

PETER GIBSON MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

June 2020

Dear ConAvent

Thank you for your email about the UK's future agricultural policy.

Food and farming is a bedrock of our economy and environment, generating £112 billion a year and helping shape some of our finest habitats and landscapes. I am pleased that the Government are committed to matching the current budget available to farmers in every year of this Parliament, providing certainty and stability.

Our high environmental, animal welfare and food safety standards are already in law, including legislating to prevent the importation of chlorinated chicken or hormone-treated beef, and the Government's manifesto commits them to continuing to defend robustly those standards in future trade negotiations.

Leaving the EU creates a once in a generation opportunity to design a domestic agricultural policy that will stand the test of time. We can bring in innovative new ideas to support investment in healthy, sustainable British food production and do much better for farming, the environment and animal welfare. The Agriculture Bill will allow the UK to move to a system of paying farmers public money for public goods including environmental protection, access to the countryside, and work to reduce flooding. In order to spend more on boosting productivity and environmental benefits, Direct Payments will be phased out over an agricultural transition period, which is due to start in 2021 and run for seven years.

I am pleased that the Agriculture Bill will champion British food by improving transparency and fairness in the supply chain and through investing in new technology and research to ensure our food producers remain competitive and innovative. The Government will also help food producers strengthen their negotiating position at the farm gate and seek a fairer return by collecting data from across the supply chain.

Member of Parliament for Darlington

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We must take this opportunity to use public money to reward environmentally-responsible land use, as well as maintaining and enhancing high standards of animal welfare. I am convinced that we will harness this opportunity and ensure that our best days as a food and farming nation lie ahead of us.

Once again, thank you for taking the time to contact me and if I can ever be any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Peter Gibson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

PETER GIBSON MP