

5th August 2016

**The Rt Hon George Eustice, MP
Minister of State for Agriculture, Fisheries & Food
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Nobel House
17 Smith Square
London
SW1P 3JR**



Dear Minister

As you know, AIC represents a wide range of agricultural businesses across the Animal Feed, Crop Marketing, Crop Protection, Fertiliser and Seed sectors and is the primary trade body for businesses supplying inputs and advice to farmers. We estimate that our 250 Member companies supply circa £7 Billion of the £9.5 Billion inputs to UK Agriculture. In addition we now have over 3,000 participating companies involved in our range of independently audited assurance schemes which dovetail with Red Tractor and which have mutual recognition with a number of similar schemes elsewhere in the EU.

Following a meeting with your officials (led by Neil Fourie) recently, it was agreed we would set out, in outline, the expertise and assistance we and our members are able to offer the Department as it moves forward with the negotiations to leave the EU and the trade arrangements which then need to come into operation.

In both the export of UK cereals, finished feed, seed and the import of feed raw materials, plus a range of other agri-inputs, AIC members have the 'coal-face' experience and expertise which we believe will be invaluable in ensuring preparation for negotiations is comprehensive. In the area of grain exports/ raw material imports, as an example, by bringing together this expertise with the relevant officials it will be possible to ensure that the necessary detail on tariff, non-tariff and phytosanitary requirements are laid out alongside the resources which will be needed to address customs and port authority procedures – all designed to ensure any final negotiated arrangements protect the UK interests and competitive position.

As an association we work with a number of stakeholders to identify common points of principle and therefore feel well placed to speak on trade policy issues. At the same time we continue to work through our European organisations to identify common points of interest and to deliver these to policy makers and negotiators.

We recognise that timescales currently remain imprecise but over the next few months departments will need to build a negotiating position and we are ready to offer the expertise of our membership to help ensure negotiations are able to take place on a comprehensive and informed basis. We look forward to working with you as this position is developed.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'David Caffall'. The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

(Electronic signature)

**David Caffall
Chief Executive**