



Sustainability Guidance for Food Suppliers

Future of Food
Our recipe for sustainability

Updated July 2026



How to use this guide

This pack is designed to help our suppliers support Co-op’s Future of Food sustainability goals and make a positive impact on people and the planet.

The Food Sustainability team works on long-term, system-wide change, so some of the actions are broad. This pack will help you understand what we do, our commitments, and where future actions may apply to you.

Because Protein and Produce are higher-risk areas, we have included extra information for these categories at the end of the pack. This document will be kept up to date as new policies and targets are developed, and we will contact you when relevant changes affect them.

For detailed brand standards, please refer to Co-op’s Codes of Practice documents found in [Mycore](#).

The Food Sustainability team regularly reviews own-brand suppliers on their sustainability performance. If you are discussing sustainability projects, please involve us early so we can support and align efforts effectively. Contact details for each area are included if you want to discuss opportunities. The team is always available to provide advice and help with any sustainability challenges.

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Co-operating to build more value for our member-owners every day

Introduction by Cathryn Higgs, Head of Ethics, Sustainability and Policy

As the world changes and puts more pressure on our food system, it is more important than ever to take action to protect both people and the planet.

In 2026, this is even more important as concerns grow about the resilience of the global food system, with food insecurity increasing due to rising prices and greater inequality.

Sustainability remains a key priority for Co-op and this document explains our key work, commitments, priorities, and where to go for more information.

What's new in this version:

- Updated Food Sustainability team contacts (page 4)
- Updated Co-op brand standards infographic (page 5)
- Updated Nutrition Code of Practice for own brand products (page 8)
- New commitment to the Food Foundation's "Bang in Some Beans" campaign (page 15)

Reminder from the 2025 version:

- Commitment to ASC and LEAF certification for produce and farmed seafood by 2027 (page 11)
- Updated packaging data requirements to meet legal obligations (EPR, plastic tax, DRS) (page 9)
- News that we have joined the Reuse Packaging Partnership and UK Packaging Pact to support reusable packaging systems by 2030 (page 9)

We hope this guide supports you and your team in delivering Co-op's sustainability priorities. Thank you for your continued support.

Cathryn

Head of Ethics, Sustainability & Policy



Together we can make a difference

Your Sustainability Contacts

Cathryn Higgs – Head of Ethics, Sustainability & Policy

Nichola Taylor – Head of Delivery - Sustainability



Joe Hulme, Senior Climate Change Manager

Joe leads the team responsible for setting our climate action agenda and carbon reduction targets.



Aisha Aswani, Senior Human Rights & Ethical Trade Manager

Aisha leads the team responsible for delivery of the ethical trade and human rights programme for Co-op food. Aiming to champion the best labour rights in the supply chain.



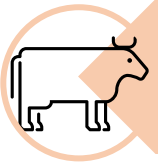
Bryonie Hollaert, Senior Nutrition Manager

Bryonie sits within our Co-op Brand team and is responsible for Co-op's approach to product nutrition standards and healthy and sustainable diets, ensuring we are compliant with legislation and promoting healthy and sustainable innovation.



Emily Pearce, Senior Sustainable Sourcing & International Development Manager

Emily leads the team responsible for Co-op's sustainable sourcing and Fairtrade strategies, alongside our approach to international development, water security, nature and food waste.



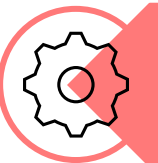
Joseph Keating, Senior Agriculture Manager

Joseph leads the team responsible for delivery of Co-op's commitments around British sourcing, close farmer partnerships and high animal and aquaculture welfare standards.



Rob Thompson, Senior Packaging Manager

Rob leads our work on all things packaging. This includes packaging recyclability, plastic pollution and our Extended Producer Responsibility obligations.



Cate Hickey, Senior Policy Development & Campaigns Manager

Leads the team responsible for the communication of sustainable action and leadership at Co-op, alongside our governance processes and policy development.



Rob Marsh, Senior Sustainability Delivery Manager

Rob sits in our sustainability delivery team and is responsible for ensuring we deliver on our sustainability commitments within our supply chain by working with our suppliers, sustainability and commercial teams.



Kelly Moore, Senior Value Chain Manager

Kelly sits in our sustainability delivery team and is responsible for ensuring we deliver on our sustainability commitments within our supply chain and operations, with a particular focus on food waste.

OUR RESPONSIBLE RETAILING FUNDAMENTALS

We are proud to have strong Co-op brand standards across all our own-brand products.

ALL OUR SEAFOOD IS CERTIFIED TO MSC AND ASC STANDARDS,

or sourced through credible Fishery Improvement Projects.



100% OF OUR FRESH PORK, SAUSAGES, GAMMON AND BACON ARE OUTDOOR BRED.



ALL CO-OP BRAND FRESH, BREADED AND READY-TO-EAT CHICKEN IS REARED WITH A LOWER STOCKING DENSITY,

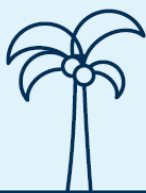
giving the birds 20% more space to thrive.



96% OF OUR CO-OP BRAND PACKAGING IS RECYCLABLE AT HOME OR IN STORE.

100% OF THE PALM OIL WE USE IN CO-OP BRAND PRODUCTS IS COVERED BY RSPO* SCHEMES.

*Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil



WE ENSURE THAT THE WOOD AND PAPER USED IN OUR PRODUCTS COMES FROM RESPONSIBLE SOURCES.



WE WILL NOT SELL BAGGED COMPOST CONTAINING PEAT IN OUR STORES.

THERE ARE NO ARTIFICIAL COLOURS, FLAVOURINGS OR FLAVOUR ENHANCERS

in any of our products.



Our animal welfare standards go over and above the legal requirements for chicken, pork, turkey, beef, lamb and dairy.

ALL OUR CO-OP BRAND MEAT AND DAIRY PRODUCTS ARE FROM ACCREDITED ASSURANCE SCHEMES

such as Red Tractor and RSPCA Assured.



