Press Release

23 November 2026

Fresh food can't wait at the border: EuroCommerce backs EU-UK push to reduce barriers to agri-food trade

EuroCommerce, the voice of the European retail and wholesale sector, sees the outcome of the EU-UK Summit as an important step towards rebuilding a closer and more efficient trading relationship, particularly through progress on reducing Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) barriers affecting agri-food supply chains.

Following Brexit, new certification requirements, documentary checks and physical border controls have added significant cost and complexity to highly integrated European and UK food supply chains.

For retailers and wholesalers, reducing these barriers will make a difference. Retailers depend on efficient, just-in-time supply chains to maintain the availability and affordability of fresh, seasonal and perishable products, while wholesalers frequently manage mixed consignments and smaller B2B shipments for which certification and border formalities can impose disproportionate costs.

EuroCommerce therefore encourages both sides to ensure a pragmatic and predictable transition, giving all actors in the agri-food chain the time and clarity they need to prepare. Clear and timely guidance, together with realistic and stable implementation timelines, will be essential to enable the entire supply chain to make the necessary changes with confidence.

The renewed EU-UK partnership should also provide a foundation for closer regulatory cooperation. Avoiding unnecessary regulatory divergence will help reduce administrative burdens, strengthen the competitiveness of European and UK businesses and make cross-border supply chains more resilient.

Christel Delberghe, Director General of EuroCommerce, said*: "Removing unnecessary checks and administrative requirements will help goods move more efficiently, reduce costs and food waste, and strengthen the competitiveness and resilience of EU-UK agri-food supply chains. In an increasingly uncertain global trading environment, a strong and trusted EU-UK partnership is more important than ever to facilitate cross-border trade, also for the benefit of consumers, while maintaining high food safety standards. "*

--END—

Contact:
Daniela Haiduc | Director of Communications, haiduc@eurocommerce.eu

EuroCommerce is the principal European organisation representing the retail and wholesale sector. It embraces national associations in 28 countries and 5 million companies, including leading global players and many small businesses. Over a billion times a day, retailers and wholesalers distribute goods and provide an essential service to millions of businesses and individual customers. The sector generates 1 in 7 jobs, offering a varied career to 26 million Europeans, many of them young people. It also supports millions of further jobs throughout the supply chain, from small local suppliers to international businesses. EuroCommerce is the recognised European social partner for the retail and wholesale sector.