to say I'm a bit mystified as to why more progress can't be made. So I hope we can pick this up in consultations.

On the economy, the UN mediated a meeting in Oman between the Central Bank of Aden and Sanaa, i.e. both branches, on enacting the revenue managing elements of the Stockholm Agreement. I want to endorse what the Special Envoy said about the importance of improving Yemen's economy and ensuring the payment public sector salaries across the country. And we encourage both parties to

continue to engage with the Special Envoy on this issue and to meet again to pursue an agreement. But I also wanted to reinforce the importance of donor countries being able to support the UN in this regard, both on the foreign exchange point, and also as we heard from Mark Lowcock, on the humanitarian aid and its disbursement point. There's a cruel irony in the fact that Yemen is the worst humanitarian disaster the world is currently faced with, and the appeals are under-funded. So between us, and appealing also to the wider UN membership, that's something we need to put right. For the UK's part, we've made available over half of our \$250 million support and we're going to bring forward further funds where we can.

Mr President I'd like, if I may, to turn to the humanitarian point. I think Mark's figures are shocking. If this war continues till 2022 the number of deaths is truly, I don't think there are enough superlatives to describe how awful this will be, and it's already awful enough. So I think we on the Council need to redouble our efforts to help support humanitarian access.

The issue that David Beasley raised with us of the manipulation of aid, it's cynical, it's evil in a way. And the Yemeni people, when all of this is over, the Yemeni people will remember who tried to starve them of assistance. So not just for the sake of the people but for the sake of the future stability of Yemen, it's extremely important this gets sorted out, and it gets sorted out quickly, and I think what David said about there being factions within factions as to who supports the impartial delivery of aid and who doesn't. But I hope other people on the Council will be able to join me in supporting the World Food Programme's efforts and calling on the Houthis to comply with UNSCR 2451 and facilitate unhindered humanitarian access. I think that's so important that there's a strong message today. I note that not all the problems are coming from Houthi controlled areas, and it's important to call that out, but if I've understood David correctly, there is a way of resolving those other issues on the ground, meaning that the Houthi problem is the biggest block overall. So I do appeal to anyone with any humanitarian instinct on the ground to work with OCHA, to work with the World Food Program, to get this sorted out because as we've all heard Mr President, the people of Yemen can't take much more. Thank you.

Press release: Big wins for British businesses as Vice Premier Hu Chunhua visits

New business deals representing commercial signings, future contract commitments and MoUs, were agreed by British and Chinese companies as part of the 10th UK China Economic and Financial Dialogue (EFD) taking place in London this week.

The announcements were welcomed by the International Trade Secretary, Dr Liam Fox MP. In total, the deals are expected to deliver 175 new jobs in the UK, and deliver significant wins for the financial services, education, creative, food and agriculture and technology sectors.

Also announced today was a landmark market access agreement for British farmers, supported by the Department for International Trade (DIT) and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), which could put UK producers on track to export British beef to China by the end of 2019.

The agreement is expected to be worth an estimated £230 million in the first 5 years.

Secretary of State for International Trade, Liam Fox MP, said:

Britain is a key partner for Chinese trade and investment, and is one of China's most important trading partners in Europe.

Today's announcements show the breadth and depth of our trading relationship, the success UK firms are having in China, and the huge opportunity the Chinese market holds for British companies, particularly with regards to market access.

As an international economic department, DIT will continue to support UK businesses to increase their share in this growing market and build on our substantial export figures, as we progress towards leaving the EU.

The deals were signed and agreed at a ceremony at Mansion House, witnessed by Minister for Trade Policy, George Hollingbery MP.

An MoU was also signed between DIT and the National Development and Reform Commission of the People's Republic of China on infrastructure cooperation in third countries.

This is a technical agreement that focusses on facilitating practical cooperation between UK and Chinese firms on projects overseas – ensuring that projects are delivered in line with the highest economic, environmental, social and financial standards in order to deliver sustainable, and inclusive development outcomes and deliver real opportunities for UK and international businesses.

Further information on commercial deals and MoUs:

Deals valued at £503 million have been agreed, creating 175 new jobs.