ALL OUR MILK, FRESH CREAM, AND MILK USED FOR BLOCK BUTTER, CHEDDAR, AND UK YOGHURTS ARE 100% BRITISH IN CO-OP BRAND PRODUCTS.



ALL UK GROWN PRODUCE WILL BE LEAF MARQUE CERTIFIED BY JANUARY 2027.



100% CAGE-FREE COMMITMENT

across our continental meat range.

100% OF OUR CO-OP BRAND FRESH & FROZEN MEAT IS BRITISH,

including when used as an ingredient.



OUR ETHICAL TRADE PROGRAMME CHAMPIONS THE BEST LABOUR STANDARDS IN OUR SUPPLY CHAINS

and we are working co-operatively to tackle modern slavery.



OUR CLIMATE PLAN COMMITS TO REACHING NET ZERO ACROSS CO-OP'S VALUE CHAIN BY 2040.



We're committed to ensuring

100% OF THE SOY WE USE WILL BE DEFORESTATION AND CONVERSION FREE,

continuing to deliver and close the gap beyond 2025.



100% OF CO-OP TEA, COFFEE, BANANAS, COCOA*, BAGGED SUGAR, ROSES AND SOUTH AFRICAN WINE ARE FAIRTRADE.

Co-op is also the world's largest seller of Fairtrade wine. *including where used as an ingredient.



ALL CO-OP BRANDED COSMETICS AND HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTS ARE CERTIFIED CRUELTY FREE.



We're committed to working with our suppliers to

MINIMISE THE RISK OF PESTICIDE USE

and encourage the use of Integrated Pest Management.



FOR EVERY LITRE SOLD OF OUR CO-OP BRAND STILL, SPARKLING, FLAVOURED WATER AND ICE, 3P IS DONATED

to The One Foundation and towards clean water and sanitation projects.



WE HIGHLIGHT THE HEALTHIEST OPTIONS IN OUR RANGE WITH THE 'YES I'M HEALTHY' LOGO

and are committed to helping our customers lead healthy lives through the products we sell and the initiatives we are part of.



WE ARE COMMITTED TO INCREASING OUR NON-HFSS* SALES FROM 75% TO 83% BY 2030.

*High Fat, Salt, and Sugar.



Climate Change

Climate change is real, and the stability of our planet is under threat. We must take action now to protect our planet, not just for us but for future generations. Food production contributes a significant proportion of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. At the same time, our entire food system is extremely vulnerable to collapse if it doesn't adapt to the changes we're seeing. At Co-op we're committed to finding solutions to this crisis in a way that not only reduces emissions and protects the natural world, but which also creates a fairer, more just and equal world in the process.

Our Position

Co-op's [climate plan](#) is far-reaching and co-operative, built and delivered together with our partners, suppliers, members and colleagues. It has three fundamental priorities:

- 1. Making long-term changes to how we do business:** We will be a net zero business by 2035 for our operations, and 2040 across our entire business.
- 2. Setting clear medium-term milestones:** We have set new 1.5°C aligned near-term targets to reduce emissions across all scopes. For Scope 3, our near-term target is to reduce value chain emissions by 48% by 2030 against a 2016 baseline.
- 3. Rapidly reducing emissions from our operations and products:** We will continue to take clear, practical steps to reduce emissions from the running of our business and the products we sell.

Our priorities are underpinned by supporting natural restoration and innovation, impactful campaigning, a responsible approach to climate finance, support for our customers and members through lower impact choices, and our active work with others to share and implement climate innovation and data transparency.

USEFUL RESOURCES

- **Science Based Targets Initiative (SBTi)** - guidance on how to set Science Based Targets
- **WRAP - Scope 3 GHG Measurement and Reporting Protocols for Food and Drink** - guidance & data sources for scope 3 accounting
- **Mondra** - a product carbon footprinting tool used across UK food retail - we may ask you to review Mondra data.

Our Asks

We understand that our suppliers are at different stages in their climate journey.

To give you clarity on what we expect as milestones of progress, we've developed a clear pathway which aligns with the UK food industry.

We encourage all our suppliers to collaborate and achieve our targets together.

Commit to 1.5°C degree aligned science-based targets.

Publish your Scope 1, 2 and 3 GHG emissions inventory.

Reduce your GHG emissions and share progress transparently.

Data and sharing progress

As of 2025 we now use **Mondra** to generate estimated product carbon footprints directly from specification data.

We may ask you to review and validate this modelled footprint together to ensure we have a common understanding of our shared impact.

How we can support each other

- Alignment on view of impact + progress
- Reviewing opportunities to reduce GHG
- Feedback on climate strategy + approach
- Connecting up peers across food sector

Key Contacts

Joe Hulme
(Senior Climate Change Manager)

Jon Savidge
(Climate Change Manager)

Nieves Lovatt
(Climate Change Manager)

Sustainable Sourcing

Climate change and extreme weather is affecting how and where our food is grown, and on top of that we’re consuming foods at a rate that the planet cannot sustain. This is severely impacting the environments we source from, facing issues including deforestation, soil degradation, biodiversity loss and water scarcity.

Co-op ensures the ingredients we use in our products are sourced as responsibly as possible to protect us from risks and increase the resilience of the supply chains we rely on to continue operating as a business. We also need to input into external commitments, including legislative asks from Government and campaigns from NGOs.

Key Contacts

- Emily Pearce
(Senior Sustainable Sourcing & International Development Manager)
- Alastair Pattrick
(Sustainable Sourcing Manager)
- John Feege
(Senior Technical Manager - Crop Protection)
- Charlotte Lonsdale
(Technical Manager - Crop Protection)
- Olivia Theaker
(Agriculture Manager)

Our Position

- Our core sustainable sourcing commitments:
- Our ambition is all our primary forest risk commodities (cattle, coffee, cocoa, palm oil, rubber, soy and wood) will be deforestation free.
 - Our commitment is that all the soy we use in our products, including soy embedded in animal feed will be deforestation and conversion free and responsibly sourced. We continue to work to improve sourcing, drive positive impact in production landscapes and address drivers of land use change in high-risk sourcing regions.
 - 100% of the palm oil we use in Co-op own-brand products is covered by RSPO (Round Table for Sustainable Palm Oil) schemes. Since 2020 this is 100% segregated RSPO palm unless derogation is granted.
 - All bagged growing media products (such as compost) sold in Co-op stores do not contain peat.
 - Co-op’s crop protection policy encourages the most environmentally considerate methods of production which also protect the health and wellbeing of the people handling Co-op products.
 - 100% of our meat is British, and all our seafood is responsibly sourced.
 - All Co-op’s whole head produce from the UK must be Red Tractor or Organic certified. Fresh produce from overseas must be GLOBAL GAP or equivalent certified.
 - All horticultural products supplied to the Co-op must be certified to GAP standards or an equivalent standard.

