Dear David Davis MP (copied to Theresa May PM),

We are writing to you in your role overseeing the new government unit, which will lay the groundwork for a British exit from the European Union.

Our group of 85 signatory organisations works across a wide spectrum of food issues, including farming, countryside, environment, fishing and marine environment, poverty, trade, animal welfare and public health, together representing the interests of millions of people. We met in the last week to discuss the implications of the EU Referendum for food and farming.

A large proportion of the UK’s current food, farming and fishery policies is covered by EU competence, and re-thinking this creates many opportunities. Better food, farming and trade policies can help to cut greenhouse gas emissions from farming and food industries by 80% by 2050, and promote healthier diets to combat heart disease, cancers, diabetes and obesity and to promote oral health. Such policies can also support a vibrant and diverse economy, good jobs and working conditions, ethical and sustainable production methods, international development, improved animal welfare, more farmland and marine wildlife and restored farmland biodiversity, as well as enhancing the beauty of the countryside and protecting the environment (in particular fresh water and soils), while providing a safe and traceable food supply.

Crafting good food and farming policies is also essential to help heal the rift that has so far characterised the EU Referendum process, as well as to combat the disenfranchisement and distrust in the political process that so many of our fellow citizens have expressed.

We therefore suggest that the new unit, under your leadership, should:

**Ensure, in concert with the devolved administrations, that fair, healthy, humane and environmentally sustainable food, farming, fishing and land management are central to the post EU Referendum strategy for the UK.**

- Food, farming and fishing policies, and the sectors’ compliance with strong environmental protections, designed explicitly to achieve public good, must be the bedrock principle for any post EU Referendum negotiations.
- Public spending on subsidies, research or other support must be directly linked to public goods.
- The role of migrant and seasonal labour in food production needs to be tackled head on.

**Ensure that new trade agreements build on, and do not undermine, progress achieved over several decades and under several governments.**

There are many examples, to name but a few: local and sustainable food in public sector food buying, which can help lead the way in investing in quality British production; environmental legislation that protects natural environments, wildlife and habitats; the living wage and better working conditions; millions of food jobs supported in the world’s poorest countries; food labelling and marketing controls; animal welfare standards; tackling food waste; support for organic production methods, and new approaches to reducing farm antibiotic use. While more progress is needed in all of these areas, we are seriously concerned that such considerations may be over-run by a drive for new trade deals at any cost, and pressures to de-regulate. Conducting Environmental and Health Impact Assessments as part of the preparation for new trade deals should be a critical step in the process.
We therefore urge you to ensure that:

1) The unit’s terms of reference include public health and sustainability.
2) Food, farming and fishing makes up one of the Options Papers being developed by your unit.
3) The unit includes officials with food, farming and fishing, public health and sustainability expertise, including from e.g. DEFRA, DfID, BIS, FSA, FSS and DH, and from the Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland governments and administrations.
4) You draw on expertise outside the civil service to support your fact-finding and development of options. We are ready to support you in this and our networks include some of the UK’s best academics on food policy, experts on key issues and other well-informed stakeholders.
5) Respect for scientific advice on environmental and public health matters is prioritised, for example when advising on environmental legislation and fishing quotas.
6) Consideration is given to the wealth of policy work that our organisations and others have done in recent years, to inform your food and farming Options Paper. Examples include:
   - *Square Meal: Why we need a new recipe for farming, wildlife, food and public health* (Square Meal group) – [www.foodresearch.org.uk/square-meal/](http://www.foodresearch.org.uk/square-meal/)
7) Important principles, processes and legal requirements that are already enshrined in UK policy or have been upheld in EU negotiations, often with the strong support from the UK, are built upon. For example: the need for policy to further international development objectives; legislation to protect species and habitats and to ensure fishing at sustainable levels (Maximum Sustainable Yields – MSY); drives to reduce waste in commercial fisheries; climate change targets; the precautionary principle, and the Sustainable Development Goals (Agenda 2030 for which the Cabinet Office oversees domestic implementation), especially to support the most economically vulnerable in the UK and internationally.
8) Important policy initiatives already underway are not further delayed, nor undermined, such as the Childhood Obesity Strategy; the 25-year Environment Plan; implementation of the national pollinator strategy; and the devolution of power and responsibilities to UK cities and local administrations.
9) The highest standards of transparency in policy development are upheld, as this will be key to winning support and building public trust.

We would really value an opportunity to meet with you, at your earliest convenience, to discuss these issues and to explore how we can support the new unit in its important work.

