



# The Future of Food

## 2020 Update

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We're all well versed in the unprecedented change we've encountered over the last six months and in our world of ethics and sustainability, the crisis has raised its own set of challenges.

We've had to pause some things and face into new priorities. First and foremost, we've focused on the humanitarian and economic crisis impacting communities in the UK and on a global scale.

But that doesn't mean our previous challenges disappeared. One remaining constant has been our commitment to The Future of Food – Co-op's recipe for sustainability to 2030.

Below we share a handful of our highlights this year, but of course that's not all we've achieved, and our plans are underpinned by strong foundations. To learn more on how we are progressing with our targets, read [Co-op's 2019 Sustainability report](#).

We now need to recognise the responsibility we all have to protect people and the planet – whether you're a customer, member, supplier or partner, we look forward to working together to create a more sustainable future for all. The Future of Food is in our hands and it's only together that we can make a difference.

**Cathryn Higgs, Head of Food Policy**



# Chapter 1: Sourcing & Creating with Care

Our products will be created with respect for people and the planet.

## Protecting our most important ingredients

- ✓ This year we published our 30 Key Ingredients which are central to how we source responsibly and how we protect them.
- ✓ Our next priority is sharing our action plans underneath those ingredients, including how we will achieve our ambitious goals on sustainable soy and segregated palm oil, and take further action on deforestation.



## Action on plastic

- ✓ As part of our journey to 100% recyclability, we launched a 50-store trial of our film recycling scheme, with a view to provide a collection point in every community in 2021.
- ✓ We recognise the need to continue to lightweight all packaging and since 2018 we have reduced the amount of plastic in our own brand packaging by 1313 tonnes per annum.
- ✓ As part of our commitment to use more recycled material, we moved our own brand 500ml, 750ml, 1l and 2l PET bottles for still and sparkling waters, soft drinks and mixers to 100% recycled plastic content.
- ✓ For our 2020 Christmas range, we removed all the plastic toys from our Christmas crackers and made our entire gifting range completely recyclable.

## Climate change commitments

- ✓ We reported our complete end-to-end carbon footprint, set Science Based Targets to reduce our overall product emissions by 11% and those associated with our operations by 50% by 2025, and last year we reduced our product related emissions by 2.5% and our operational emissions by 39%.
- ✓ We signed up to the UN Global Compact 'We mean business' coalition which commits us to net zero by 2050 at the very latest.
- ✓ We are now progressing how we make our tangible reductions, fast, and exploring how we bring our members and customers on the journey to tackle the climate crisis.

# Chapter 2: Treating People Fairly

Everyone that produces our food will get a fair deal.

## Our commitment to Fairtrade

- ✓ We celebrated 25 years of championing Fairtrade with our members, customers and producers. We shared stories, empowered communities to celebrate Fairtrade and made it easier for customers to choose Fairtrade when in store.
- ✓ Our commitment to Fairtrade remains stronger than ever and we are looking forward to sharing more plans on our ambitions very soon.

## Emergency support for communities and workers impacted by COVID-19

- ✓ Through our Global Wellbeing Charter we reallocated £950K of funds to support producer communities in tackling the pandemic through access to medical care, food parcels, PPE and the provision of clean safe water to support better hygiene and sanitation with our partners The One Foundation.
- ✓ We worked collaboratively with other retailers and partners on common guidance, training and initiatives to help keep vulnerable workers and farmers in our supply chains here and overseas safe.



# Chapter 3: Learning & Celebrating Together

We'll work together with our members to make a difference

*Access to healthy, nutritious food for all*

- ✓ During the height of the crisis, we prioritised getting food to vulnerable people in communities across the UK - donating £1.5m in Co-op stock to FareShare and raising donations to support over 5m meals, alongside £1.3m raised for the National Emergencies Trust to support local food groups with sustainable solutions.
- ✓ We mobilised our Member Pioneer network and our Members to connect local charities with their communities, stores and volunteers - helping 11,000 vulnerable customers through our Community Shopping Scheme and through 7,700 hours of support from Co-op Member Pioneers.
- ✓ Our work to support young people included providing £2.6m in food vouchers for free school meals for over 6,000 Co-op Academy students and joining the 'Child Food Poverty Taskforce' spearheaded by Marcus Rashford.
- ✓ We know the issue of access to food will continue as repercussions of the pandemic are felt. Our priority now is establishing how Co-op can provide access to healthy, nutritious food for everyone - including our commitment to boost the Healthy Start national scheme with more fruit and veg, and how we can best tackle food insecurity at a time when communities need more support than ever before.

