

# Media Release



November 18, 2019

NPA Press Release

## **A Fair Deal For British Pig Farmers – NPA launches 2019 general election manifesto**

The next Government must ensure the UK's ability to produce high quality pork products is not fatally undermined by double standards in our post-Brexit trading arrangements.

That is one of the key messages in the National Pig Association's (NPA) election manifesto, which, published today, sets out its demands for a Fair Deal for British Pig Farmers.

"The NPA believes Brexit could offer opportunities for the pig industry," NPA chairman Richard Lister said. "However, if the needs of pig producers and the wider agricultural sector are ignored in pursuit of other goals, the consequences could be catastrophic for the industry. "That is why we have put forward a number of policy requirements for the next Government that put common sense and fairness at the heart of the policymaking process."

The NPA's key policy asks come under four key themes – avoid a disastrous no deal Brexit, grow the pig industry with supportive Government policies, maintain animal health and welfare standards and retain sufficient access to labour.

Specific pig industry requests under these headings include:

- **Fairness in tariffs** – if our departure from the EU results in new tariff arrangements, the Government must ensure they are set at a rate that does not open the floodgates to cheap pork imports, while UK producers face large and restrictive tariffs on exports to Europe.
- **Equivalent standards** - we must not agree to future trade deals that expose us to imports that would be illegal to produce in the UK. The Government must insist that import standards match our own.
- **Keeping ASF out** - we need better border controls and tougher sanctions on those bringing in meat illegally.
- **A fair and proportionate approach to regulation** – for example, farrowing crates should not be banned. Farmers who wish to move to alternative systems should be financially supported to enable them to do so.
- **Helping pig farmers grow** – as a previously unsupported sector, we will need support under a new domestic farm policy that helps producers invest in modern production facilities that deliver good animal health and welfare and reduce our environmental impact.
- **Access to EU labour** - we need continued access to EU labour, particularly permanent 'unskilled' labour for our farms, food processing companies and allied industries.

Mr Lister highlighted the threat of cheap imports as one of the core messages in the manifesto. "The UK pig industry is in a good position to thrive on a global scale if the next Government gets it right and helps us to grow and reach new markets.

“But this industry knows from painful experience – the decision to unilaterally ban sow stalls in 1999 - the devastation that follows when policies hamper domestic producers while inviting in cheaper imports produced to standards that are illegal in this country. The situation resulted in a mass exodus of domestic producers unable to compete in an unfair market. That must not be allowed to happen.

“We are only 54% self-sufficient in pork, and the next Government will have a direct influence over improving or worsening this.”

The other key themes in the manifesto include a more joined-up approach to protecting the pig sector from the huge threat posed by African swine fever (ASF).

NPA chief executive Zoe Davies said ASF, currently spreading across Asia and still present in Europe, was currently the biggest threat the UK pig sector faces.

“We have been disappointed so far with the lack of rigour shown by the border authorities to raise awareness of the ASF risk and adopt robust measures to keep the virus out,” she said.

“The next Government must take this threat seriously – before it’s too late.”

Senior policy Ed Barker said the NPA would work tirelessly in the run-up to the December 12 poll to ensure candidates understood the NPA’s position on these critical issues. “We will make sure the pig sector’s voice is heard,” he said.

### **Notes to editors**

You can view the NPA manifesto [here](#)

You can view our No Deal Brexit briefing [here](#)

You can view our ASF briefing [here](#)

You can view the dedicated ASF section on our website [here](#)

### **More information**

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