Our Asks

- ✓ Familiarise yourself with our responsible sourcing policies that relate to your area including Soy, Palm Oil, Crop Protection & Feed.
- ✓ Use Co-op’s farming groups to share supplier best practice and innovation with others.
- ✓ Maintain our commitment to British Sourcing and commitment to use only responsibly-sourced seafood - if you need support making these decisions, please get in touch.
- ✓ Understand what forest risk commodities are in your supply chains and ensure they are deforestation free through appropriate traceability and monitoring - as well as adhering to existing policies on individual commodities.
- ✓ Support implementation of our soy policy.
- ✓ Horticulture - reduction of peat from pot plants.
- ✓ Responsible growing media - support responsible replacement of peat in substrates in our supply chain
- ✓ All garden & pet care range suppliers must risk assess proposed ranges they sell to the Co-op against Co-op Policy to ensure they comply with the risk criteria.
- ✓ Use Integrated Pest Management (IPM) techniques and phase out highly hazardous pesticides.
- ✓ Produce - uphold our commitment to the NFU Fruit & Vegetable Pledge.

Future Priorities

- Implementation of our Nature strategy to meet incoming Taskforce for Nature Financial Disclosure (TNFD) requirements.

Essential Requirements

- ✓ [Soya Code of Practice](#)
- ✓ [Palm Oil Code of Practice](#)
- ✓ [Crop protection policy](#)

Healthy & Sustainable Products

Co-op has an important role to play in helping our members, colleagues and customers lead healthy, sustainable lives. We do this through the products we sell and the initiatives we're part of.

Health and sustainability are closely interlinked. Our healthy and sustainable diets strategy feeds into our overall sustainability strategy. We're signed up to WWF's Commitment for Nature, which includes the goal of halving the environmental impact of our basket by 2030 - reducing meat in products and increasing veg is vital to achieve this.

In 2025 we published a target to increase the percentage of our own brand sales from non-HFSS products (not high in fat, salt or sugar).

Key Contacts

Bryonie Hollaert
(Senior Nutrition Manager)

Aoife McKernan
(Nutrition Manager)

Robert Marsh
Senior Sustainability Delivery Manager - HSD)

Charlotte Leach McKenna
(Sustainability Project Lead)

Our Position

We take a responsible approach to reducing the amount of salt, sugar, and calories in Co-op own-brand products

- In 2025 we published our target to increase the percentage of our own brand sales from non-HFSS products (not high in fat, salt or sugar), from 78% to 83% by 2030.
- We will continue to support the business to comply with the Government's HFSS restrictions, including across the devolved nations.
- Reducing the amount of meat & dairy ingredients & products across our whole portfolio is also critical to meeting our climate commitments. See page 6 for more detail on this.

We have published our 2025 sales figures for animal and plant-based protein, and fruit and veg. We will continue to review the data and set targets if deemed appropriate:

- ✓ In 2025, 0.87% of total Co-op sales tonnage (excl. alcohol and non-food) came from plant protein
- ✓ In 2025, 41% of total Co-op sales tonnage (excl. alcohol and non-food) came from animal protein
- ✓ In 2024, 23% of total Co-op sales tonnage (excl. alcohol and non-food) came from Co-op fruit & veg
- ✓ Throughout 2025, 75% of our Co-op own-brand food and drink sales (in tonnes) were from non-HFSS products

We need to operate within:

- ✓ HFSS restrictions
- ✓ CQUIN framework (which asks for healthier food to be provided to the NHS - affecting the FTG we supply to hospitals).
- ✓ Co-op Marketing to Parents Policy (which states that only non-HFSS products can be marketed to parents, e.g. in back-to-school campaigns).

Our Asks

- ✓ Comply with our Nutrition Code of Practice which gives details of Co-op's nutrition standards for our own brand products.

We encourage:

- ✓ Reformulating and developing new products to add more veg and more plant protein.
- ✓ Developing new plant-based products and non-HFSS products and ranging/promoting them in as many stores as possible.
- ✓ Where de-list is unavoidable, endeavouring to replace with a product that's equivalent or better in terms of veg content and healthiness.

We may be in touch to discuss...

- ✓ Working together on behaviour change trials to increase sales of veg-containing and non-HFSS products.

Future Priorities

- ✓ We are continuing to develop our reporting capability and working with the food industry to align on reporting metrics
- ✓ We are considering the right targets for sales of fruit and veg and different types of protein
- ✓ We will continue to implement our healthy, sustainable diets strategy, working across product development, pricing and promotions, ranging and marketing to drive sales of healthier and more sustainable products.

Essential Requirements

- ✓ Nutrition Code of Practice

Packaging & Recycling

Co-op will continue to reduce, remove and decarbonise packaging where appropriate; supporting our sustainability commitments, doing what is right by our member-owners; complying with regulation and minimising cost. We will achieve this through product innovation and a consistent approach, working closely with our suppliers.

Plastic packaging and pollution remains front of mind for customers and NGOs when considering environmental impacts and so we are committed to reducing our plastic footprint.

