

Post-Brexit Food Safety Standards - Deregulation in the pursuit of trade deals increases public health risks

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Abstracts

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SUMMARY

Food trade appears to be the weak spot of the UK regarding the negotiation of trade deals. A globalized approach on trade deals also reveals the inevitable deregulation in the effort of striking deals with multiple trade partners. As the UK intends to diverge from EU rules and standards, it would need to find another country or trade bloc to which it can align, the most likely option being the US, with that option leaving UK consumers worse off.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Although the UK government has vowed to maintain these food safety standards, its strategic approach in the pursuit of trade deals is effectively leading to the revision of those standards towards deregulation. Reaching a trade deal with the US appears to be the main incentive for that shift. A trade deal with the US can only lower food safety standards given that regulation is considered by US negotiators as a trade barrier. As a result, chlorinated chicken, hormone-treated beef, genetically-modified food, along with products with reduced labeling and additives or pesticides currently banned, are expected to be available in the UK.

As the UK has been reliant on food imports and the EU's supply chain, maintaining the high quality of food based on EU food safety standards after

departure from the EU has been seen as critical by the public. UK's best chance for achieving sustainable food security after Brexit. A no deal withdrawal could adversely affect public health, consumer protection, animal welfare and environmental sustainability, as other countries begin to produce food for the UK to replace imports from the EU.

A "Canada-style" trade agreement that appears to be ideal for the UK to maintain a form of free trade relationship with the EU, seems far-fetched, especially when there is no intention of formally aligning standards. In fact, greater authority in post-Brexit legislation has been used by the UK government to deviate from EU provisions, creating loopholes and amends that most certainly lead to deregulation of food safety standards.

SCOPE

Understand how food trade is under threat

See the plans outlined for deregulation

learn how deregulation might dramatically change food production

REASONS TO BUY

Why does is the UK considering deregulation?

What are the potential benefits?

What are the downsides?

What is the most likely outcome?

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