

## **UK and France agree to resume cross border trade**

The French Government has agreed to reopen the border with the UK following the rapid increase in cases of Covid-19 in Britain. This follows two days of major disruption to the agrifood supply chain with increasing numbers of Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) being unable to travel to and from France.

The new protocol between the UK and France, which will end on 6 January 2021 but is likely to be reviewed before the end of the year, permits HGV drivers to enter France if they have tested negative to the coronavirus. The Government has set up testing facilities in Kent to try and get vehicle movements flowing as quickly as possible. Lateral Flow tests are being used with a test result back within 30 minutes.

More details will be circulated when available.

## **Drivers' hours extended**

The Government has announced that the rules relating to drivers' hours will be relaxed as a result of the ongoing position of Covid-19. The relaxation comes into force today (Wednesday 23 December) and will end on 22 January 2021.

Anyone driving in Great Britain (GB) under the EU drivers' hours rules and undertaking carriage of goods by road can use this relaxation where necessary. The relaxations are not limited to specific sectors or journeys.

The EU drivers' hours rules can be temporarily relaxed as follows:

- replacement of the requirement to take a full weekly rest period of 45 hours in a 2-week period with an alternative pattern of weekly rest periods specified below. This enables 2 consecutive reduced weekly rest periods to be taken;
- in a 4-week period beginning on 23 December 2020, a driver can take 2 consecutive reduced weekly rest periods of at least 24 hours (allowing them to work two 6-day weeks);
- however, any reduction in weekly rest can be compensated for in the normal way by an equivalent period of rest taken before the end of the third week following the week in question
- in addition, any rest taken as compensation for a reduced weekly rest period should be attached to a regular weekly rest period of at least 45 hours (which can be split over 2 regular weekly rest periods);
- the fortnightly driving limit can be increased from 90 hours to 99 hours.