

Sector Summary:

Soft Fruit and Vegetables

Trade and supply chains:

- Exporters will need an Economic Operators Registration and Identification (EORI) number to move goods in and out of the UK. While this can be done in minutes [online](#), further checks can take up to 5 days, and Customs may require applicants to wait an additional 48 hours before it can be used.
- Fruit and vegetables exported to the EU will have to apply for a UK-issued certificate of conformity via SASA, and are recommended to apply for an equivalent EU-issued certificate. This will ensure that exports meet Specific and General Marketing Standards (SMS and GMS) and meets EU marketing standards e.g. be fit for sale, meets quality grading and is correctly labelled.
- Growers/packers can apply to the Horticultural Marketing Inspectorate for Approved Trader Status (ATS) of the business consistently meets requirements. This means that applicants are identified as low risk, and will receive fewer inspections.
- Defra has produced the following guidance note for anyone exporting fruit and veg in a No Deal Brexit.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/839218/flowchart-brexitefruit-veg-export.pdf

Inputs:

- While there will be no tariffs on imported propagated materials from the EU, the UK will lose access to the EU Plant Passport regime, meaning that all plant imports will need plant health tests and plant passports. See <https://www.sasa.gov.uk/eu-exit-guidance-plant-health> for more information. SASA also provide guidance notes on importing seed and plant propagation materials.
- Many materials are directly or indirectly sourced from the EU, such as coir, polytunnel materials or irrigation equipment. Suppliers are only able to quote based on the current market situation, so it is advised to budget for additional cost and transport implications in the event that we leave the EU without a trade deal , or buy supplies ahead if possible.

Workforce:

- With soft fruit and vegetables employing large numbers of migrant labourers, many of which are from the EU, the question of whether or not and how many will be permitted to stay in the future is hugely important.
- Agriculture has not been designated a priority sector for shortage occupations after Brexit, but it is estimated that around 80,000 Seasonal Agriculture Workers Scheme (SAWS) permits will be needed in 2020.
- For permanent and near-full time staff, around a fifth of total employment in the sectors, businesses should look into supporting EU staff in securing residency if at all possible. Advice on how to apply for settlement status after 31st October can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/eusettledstatus>

- Farmers should also begin looking into alternatives for migrant labour, and be prepared to budget more for staff costs in the coming months as businesses will be competing for a smaller pool of staff and the predicted fall in the value of the pound is likely to reduce the attractiveness of UK wages. Recruiting from outside the EU is expected to cost an additional £450 per worker.
- **If you have not begun recruiting for summer 2020 it is highly recommended that you begin, and consider alternatives outside the EU.**

Calendar planning:

- Begin recruitment for seasonal labour for summer 2020, and look into alternative sources of labour
- Buy ahead equipment, fertiliser and supplies as much as possible ahead
- Assess risk of planned crops, and whether an expansion or reduction in growing area is suitable

For further information on steps to take to increase your business' resilience in a No Deal Brexit see our online checklist at: <https://www.fas.scot/rural-business/brexit/preparing-for-no-deal/>

No issues expected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Markets largely considered to be resilient (e.g. good domestic market, low threat of cheaper imports)
Known issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labour shortages, particularly over summer period, but also sourcing labour longer term • Changes to paperwork on standards required for exporting to the EU • Dependence on EU-sourced equipment
Unknown issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirements for work permits for non-UK labour • The length of delays at customs and impact on price of exported produce • Longer-scale of adaptation to new markets, especially for fruit

Opportunities:

- Scotland provides opportunity for late season fruit and veg within the EU
- Soft fruit is a high value export for Scotland
- To develop more local domestic and seasonal markets for homegrown fruit and veg

	Soft fruit	Vegetables
Subsidy reliance	Low	Low
EU market access		Low
Trade vulnerability to non EU imports	Low	Low
Reliance on other at risk sectors	Low	Low
Labour - farm	High	High
Labour - processing	High	High
Logistics	Medium	Low
Processing	Low	Low