

# Media Release



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**NPA PRESS RELEASE**

## **Farming industry needs permanent EU workers, too**

The NPA has stressed the need for the Government to recognise the importance of permanent EU labour after we leave the EU, following today's announcement on a new seasonal workers' scheme.

The pilot scheme will provide visas for up to 2,500 non-EU workers a year to work on fruit and vegetable farms for six months.

Defra Secretary Michael Gove said the Government had 'listened to the powerful arguments from farmers about the need for seasonal labour to keep the horticulture industry productive and profitable'.

NPA chief executive Zoe Davies welcome the fact that the Government has shown it is listening to industry concerns.

But she said: "However, it is important that the conversation now moves onto the need for the wider farming, processing and allied sectors to continue to have access to permanent EU labour after we leave the EU," she said.

"As our survey of members showed, the UK pig industry is hugely reliant on permanent EU workers to function. We fully support measures to attract more home-grown workers to the sector, but in the short-term we will also continue to stress the need for policies that make EU citizen welcome to live and work in this country.

"Without them, the UK pig sector will not be in a position to grasp the opportunities Brexit might present in the global or domestic markets."

The NPA's October 2017 survey of members across the pig industry showed:

- Just over a half of respondents employed at least one non-UK worker, with 24% hiring more than a quarter of their labour from overseas.
- Around 90% of businesses using non-UK labour employed them on a permanent basis, with 94% of non-UK workers coming from the EU.
- 64% of those employing EU labour said it had become harder to find EU labour since the vote. None said it had got easier.
- Nearly half of those employing EU labour said EU workers they employed were considering leaving the UK due to uncertainty over Brexit.

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## Notes to editors

- 1) More information on the NPA's survey of members about access to labour after we leave the EU can be viewed [here](#)
- 2) The NPAs position on migrant labour can be viewed in our briefing on Brexit's opportunities and challenges for the pig sector [here](#)
- 3) NPA chief executive Zoe Davies' spelled out the association's concerns when she gave evidence to the EFRA committee. Read more [here](#)

## More information

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