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**Exclusive letter to The Editor**, Daily Telegraph. For points of clarification, please contact Robert Sturdy on 07785 328968 or Press Officer Ellee Seymour on 01353 648564/07939 811961.

Dear Sir

While your article on the EU sugar deal (26 November) is absolutely correct, I would like to clarify some essential points.

One of the problems faced by UK farmers is that the British government will probably be the only one in the European Union not to pay the total compensation direct to sugar beet growers. This means that sugar producers will suffer much more in comparison to their French counterpart – surely no EU harmonisation there.

It is very doubtful whether we will see the 36% cut in price being passed on in supermarkets. It is most unlikely that one of the biggest users of sugar, the soft drinks industry, will in turn cut their prices by 36%. Only the multi-national supermarkets stand to benefit from this, along with manufacturers in the food and drinks industry. It seems that the British Presidency takes delight in disadvantaging our farmers in their support for multi-nationals, as was highlighted by Peter Mandelson in his attack last week on trade barriers.

This deal will cut our farmers' income quite drastically and force some out of business. I believe this bitter sweet deal highlights the inadequacies of the European Parliament's Agriculture Committee in Brussels because the decision was taken out of their hands.

This agreement will undoubtedly have a devastating affect on the ACP countries, which have been supported most effectively by the present regime. Bearing in mind this next round of WTO talks is a development round, it is rather surprising that the winners of the sugar deal will be Australia and Brazil, while the poorer countries face the likelihood of increased poverty.

Yours faithfully  
Robert Sturdy MEP  
Conservative International Trade spokesman