Financial Services

- A new UK-China Fund, targeting £1 billion delivered in partnership by Charterhouse Capital, China Investment Corporation and HSBC to invest in UK SMEs with growth plans linked to China.

- Industrial Bank (China) announced the opening of a new representative office in London, set to create 70 new jobs. The London Representative Office is expected to become an important base for the global initiatives of Industrial Bank.
- MultiPass International and UnionPay International concluded an MoU to develop a digital payment platform to further expand issuance and acceptance of UnionPay branded cards outside mainland China. The new partnership is expected to create 105 new jobs over the next 3 years.
- Fosun have acquired a majority stake in Tenax Capital to help build out their footprint in the European asset management space and to help bring European investors to China.
- Redington's Chinese subsidiary, Yuyuan Technology has signed commercial agreements with Taikang Life and Aviva-Cofco Life to provide interactive asset liability management tools.
- OakNorth, Baillie Gifford and VCP Advisors have announced that they will set up a Wholly Foreign-Owned Enterprise (WFOE) in China.
- China Banking Association, Shanghai Stock Exchange, China Investment Corporation (CIC), The Industrial Bank and CITIC Bank have announced they will be upgrading existing branches, opening representative offices or opening new branches in the UK.
- Establishment of Heng'An Standard Life's (HASL) pension insurance business, the first awarded to a foreign- invested business in China.
- Schroders have been awarded Qualified Foreign Limited Partner (QFLP) licences and quotas.
- XTX markets will become the first foreign non-bank market maker on the CFETS's G10 market.

Creative

- BBC Studios announced a wide-ranging partnership with Promotional Partners Worldwide (PPW), to bring British children's cartoon 'Hey Duggee' to China . The agreement will see PPW act as the agent and licensee for Hey Duggee for Greater China – including mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau.
- Cornwall's The Lost Gardens of Heligan, one of the UK's most well-known gardens, has announced a collaboration with Sheng lu Manor in Beijing to create a "Beijing Shenglu Heligan Garden", to showcase the UK's cultural, agronomic and horticulture expertise.

Energy and Built Environment

- UK engineering consultancy company Arup and Shanghai Urban Construction Design & Research Institute (SUCDRI) have signed an MoU to cooperate on future infrastructure projects. The MoU follows a recently successful joint bid by the two organisations for the Shanghai Central Urban Area Drainage

Masterplan project from Shanghai's municipal government.

- China National Petroleum Cooperation (CNPC), along with its joint venture partner INEOS, will invest in a New Energy Project in steam and electric power, at the Grangemouth facility. The plant will operational by 2022.
- Hayward Tylor (HT) have signed an MoU agreement with Shinhoo Canned Motor Pumps (SH) to supply pumps for the energy and chemical industry.
- Innovative Physics Limited (IPL) and CNNC Environmental Protection Co. (CEPC) have signed a collaboration framework agreement.

Education

- Wonderbly a UK publishing and education technology company, has signed an MoU for strategic cooperation with China's biggest publishing group – Phoenix Publishing and Media Group to bring innovative personalised reading and learning to the Chinese market
- Cranleigh School and Cogdel Education Group signed an MoU lasting 25 years denoting a partnership to set up Cranleigh's bilingual school in China.
- Thames Holdings Ltd and Shenzhen Fuzhida Management Ltd, signed a contract to form a joint venture to establish 50 nurseries across China in next 5 years.
- Repton and Kingold have signed an MOU to set up Repton's bilingual schools initially in the Greater Bay Areas.

Tech

- Micro Focus, one of the UK's largest listed technology companies, announced a series of partnership deals with Chinese company H3C, marking its continued expansion into the Chinese market.

Food and Drink

- Export wins for Hayman's range of Gins; London Distillery; McCann Apples; Rooney Fish; Newby Tea and Baijiu Society.

Bilateral trade between the UK and China is worth a record £68.5 billion a year, the UK's fifth-largest trading relationship.

Over the past decade UK exports to China have tripled, making China the UK's sixth largest market globally with more than 10,000 UK businesses now selling goods and services to China.