Our Position

- We're committed to reducing the total amount of packaging we use and reducing our plastic footprint. Our ambition is to optimise packaging both from an environmental view and in terms of EPR tax.
- We aim to reduce the carbon footprint of all packaging materials, aligning with Co-op net zero targets.
- Where we do use packaging, the priority is for packaging to be recyclable, and we are working to align with the green and amber material classifications of the Recyclability Assessment Methodology (RAM).
- We committed to a minimum of 50% recycled plastic in rigid PET and 30% in HPDE. We should aim to use minimum of 30% recycled content in other plastics, as any plastics with under 30% recycled content are taxed at £228.82 / tonne under the Plastic Packaging Tax (April 2025).

Our Asks

- ✓ Work with us to reduce the carbon intensity of Co-op packaging through weight reduction, use of recyclate, material substitutions, decarbonisation of the manufacturing process, and transition to reuse models to replace single-use packaging.
- ✓ Data for packaging specification, RAM classification, weights, and recycled content must be accurate in all our systems, as we'll use it in reporting for EPR and DRS scheme administrators and for HMRC for the Plastics Tax.
- ✓ Consider the full net cost of packaging choices including end of life tax and levies, such as EPR.

- ✓ Replace highly ecomodulated packaging classified as 'red' under EPR with amber or green materials.
- ✓ Remove non-essential packaging (especially plastics).
- ✓ Think about ways to utilise packaging innovations that surprise and delight customers.
- ✓ Don't introduce any new packaging containing PFAS 'forever chemicals' and eliminate it where we do use it currently (deadline 12th August 2026).

Future Priorities

- Data accuracy – we require packaging data obtained from our suppliers to be accurate so that Co-op can comply with legislation and reduce financial risk.
- Co-op have joined the UK Packaging Pact as a founding signatory and will be joining other retailers and brands in their aims to reduce the environmental impact of all packaging materials by optimising packaging, removing unnecessary or problematic items, and by developing interoperable refill systems.
- Deposit Return Scheme - we will need to comply with labelling and collection requirements by October 2027. Please ensure all in-scope drinks containers meet the requirements of Exchange for Change's RVM specification.

Key Contacts

Rob Thompson
(Senior Packaging Manager)

&

Katie Pepper
(Sustainability Delivery Manager)

Essential Requirements

- ✓ Packaging Code of Practice

Food Waste

More than one third of food produced globally is never eaten. Wasting our valuable food costs our Co-op millions every year and we are currently well behind other retailers in our progress towards a 50% reduction in food waste by 2030. Wasting food also wastes precious resources like water, labour and energy; and causes 8-10% of global GHG emissions (5x emissions from aviation)(UNEP). In addition, it is estimated that a family of four can save around £1,000 per year just by throwing away less food (WRAP).

To help Co-op save members' money and to protect our valuable food and resources we are committed to wasting less food and helping customers to do the same at home. Preventing food waste in our own operations is a priority, in line with the Government's food waste hierarchy. However, we can also prevent food waste across our supply chain, by how we order, design, specify, package and label products.

Key Contact

Rowen West-Henzell

(Environment & Sustainability Manager - Food Waste & Water)

&

Kelly Moore

(Senior Sustainability Manager - Food Waste)

&

Rochelle McCartney

(Sustainability Delivery Manager - Food Waste)

Our Position

As signatories to the WRAP UK Food and Drink Pact and [Food Waste Reduction Roadmap](#), Co-op is publicly committed to halving operational food waste by 2030 (based on a 2022 baseline).

Co-op has a commitment in place to:

- *Reduce our operational food waste by 50% by 2030, in line with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 12.3);*
- *Measure & report our food waste data;*
- *Deliver our food waste prevention plan.*

We are also continuously looking at actions that could help reduce food waste in our supply chains and for our customers at home.

Our Asks

We are asking all suppliers to follow our lead in doing the following:

- ✓ Sign-up to the Food Waste Reduction Roadmap, Champions 12.3 or your national food waste reduction programme.
- ✓ Set a target to halve food waste in your operations by 2030 in line with SDG 12.3.
- ✓ Measure your operational food waste and develop and share a food waste prevention plan.
- ✓ Help us understand instances in which we create waste in our supply chain – and identify solutions to prevent or reduce.

- ✓ Consider what steps you can take to prevent food waste in your supply chains, including on-farm (e.g. flexibility in specifications; grower engagement; schemes to utilise surplus).
- ✓ Redistribute surplus edible food to colleagues or via our approved redistribution partners:
 - Fareshare/The Felix Project
 - The Bread and Butter Thing
 - Company Shop
 - City Harvest
- ✓ Consider sending surplus to animal feed if redistribution is not an option.
- ✓ Prioritise projects to tackle food waste, using [WRAP's Best Practice Guidance](#). - e.g. increasing shelf life, pack size/portioning, new innovations. Please let us know how we can support.

Useful Resources

- ✓ [WRAP Food Waste Reduction Roadmap](#)

Farming & Fisheries

We have strong sourcing standards from 100% British across fresh and frozen protein and dairy to our responsibly sourced seafood.

Co-op ensures our farmers, growers and fisheries are at the heart of our business. We are committed to working with our suppliers to ensure welfare is always to the fore and we believe farming and fisheries can have a positive role to play in addressing the challenges of climate change.

Key Contacts

Joseph Keating

(Senior Agriculture & Fisheries Manager)

Tom Glen

(Agriculture Manager - Pork, Poultry & Eggs)

Sam Darley

(Fisheries & Agricultural Compliance Manager)

Olivia Theaker

(Agriculture Manager - Produce)

Lucy Witter

(Agriculture Manager - Dairy)

Laura Talbot

(Agriculture Manager - Beef, Lamb & Contingent Meats)

Our Position

- All Co-op fresh and frozen meat is British, including when used as an ingredient.
- All shell eggs sold in Co-op stores are free range or Organic. We also never use caged hen's eggs as ingredients in our own-brand products.
- We support animal welfare through schemes such as [Red Tractor](#), [RSPCA Assured](#), and our own-brand animal welfare standards.
- As a minimum all our Co-op own-brand meat, poultry and British dairy products sold are produced from farms that are accredited to a national farm assurance scheme; Red Tractor, which ensures high standards of [animal welfare](#).
- Our Farming Groups and supply chain activity provide networks that help farmers share knowledge and address key issues like climate change.
- Over the past 12 years we have been working collaboratively to develop GHG emission reduction plans, setting ambitious aims to reduce emissions from dairy and protein production.
- All fish supplied to Co-op must be certified to one to the following standards: Aquaculture Stewardship Council ([ASC](#)), Global Aquaculture Alliance Best Aquaculture Practice ([GAA BAP 4*](#)), [Global Gap](#), Marine Stewardship Council ([MSC](#)), [RSPCA Assured](#) or in a credible Fisheries Improvement Project ([FIP](#))
- We're members of the Sustainable Seafood Coalition and we use its voluntary codes of conduct for the responsible sourcing and labelling of fish and seafood products.
- We're also supporting research, through membership of Responsible Use of Medicines in Agriculture (RUMA) that helps identify alternatives to antibiotics.
- All Co-op Brand fresh, breaded and ready to eat chicken must be bred with a lower stocking density of 30kg m², giving the birds 20% more space.

