



Mr Rishi Sunak, MP
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Dear Mr Sunak,

We would like to thank the Government for their continued support in this difficult and unprecedented situation, most especially with regard to the financial aid which has been forthcoming throughout this crisis. Your task is not one that many in this country envy, and we wish you continued success with it.

We welcome your recent announcements which aim to stimulate the recovery of the economy by providing incentives. 'Eat out to help out' is a tremendous idea, and we congratulate the minds behind it. However, we do feel that you have perhaps missed an opportunity to go one step further and to help our food producers – both beef farmers whom we represent, and the wider agriculture industry in general. The agricultural workforce has, as ever, worked through thick and thin, through fair weather and foul, producing a regular and stable supply of food for the country. They have not been furloughed. They have not had time off. Neither have they been quite as obviously appreciated as they should have been.

Perhaps now is the time for the public and the service sector to thank their food producers by lending their support in some small way. It would be a way of showing the country's appreciation to those who have worked tirelessly to feed the nation if the Government were to apply some pressure to the pubs and restaurants who will benefit from the extra funding. Please can you ensure that they buy local and support local producers. Stipulating to eateries via a well-devised PR campaign that their food should be sourced from within the UK would give the financial incentives– ultimately paid for by the UK tax-payer – a double benefit, helping to secure jobs within the industry and providing a well-deserved 'thank you' to those who worked so hard to help us through this crisis. There is not a great deal of benefit to the UK (or much of a PR win) in using UK tax-payers money to support agriculture in other countries.

There has been a great resurgence of patriotism in recent months, which has helped us through the dark times. There are even more difficult times ahead. If we are to emerge from this crisis as a united and stronger nation, we need to pull together, making use of our inherent strengths and helping each other where possible to recover our economy, our financial security and ultimately, our way of life.

Yours sincerely,

Neil Shand
Interim CEO,
National Beef Association