

# News story: £700 million South West food exports are vital to economic success

The Chief Secretary to the Treasury, Liz Truss used a visit to several food manufacturers in Cornwall this week (12 and 13 July 2018) to unveil new figures that showed food and agricultural exports in the first quarter of 2018 were up for the fourth year in a row.

From January to March 2018, £175 million worth of food and agricultural goods were exported from the region around the globe, up £10 million on last year.

In 2017, nearly £700 million worth of Cornish food and agricultural goods were exported around the world, and the Chief Secretary hopes that this figure will be bettered this year:

Food manufacturers in this region have made a flying start to 2018 and it's hugely encouraging to learn, once again, that food exports are up for the first quarter of this year.

Exporting boosts the earnings of a business, and the wages of local workers, it also enhances the reputation of Britain and Cornwall around the world.

I want to see more people abroad enjoying a taste of Cornwall, like the magnificent clotted cream I've seen made during my visit.

It is so important that local traders in this part of the world have the opportunity to increase their trade and create jobs and I'm here to learn how we can help them do this.

While visiting Cornwall, the Chief Secretary was hosted by groups of businesses and also visited several food manufacturing factories.

The government is delivering for the South West, and the region now has the second-lowest unemployment rate of all UK regions. And this year alone employment has increased by 37,000, with a record high 2.8 million people now in work.

Since 2010 the government has worked hard to make sure businesses in all regions of the UK can start-up and scale-up. By cutting corporation tax we have helped encourage this, with 1.2 million more businesses starting up since 2010.

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# Press release: Farming regulation changes proposed

A major simplification of the way we regulate farming has been proposed in an [interim report published today](#) by Dame Glenys Stacey, Chair of the Farm Inspection and Regulation Review.

The interim report sets out the problems with the current system of regulation, largely borne out of the requirements of membership of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). It finds that farmers and regulators alike are exasperated by the demands of regulation, which are unduly precise and inflexible. As we leave the EU, there is an opportunity to rebuild trust between the regulating authority and the farmer, which would maintain high standard on farms and support farmers to comply.

The way we regulate now exasperates responsible farmers and regulators alike. Some of our regulations are unduly precise and inflexible. Tightly-drawn European regulation can have adverse consequences for farm businesses and lead to a lack of transparency in the food chain. It inevitably sours relationships between the farmer and the regulatory authority. Inflexible regulation can lead farmers to hide their mistakes and naturally, that undermines any trust between the regulating authority and the farmer.

The Review estimates 150,000 farm inspections are carried out each year by multiple agencies such as the Rural Payments Agency, the Animal and Plant Health Agency, Natural England and local authorities to meet the strict criteria of the EU's Common Agricultural Policy.

The report discusses the opportunity to use a single field force to conduct more meaningful farm inspections, as part of a more flexible, proportionate regulation. A simpler and more targeted regulatory system would be an immensely powerful tool in achieving the government's environmental objectives and supporting farmers to uphold standards.

Farming legislation has evolved and accreted in a piecemeal way over many years. Farmers face an unduly extensive and complex array of regulatory requirements. Some of those requirements seem illogical as well as inflexible, bringing farming regulation into disrepute.

The interim report also recommends better use of technology such as satellite imagery to check compliance. This could maximise the information gathered ahead of any inspection to support comprehensive visits for farmers and regulators alike. The Review is due to complete its work by the end of this year and will publish a final report with recommendations.

Dame Glenys Stacey, Chair of the Farm Inspection and Regulation Review said:

Farmers have long been frustrated by the way farms are regulated. As we leave the EU and as government sets out new expectations for

farming, we have a unique opportunity to transform the way we do things.

This interim report sets out a direction of travel for farming regulation. We do not suggest piecemeal adjustments. Instead we think more radical change is necessary, to make the most of the opportunity we have now, and to best enable farmers to produce and market food while also meeting the other expectations government has of farming.

I do encourage all farmers and land managers who are frustrated with regulation, but resigned to how things are, to read our report and to think that things could be and should be different.

Secretary of State Michael Gove said:

Dame Glenys makes a thorough and compelling case for fundamental changes to the existing inspection and regulation framework. The regulation on farmers under the CAP has imposed an extra bureaucratic headache on farmers, with no room to recognise innovation or good intent.

The interim findings of this independent report will be a key consideration in the plans for our future Environmental Land Management Scheme, for which an effective regulatory regime is crucial. This will work to enhance the excellent work farmers do to manage and protect the environment.

The independent review was announced in February to simplify the way farmers and landowners are regulated as we leave the EU. The strict requirements of the CAP mean that many inspectors are currently not able to use discretion or exercise their own judgment.

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## [News story: Notice of competition launch 'Don't Blow It! Safely eliminating munitions on the battlefield](#)

The Defence and Security Accelerator (DASA) is launching a new competition aimed at the private sector and academia, to seek innovative solutions and approaches to accessing, disabling and/or irreversibly destroying chemical

and biological weapons munitions, improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and bulk agents on the battlefield.

The competition is aimed at non-traditional defence and security innovators and DASA will be particularly interested to hear from those in allied technology areas such as the oil and gas, mining sectors as well as those which have experience in handling hazardous materials.

With an initial £500,000 to fund multiple proof-of-concept proposals at low Technology Readiness Levels (TRL), it is anticipated that an additional funding of £1.5 million may be available depending on the outcome of the initial funding phase.

It is jointly funded by the UK Ministry of Defence and the US Department of Defense, and will operate under an existing memorandum of understanding between both nations.

The competition will formally launch at an event in London on 26 September 2018.

If you are interested in attending please register your [Expression of Interest](#) by 5pm on 12 September 2018. Places are limited and we reserve the right to limit attendance if needed. If you are accepted to attend the event, you will be sent full details and an agenda.

Details about the competition can be found [here](#).

Any queries regarding this competition, should be sent to [accelerator@dstl.gov.uk](mailto:accelerator@dstl.gov.uk)