

## Alok Sharma, MP for Reading West

8<sup>th</sup> March 2019

Dear Constituents,

Thank you for contacting me about food safety standards and the Agriculture Bill.

The Government is currently reflecting on concerns about the Bill raised during Committee Stage, as well as those raised by colleagues and interested parties. I look forward to the Bill coming back to the House, at which point I will have the opportunity to vote on any amendments brought forward there.

It is absolutely vital that people across the UK have confidence in the food they eat. I therefore welcome the Government's very clear commitment that any future trade agreements must uphold the UK's high levels of food safety, animal welfare standards, and environmental protection. Ministers have made clear these standards will not be watered down in pursuit of any trade deal once the UK leaves the EU.

Public consultations will be run ahead of any negotiations for new trade agreements, while any final agreement will be scrutinised and ratified by Parliament. These measures will ensure that both Parliament and the public can have their say on the content of any potential new trade agreements, including in the area of food standards. I am aware consultations have already taken place in the US, New Zealand and Australia, as well as with the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP).

I am encouraged by the Government's commitment to uphold our high food standards, ensuring we will all continue to have confidence in the food we eat.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



**Alok Sharma MP**

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