- All Co-op Brand fresh pork supply, sausages, gammon and bacon must be sourced from outdoor-bred RSPCA assured farms.

Our Asks

- ✓ Work together to address any supply issues that arise on farm or in source fisheries.
- ✓ Support us to deliver against our agreed joint development plans for primary production.
- ✓ Drive continuous improvement in areas of animal welfare and environmental impact.
- ✓ Continue to support our direct engagement with supplying farms.
- ✓ Work with us to implement our LEAF & ASC certification across Co-op branded UK produce and fresh and frozen farmed fish lines by January 2027.

Future Priorities

- Support R&D and innovation projects in areas such as carbon reduction, biodiversity and water quality.
- As our young farmer pioneer programme has ended, identify how we can support apprenticeships and young farmers in primary production.
- Continue to champion the conversation around mental health in farming.
- Work with us to go beyond welfare standards, focusing on enrichment, natural behaviours, and transparent reporting.
- Promote welfare innovation through pilot schemes and farmer training.

Essential Requirements

- ✓ [Co-op sourcing standards](#)
- ✓ [Production & welfare KPIs](#)

Water Security

Water is critical to all life on earth and is essential for food production. The food industry and agriculture is the biggest user and polluter of water. We all have a responsibility to play our part in preserving this precious resource for communities and ecosystems in our supply chains. Co-op is committed to working collaboratively with partners and suppliers to tackle increasing global water poverty, pollution and scarcity.

Key Contacts

Emily Pearce

(Senior Sustainable Sourcing & International Development Manager)

Rowen West-Henzell

(Environment & Sustainability Manager - Food Waste & Water)

Our Position

Our supply chains (and the people who work in them) rely heavily on clean and reliable water resources. Increasingly we are all feeling the impact of too much or too little water on the availability, quality and price of food, exacerbated by climate change and geopolitical shocks. As the climate warms and water risks multiply, we're committed to working with you to build more resilient supply chains and improve water security in our most vulnerable sourcing communities.

This includes increasing access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene, which remains out of reach for many in our supply chains. Co-op remains the only retailer with a charity water donation - 50% of which brings clean water solutions to communities producing our valuable Fairtrade food.

Read more on water in our [Water Security report](#).

We improve water security in the following ways:

We are founding supporters of WRAP's Water Roadmap and the Water Roadmap Retailer Leadership Commitment, which commits us to monitor water use; map water risk; advocate for better water governance; report on progress and support collective action in at-risk sourcing areas.

Under the Water Roadmap we participate in seven collective action projects with other retailers and suppliers (including in the UK, South Africa and Southern Spain) to play our part in better water management on the ground, working with farmers, local stakeholders and technical experts to deliver action plans and secure investment in nature-based solutions.

We have a long-standing commitment to work with suppliers on reducing pesticide use, coming 3rd in Pesticide Action Network's Supermarket Ranking 2024.

We also raise funds for clean water, sanitation and hygiene projects (donating 3p per litre to The One Foundation on own-brand water and ice). 50% of this donation goes to our Fairtrade producer communities. Our branded water suppliers also donate 1p to Water Unite on every litre sold, raising funds for clean water, sanitation and plastic recycling programmes.

Our Asks

- ✓ Sign-up to WRAP's Water Security Roadmap, to help mitigate water risks.
- ✓ Undertake a water-related risk assessment for your supply chains to identify water risk hotspots, and where possible provide us with data when requested.
- ✓ Develop your understanding of water risk in the catchments you source from/or have sites located in and develop efficiency or water quality targets as relevant.
- ✓ Consider agricultural standards or third-party certifications that place more emphasis on water security, for example those in the SIFAV Basket of Water Standards.
- ✓ If sourcing from an area identified as high-risk by Co-op, engage with relevant collective action projects or local water stewardship initiatives (we will signpost as relevant).
- ✓ Consider joining Co-op and funding water security projects with partners The One Foundation and Water Unite.
- ✓ Collaborate with us as we develop our supplier approach to water risk.

Future Priorities

We're updating our water risk mapping in our fresh produce and animal protein supply chains. We will also be developing our approach to managing/mitigating water risk in collaboration with you.

Useful Resources

- ✓ [WRAP Water Security Roadmap](#) - actions to take
- ✓ [WWF Water Risk Filter](#) - risk mapping tool
- ✓ [Alliance for Water Stewardship](#) - 3rd-party verification for sites that are leaders
- ✓ [IDH SIFAV Basket of Water Standards](#)

Human Rights & Ethical Trade

Co-op is dedicated to driving improvements in working conditions and aims to be the UK's leading retailer for human rights and ethical trade. We protect the rights of workers and manage human rights risks in the supply chain through support for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, ETI Base Code and our Ethical Trade programme. The scope of the programme covers all own-brand products and reaches over 784,657 workers in 2,988 sites, located in over 66 countries.

We have identified eight human rights priority areas, covering 17 sourcing countries to tackle complex issues where risks are greatest. High risk categories include **fresh produce, flowers, tea, cocoa, sugar, protein & seafood and non-food**.

