

Motion 10

Council motion – Showcasing the best of British Food and Drink in our stores

Our members value our commitment to making sustainable and ethical choices accessible and supporting British farmers, not only because it's the right thing to do but because they value the quality and taste of homegrown products.

Our Co-op is proudly based in communities right across the United Kingdom. Our members have told us how much they value their local store and that they want to have a say about what they can buy - especially products that are sourced from and better reflect the places they live. We want our Co-op to do more with local suppliers and to involve members in choosing products from Scotland, Wales, England and Northern Ireland, which showcases the fantastic diversity of the amazing food and drink products made across the UK.

We also think that at a time when food security is a concern, it is even more important that we back our British farmers, growers and producers. We want our Co-op to continue to work with our farmers and suppliers to support them, and to do more to show our members that simply by choosing to shop at Co-op they are supporting British farmers.

We ask the Board to:

- Provide more opportunities for member owners to influence the products they can buy in store, including a 'Best of British' showcase of Scottish, Welsh, English and Northern Irish products, chosen by Member Owners.
- Do more to source from local suppliers and share more information about the positive impact that choosing British products has for our farmers and suppliers.

Board response:

Co-op Members consistently say that the quality of our food and our commitment to ethical sourcing is a big reason why they choose Co-op. We're proud of the strength of our commitments to supporting our British farmers all year round.

That's why in our stores, you'll find that all our Co-op brand fresh and frozen meat is British, including when it's used as an ingredient in products like sandwiches, pies and ready meals. You'll find that all our Co-op brand fresh milk, fresh cream and cheddar cheese is 100% British. You'll also see the work we've done over many years to maximise the length of the British season for our fresh produce, too.

The resilience of our food system is under strain like never before – and supporting the farmers in our supply chain, around the world and in the UK – is critical. Whilst the depth and breadth of our British sourcing commitments are vital, what sets our Co-op apart is the fact we have stood by them through thick and thin for over a decade, and that we are unwavering in our commitment to continue to stand by them.

The impact of climate change and increasingly volatile weather is the gravest risk facing farmers today. At the same time, they are uniquely positioned to work with us to address the climate and nature crises that we are facing. That's why we've invested heavily in our farming sustainability programmes. In 2025, we announced a new fund

to help farmers adopt sustainable practices. By the end of the year, we provided £760,000 of funding to farmers in our supply chain, to support them in reducing emissions and promoting nature on their farms.

Too often, far too little thought is given to where our food comes from, or the hard work that happens on farms right across the UK and around the world every single day. We've long recognised the responsibility we have to stand by our farmers, but also to show our members and customers how they, just by choosing Co-op, support British farming. Our British and provenance sourcing commitments feature prominently on packaging on the relevant products, for instance, so that it's clear for customers when they are buying British products.

Our members have told us that they want to buy great quality British products from their Co-op and throughout the summer, we'll be showcasing the best of British in our stores. We'll also be sharing more information with our members about the important issues of food security and how we support farmers and producers, with opportunities to find out more on our new Ownership Hub, which was established following a motion voted for by members last year.

As a member owned business, hundreds of thousands of member owners join in and shape our Co-op every year, including designing the fantastic products and services we provide, from chocolate bars to Life Services products. We welcome the opportunity for members to get involved and have their say on the best of British products that they can buy at their Co-op and we'll look to work with members on this over the next twelve months.

The Board recommends supporting this motion.