



**Mr. Maroš Šefčovič**

Commissioner for Trade and Economic Security  
Directorate- General for Trade  
European Commission  
Wetstraat 170  
1049 Brussels  
Belgium

Brussels/London, 6 May 2025

**Subject:** Call for Support in Advancing an EU- UK SPS Agreement

Dear Mr. Šefčovič,

EuroCommerce, the voice of the European retail and wholesale sector, and the British Retail Consortium (BRC), the trade association for UK retailers, are reaching out to request your support in securing a Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) agreement between the European Union and the United Kingdom. The re-establishment of such an agreement has already been identified as a priority by the UK government. We would equally welcome the EU's commitment to this objective, recognising its importance for ensuring the smooth flow of goods, reducing trade frictions, and strengthening economic ties.

New requirements for physical, documentary, and identity checks have significantly complicated agri-food trade between the United Kingdom and the European Union since Brexit. Prior to Brexit, deep regulatory harmonisation enabled the development of highly integrated supply chains within and between businesses in both the UK and the EU. The UK's reclassification as a 'third country' under EU trade rules, resulted in the imposition of a new set of regulatory barriers for operators on both sides. This regulatory divergence has notably impacted the retail sector, which depends on highly efficient, just-in-time logistics and cross-border supply networks to maintain the availability and affordability of food products, especially perishable and seasonal items. We would like to encourage European decision-makers to pursue the conclusion of a SPS agreement that helps to reduce delays, administrative costs, and food waste across the supply chain thereby boosting economic growth and increasing investment to our mutual benefit.

The EU remains the UK's most important trading partner for agri-food products, accounting for 71% of UK food and drink imports — valued at €45 billion in 2024 — and 57% of UK exports, worth €14 billion in the same year. 80% of UK supermarkets' imports, approximately a fifth of all food they sell, is from the EU. The successful conclusion of an SPS agreement could result in a substantial increase in agri-food trade, while also enhancing productivity across the entire supply chain and safeguard food security and to ensure consumers have access to a diverse, healthy, and affordable food supply throughout the year.

As well as an agreement on SPS regulations to reduce border checks, we would also welcome closer regulatory co-operation on product safety and environmental regulations. These are also creating increased burdens and costs in European and UK supply chains and we would welcome closer alignment to deliver the same benefits as an agreement on SPS.

In today's global environment, where international trade is increasingly characterised by protectionism and unfair practices — often resulting in supply chain disruptions — it is more important than ever to foster trusting partnerships that facilitate and promote cross-border trade, while maintaining the highest food safety standards.

Yours sincerely,



Helen Dickinson  
Chief Executive



Christel Delberghe  
Director General