

PRESS RELEASE

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SNP PUSH COMMISSION ON FRENCH BEEF BAN

Ian Hudghton MEP, Scottish National Party member of the European Parliament's Agriculture Committee has tabled a Priority Written Question to Commissioner David Byrne today in a bid to mount pressure on the Commission to get France to lift it's illegal ban on British beef.

His question reads:

"In view of the European Court of Justice ruling in September 2001 that France has "failed to fulfil its community obligations" by continuing its ban on imports of British beef, and given the commercial losses being sustained by British producers as a result of this unilateral actions, would the Commission please inform members:

- What action it has taken thus far to lift the ban given the ruling of the Court of Justice was made some six months ago?
- What reparation will be made to British beef producers in order to compensate for the illegal actions of the French?"

The MEP's actions are being mirrored in Westminster where his SNP colleague, Annabel Ewing MP has tabled a question to the Agriculture Minister, Margaret Beckett asking what action has been taken at a UK level to end the ban.

Speaking from his office in Brussels today, Mr Hudghton said:

"It is an absolute disgrace that six months on from the Court of Justice ruling, farmers throughout the UK still can't sell their products to the French. Here in Scotland we have some of Europe's finest quality beef. It is a disgrace that, even after the Court has ruled that France should lift its ban on British beef, the ban remains firmly in place. Annabel and I will keep on and on about this unfair and inexcusable situation and will knock on every Commissioner and Minister's door until this illegal ban is lifted and farmers are adequately compensated for their losses."

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