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By Fred  
Searle

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## 'Protect British standards,' NFU President urges PM

### Minette Batters meets Boris Johnson to warn against undermining food and farming standards after rejection of Ag Bill amendment in Commons



Minette Batters met Boris Johnson at Number 10  
Photo: Andrew Parsons / No 10 Downing Street

**N**FU President Minette Batters has met with Boris Johnson to urge action to safeguard British farming's high standards in post-Brexit trade policy.

The meeting on 14 October followed a vote in the Commons two days earlier when MPs rejected attempts to require imported food to meet domestic legal standards when the UK leaves the EU on 1 January 2021.

With campaigners warning that the UK could be forced to accept lower standards in order to finalise a US trade deal, a Lords amendment to the Agriculture Bill would have forced trade deals to meet UK animal welfare and food safety rules. However, MPs voted by 332 votes to 279 to support the government and reject the amendment.

Looking to prevent damage to British

Prime Minister to increase parliamentary scrutiny of trade deals, in particular by strengthening the Trade and Agriculture Commission to allow MPs to have their say on how trade deals would impact British food and farming.

She said: "It was good to have the opportunity to meet with the Prime Minister today, at such an important time for British farming.

"We are at a juncture that will have ramifications for both farming and the wider public for decades to come. I made clear that the nation cares deeply about British food and the high standards it is produced to. They do not want to see it undermined by imported food that could be produced to standards that are illegal here.

Batters added: "Already, over a million people have signed our petition and tens

of thousands of letters have been written to MPs on this issue. Those people want action to ensure our high standards of food production are not undercut.

"We also discussed the critical importance of getting our new agricultural policy right and the urgent clarity needed now for our fruit, veg and flower growers about where they will get their all-important workforce from in time for the 2021 season and beyond.

"I hope to continue to have constructive discussions with the Prime Minister and his government ministers as the Agriculture Bill reaches its final stages and throughout our trade negotiations with the EU and others."

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agriculture next year, Batters urged the

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