

China resumes imports of unprocessed pork from UK

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British pork producers are celebrating a significant victory as the government has successfully ended China's Covid-era restrictions on imports of UK unprocessed pork. Industry estimates suggest this development could increase revenues by approximately Â£80 million.

With the restrictions lifted, British sausages and other premium pork products can again make their way onto Chinese dinner plates, and major UK producers have been given the green light to restart their exports immediately. In 2023 alone, China purchased around Â£180 million worth of pig meat from the UK, making it the country's largest non-EU customer. This reopening of the market is expected to result in even more British products heading to China.

China is the world's largest pork consumer, where pig ears, tails, and even trotters are regarded as delicacies. However, China had halted pork imports during the COVID-19 pandemic and has only gradually begun to lift those restrictions.

According to the UK Government, this positive change follows high-level discussions during the Foreign Secretary's recent visit to China. Representatives from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Department for Business and Trade have collaborated with industry stakeholders, the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB), and the UK Export Certification Partnership (UKECP) to restore British pork to Chinese menus.

Daniel Zeichner, Minister for Food Security commented that this is a major win for British pork producers, who can now send their high-quality products to one of their largest markets, worth Â£180 million. He added, "This is another example of the government delivering on our Plan for Change, boosting growth, and benefiting businesses across the country. Our pork is world-famous for its quality, and we can now satisfy the appetites of Chinese consumers."

Graham Wilkinson, CEO, the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB) said, "China is our biggest export market for the pork sector and the announcement of the re-listing of two UK sites is very welcome news for the industry."

The announcement will help to deliver growth and follows another recent victory for British farmers and producers, with the government securing access to the US market for UK beetroot growers earlier this year, worth approximately Â£150,000 per year in increased exports.