

MPs to quiz food policy experts on impact of Brexit

What might the potential impacts be on food and farming if the UK leaves the European Union, or if it stays? MPs will quiz leading food policy experts about the implications of leaving or staying in the EU on this important – and overlooked – question.

Academics from **City University London** and the **University of Warwick** will be scrutinised by a cross-party panel of politicians in the House of Commons on **Monday 25th April**. The event will be chaired by Charlotte Smith of BBC Radio 4's Farming Today.

Organised by [The Food Foundation](#), the [Food Research Collaboration](#) and the [Food Ethics Council](#), the event will examine the implications of leaving or staying in the EU for healthy and sustainable diets, food security, food prices, food safety, agricultural subsidies and food culture.

To attend, [sign-up here](#) or contact robin.hinks@foodfoundation.org.uk

- **Date:** Monday 25th April, 2016
- **Time:** 5.30pm – 7pm
- **Venue:** Committee Room 17, House of Commons, London
- **Speakers:** Professor Tim Lang (Centre for Food Policy, City University London), Professor Wyn Grant (University of Warwick) and Professor Fiona Smith (University of Warwick)

The debate follows the publication of a Food Research Collaboration briefing paper – [Food, the UK and the EU: Brexit or Bremain?](#) – which argues the EU referendum has “momentous significance” for UK food.

Professor Tim Lang, Chair of the Food Research Collaboration, said:

“The referendum has profound implications for UK food, largely ignored so far in the Brexit debate. A vote to leave will be the most significant food event in a generation. Whether we leave or remain in the EU, the world of food faces huge challenges over health, environment, supply and price, in which the EU will be a major player.”

“The UK should wake up to the significance of our and the EU’s food role in this changed world. The public isn’t yet interested, seeing it as a matter of farming. This is dangerously wrong.”

Professor Wyn Grant, of the University of Warwick, said:

“Most farmers’ concerns centre on the effect any decision would have on EU farm subsidies. Against a backdrop of falling farm incomes, subsidies can make the difference of running at a profit or a loss. Without the payments the future of many farm businesses would be in jeopardy.”

“There is a perception across the agricultural industry that leaving the EU would reduce the burden of regulation. However, what people might not realise is that a lot of the regulation that originally came from Brussels has been ‘gold plated’ by our own UK government. This means it wouldn’t be so easy to rip them up, should the UK opt to leave.”

For more information, contact: Ed Grover, City University London: ed.grover@city.ac.uk; 0207 040 3062; or Robin Hinks, The Food Foundation: robin.hinks@foodfoundation.org.uk; 0203 805 4673

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Notes to editors

Follow the debate on Twitter – we'll be tweeting throughout the event at [#EURefFood](#)

1) The Food Foundation is an independent think tank that tackles the growing challenges facing the UK's food system through the interests of the UK public. It is independent of all political parties and business, and is not limited by a single issue or special interest.

<http://foodfoundation.org.uk/>

2) The Food Research Collaboration (FRC) is an inter-university project that facilitates joint working by academics and civil society organisations (CSOs) to improve the UK food system. It is overseen by a steering group of academics (Dundee, Cardiff, Sussex) and civil society representatives (Sustain, UK Health Forum, IEEP), guided by an advisory panel of specialists and funded by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. It is physically serviced from the Centre for Food Policy at City University London.

<http://foodresearch.org.uk/>

3) The Food Ethics Council is an independent charity that works to create fair food systems with food businesses, NGOs and governments. Our 18 Council members are all experts in their fields, and include ethicists, food policy experts, organic farmers and senior food business executives.

<http://www.foodethicscouncil.org/>

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