



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

POLICY AND STRATEGY

Preparing Wales' Fishing Sector for Brexit

Businesses in Wales' fishing sector are committed to preparing for the UK's exit from the European Union.

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Nerys Edwards runs Syren Shellfish, a Pembrokeshire-based seafood company that buys live produce from approximately 50 fishers based from Aberystwyth to Swansea.

Following Brexit, she aims to maintain existing business links with her current chief market – Spain.

“Spain eats so much more shellfish than they do in the UK. I work with an exceptionally good company who feel like family, and we've dealt with them for years.

“They value our Welsh fishermen and our Welsh product, and that is

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immensely important.” ”

In the event of a 'no deal' Brexit, the EU will recognise the UK as a 'third country', and Welsh businesses will need to adapt to a number of changes when exporting, including new tariffs and checks.

Despite this, Nerys is determined to adopt the new processes, allowing her to continue trading with the EU:

“ “We know we’re going to have to compromise on tariffs, but I need to for my fishermen, as I’m safeguarding families’ livelihoods.

“ “There are also about 7 onshore jobs for every fisherman at sea, and so it’s really important that we keep them all safe.” ”

Before Brexit, businesses in the fishing sector should apply for an Economic Operator Registration and Identification (EORI) number. [Get an EORI number](#) on GOV.UK.

For each time they export after Brexit, businesses must apply for UK catch certificates ([Create a UK catch certificate](#) on GOV.UK), which, in turn, are used to produce Export Health Certificates ([Get an export health certificate](#) on GOV.UK) that allow the produce to enter the EU.

It will also be important to find out which ports accept the produce being exported ([Get your business ready to export from the UK to the EU after Brexit](#) on GOV.UK).

The new system was initially a challenge for Nerys, but one that was overcome through some innovative thinking:

“ “When you’re loading live shellfish, you’re very, very time-critical. I’ve

employed another staff member to enter the information from a remote office, which I can't do when I'm landing on the quayside in the pouring rain, trying to do figures, grade fish, and get them loaded."

" "I take a photo of each fisher's invoice, and send them to her by WhatsApp, so that she can upload them onto the computer and create the UK Catch Certificate. This then means I can get my Export Health Certificate, and my lorry can leave the quay." "

The Welsh Government's [Preparing Wales](#) website provides information to industries that need to make significant changes to their business models before the UK leaves the EU, including in fishing, and in food production and exports.

It is regularly updated, and includes relevant resources like the [Fishing export checklist](#), and the [Brexit Toolkit](#), which measures business readiness for Brexit.

" "Communication is key. As well as just having time to sit down and read everything – there's quite a lot at the moment." "

The Welsh Government regularly publishes newsletters with updates on how the fishing sector can prepare for Brexit, including the Fisheries and Brexit bulletin, ([Subscribe to fisheries and Brexit bulletin](#)) as well as the Marine Planning ([Subscribe to marine planning newsletter](#)) and [Business Wales newsletters](#).

Nerys acknowledges that whilst there may be a lot of new steps to have to follow, doing so will give her business added security leading up to, and after, Brexit.

" "I know it's time-consuming. But it's surprising. Once you actually sit down

and get your head around it all, it takes a bit of pressure off, because you know you've done your best to get ready.

“ “If we all work together, we'll have a future, but it's going to take us working together.” ”

Find out more about what your business will need to do by going to these websites:

- Welsh Government: [Preparing Wales](#)
- UK government: [Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs \(DEFRA\)](#)

For more information on the Export Health Certificate, you may also find [our article on the veterinary sector](#) useful.

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