

Britain has an 'it will be alright on the night attitude' to Brexit- agri food chair

Britain has "it will be alright on the night attitude to Brexit", chair of the agri-food committee of the British Irish Chamber of Commerce Maree Gallagher has said.

Ms Gallagher told the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Agriculture that she doesn't think the British are as prepared for Brexit as Irish agri-food exporters are.

"I do not think their level of preparedness is anywhere near where it should be, they seem to have an 'it will be alright on the night attitude,'" she said.

"Our sense is that the British government has not done as much work as the Irish government in terms of planning for a no deal Brexit. In terms of a business scenario, we have been discussing supply chain issues and how can we support trade for a long time now."

CEO of the Irish Exporters Association Simon McKeever said that there is still danger of a "crash out", despite talks of a Brexit deal being signed off on.

"There's very little positive outcomes to Brexit. We've done a lot of work creating awareness on it. We've done a lot of work on a promoting a deal and not a crashing out, but there is, still a grave danger of a crash out," he said.

Mr McKeever pointed out that trade deals have become the "holy grail" for the British government since they have decided to jeopardise their trading relationship with the EU but that they may not find it that easy to make deals because of this/

"I think be more difficult for them to get trade deals than they believe, but there is very little awareness there," he added.

Both Ms Gallagher and Mr McKeever called for the introduction of state aid across the EU to help all economies and particularly economies like Ireland that will be the "most exposed to Brexit" consequences.

"Irish companies have not had to consider customs for the last forty years, customs regulation is timely and paper filling and an administrative burden. Companies will need support," Ms Gallagher explained.