



Bernard Van Goethem

Director of the Directorate on
Crisis preparedness in food, animals and plants
DG SANTE
European Commission

Brussels, 29 September 2025

Subject: Future EU-UK SPS Agreement and Impact on Trade in Seed Potatoes

Dear Mr Van Goethem,

The co-signing organisations welcome the outcome of the EU-UK Summit held on 19 May 2025, where an agreement was reached to strengthen the economic relationship through a new Strategic Partnership between the EU and the UK. This is an important political step that sends a positive signal to industries still bearing the negative consequences of Brexit, with EU-GB trade in seed potatoes being one of the most affected.

Following up on our previous communications and the concerns raised by many EU stakeholders, we wish to reiterate the urgency and strategic importance of resolving the ongoing restrictions on EU-GB seed potato trade. The current situation has created significant uncertainty and operational challenges for the EU potato sector, threatening food security and its ability to secure supply for the EU market and jeopardizing the long-term sustainability of the sector on both sides.

We welcome the European Commission's audit of seed potato production systems in Scotland, Northumberland, and Cumbria, carried out at the end of 2024, as a positive step towards reinstating bilateral trade. However, the audit report has not yet been published. We urge the Commission to release the findings of this report without delay, as it is a critical step towards establishing seed equivalence between the UK and the EU.

We respectfully call on the European Commission to prioritise discussions on reopening EU-GB seed potato trade before concluding negotiations on the future SPS Agreement. Seed potato production is a lengthy process that requires careful planning and multiple growing seasons for both EU and GB producers to scale up. It is therefore crucial that a bilateral agreement is reached as soon as possible to allow the sector sufficient time to prepare.

We also wish to highlight the need for both the EU and the UK to agree on a legislative framework that enables the exchange of genetic material. We encourage the European Commission to urge its UK counterparts to simplify the procedures for national listing in the UK. Streamlining this process and ensuring mutual recognition of DUS and VCU testing would further ease the introduction of new varieties into the GB market.

The co-signing organisations have been following the issue of EU-GB seed potato trade for many years. **We would therefore like to request a meeting with the Commission to discuss a potential future agreement on bilateral trade in seed potatoes and to gain a clearer understanding of the possible legal basis.**

The co-signing organisations intend to continue contributing constructively to this dialogue and will share further input reflecting the sector's priorities and technical considerations in the coming weeks.

We thank you for your continued attention to this matter and stand ready to contribute further to the dialogue.

Yours faithfully,



Elli Tsiforou,
Copa-Cogeca Secretary General



Nuria Moreno,
EUPPA Secretary General



Garlich von Essen,
Euroseeds Secretary General



Berta Redondo Benito,
Europatat Secretary General



Sebastian Emig,
ESA Director General

CC:

Sylvain GIRAUD, Head of Unit – G.1. Plant Health, DG SANTE;
Mauro Poinelli, Head of Unit – E.2. Wine, spirits and horticultural products, DG AGRI;
Mr Flavio Coturni, Head of Unit – D.3 Agriculture, Food, and Sanitary and Phytosanitary Matters, DG TRADE;
Maria Kammenour, Deputy Head of Unit – G.1. Plant Health, DG SANTE;
Julie POIROT, policy officer - G.1. Plant Health, DG SANTE.