

Rt Hon. Kemi Badenoch MP
Secretary of State for the Department for Business and Trade
Department for Business and Trade
3 Whitehall Place
London
SW1A 2HP

6th March 2024

Dear Secretary of State

We are writing to seek urgent assistance in relation to meat export opportunities to Australia.

As you will be well aware, the UK has reached a comprehensive free trade agreement which has granted Australia significant duty-free quota volumes of beef and sheep meat. This has been a source of considerable consternation among UK farmers on the basis that these volumes are a potential threat to the stability of the domestic market with the risk that these products undercut domestic livestock prices.

Notwithstanding this, our members are always looking proactively for business opportunities and seeing if they can also benefit reciprocally. There are UK operators in Australia right now trying to do this and they have indeed identified opportunities to export beef products to that market only to find that they are unable to do so as currently Australia will not permit the import of UK beef or sheep meat without undertaking a protracted approval process which, put simply, means that Australia considers UK beef and lamb not safe to import unless and until we prove otherwise.

Conversely, as part of the Border Target Operating Model, the UK has listed Australian Lamb as 'low risk' meaning that they do not even need to provide an export health certificate (EHC) and their beef as 'medium risk' where the UK's new simplified EHC can be used. Most importantly, the UK has granted this unilaterally without requiring that Australia go through any sort of country or site approval process and without any attempt at trying to secure reciprocity.

We would ask that this is addressed urgently and that the Government requests that Australia reciprocates and allows the import of UK beef and lamb without preconditions. If needed this can be done on the basis of pre-listing, allowing trade to commence with audits taking place later and regularly thereafter in the normal manner. Again, we feel UK farmers would be deeply concerned if it emerged that we are prepared to import Australian meat and meat products without restriction but are unable to export to that market despite there being an FTA.

These business opportunities require speedy action without which competitors from other countries will take the business so we would ask for a response by return assuring us that immediate steps will be taken to ensure that the UK can ship meat and meat products to Australia without delay.

Yours sincerely,



Nick Allen

Chief Executive Officer

The British Meat Processors Association is the leading UK red meat trade body, working on behalf of businesses that supply over 80% of red meat to the country. Our members are responsible for supplying fresh meat and meat products to retailers, restaurants, and food service companies throughout the UK and exporting to the rest of world.

We work alongside Governments across the UK and other organisations to help develop a meat industry that is competitive, professional and supplies a sustainable, long-term and affordable supply of food to British customers. We also have a strong Associate membership of supporting and associated industries to core red meat processing.