

Enhancing AHDB's role



OUR ASK

Enhance the role of AHDB with government matching levy payer funding for export promotion (presently around £8 million per year) to open and leverage new markets around the world.

Why it's needed

Global demand for food continues to grow, with the world's population set to increase by more than a quarter over the next 30 years. British produce, with its high production and environmental standards and reputation for high quality, should be at the centre of feeding this growing population.

The NFU's ambition is to grow our agri-food exports by 30% to over £30 billion by 2030 – a target that is within reach with the emergence of exciting new markets which are increasingly demanding high quality and safe products like those produced in the UK.

Accessing international markets is highly competitive and requires a 'boots on the ground' approach. To access these markets, a huge collective effort from across industry and government is required.

The AHDB already offers networking and advisory services to agricultural and horticultural businesses wishing to expand their exports abroad. Government match-funding of the industry's own levy contribution would help bolster these important services and assist in pinpointing the opportunities that are available to British agri-food producers.

Government-matched levy funding is necessary because our global competitors are already receiving similar support. In the US, Export Councils receive funding through membership dues, as well as levy payments, and this is bolstered by US government funding for overseas marketing and promotional activities, such as the Agricultural Trade Promotion Program.

In Ireland, the independent trade body, Bord Bia, employs market researchers and sales representatives with expert knowledge of Irish produce to sell to new markets. Its average annual income was €76,962,000 between 2019 and 2020. Of this, 80.4% and 76% was government funding respectively.

If UK exports are to thrive on a global stage with competitors who have this much support, we need to increase our global marketing capacity. While British agri-food producers are already contributing up to £8 million a year, a doubling of this through government support would reassure British farmers that any future government is willing to back them internationally.



What it would deliver

Match funding of AHDB export activity would mean greater support for UK exporters and investment in technical expertise for markets abroad which would have significant economic benefits.

Increased exports would help create jobs throughout the food supply chain, from farm workers who work tirelessly to create the produce, to lorry drivers and dock workers who ensure its delivery.

The total value of the UK food and farming sector was £127bn

in 2021, while agriculture's contribution in 2022 was £13.9bn.

With the successful expansion of the export market, there is great potential for this to increase.

With an expected two billion more middle-class consumers by 2050, there is great depth to the UK's potential export market in regions and countries such as the Gulf Cooperation Council, South Korea and the USA. If the government sees export

markets as critical to the UK's future growth, this must be backed up by a monetary commitment to market UK goods around the world. British agri-food products are also produced to some of the highest animal welfare and environmental standards in the world. This is something that we, as an industry, are immensely proud of and want to share with the rest of the world.

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