

## Meeting of APPG on Geographically Protected Food

Minutes 03.03.2021

Guest: Rt Hon. Greg Hands, Minister of State for Trade Policy

In attendance: Ruth Edwards MP, Deidre Brock MP, Andrew Griffith MP (staff), Virginia Crosbie MP, Baroness Sarah Ludford, Alicia Kearns MP (staff), Simon Robinson

### **1. Remarks: Rt Hon. Greg Hands MP Greg Hands MP**

- a) Defra is principal lead on GIs.
- b) Two aspects to GIs in trade: a mark of quality and a protection (namely against duplication or counterfeiting). High value products can also attract internal taxes which opens the door for illicit versions of the product.
- c) According to Defra statistics, around 25% of UK food and drink exports (by value) is generated by GIs, with exports totalling £5 bn in 2018. A significant portion of this unsurprisingly came from Scotch Whisky exports.
- d) DIT's work on GIs isn't exclusively around FTAs; they also various market access barriers around the world which may stem from outdated or protectionist rules. DIT works with countries to reduce and remove these on GI products, and talks are held every day with international buyers.
- e) With the recent launch of the "Open Doors" export campaign ([announced](#) by Secretary of State Liz Truss speaking at the NFU conference on 23 February), DIT are expecting a positive response from emerging markets demanding high-quality food and drink produce.
- f) DIT are working to educate current and prospective exporters on the opportunities of around increasing their exports around the world and help with understanding the technical nuances around this. They are also setting up mentoring scheme and face-to-face (virtual) meetings to allow British producers to pitch their products directly to potential buyers. Further information about this can be found at DIT's [exports hub](#).
- g) We should write out to APPG members to share the link.
- h) The Minister also promoted the 'Export Champions' [scheme](#).

### **Questions from attendees:**

#### **Q. Japan agreement – when can we know which GIs are included?**

**Answer:** The 3 month process mentioned in the APPG on GIs is only one step. In addition, the UK and Japan need to agree on a process and timeline for adding new GIs to the agreement. We are working closely with Japan to determine timelines, but discussions are still ongoing at this point.

#### **Q. What progress are we making in talks with the US?**

**Answer:** There is a [confirmation hearing](#) on Thursday 25 February for the next US Trade Representative. There hasn't been a formal round since the election. We are waiting to see where the new administration wants to take negotiations. Historically, US can be quite difficult on GIs.

There are two retaliatory tariff schedules involving the US, the Section 232 tariff dispute and Airbus/Boeing dispute. The UK's position is different on each one:

- a) S232 = steel tariffs on UK steel, which we are against and think are unlawful, counterproductive, unfair.

We put retaliatory tariffs on a group of iconic US products including bourbon, Levi's, Harley Davidson etc. These are still in place because we have rolled them over from the EU.

- b) Airbus/Boeing dispute – This has since progressed significantly since the meeting and the US has dropped a large number of tariffs after the UK's January actions.