



## Co-op Code of Practice

### Soya

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#### 2. Scope

This Code of Practice applies to all Co-op branded pre-packed food and non-food products.

It applies to soy used directly in products and indirectly via animal feed.

Processing aids are excluded.

This policy applies to soy of any geographical origin.

#### 3. Aim

Co-op understands the importance of using responsibly sourced soy in its products. This widely used ingredient can harm humans, wildlife, and the environment when it is produced irresponsibly.

Our aim is that all soy used in Co-op products, including embedded in animal feed, will be deforestation and conversion free (with a cut-off date of 2020, or earlier) and responsibly sourced by the end of 2025 (31 December 2025) at the latest. Our aim is for all our suppliers sourcing soy to adopt and cascade the same commitment within their supply chains.

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## 4. Co-op approach

### Sourcing

Co-op covered its entire footprint with Round Table on Responsible Soy (RTRS) credits from 2018-2020. Credits are a first step towards responsibly sourced soy by demonstrating support for more sustainable soy production, to drive change we know we need to move to cover direct sourcing.

We have continued to cover our footprint with certification or RTRS credits during 2021. Fresh protein suppliers have used RTRS credits as a minimum to cover their 2021 footprints.

We collate soy data for Co-op products and supply chains annually and our suppliers must give detailed information about the origin of the soy, including company supplying the soy, first port of entry to Europe, country, area origin and amounts used in animal feed (see 6.5 for details)

As different species have different feed requirements and supply chain challenges, we are working with our suppliers to develop robust action plans. As a full member of RTRS, we report publicly on our use of soy [here](#).

### Innovation

We will work with our suppliers on feed innovation and reducing the environmental impact of our soy use.

### Campaigning

We are members of the UK Round Table on Soy, and signatories to the UK Soy Manifesto and the Cerrado Manifesto. We support robust due diligence legislation on forest commodities to help facilitate sourcing changes.

We encourage suppliers to actively participate in relevant industry initiatives, including signing up to the UK Soy Manifesto, and adopting and cascading UK Soy Manifesto commitments

## 5. Targets and commitments

All soy used in Co-op products, including embedded in animal feed, must be deforestation and conversion free (with a cut-off date of 2020) and responsibly sourced by the end of 2025 (31 December 2025).

## 6. Supplier requirements

### 6.1 Sourcing requirements

By 2025 (at the latest) all soy used by Co-op suppliers must be physically deforestation and conversion free.

This sourcing requirement can be achieved by one of the following:

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### a) Certification

Soy in animal feed must be covered by standard(s) which have been benchmarked to the FEFAC Soy Sourcing Guidelines (2021) to include the following features:

- Criterion 34 pertaining to conversion free soy
- Cut-off date (no later than January 2020)

By the end of 2025 (31 December 2025) this must be segregated.

In the period 2022-2025 mass balance will be allowed as demonstrating a transition to support more sustainable production of soy.

Area Mass Balance is only accepted with approved derogation from the Co-op. This approval will be contingent on a robust action plan to show the transition to physical vDCF soy and approval for a derogation must be sought before use. The derogation must be agreed in advance by Co-op.

### b) Sourced from areas considered low risk of deforestation or conversion, or sourced from landscapes and jurisdictions which are verified deforestation- and conversion-free

Where credible definitions and methodologies to determine verified low risk or jurisdictional deforestation and conversion free regions are agreed we will consider these as alternatives to approved certification.

To make this claim suppliers must provide credible evidence of traceability to prove that soy has been sourced from these areas. This must be approved by Co-op in advance.

Co-op currently considers soy sourced from areas outside of South America as low risk for deforestation and conversion. As above, credible evidence of traceability must be agreed in advance with Co-op.

Co-op encourages suppliers to use credible certification schemes to support responsible production beyond managing deforestation and conversion risk, regardless of origin.

## 6.2 Credits

In the period 2022-2024, for soy that does not meet the above requirements, this volume must be covered by RTRS credits, preferably Regional. For footprints from 2023 onwards the RTRS credits must be purchased by suppliers and allocated to the Co-op. The preference is for Regional RTRS credits wherever possible. As part of actions plans (see section 6.3) suppliers must show timebound plan to reduce their dependence on credits.

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### 6.3 Action plans

Action plans are required for suppliers that meet the following criteria:

- Use fresh meat, farmed fish, eggs and dairy, or meats, farmed fish, eggs and dairy in processed food products (Tiers 2, 3, 4a and 4b on the [Consumer Goods Forum Soy Ladder](#))
- Use over 100 tonnes of soy in animal feed per year

Suppliers that meet these criteria must share a clear timebound action plan, with milestones, of how they are going to achieve the 2025 ambition. This action plan must be shared with the Co-op.

Action plans must be shared no later than end of 2023 (31 December 2023) and updated on an annual basis.

### 6.4 Company sourcing policy

Suppliers must have their own responsible sourcing and deforestation and conversion policy for all soy used in their business, aligned to the [Accountability Framework Initiative](#) and [UK Soy Manifesto](#).

A guide template for suppliers is available [here](#).

This must be publicly available by the end of 2023.

Suppliers are encouraged to set deforestation and conversion free commitments for their entire business, not just soy.

### 6.5 Reporting

Co-op requires its suppliers to give detailed information (annually and on request) about the origin of soy used in animal feed for Co-op products. This includes the company supplying the soy, country, area (if known) of origin and amounts (total amount and each individual amount).

Where this information is not currently available suppliers must work to increase transparency.

Suppliers must also give all information relevant to the certification of soy used, including standard used and supply chain model (e.g. credits, mass balance, segregated).

The Reporting period will typically start in early January, to report on the previous year, and form the basis of Co-op's annual sustainability reporting and RTRS annual report.

The process is currently carried out by 3Keel, using a joint process with many other retailers. Suppliers will receive notification in advance (November/December) of the reporting period each year.

Suppliers who use soy as a direct ingredient must report on amount, origin and certification used - supported with evidence of traceability.

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## 6.6 Responsible sourcing of feed

Our aspiration is for all feed used in our products to be responsibly sourced, and we encourage suppliers to meet the following criteria for feed ingredients:

- Fully traceable to boat/ farm of production/ origin
- Carbon impact and life cycle assessment evaluated
- Zero deforestation or land conversion
- The social impact of producers within feed ingredients supply chains considered and risks understood and mitigated

## 7. References and Useful Links

- [Retail Soy Group - eLearning resources](#)
- [UK Roundtable for Sustainable Soy](#)
- [Round Table for Responsible Soy \(RTRS\)](#)
- [UK Soy Manifesto](#)
- [FEFAC Soy Sourcing Guidelines](#)
- [Principles of successful strategies for downstream sellers of livestock products](#)
- [Accountability Framework](#)

## 8. History of amendments

Version number	Date	Details of amendment including sections numbers amended
1	April 2019	First issue
2	November 2020	Clarification on Credits – sections affected 4, 5, 6 and 7 Owner updated
3	November 2022	Major update of entire policy - while 2025 ambition remains almost all text has been updated to reflect clearer requirements.  Sections affected - all

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