

Trade Secretary champions small businesses to reach their export potential

Small businesses across the country are in prime position to seize the opportunities of new trade deals and help the UK become an exporting superpower, the Trade Secretary says today.

On Small Business Saturday, Anne-Marie Trevelyan heralds the power of small businesses and encourages them to take up recently revamped Government support for exporters, so they can sell more of their first-class products around the world.

New figures released this week show small businesses exported over £99bn of goods and services in 2019, up by more than £700m from the previous year.

However, only 1 in 10 small businesses were selling their products overseas, with just over 228,000 small businesses exporting goods and services in 2019.

International Trade Secretary Anne-Marie Trevelyan said:

From the high street to the web, small businesses are at the heart of our economy. It is great to see so many are reaping the benefits of exporting and we want to see them go even further.

Just 1 in 10 small businesses currently export, so we're boosting our support to give them direct, tailored advice to help them on their exporting journey. Many of these businesses are in prime position to take advantage of the trade deals we are negotiating, and can play a vital role in helping the UK reach our Race to a Trillion.

Last month DIT published a 12-point Export Strategy – titled 'Made in the UK, Sold to the World' – to help get more businesses selling more products to more countries, so the UK reaches one trillion pounds a year in goods and service exports.

Alongside the Strategy, DIT hosted International Trade Week, which featured 20 SME-specific events providing expert, tailored advice to over 1,000 registered companies who attended.

More than 1,000 businesses have also already signed up to the newly-expanded UK Export Academy, which offers free, comprehensive training for SMEs to learn how to sell to customers and secure contracts around the world with confidence.

US market to open doors to UK lamb from 2022

Exports of British lamb to the US market can resume from next year after more than two decades of restrictions.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) today confirmed it has amended the rule which currently prevents imports of lamb from the UK into the USA. The amended “small ruminant rule” will come into force on 3 January 2022.

This exciting new development means that over 300 million US consumers will soon be able to enjoy the UK’s world renowned lamb. It is estimated that this market will be worth £37 million in the first five years of trade.

In a call earlier today with his US counterpart Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack, Environment Secretary George Eustice expressed his delight at the news. The Ministers committed to continue to work together in the months ahead.

Today’s update comes after President Biden committed to lift the ban on British lamb during the Prime Minister’s visit to the White House in September, and follows an easing on restrictions on British beef exports earlier this year.

Environment Secretary George Eustice said:

Today’s great news follows years of negotiations and builds on the success in securing the resumption of UK beef exports to the US. UK lamb is renowned for its high quality, food safety and welfare standards. Millions of US consumers will now be able to enjoy British lamb as early as next year.

The US market for lamb is growing as consumer trends change and there are now new opportunities for farmers and meat processors in this market.

The small ruminant rule (SRR) previously restricted access to the US market for all sheep meat from the UK, as well as a number of other countries including EU member states and Canada.

This development clears the way for Defra to work with the Department for International Trade (DIT) and UK food safety authorities, such as the FSA, DAERA and FSS, and counterparts in the USA, in completing the final necessary steps to achieving the full resumption of UK lamb exports to the USA.

International Trade Secretary Anne-Marie Trevelyan said:

This is fantastic news that brings UK farmers a step closer to putting their first-class lamb on American menus for the first time in more than 20 years.

The UK exported £436.4 million worth of lamb to the world last year and over £29 million worth of meat to the US. We want those numbers to grow and this win will help achieve that.

Our teams are working hard to unlock multi-million-pound markets for brilliant UK businesses and I will be banging the drum for them when I visit the US next week.

Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board International Market Development Director Dr Phil Hadley said:

This is fantastic news for our sheep producers and exporters.

The US market is estimated to be worth £37 million over the first five years of trade and presents a further valuable opportunity for the UK sheep sector.

Today's announcement means lamb exports will complement our existing pork and beef trade to the US, which was worth an impressive £22 million to industry in the first nine months of 2021. Gaining access to the US further cements our reputation as being world renowned producers of high quality lamb and we look forward to seeing our products on US plates in the New Year.

NFU President Minette Batters said:

It's excellent to hear that the work of the UK government and levy boards has finally helped secure access for British lamb to the United States. British lamb is a fantastic, sustainable product that is recognised around the world for its quality and we know there is demand for it in the US.

This is exactly the sort of export opportunity we need to see the government pursuing and is something we strongly support. This is a positive step for Britain's lamb producers and we would urge the government to continue opening up new markets around the world.

[Latest notices for traders from Defra, December 2021](#)

Please note that the information in this page has been issued by Defra, not the Government Chemist, and it is published to increase dissemination amongst Government Chemist stakeholders.

Import requirements from 1 January 2022

From 1 January 2022, businesses importing products of animal origin, animal by-products and high risk foods not of animal origin (HRFNAO) must pre-notify consignments at least four hours in advance of arriving into Great Britain. The pre-notification must be made via the Import of products, animals, food and feed system (IPAFFS).

To help you get ready for these new requirements Defra have incorporated key information [this document](#). Please take the time to read and understand the actions needed to continue importing from the EU into GB from 1 January 2022.

Additionally, you can refer to the [Border Operating Model for further information](#).

