

## Email from Defra with labelling update, 15 August 2024

Dear all,

Thanks again for the catch-up. [REDACTED]

## Internal email sharing politico article, 12 September 2024

Morning! To see interesting article – [REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Thursday, September 12, 2024 7:40 AM

**To:** [REDACTED]

**Subject:** FW: UK food industry in last ditch plea to scrap costly 'Not for EU' labels

FI

[REDACTED]

**From:** POLITICO Pro Article <[no-reply@politico.eu](mailto:no-reply@politico.eu)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, September 11, 2024 3:22 PM

**To:** [REDACTED]

**Subject:** UK food industry in last ditch plea to scrap costly 'Not for EU' labels

## UK food industry in last ditch plea to scrap costly 'Not for EU' labels

By Sophie Inge · Sep 11, 2024, 4:22 PM · [View in your browser](#)

LONDON — Britain's food industry is urging the government to "draw a line" under the previous Tory administration's post-Brexit food-labeling policy as part of ministers' plans to reset relations with the EU.

As [reported by POLITICO](#) last month, the government is currently reviewing plans to extend the requirement for "Not for EU" labels to food sold across Great Britain. The unpopular policy — which was introduced as part of the Windsor Framework agreement between the U.K. and the EU and already applies to food sold in Northern Ireland — was meant to ensure that goods are not moved onward to the Republic of Ireland, an EU member country.

But it has faced a huge backlash from businesses, who say the labels add significantly to their costs and [prevent them from trading items that could otherwise be sold into the EU](#). They have also [proved unpopular among consumers](#).

Under plans set out by the previous Tory government, meat and dairy products sold across the U.K. will be required to carry the labels from Oct. 1 this year, with a more comprehensive rollout planned for more products from July 2025.

But in [a letter to ministers shared with POLITICO](#), food trade bodies argue that it is “already too late” to go ahead with the October start date.

“We accordingly believe it is imperative either for there to be an immediate decision not to proceed or, at a minimum, the announcement of a formal six-month moratorium to allow more time for deliberation,” said the signatories, which include representatives from the Provision Trade Federation, the National Farmers’ Union and the Chilled Food Association.

### **‘In complete limbo’**

The previous Tory government conducted a consultation on the labeling policy in February and March this year. However, the Labour government has yet to publish a summary of the responses or respond to the findings.

As a result, the signatories said they have been “left in complete limbo” and are unsure about whether to change their packaging ahead of the deadline.

The Labour government is seeking a veterinary — or sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) — agreement with the European Union as part of a wider “reset” in U.K.-EU relations, which would potentially remove the need for the food labels altogether.

In their letter, the food trade bodies said the labeling policy would “sit uneasily with the current government’s stated aim of seeking a new and closer relationship with the EU, particularly in the area of SPS controls which have been at the origin of many of the problems currently associated with moving goods from GB to NI.

“We would strongly urge you to draw a line under this poorly handled chapter and make the earliest possible announcement to that effect.”

A government spokesperson said ministers were “carefully considering” the evidence provided in the recent labeling consultation.

“We are committed to taking all necessary steps to protect the U.K. internal market and are continuing to engage with businesses to ensure the smooth flow of goods to Northern Ireland,” the person said.

## **Update to Cabinet Secretary, 13 September 2024**

PS/Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform & Islands,

This short advice note updates the Cabinet Secretary about the UK Government's latest plans on 'Not for EU' labelling,

### **Background**

Officials met with Defra on 12 September 2024 to discuss future plans for GB wide labelling proposals. As you are aware, the previous UK Government had proposed introducing GB wide requirements for 'Not for EU' labelling on all Agri-foods products. This was due to commence on 1 October 2024 but the necessary SI was not laid and we were waiting for the new UK Government to confirm their position on the proposals.

This update may be timely ahead of the EFRA portfolio Inter-Ministerial Group next Monday. Lines to take have been provided below in case the subject comes up in the margins of the meeting.

### **Update on GB Wide Labelling**

[REDACTED]

### **Lines to Take**

[REDACTED]

### **Monthly Food Security Update – Internal Email**

**GB Wide 'Not for EU' Labelling – [REDACTED]**

### **Monthly Food Security Update July – Internal Email**

**GB Wide 'Not for EU' Labelling – [REDACTED]**

### **Monthly Food security Update June – Internal Email**

**GB Wide 'Not for EU' Labelling – [REDACTED]**

### **Extract of email to Director for Agriculture and Rural Economy from Defra 23 August 2024**

#### GB-Wide

- The GB Labelling policy remains under review.
- The previous government consulted on the Marking of Retail Goods Regulations to extend the 'Not for EU' labelling requirement across Great Britain. This

government is carefully considering the evidence provided before making decisions.

- [REDACTED]

### **Extract from Economy Top Lines Briefing 19 June 2024**

#### **Windsor Framework & UK Border Target Operating Model**

[REDACTED]

### **Extract from Internal Email 1 August 2024**

#### **UK “not for EU” labelling proposal**

Just mentioning this on the off-chance it crops up after the election. UKG had been intending to lay a SI in July requiring all agri-food products on sale in GB to be labelled as “not for EU”. That was obviously put on hold when the election was announced and Defra do not now expect it to be laid in July. We had not seen any detail of the proposals or a consultation report and there were concerns from industry, [REDACTED]

**Nothing further on this.**

### **Extract from Internal Email 10 July 2024**

#### **Windsor Framework & UK Border Target Operating Model**

- We do not support UK Government plans to extend “not for EU” labelling to agrifood trade across the whole of GB. This goes beyond the requirements of the Windsor Framework, and will arbitrarily put additional costs on Scottish businesses.

### **Extract from Economy Top Lines Briefing 18 September 2024**

#### **Windsor Framework & UK Border Target Operating Model**

[REDACTED]