Our Position

- Our 'Sound Sourcing Code of Conduct' sets out the workplace and employment standards that we apply across our supply base, which is based on the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) Base Code and core international labour standards.
- Our Human Rights and Ethical Trade Policy Position Statement, Grievance & Remedy Policy and the UK Food Supply Chain Serious Incident Escalation & Management Protocol share our approach to protecting workers in our supply chains and our Supplier Guide to Ethical Trade covers the requirements of the Co-op monitoring programme.
- Co-op's supplier engagement programme includes annual ethical trade review meetings and supplier workshops in key sourcing countries.
- We report annually on our activity to manage the risk of modern slavery in our supply chain in our Modern Slavery statement.
- We're committed to eliminating unfair and unethical recruitment fees. We support industry-level initiatives which includes our sponsorship of Stronger Together Consumer Goods and South Africa programmes which provide suppliers with free training and tools.
- Transparency: we have disclosed our top eight human rights priority areas and we publish country-level, tier 1 and high-risk supply chain data on pdfs and on Open Supply Hub and two Human Rights Impact Assessments (read more).
- We are committed to empowering the people who produce our food, with a focus on vulnerable workers and empowering women.

Our Asks

- ✓ Ensure you are meeting our minimum requirements for trade as set out in the "Supplier Guide to the Co-op Food Ethical Trade Programme" and have robust systems to identify human rights issues in your own sites and supply chain.
- ✓ Share with us the steps you are taking to understand & mitigate your key human rights risks and be open about the issues you are finding so we can work together to address them.

- ✓ Have appropriate capability, resources and governance structures in place to address human rights risks in own operations and global supply chains.
- ✓ Put in place clear strategy and policies to tackle modern slavery issues, eliminate unfair and illegal recruitment fees and promote gender equality, diversity & inclusion.
- ✓ Understand and demonstrate progress against the proactivity, ownership and partnership behaviours as set out in the Co-op Supplier Ethical Trade Framework and Guidance.
- ✓ Attend ethical trade capability-building sessions, access resources available on Future of Food Channel and share your experiences.
- ✓ Join industry-wide initiatives to address systemic human rights issues.

Future Priorities

- Implement enhanced due diligence approaches with interventions in high-risk supply chains or recruitment corridors.
- Support our suppliers in improving human rights across our supply chains through delivery of our global supplier engagement programme, working collaboratively to reach over 3,000 delegates in 80 events.
- Champion the role of women and vulnerable people in our supply chains by launching projects to implement the GAIA principles in two high-risk supply chains to address the root causes of gender-based violence and harassment.
- Continue to work collaboratively to eliminate illegal and unfair recruitment fees in our global supply chain.

Essential Requirements

- ✓ Suppliers Guide to the Co-op Ethical Trade Programme
- ✓ Supplier Ethical Trade Framework and Guidance

Key Contacts

Aisha Aswani
(Senior Human Rights Manager)

Jessica Garratt
(Human Rights Manager)

Heather Webb
(Human Rights Manager)

ethicaltrade@co.op.co.uk

Fairtrade

We're proud to be the largest convenience retailer of Fairtrade products in the UK. We've championed Fairtrade for over 30 years, launching the world's first own-brand Fairtrade product in 1998 and bringing the first Fairtrade bananas to the UK in 2000. Since then, we've continued to lead the way, switching entire own-brand categories to Fairtrade and growing our contribution to Fairtrade producers. There's still a lot to do to overcome unfairness in the food chain, but together we can make a difference.

Our Position

At Co-op we believe **Fairtrade is the gold standard** of ethical and sustainability certifications because Fairtrade offers a unique and leading movement for change.

Working with the Fairtrade Foundation, we focus on leading the way in **7 core Fairtrade categories (cocoa, wine, tea, coffee, sugar, bananas and flowers)**, which are at high risk from poverty, human rights abuses, deforestation and impacts from climate change.

- 100% of our bananas, chocolate, tea, coffee, bagged sugar, roses & cocoa are Fairtrade.
- We're the world's biggest seller of Fairtrade wine. Our South African wine range is 100% Fairtrade across both branded and own-label. New wines from Argentina and Chile are also Fairtrade-sourced wherever possible.
- Under our Fairtrade Ingredients Policy (found in our COP), where we use coffee, tea or bananas as an ingredient, we ensure Fairtrade producers benefit, by funding strategic projects in producer communities.
- All formats of cotton wool are Fairtrade sourced.
- We're the world's only retailer of Fair Trade Charcoal and our rubber gloves are also 100% Fair Trade, partnering with Transform Trade (formerly Traidcraft Exchange).

Our Asks

Continue to grow the contribution we make to Fairtrade producers. This means:

- ✓ Support category teams to increase Fairtrade ingredient volumes and the % of category/range sold on Fairtrade terms.
- ✓ Drive opportunities to increase contributions and impact made to Fairtrade producers and their communities, e.g. living income commitments.
- ✓ Keep us informed of any new Fairtrade ingredient or conversion opportunities and support commodity specific targets with us e.g. sourcing commitments to producer communities.
- ✓ Support categories use of promos, distribution and category plans to grow contribution to Fairtrade producers.
- ✓ Build relationships with producer groups and champion the Fairtrade difference.

BUSINESS USE

Future Priorities

- Fairtrade development plan – strengthening our sourcing standards of key commodities to safeguard supply chains and deepen impact for producer communities.
- Exploring new and strengthening existing sourcing programmes in Fairtrade supply chains. The [Women's School of Leadership](#) (cocoa), [Productivity Improvement Programme](#) (bananas) and [Fairtrade Alliance for Climate-Smart Supply Chains](#) (tea, coffee and flowers) are examples of these projects. We'll approach you if there are opportunities.
- Protect and growing our Fair Trade offering.

What is Fair Trade? (two words)

Fair Trade are principles of trade between companies and producers which pays fairer prices to the producers. There are various Fair Trade schemes.

...And Fairtrade (one word)?

The FAIRTRADE Mark is the most recognised system of certification that sets internationally agreed standards in the production of goods to secure a better deal for farmers and workers. The Fairtrade Foundation is the organisation that licenses use of the FAIRTRADE Mark on product in the UK. Currently only Transform Trade are approved as an alternative Fair Trade scheme.

