

Dear Sir

We believe that the health of millions of UK children could be at risk if food supplies to schools are not protected from a no-deal Brexit.

With anticipated interruptions to the supply of fresh fruit and vegetables and food prices set to rise by anything up to 10%, we call on the government to protect the food of the 3 million children in the UK who depend on their free school meal as one of their main sources of nutrition.

The Department for Education (DfE) insists that schools will have what they need to meet school food standards, provide nutritious meals and that the UK has a 'high level of food security' which will continue 'with or without a deal'.

However, in private the government predicts food shortages and consumer panic buying. The EU Exit day at the end of October comes at the end of the British growing season when the UK becomes more reliant on fresh fruit and veg from other European countries. Some British growers have also suffered significant crop losses this year due to the bad weather.

We are concerned about how schools who are already experiencing budget shortages will cope with limited fresh food supplies and price hikes. The public sector caterers will be hit harder as they will not have the same buying power as their private sector colleagues.

It will be the most vulnerable school pupils who will end up losing out. The Government needs to reassure schools urgently that extra funding will be reliably available to ensure schools can continue to feed children well.

Signed:



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Chief Executive,  
Sustain: The Alliance for  
Better Food and  
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**Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall**  
Leading chef, food writer,  
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General Secretary; UNISON



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