



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs

**The Rt Hon George Eustice MP**  
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Dear (Authorised Trader),

### **Continuation of the Scheme for Temporary Agri-food Movements to Northern Ireland (STAMNI)**

Following a meeting of the UK-EU Joint Committee on 24 February 2021, both parties agreed in a joint statement that the UK “would provide a new operational plan with respect to supermarkets and their suppliers, alongside additional investment in digital solutions for traders in accordance with the [Northern Ireland] Protocol”. I am writing to you to explain what the UK Government’s new operational plan means for you, and the continued movement of agri-food goods from Great Britain to Northern Ireland.

As you know, from 1 January 2021, the Northern Ireland Protocol entered into force, as a result of which the movement of goods from Great Britain to Northern Ireland became subject to new checks and controls. To enable businesses time to adjust to these new requirements, and to mitigate the impact on the everyday life of communities in Northern Ireland, a grace period from most official certification requirements (such as export health certificates, phytosanitary certificates or marketing standards certification) was agreed in December 2020 for products of animal origin, composite products, food and feed of non-animal origin and plants and plant products.

I can confirm that the existing STAMNI arrangements continue and official certification requirements will be phased in from 1 October 2021. This is set out in the operational plan that we have provided to the EU, as referred to in the joint statement by the co-chairs of the EU-UK Joint Committee of 24 February 2021.

This operational phasing approach has been guided by delivery realities on the ground and by the priority that the UK Government and NI Executive place on protecting biosecurity. These temporary operational arrangements therefore remain consistent with the overarching objectives of the Northern Ireland Protocol by addressing the unique circumstances of Northern Ireland and protecting the Belfast Good Friday Agreement. We will continue discussions with the European Commission on implementation and delivery through the Specialised and Joint Committees.

Please note, products identified by the EU as agri-food P&R goods are unaffected by this announcement. Separate guidance for the movement of P&R goods is available on [Gov.uk](http://Gov.uk). If you are moving permitted chilled meats from Great Britain to Northern Ireland,



P&R Export Health Certificates (EHCs) are required until the end of this grace period. The [guidance published on our GB-NI Trader Showcase](#) sets out the qualifying criteria and the requirements you need to follow for P&R fresh meat, minced meat and meat preparations.

We will also continue to develop and introduce tools and methods that are designed to support businesses moving goods from Great Britain to Northern Ireland, and we will keep you involved and up to date as this work progresses. As part of this, Defra has established the Digital Assistance Scheme (DAS) that aims to support the continued movement of agri-food goods from Great Britain to Northern Ireland and address the cost and burden of compliance with the Protocol for industry. DAS digitises the certification and verification processes and is backed by a major injection of Government funding. I encourage you to engage fully with the design of DAS, including the current workshops planned in March as this will help us to ensure that this meets the needs of your company.

Business preparation remains extremely important and we will be in touch with you in the coming weeks to inform you of how you should prepare for the phased introduction of certification.



**RT HON GEORGE EUSTICE MP**

**If you would like further information on moving agri-food goods from Great Britain to Northern Ireland, please contact the Movement Assistance Scheme (MAS) helpline on 0330 0416 580. MAS can help you by offering support and advice, and information around Great Britain to Northern Ireland processes and policy. The helpline is open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm (excluding bank holidays).**