

## India-UK Trade Pact Eases Poultry Export Restrictions, Boosts Agri-Trade Prospects

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India and the United Kingdom have reached a key understanding under the ongoing trade negotiations that will provide targeted relief to Indian poultry exporters. Rather than a blanket ban during disease outbreaks, the deal allows for only partial restrictions, applying specifically to affected regions. This more nuanced approach is expected to bolster trade in poultry and other agricultural products, while introducing mutual recognition of standards to streamline food and animal product exports.

Under the terms being finalised as part of the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), the United Kingdom has agreed to limit poultry import restrictions to certain zones in India, rather than halting imports from the entire country. In the event of bird flu or similar outbreaks, India will be able to continue exports from zones officially recognised as free from the disease. The UK is obligated to evaluate these applications based on scientific assessments, enabling trade to continue from unaffected regions and supporting uninterrupted access to UK markets for Indian producers.

The agreement also introduces a revised auditing system for shrimp exports, under which repeated audits of individual processing units will no longer be necessary. Once India's national control system gains approval, individual exporters will be exempt from repeated checks. This is expected to reduce bureaucratic delays and enhance efficiency for seafood exporters.

Beyond poultry and shrimp, the framework includes a broader commitment to mutually recognise each other's Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) measures, technical standards relating to food safety and animal and plant health. Provided these standards are scientifically justified, both countries have agreed to accept them. This is projected to benefit a wide range of Indian agricultural and food products, including spices, basmati rice, tea, coffee, eggs, and honey.

For the first time, India has also negotiated cooperation-based clauses in a trade agreement covering animal welfare and the global concern of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in livestock. This development reflects a more holistic approach to trade in agricultural and animal products, aiming to align public health, food safety, and ethical considerations.

Officials familiar with the matter said these provisions mark a significant shift in how agricultural trade is governed between India and the UK. The more flexible and scientifically grounded approach is likely to give Indian exporters a competitive advantage, while preserving public health safeguards in both countries.