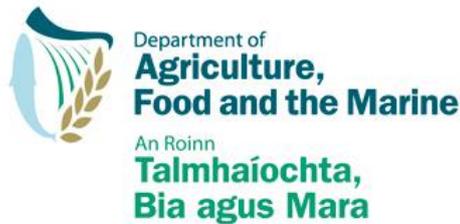


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16 March 2017

Creed & Van Dam Discuss Brexit In The Hague

The Minister for Agriculture Food and Marine, Michael Creed TD this afternoon (Thursday) met with his counterpart Martijn Van Dam, the Agriculture Minister for the Netherlands. Following on from a meeting with the German Agriculture & Food Minister Christian Schmidt earlier in the day in Berlin, the dialogue was the second of three bilateral meetings being conducted by Minister Creed over a two day period, concluding on Friday in Copenhagen with a meeting with Danish Agriculture Minister Esben Lunde Larsen.

Commenting after the engagement with Minister Van Dam, Minister Creed said;

“it is timely that I visit the Netherlands in the immediate aftermath of their election, in order to maintain and reinforce the traditionally strong relationship between the two countries on agriculture and fisheries policy. This continuity is important from our perspective as we continue the process of building awareness and alliances around the particular exposure of our Agri-food and fisheries sectors as a result of the Brexit decision.”

Minister Creed welcomed the common ground that Ireland and the Netherlands share in terms of their views on how trade matters should be addressed in the context of the Brexit negotiations;

“in value terms the Netherlands is even more exposed than Ireland, with Agri-food exports to the U.K. of about €8 billion annually. Therefore we have a significant shared interest in protecting our trading relationships with the U.K. Building alliances with Member States such as the Netherlands will be crucial in informing the final negotiating position of the E.U.” said Minister Creed.

There was also consensus on engaging in further and deeper consultation in relation to the potential impact of Brexit on Fisheries and the Common Fisheries Policy, with the Minister adding;

“I welcome that Minister Van Dam and his officials shared my concerns in relation to the potential impact of Brexit on Fisheries and committed to a process of engagement specifically on the issue , with a view to shaping a coherent and unified approach with a number of other coastal Member States to addressing Fisheries as part of the overall EU negotiating platform on trade and not in isolation.”

Minister Creed made specific reference to the importance of maintaining an All Island North-South food economy and cautioning against the return of a hard border. The meeting concluded with a discussion on the future of CAP post 2020.

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