Yours sincerely (in alphabetical order by organisation),

Contact for correspondence: Kath Dalmeny, Coordinator of Sustain: The alliance for better food and farming, email: kath@sustainweb.org; telephone: 020 7065 0902; mobile: 07989 557982

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<td>Dr Elizabeth Mitchell</td>
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Dr Sue Christie  Vice Chair  Belfast Food Network
Pat Thomas  Founder Director  Beyond GM
Peter Brown  Director  Biodynamic Association
Katharine Jenner  Chief Executive  Blood Pressure UK
Shaun Spiers  Chief Executive  Campaign for the Protection of Rural England
James Treasure-Evans  International Policy Manager  Concern Universal
Professor Graham MacGregor, Chair  Consensus Action on Salt and Health
Philip Lymbery  Chief Executive  Compassion in World Farming
Sue Dibb  Coordinator  Eating Better Alliance
Ricarda A Steinbrecher  Co-Director  Econexus
Barbara Young  Co-Chair  Environmentalists for Europe
Stanley Johnson  Co-Chair  Environmentalists for Europe, and Former Conservative MEP
Dr Mick Horton  Dean  Faculty of General Dental Practice (UK)
Professor Simon Capewell  Vice President for Policy  Faculty of Public Health
Barbara Crowther  Director, Policy & Public Affairs  Fairtrade Foundation
Pippa Woods CBE  Chair  Family Farmers’ Association
Ian Eggington-Metters  Interim Director  Federation of City Farms & Community Gardens
Niki Charalamopoulou  Managing Director  Feedback: The global food waste campaign
Helen Crawley  Coordinator  First Steps Nutrition Trust
Dan Crossley  Executive Director  Food Ethics Council
Anna Taylor  Executive Director  Food Foundation
Victoria Williams  Director  Food Matters
Professor Tim Lang  Founder  Food Research Collaboration, City University
Professor Corinna Hawkes  Chair  Food Research Collaboration, City University
Geoff Tansey  Curator  Food Systems Academy
Mark Driscoll  Head of Food  Forum for the Future
Jonathan Porritt  Co-Founder  Forum for the Future
Clare Oxborrow  Senior Food and Farming Campaigner  Friends of the Earth (England, Wales and Northern Ireland)
Joe Mann  Director and Food Teacher  Fun Kitchen
Lawrence Woodward  Director  Future Sustainability
James Campbell  Chief Executive  Garden Organic
Nick Dearden  Director  Global Justice Now
Liz O’Neill  Director  GM Freeze
John Sauven  Executive Director  Greenpeace
Oliver Dowding  Agricultural Spokesperson  Green Party of England and Wales
Professor Ralph Early  Professor of Food Industry  Harper Adams University (Food Science & Agri-Food Supply Chain Management)
Robin Ireland  Chief Executive  Health Equalities Group
Dr Richard Marsh  Chief Executive  Institute for Food, Brain and Behaviour
Professor Sylvia Tilford  President Elect  Institute of Health Promotion and Education
Emily Howgate  Coordinating Director  International Pole & Line Foundation
Allison Ogden-Newton  Chief Executive  Keep Britain Tidy
Ed Hamer  Spokesperson  Landworkers Alliance
Rosie Boycott  Chair  London Food Board, Greater London Authority
Jerry Percy  Executive Director and Chief Executive  Low Impact Fishers of Europe (LIFE)
Carmel McConnell MBE  Founder  Magic Breakfast
Carrie Hume  Director of Conservation and Campaigns  Marine Conservation Society (MCS)
...Sustain coordinates the following alliance activities, involving many national and community organisations:

Better Jobs for Better Farming and Land Use
Campaign for Better Hospital Food
Campaign for a Sugary Drinks Duty
Children's Food Campaign
Sustainable Fish Cities

Tom Andrews  Programme Manager  Sustainable Food Cities Network
Patrick Holden  Chief Executive / Founder  Sustainable Food Trust
Tom Wills  Policy Officer  Traidcraft
Richie Alford  Co-Chair  UK Food Group
Dr Angela Wright  Co-Chair  UK Food Group
Modi Mwatsama  Director, Policy & Global Health  UK Health Forum
Diana Holland  Assistant General Secretary for Food & Agriculture  Unite the Union
Dave Prentis  General Secretary  UNISON
Professor Kevin Morgan  Professor of Governance & Development  University of Cardiff, Geography & Planning
Vicki Hird  Director of Policy & Campaigns  War on Want
Kate Allen  Executive Director, Science and Public Affairs  World Cancer Research Fund
Stephen Trotter  Director for England  Wildlife Trusts