

Agriculture Bill

AMENDMENT
TO BE MOVED
ON REPORT

After Clause 42

LORD CURRY OF KIRKHARLE

Insert the following new Clause—

“Trade and Agriculture Commission

- (1) The Trade and Agriculture Commission (“the TAC”) is established.
- (2) Within three months of the day on which this Act is passed, the TAC must produce a report making recommendations to the Secretary of State to promote, maintain and safeguard current standards of food production through international trade policy, including standards related to food safety, the environment and animal welfare.
- (3) The Secretary of State must lay the report under subsection (2) before Parliament on the date of publication.
- (4) The report under subsection (2) must include—
 - (a) recommendations for the policies and legislation that the Government may adopt, including the necessary processes and institutions, in order to ensure that imported agri-food products placed on the market in the United Kingdom meet equivalent standards to those required of UK producers and that UK law and policy relating to food imports is effectively supportive of high standards, including in relation to food safety, the environment and animal welfare both domestically and internationally;
 - (b) where relevant production standards are not provided for in existing primary or secondary legislation in the United Kingdom, recommendations for the policies and legislation that the Government may adopt, including the necessary processes and institutions (such as testing regimes, assurance schemes and certification bodies), in order to ensure that imported agri-food products sold in the United Kingdom are produced to appropriately high standards in relation to food safety, the environment and animal welfare;

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- (c) the scope of agri-food standards and regulations for production methods and final and intermediate products that are relevant to agri-food products which the Government should aim to maintain in future trade negotiations relating to the trade of agri-food products;
 - (d) identification of existing powers exercisable by a Minister of the Crown for administering, enforcing and monitoring standards as set out in paragraph (c), including import restrictions based on those standards;
 - (e) recommendations about how to ensure effective and transparent comparison of agri-food production standards with international standards, including how different production systems and regulatory approaches might be considered equivalent to those that apply in the United Kingdom;
 - (f) recommendations for how to monitor imports of agri-food products in order to assess and compare the standards as defined under paragraph (c);
 - (g) consideration of exceptions to import restrictions of agricultural products, for instance where a requirement may have negative impacts on consumer interests or on developing countries, and recommendations of how best to manage such exceptions; and
 - (h) recommendations for public and Parliamentary scrutiny of any current or future trade negotiations relating to the trade of agri-food products with a view to agreeing an international trade agreement consistent with the TAC's other recommendations under subsection (2).
- (5) In addition to the report under subsection (2), the TAC must produce a report relating to each and any international trade agreement agreed, negotiated or concluded by the Government at any time after the commencement of this Act, prior to such an agreement being signed, considering its impact on the trade of agri-food products.
- (6) A report under subsection (5) must assess the terms of the international trade agreement under consideration and its impact on the Secretary of State's ability to promote, maintain and safeguard standards of agri-food production, including in relation to food safety, the environment and animal welfare.
- (7) The Secretary of State must lay any report under subsection (5) before Parliament on the date of publication, and a Minister of the Crown must move a motion to consider any recommendations in the report in each House of Parliament prior to the relevant agreement being signed.
- (8) The relevant international trade agreement may not be signed by the Secretary of State or another Minister of the Crown within 21 days of a motion being moved under subsection (7).
- (9) "International trade agreement" means –
- (a) an agreement that is or was notifiable under –
 - (i) paragraph 7(a) of Article XXIV of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, part of Annex 1A to the WTO Agreement (as modified from time to time), or
 - (ii) paragraph 7(a) of Article V of the General Agreement on Trade in Services, part of Annex 1B to the WTO Agreement (as modified from time to time), or

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- (b) an international agreement that mainly relates to trade, other than an agreement mentioned in paragraph (a)(i) or (ii).
- (10) The TAC may create such working groups and commission such research as it deems appropriate to meet its duties under subsections (2) and (5).
- (11) Within three months of a report being laid under subsection (3), the Secretary of State must—
 - (a) lay before Parliament a response to the TAC's report and all its recommendations, including how the Secretary of State intends to maintain the United Kingdom's standards for food production in importing agricultural products in relation to food safety, the environment and animal welfare, and
 - (b) make a statement to Parliament on the Government's response to the TAC's recommendations.
- (12) Ministers of the Crown must table motions for resolution regarding the response under subsection (11) in each House of Parliament.
- (13) It shall be an objective of the Secretary of State to achieve outcomes consistent with the relevant resolutions passed under subsection (12).
- (14) The Secretary of State may by regulations made by statutory instrument confer further functions on the TAC after the report under subsection (2) has been published.
- (15) The Secretary of State may by regulations made by statutory instrument amend the period of three months under subsection (2) provided that such an extension is agreed by the TAC in writing.
- (16) A statutory instrument containing regulations under subsection (14) is subject to affirmative resolution procedure.
- (17) A statutory instrument containing regulations under subsection (15) is subject to negative resolution procedure."

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