

UK EU Trade Reset Brings a New Era for FMCG Efficiency and Complexity

LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM, May 20, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The recent "reset" trade agreement between the UK and the EU brings with it both opportunities and new complexities. Here's what it means for us and for the wider FMCG landscape.



A Welcome Reduction in EU Border Friction

For several years, the FMCG industry has contended with a fragmented and often inefficient post-Brexit border regime. The new UK-EU agreement introduces a long overdue sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) deal that reduces checks and simplifies paperwork for plant and animal products.

Phil Durham, UK Business Unit Director at Atlante commented on the latest updates to the regulations:

"The new UK-EU agreement is a welcome development for the entire FMCG industry, and specifically for importers and distributors like Atlante. As a company that sources high-quality food products from across Europe and brings them to UK shelves, any move that simplifies trade and reduces friction at the border is a major win. Streamlining customs processes and enhancing regulatory alignment will help us deliver even greater efficiency in our wholesale and distribution operations. This deal strengthens our ability to serve UK retailers with speed, consistency, and competitive pricing, all while deepening our relationships with EU partners."

For UK-based FMCG distributors like Atlante, this move is a positive step forward. Faster customs clearance and reduced bureaucracy will mean:

- Shorter delivery times for EU imports and exports
- Reduced risk of life issues linked to border checks.
- More reliable supply chains for retailers

This is especially relevant for many of Atlante's European supplier relationships, where smoother

cross-border flow can support more efficient stock replenishment and better forecasting.

A Compromise: Alignment with EU Food Standards

The UK has agreed to “dynamic alignment” with relevant EU food and drink regulations meaning we’ll follow EU rules without having a formal say in how they are made. While this may sound controversial, it also brings practical benefits for businesses like ours that work with both EU and UK partners.

By adhering to a single regulatory standard, compliance becomes more straightforward. Products developed and packaged to EU specifications won’t need dual-labelling or reformulation, streamlining the supply chain from producer to supermarket shelf. However, this alignment also brings challenges, especially when considering products sourced from outside the EU.

The Challenge: Cost Rises for Non-EU Produce

While the new agreement reduces friction for EU trade, it shifts scrutiny toward non-EU imports adding cost, time, and complexity to supply chains that rely on global sourcing. This is a concern across the FMCG industry.

Under the new regime, products like avocados, pineapples, mangoes, and oranges, many of which are sourced from Costa Rica, Peru, South Africa, Egypt and Morocco, will face increased border checks and stricter compliance. Importers could now see inspection rates jump from less than 5% to as high as 100% for some fruit and vegetables.

For FMCG distributors like Atlante, which source specialist products globally, this could mean:

- Longer port delays
- Higher inspection and admin costs
- Increased risk of shelf-life compromise
- Price pressure for UK retailers and consumers

As highlighted by industry leaders, substituting these goods with EU alternatives is rarely feasible. European farms simply do not produce them in sufficient volume or consistency.

Supply Chain Impacts: Retailers and Consumers

Retailers are already navigating price sensitivity, especially in fresh and healthy food categories. While ambient and long-life products are less impacted by spoilage risk, any disruption in upstream supply (such as delayed ingredients or packaging) can ripple through to final goods.

At Atlante, we’re working proactively with our suppliers and logistics partners to:

- Optimise shipping schedules and documentation

- Identify alternative port routes where feasible
- Communicate clearly with retail customers on lead times and availability

We remain committed to maintaining value and efficiency for our retail and wholesale partners even as the regulatory and logistical landscape evolves.

Looking Ahead

The UK-EU reset deal is a mixed bag. It provides greater clarity and efficiency for trade with Europe—a key win for FMCG businesses with established EU relationships. But it also brings new barriers for global sourcing, particularly fresh produce, which could drive cost inflation in some categories.

For Atlante UK, the priorities are clear:

- Stay agile in managing shifting compliance requirements
- Support retailers with timely, transparent updates
- Champion innovation and value across our supply chain

As ever, we will continue to combine global expertise with local knowledge to deliver exceptional FMCG distribution—no matter how the borders shift.

About Us

Atlante is a dynamic global food sourcing platform with over 100 specialists in sales, buying, product development, and more, dedicated to bringing innovative and authentic food solutions from concept to shelf. Based in Bologna, at the heart of Italy's food valley, Atlante specialises in navigating the global food market to deliver the best of Italian cuisine and beyond.

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