There are [two main types of FAIRTRADE Mark and sourcing models](#) that Co-op uses – All That Can be (ATCB) and Fairtrade Sourced Ingredient (FSI).

Find out more about what these mean and our commitments to source particular ingredients in our Fairtrade Code of Practice (can be found on MyCore).



Essential Requirements

- ✓ [Co-op Fairtrade Code of Practice](#)

Key Contacts

Emily Pearce
(Senior Sustainable Sourcing & International Development Manager)

&

Kate McCrindle
(Fairtrade Manager)

Changing Behaviours and Communicating to Members & Customers

We can't drive sustainable change on our own. How our members and customers consume our products at home and on the go has an impact on the future of food as well our supply chain. So it's key that we work together, for everybody, every day. That's why in our Future of Food ambition we prioritised learning about and celebrating the true value of food and sharing the stories of the people that produce it.

Key Contacts

Cate Hickey
(Senior Policy Development & Campaigns Manager)

Orla Waters
(Policy Development & Campaigns Manager)

Jon Curry
(Policy Development & Campaigns Manager)

Our Position

- We are responsible for the governance of food policy issues, ensuring we're ahead of emerging issues, manage Co-op's reputation and ensure Co-op brand standards remain market leading and meet the high standards and expectations of our member owners.
- Within Co-op's social value strategy, we are responsible for the proof points to "Access to a Sustainable Future".
- We have a rolling comms plan for the year to ensure we talk about all areas of our sustainability agenda - including comms about Co-op's products and partner campaigns.
- We campaign for change during events such as Fairtrade Fortnight and Great Big Green Week - campaigning alongside our colleagues, members and customers to drive collective action and change for the planet and people.
- We work with our Public Affairs and Campaigns team to campaign for legislative changes and government support on the topics where Co-op can lead and make a difference.
- Behaviour change is key to creating sustainable change - projects we've worked on include Soft Film Recycling and helping customers to make plant-based choices.
- We work with Members to develop sustainable solutions - previous projects have included designing Fairtrade Chocolate bars and sharing ideas on packaging reduction.
- We work closely with the Community team to activate sustainable action in UK communities. This work includes advocacy and campaigning moments, grassroots action and funding local sustainable solutions.

Our Asks

- ✓ Keep us informed on any product/ policy/ brand changes that might impact on existing or new food policy or brand standards.
- ✓ Tell us about sustainability-driven supplier projects that we can help you elevate with the Customer team and talk about to Members and customers.
- ✓ Tell us about category innovations that might interest Members and customers.
- ✓ If you want to work with the [Member Activator](#) network on sustainability activity, please include us in the conversation.
- ✓ If you have project opportunities to support healthy, sustainable diets and behaviour change please let us know. We may also approach you with ideas.
- ✓ Keep the conversation flowing - invite us to your team meetings for regular progress updates.

Future Priorities

- Food Policy and Brand Standards governance forum - ensuring we are on the front foot on food policy/consumer issues but also our Co-op Brand/propositional standards.
- Healthy, sustainable diets projects - we're looking into future programmes to drive community level change within healthy, sustainable diets.
- We have committed to the Food Foundation campaign "Bang in Some Beans" to help the UK public double the amount of beans they eat by 2028. We've committed to champion the benefit of beans across affordability, health and sustainability benefits with our customers and member-owners.

External Commitments

We report annually on our sustainability performance in our Social Value and Sustainability Report, and the latest version can be found [here](#).

Alongside our own commitments, Co-op has agreed to a series of external commitments alongside other retailers and brands. We are held accountable to these via annual reporting and public benchmarking. Where relevant, we encourage all suppliers to align with the industry to enable us to tackle these challenges together. Some of these commitments are listed below.

[WWF's Retailers' Commitment for Nature](#)

We have joined a coalition of retailers to play our part in halving the environmental impact of UK shopping baskets by 2030.

[UK Food and Drink Pact \(formerly Courtauld Commitment 2030\)](#)

A voluntary agreement that enables collaborative action across the entire UK food chain to deliver farm-to-fork reductions in food waste, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and water stress that will help the UK food and drink sector achieve global environmental goals. You can deep dive into the targets here [UK Food and Drink Pact | WRAP](#).

[UK Packaging Pact](#)

A voluntary multi-retailer commitment, goals:

Goal 1: Optimise Packaging

Goal 2: Scale Reuse & Refill

Goal 3: Support Circular Infrastructure Investment

Goal 4: Harmonise Data.

[British Retail Consortium Climate \(BRC\) Action Roadmap](#)

The roadmap commits us to achieving net zero for our operations by 2035 and for our products by 2040.

[UK Soy Manifesto](#)

We've signed up to this collective industry commitment aiming to ensure fully deforestation and conversion free (DCF) soy for all soy coming to the UK by 2025. The group remains committed to this ambition, but we are aware that we have not reached the goal in full by the set timeline - more information on the challenges and next steps are found [here](#).

[Fairtrade Climate Pledge](#)

Alongside Fairtrade business partners around the world, we signed a climate pledge committing to do more to protect and invest in the resilience and green transition of global supply chains in the face of the climate crisis.

[NFU Fruit & Veg Pledge](#)

We've signed the NFU Fruit & Veg Pledge to make commitments on how we'll work with our suppliers and their growers. From the formation of closer working partnerships with our suppliers and their growers, to the implementation of best practice models across the board, we've worked tirelessly to create long-term relationships which result in a supply chain that is built on honesty, fairness and trust.

[IDH Bananas Living Wage](#)

As a coalition of UK retailers, we will strive for workers in our banana supply chains to receive a living wage by the end of 2027. We will progress faster wherever feasible.

Data and Systems

We collect data on the progress of our suppliers against minimum requirements and sustainability targets through a number of key platforms.

