

European seed sector highlights the value of EU-UK Regulatory Alignment at Euroseeds2025 Congress

Edinburgh, 20th October 2025

Since the UK's formal departure from the EU in 2020, seed businesses across both the EU and UK have faced significant challenges in moving plant breeding material and trading seeds due to regulatory misalignments between the EU and the UK, particularly on phytosanitary measures. These obstacles have caused significant delays in seed availability for farmers and substantial additional costs for businesses.

The Euroseeds2025 Congress, taking place from 19–22 October 2025 in Edinburgh, Scotland, under the theme: *"What future for seed trade and collaboration in the new world order?"* provided a platform to discuss these issues and the shared commitment of the UK government and the EU Commission to negotiate a new Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) agreement. The agreement aims to address key trade barriers, including:

- Streamlining seed movement between the EU and UK by removing the GB BTOM process and aligning Plant Health Regulations;
- Facilitating mutual recognition of variety registration and exchange of DUS reports to reduce delays and costs;
- Secure access to innovation in seed treatment options and treated seed movement;
- Resolving restrictions and delays in EU-GB seed potato trade;
- Simplifying rules for organic seed trade between the EU and UK.

The Euroseeds2025 Congress brings together high-representatives from the seed sector, the European Commission, UK Defra, FAO, and EU Member States to discuss practical solutions and the strategic importance of EU-UK cooperation for the future of seed trade, critical for global agriculture and food security.

Garlich von Essen, Euroseeds Secretary General and CEO, commented:
"The Euroseeds 2025 Congress highlights the urgent need for aligned regulations between the EU and UK. By removing barriers and ensuring smoother trade of seeds, we can support farmers, accelerate innovation, and strengthen the resilience of our sector across Europe."

Robert Sheasby, Chief Executive at Agricultural Industries Confederation highlighted that: *"As seed processors and merchants look towards a bright future for plant breeding in the UK, it is fantastic that the Euroseeds Congress is being held in the UK this year. The opportunity to consider simplified trading arrangements, new seed innovations, and to acknowledge the importance of modern breeding techniques as part of the solution to the challenge of feeding the UK, Europe, and beyond, is something we look forward to discussing with colleagues from around the world."*

Anthony Hopkins, Head of Policy British Society of Plant Breeders remarked that: *"The UK has a world leading plant breeding and seed sector which is truly global. A 'good' EU – UK Reset deal would remove most of the costly trade barriers and duplication, while boosting innovation, investment and resilience for UK and EU farmers and supply chains. The Euroseeds Congress is perfectly timed to highlight how an agreement would benefit both sides if the detail is right in promoting as much mutual recognition as possible alongside dynamic alignment and the exemption for precision breeding. The BSPB looks forward to working with officials and others to ensure the agreement delivers this."*

Tim O'Donovan, President of The Irish Seed Trade Association, highlighted that: *"Irish Seed businesses see regulatory alignment on seed as vital. Working with our nearest neighbours can only be beneficial in terms of breeding innovation and seed movement. There is security and strength in working within the same standards, something that has been lacking in the past number of years."*



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