

27th October 2021

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Rt Hon. George Eustice MP,
Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs,
House of Commons,
London,
SW1A 0AA

Dear Secretary of State,

Lead Exposure Through Food

You may be aware that the European Union have recently tightened and extended the regulations relating to lead contamination in food. [Commission Regulation \(EU\) 2021/1317 of 9 August 2021](#). Will the UK follow suit and update our [current regulations](#)?

A Unicef report estimates that [186,117 to 281,542 UK children](#) have dangerous concentrations of lead in their blood. This could be costing the country [0.31% of GDP](#) or [£6bn per year](#).

The [US National Toxicological Programme](#) found that lead exposure in children is associated with IQ loss, decreased hearing, problem behaviours, ADHD and delayed puberty. Before birth, lead toxicity is associated with miscarriage, pre-term birth and low birth weight. In adults, the associated effects include depression, anxiety, panic, heart attack, stroke, increased blood pressure and reduced kidney function. The UK's use of lead has been similar to the USA.

President Biden said that "[Lead pipes are a clear and present danger to our children](#)" and proposed spending [\\$45bn](#) to fix the problem. The US EPA says lead poisoning is the [number one environmental health threat to children ages six and younger](#). The CDC asserts that "[Lead poisoning is 100% preventable](#)". A recent [report from the Pew Trust](#) explains how lead is a factor in health inequalities and describes policies to prevent and respond to childhood lead exposure.

Our "[Manifesto for a Lead-Safe UK](#)" explains the issue in much more detail with full references to scientific papers and government sources. Our press release for the WHO [International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week 2021](#) can be found [here](#).

Written longhand by me Yours ever, Steve

Steve Norris as a Member of the LEAPP Alliance.



The Lead Exposure and Poisoning Prevention ([LEAPP](#)) Alliance

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