Authenticate

We have worked with Authenticate on our Farming & Fisheries KPIs for many years, but this year we will be extending the capability of this platform to enable more accurate CSR reporting for our own brand products. We'll be using it to map our supply chains for things like Fairtrade ingredients, mapping our top 30 high risk ingredients. We'll also be linking in internal and external systems to allow us to monitor technical, water and biodiversity risks in our supply chains, automate our packaging reporting, and to maintain accurate nutritional information for reporting against HFSS, salt and calorie targets, as well as tracking animal and plant protein levels in our ingredients.

Mondra is a platform that is used by multiple UK retailers to collect environmental data. It generates a product carbon footprint for every food product we sell, which creates a shared understanding between retailers and their suppliers. The intention is to reduce the burden on suppliers, as we realise this information is challenging to collect.

Sedex

We use the [Sedex](#) platform, the world's leading community for managing data on responsible sourcing, to manage our monitoring programme. The Co-op's Senior Ethical Trade Manager was an elected Member Director on the Sedex Board for six years until 2021 and we're active participants in various stakeholder forums and working groups that drive improvement to the platform and auditing methodology.

3Keel

We use 3Keel, an independent 3rd party sustainability consultancy, to manage volume, origin and certification information (annually and on request) of palm oil and soy used in Co-op products. Co-op have joined together with other companies to continue a standardised approach to reporting, to simplify this process for suppliers and increase our understanding around the use of these commodities.

Fairtrade

We work closely with the Fairtrade Foundation to manage, collect and report on Fairtrade ingredient volumes and data. Suppliers are also responsible for keeping MyCore up to date with Fairtrade certification and policy assurances. Full details on our licensing and reporting requirements can be found in Co-op's Fairtrade Code of Practice.

Annual Reporting

Co-op sustainability report and modern slavery statement is produced annually in April. Our annual reporting process begins in October through to March. For full details on reporting refer to the Codes of Practices on MyCore.



High-Focus Category – Produce

How you can support us

Climate change

- Commit to setting 1.5C degree aligned science-based GHG reduction targets across all scopes and keep us updated on actions you are taking and where we can support.
- Work towards being able to provide us with product carbon footprint data to evidence progress in reducing supply chain emissions, in accordance with WRAP's accounting guidance.

Sustainable Sourcing

- Support the delivery of Co-op's Crop Protection strategy.
- Help us uphold Co-op's commitment to the NFU Fruit & Vegetable Pledge.
- Take a responsible sourcing approach to substrate, including working to reduce peat use.

Packaging & Recycling

- Use innovative packaging technology to extend shelf life and reduce food waste.
- Reduce unnecessary plastic where not required e.g. trayless flow-wrap.
- Use at least 30% recycled content in plastics to avoid the Plastics Tax.

Food Waste

- Support crop loss and waste measurement and projects to encourage harvest of surplus crops for sharing with community organisations.
- Work with Co-op to raise customer awareness of ways to store produce and use all produce purchased to reduce household food waste.
- Support Co-op to test and learn about loose produce and reducing food waste in the home.

Water security

- Sign-up to WRAP's Water Security Roadmap, identify water risks for your sites / supply chains and support collective action water stewardship projects in high-risk sourcing areas.
- Consider developing soil & water management action plans that address risks according to grower locations.
- Consider certification within the SIFAV Basket of Water Standards in high-risk sourcing areas.

Human Rights & Ethical Trade

- Put in place a robust due diligence programme to manage human rights risks at all tiers of the supply chain and share the steps you are taking to mitigate risks.
- Support growers in addressing the root cause of issues and encourage them to engage in relevant in-country supplier forums.
- Understand and demonstrate progress against the proactivity, ownership and partnership behaviours as set out in the [Co-op Supplier Ethical Trade Framework and Guidance](#).

Fairtrade

- Ensure you are familiar with and adhere to Co-op's Fairtrade Code of Practice.
- Support supply chain mapping efforts by mapping to producer/ co-operative level (or as far down supply chain as possible).
- Support the Co-op Fairtrade Producer Engagement Strategy by building connections to producer groups in Co-op's supply chain.

A photograph of several pigs in a muddy field, with one pig in the foreground looking towards the camera. The image is used as a background for the top section of the document.

High-Focus Category - Protein

How you can support us

Climate change

- Commit to setting 1.5C degree aligned science-based net zero targets across all scopes by the end of 2023 (and publish them by the end of 2025 at the latest).
- Keep us updated on the actions you are taking towards meeting these targets - and let us know where we can support.
- Work towards being able to provide us with product carbon footprint data to evidence progress in reducing supply chain emissions, in accordance with WRAP's accounting guidance.

Sustainable Sourcing

- Work towards a responsible sourcing approach of Feed ingredients, particularly transitioning to deforestation and conversion free soy.
- Meet sourcing requirements in line with policies on forest-risk commodities (soy, palm oil) and where applicable have your own deforestation and conversion-free commitments for the commodities you use as a business.

Packaging & Recycling

- Reduce unnecessary plastic, e.g. trayless flow-wrap.
- Use at least 30% recycled content in plastics to avoid the Plastics Tax.
- Remove the 'forever chemical' PFAS from mince paper and do not re-introduce it in any product development (grease resistant papers used as a plastic alternative are a watch-out).

Food Waste

- A lot of protein waste occurs at home - please support steps to make our products easy to buy in the right quantities so people buy just enough, as well as easy to freeze and cook from frozen so that everything bought gets eaten.
- Plan ahead for artwork updates and product redesign to ensure food waste prevention interventions are factored into product development and labelling on pack.

Water Security

- Sign-up to WRAP's Water Security Roadmap, identify water risks for your sites / supply chains and support collective action water stewardship projects in high-risk sourcing areas.
- Consider developing water, soil & nutrient action plans, that address water risks specific to farm location.

Human Rights & Ethical Trade

- Put in place a robust due diligence programme to manage human rights risks at all tiers of the supply chain and share the steps you are taking to mitigate risks.
- Support suppliers in addressing the root cause of issues and encourage them engage in relevant in-country supplier forums.
- Understand and demonstrate progress against the proactivity, ownership and partnership behaviours as set out in the [Co-op Supplier Ethical Trade Framework and Guidance](#).

Any questions or projects to propose?

Please do get in touch! We've listed the team members for you in each section.

