

Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street  
London SW1 2AA

17<sup>th</sup> January 2017

Dear Prime Minister,

We are writing to you to ensure that as part of the EU/UK negotiation, the UK accept all the present EU laws in the acquis that set standards for animal welfare.

Around 80% of UK animal welfare legislation originates from the EU with over 40 laws relevant to animal welfare. These laws cover all four groups of animals- farm, research, wildlife and companion animals and span over forty years.

The largest body of legislation concerns farm animals with 18 relevant EU law adopted. Many of the UK's food and farming policies have been shaped at EU level and our Government now has the opportunity to redefine these policies. We have the power to lead our own farming policies to advance farm animal welfare, implement higher standards than those under the EU laws, protect the environment and promote healthier public diets to combat heart disease, diabetes and obesity.

There are opportunities to develop a new vision and farm in ways that restore natural resources, soils, water, biodiversity and then maintain them in good shape for future generations. We can provide decent livelihoods for farmers and ensure that farming and our diets contributes to the Paris targets of limiting temperature increases. We should reduce farm antibiotic use. The use of antibiotics in farming contributes to the transfer of resistant bacteria to people.

We must achieve high standards of animal welfare and move away from industrial livestock production as this is a key driver of the detrimental impact of today's farming on the environment, public health, antibiotic resistance and animal welfare.

It is vital that UK farmers are not undermined by lower welfare imports. The UK must insist on the inclusion in new trade agreements of a clause requiring imports to meet UK animal welfare standards on meat and processed products. We have the opportunity to promote higher farm animal standards by diverting money from the old CAP subsidy system into schemes that reward farmers that produce under higher welfare assurance schemes or farm to meaningful higher welfare standards. With high land and labour costs, British farming cannot compete on cost alone. Quality must become part of Britain's post Brexit brand. Good animal welfare and pasture- based farming are key components of quality.

We call for a move away from intensive farming to free range systems and halt the zero-grazing of dairy cows. We believe the Government should provide incentives to farmers to keep cows in pasture-based systems. We call for the phase out of enriched cages for laying hens. The UK must require the replacement of pig farrowing crates with free farrowing systems.

The introduction of method of production labelling of meat and dairy products would indicate the farming method employed. We know this can have a significant impact upon consumer behavior just as compulsory labelling on egg provenance allowed consumers to know how their eggs were produced and the sales of free range eggs increased and now account for around 52% of eggs produced in the UK.

Leaving the EU provides opportunities to go further where there is existing legislation. For example, prohibiting the slaughter of farm animals without stunning is already prohibited in three other EU countries. We support the British Veterinary Association position on non- stun slaughter.

We urge for better public procurement that only uses meat, milk and eggs that have been produced humanely and sustainably in the UK. We encourage less and better meat and dairy consumption as this would give us healthier lives, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, help restore the environment and feed the growing world population. Reduced consumption of meat and dairy products would enable sufficient animals to be farmed using higher welfare standards.

There is support for mandatory CCTV in all slaughterhouses and reducing times for long distance live animal transport. Furthermore, once the UK is no longer bound by EU rules, it will be free to ban live exports. We call for the Government to introduce a Bill in Parliament to ban the live export of animals for Human consumption to come into force as soon as the UK leaves the EU.

It is a priority that there is not a reduction in animal welfare standards at the expense of a drive for new profitable economic trade deals. Conservative Animal Welfare Foundation recognizes the inevitable questions- what will Brexit mean for animal welfare and the importance of ensuring that laws protecting animals remain as tough- if not tougher- once the UK leaves the EU. Animal welfare is an increasing concern amongst the public, who frequently look to Government to take the lead in both maintaining and improving standards.

Yours sincerely,

Lady Suzy and Sir Roger Gale MP, Patrons

Sir David Amess MP, Patron,

Henry Smith MP, Patron

Lorraine and Chris Platt, Co- Founders

Conservative Animal Welfare Foundation

