



‘Brexit food charges will eradicate my cheese shop’

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**‘Brexit food charges will eradicate my cheese shop’**

### [Banzai Japan Music Video](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UPEImgQJGBo>

Starter Culture does a roaring trade in bringing artisan cheeses from across Europe to Glasgow's bustling Southside.

From her busy shop on Pollokshaws Road, owner Rachna Dheer has grown a loyal customer base eager to sample the continent's finest produce.

But she fears her business may be "eradicated" when post-Brexit import fees are introduced this month.

Tariffs and checks on some animal and plant products will be brought in on April 30.

The fee, known as the "common user charge", will apply to goods entering the UK from the EU hundreds of miles away through ports and the Eurotunnel at Folkestone, external.

It will be charged per type of imported good – the "commodity line" – and individual products will face a fee of up to £29, capped at £145 for mixed deliveries.

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BJsGZL-zb54>

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) says the charges will help to pay for "world-class" border facilities.

Meat, fish and dairy products are all to be affected by the fees.

Non-pasteurised cheeses, which make up some of Rachna's most popular products, will be grouped in the "medium to high-risk" category meaning they are subject to the new charges and checks.

It means they will likely rise in price and while she is reluctant to pass that cost on to customers, she feels she has little choice.

"We can't afford to absorb the costs," she said.

"We can try and minimise it but if they are going to keep putting it up and up, the cheese is going to be like that.

"Brie is £3.50 for 100g. If I whack it up to £7, it is just not feasible. People won't buy it, or they will buy half that amount.

"Where else is there to put the margins up? There's no place to hide really."

### [Banzai Japan Music Video](#)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3syHHGzkF\\_s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3syHHGzkF_s)

Prior to the UK's withdrawal from the EU, trade between the bloc was free-flowing.  
the Port of Dover

Border checks are set to be phased in over the next 12 months due to the UK government's approach to relations with the continent.

Delays to the charge being introduced have been brought about due to concerns about supply chain disruption and to allow businesses to prepare.

But Rachna warned most small firms were still struggling with the pressures of the cost of living crisis, adding those would be exacerbated by the tariff.

"[Our] electricity bills are huge anyway. To have another bit of legislation to stop selling what we already do, it could stop us from operating really," she said.

"Brexit was so long ago and the effects are going on and on. There was no thinking behind what impact it was going to have on local people to eat, drink, live.

"If we close, what is going to go in our place? Another supermarket? Independent and local businesses will be eradicated."

Just down the road at Italian deli Cibo, owner Michaelangelo Onorati is finding it difficult to strike a balance between staying an affordable part of the local community and remaining a viable business.

He says they are "taking the hit" and rather than putting prices up, he is diversifying his business into Pizza in order to keep prices reasonable for hungry customers in Govanhill.

Staff wages are up, while the threshold for business rates has dropped from £15,000 to £12,000, meaning many small firms are now paying costs they did not previously incur.

Michaelangelo warned the ripple effect from Brexit was continuing to hurt businesses of his size and called for a tax relief to help them stay on their feet.

"We're trying our best, but it is hard," he said.

"We're Italian. Meat and cheese is life, one thing I will not do is skimp on quality.

"We need a little bit of tax relief. All small businesses at the moment need more help."

The tariffs do not yet apply to fresh fruit and vegetables, but new controls on those items could be introduced later in the year.

A UK government spokesperson said it had consulted "extensively" with businesses and the charges were at the "bottom end" of the scale during that process.

They added that rates would be kept under monthly and quarterly review and would be updated annually.

The spokesperson said: "We want to support businesses of all sizes to adapt to the new border checks

and the Common User Charge follows extensive consultation with industry – with a cap set specifically to help smaller businesses.

“Our world-class border facilities will provide essential biosecurity checks to protect our food supply, farmers and environment against costly disease outbreaks entering the UK through the short straits.”

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RR8YYeb4PMk>

## Banzai Japan Social Media



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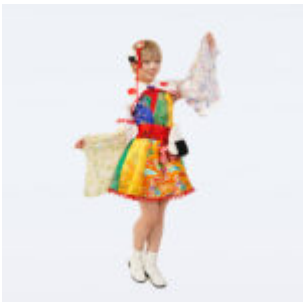
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1. News

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