Webinars: Tuesday 7 December 2021, 10.00 – 11.00, [Click to join](#)

Key information and guidance is available on this [microsite](#) and on the [Gov.uk](#) webpages. If you cannot find the information you need, please contact: traders@defra.gov.uk

Import controls from 1 July 2022

In September, the Government announced full EU to GB sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) import controls would begin on 1 July 2022. Import controls will be introduced in three phases:

From 1 July 2022

All certification, physical and identity checks will be introduced for:

- All remaining regulated animal by-products
- All lower risk plants and plant products
- All meat and meat products
- All remaining high-risk food not of animal origin

From 1 September 2022

- Certification and physical checks will be introduced for dairy products.

From 1 November 2022

- Certification and physical checks will be introduced for all remaining products of animal origin, including composite products and fish products.

From 1 July 2022

Checks on high-priority plants and plant products will transfer from place of destination to designated BCPs and control points.

Live animal physical checks will take place at designated border control posts where a facility is operational at the point of entry. Where there is no designated BCP, checks will remain at destination for other points of entry until sufficient BCPs are operational. Checks at Sevington inland BCP and designated airport BCPs will commence from 1 July 2022.

Please see the [FAQ document](#) for more information.

Building Digital UK to become executive agency of DCMS

Executive agencies are specialist bodies within government departments. They are set up to deliver a service fundamental to the policy of their sponsor department.

Building Digital UK (BDUK) currently sits within the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and is delivering the government's £5 billion Project Gigabit to bring faster and more reliable internet speeds to hard-to-reach areas.

Currently 62.9 per cent of UK homes and businesses have access to ultrafast gigabit broadband thanks to the government's focus on improving connectivity, up from just 6 per cent at the start of 2019.

While DCMS ministers will retain overall control and responsibility for BDUK and broadband rollout, the new agency will have a new corporate governance structure, including a new board.

The move will make sure it is set up in the most effective way to expand its operations for the fast delivery of broadband rollout. It will also bring the agency closer to the communities it is benefitting, with BDUK setting up a head office in central Manchester which will boost the city's credentials as

a fast-growing digital tech hub.

The government has made a commitment for at least 85 per cent of the UK to have access to a gigabit-capable broadband connection by 2025.

Digital Infrastructure Minister Julia Lopez said:

We are on a mission to make sure everyone can get faster broadband speeds and reap the benefits of internet-fuelled innovations in the coming decades.

We are moving fast and national gigabit-speed broadband coverage has jumped from six per cent to sixty per cent in just two years.

As part of the biggest broadband build in British history we are now giving BDUK greater freedom and flexibility to ramp up rollout and expand its operations to create new jobs, boost economic growth and level up communities in need.

The government has already identified up to 2.5 million hard-to-reach homes and businesses in scope of Project Gigabit across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland and is in the process of identifying more. With the work to deliver these connections set to kick off next year, the intention is for BDUK to become an Executive Agency in April 2022.

Becoming an Executive Agency will give BDUK more operational autonomy to focus on Project Gigabit as well as the Shared Rural Network, the £1 billion deal agreed with mobile network operators to end patchy rural mobile coverage and ensure 95% of UK geography has a 4G signal by the end of 2025.

While BDUK will remain legally within DCMS and retain a close relationship with DCMS policy officials, a key benefit of making BDUK an Executive Agency will be a robust new governance structure. Its new management board will incorporate a non-executive chair, executive members and non-executive members, thereby providing an extra layer of expert scrutiny and technical oversight.

ENDS

Notes to editors

Administration costs for the new Executive Agency have been minimised by identifying where shared services can be delivered within DCMS, in accordance with the government's Shared Services Strategy, delivering more streamlined services that maximise value for money.

Bereaved partners urged to come forward for more support

Press release

Bereaved partners in England are urged to come forward for more financial support from the England Infected Blood Support Scheme



- Bereaved partners of those affected by infected blood in the 1970's and 1980's will receive annual payments in England, backdated to April 2019
- Those eligible should come forward by 1 April 2022 to receive backdated payments,
- Changes to the support scheme will ensure parity between UK's infected blood support schemes

Bereaved spouses and partners of those who were infected with HIV or Hepatitis C as a result of treatment with NHS blood or blood products in the 1970's or 1980's are being urged to come forward and register with EIBSS before 1 April 2022 if they have not already done so to claim support payments, following an update to the scheme.

Changes introduced in March 2021 mean bereaved partners not yet registered with the England Infected Blood Support Scheme (EIBSS) will now be entitled to annual payments.

Payments under the updated scheme commenced on 1 December.

Minister for Patient Safety, Maria Caulfield, said:

We've always been clear those infected and their partners should be supported by a fair and transparent support scheme that focuses on their welfare and long-term independence.

These changes will mean better support for people who have lost partners and I urge anyone eligible to apply for these payments.

We have listened to the public and to stakeholders and are working

with the devolved administrations to ensure greater parity of support across the UK.

The changes are part of wider plans to bring greater parity across the UK infected blood support schemes. Eligible individuals who submit an application before 1 April 2022 will receive payments backdated to 1 April 2019 or the date of bereavement if later.

Those who register after this date will receive payments backdated to the date their application was received.

Bereaved partners already known to the scheme will be contacted directly and many have already received their first payment.

To receive backdating, individuals need to register before 1 April 2022.

- Bereaved partners can still register after 1 April 2022.
- The first payments under this new system were made this week (Wednesday 1 December).
- For more information on EIBSS and support available, visit [here](#)
- Similar infected blood support schemes operate in Scotland (SIBSS), Wales (WIBSS) and Northern Ireland (NIIBSS). For more information, visit:
 - [SIBSS](#)
 - [WIBSS](#)
 - [NIIBSS](#)

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