

# Health and Wellbeing at Co-op 2021





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NB When we refer to ‘children’ in this document, we define this as persons under 16 years of age.

## [Section 1.0: Overview](#)

Co-op has an important role to play in helping our members, colleagues and customers lead healthy lives and we do this through the products we sell and the initiatives we are part of. We all know that a balanced diet, together with an active lifestyle, is the key to good health and wellbeing. The [Eatwell guide](#) sets out the principles of a healthier and more sustainable diet. Co-op aims to help our customers move towards a diet more like the Eatwell Guide e.g. eating more fruit & veg and reducing consumption of products high in fat, sugar and salt.

## 1.1 Why is health important to customers?

At Co-op, we know customers are eager to reduce their sugar, salt and calories and increase their fruit and vegetable intake. In addition, customers are increasingly looking to complement their diets to meet their individual needs, through fortified products, increased fibre or plant-based alternatives.

Following the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, consumers are more mindful than ever of their health and want to make healthier food choices. It is crucial that we meet the needs and expectations of our customers and provide delicious and inspiring healthy products.

## 1.2 Why is health important to us?

The obesity crisis in the UK is evident, and obesity strategies have been published by government in [England](#), [Scotland](#) and [Wales](#).

Considering the emerging evidence of links between people being overweight or living with obesity having more severe outcomes with contracting Covid-19, the Department of Health and Social Care published [Tackling Obesity: empowering adults and children to live healthier lives](#) in July 2020.

Obesity strategies published since 2016 have brought in the following:

- Sugar reduction targets
- Calorie reduction targets
- New salt reduction targets
- Plans for restrictions on the promotion, placement and advertising of high fat, salt and sugar foods and drinks
- Review of front of pack nutrition labelling
- Review of calorie labelling on alcohol
- Mandatory calorie labelling for out of home

We have responded to the government consultations either directly, or through our trade body, the British Retail Consortium.

Co-op wants to play its part in tackling the obesity crisis and preventable diseases by helping our customers, colleagues and members make healthier and more informed lifestyle choices

### A look at the statistics from Public Health England

In England, around two-thirds of adults are overweight and, of these, half are living with obesity. 1 in 3 children leaving primary school are overweight and 1 in 5 are living with obesity.

Further statistics show that approximately one in ten deaths in the UK is attributable to obesity. Being overweight is the biggest single preventable cause of cancer after smoking.

In 2020, a strong link was made between obesity and Covid-19, with people living with obesity twice as likely to end up in intensive care if they get Covid-19 and people with type 2 diabetes being twice as likely to die from Covid-19.

for themselves and their families. Our actions to support us in doing this are laid out in this document.

## 1.3 Co-op health firsts

**We've led the way in several areas for over 30 years, our journey to improving the health of the communities we serve is set out below.**

- 1985** – We were the first to put dental advice on all confectionery.
- 1987** – We launched our first healthy range known as Good Life
- 1986** – We introduced HIGH, MEDIUM and LOW nutrient labelling on food products – the first consumer friendly, nutrition labelling system used by any retailer
- 1995** – We became the first retailer to commit to front of pack nutrition labelling for fat and calories (salt was added in 1998)
- 1997** – We added more dental warnings, this time on to sugary drinks and fruit juices
- 1998** – We were the first to add salt to front of pack, and Guideline Daily Amounts information for calories, fat and salt on back of pack
- 2002** – We were the first to add calorie information to alcoholic drinks
- 2005** – We were the first supermarket group to remove a range of commonly used artificial colours and MSG in all own label food
- 2007** – We were the first to remove all artificial flavourings, flavour enhancing additives and benzoate preservatives from all our own label food
- 2006** – We became one of the first retailers to adopt and support the FSA traffic light labelling scheme
- 2009** – We were the first to introduce a front of pack logo across all ranges to highlight healthier choices across all ranges
- 2009** – We became the first retailer to commit to a 'Healthy Promotions' target (this was paused in 2020 in light of upcoming legislation)
- 2011** – We committed to ensuring that at least 30% of own brand processed products are healthy (no red traffic lights on front of pack)
- 2012** – We re-launched our healthier range to provide customers with affordable products focusing on a healthier lifestyle, while maintaining taste and quality.
- 2014** – We were the first in the market to move our entire own label range of dilutable drinks to no added sugar
- 2015** – We were the first in the market to move our entire own label range of chilled juice drinks to no added sugar

## Section 2.0: Our approach

To ensure that our nutrition targets and commitments are met by the business, we take a collaborative approach across different teams in the business, working with teams such as Product Development, Marketing, Own Brand strategy, Commercial and Labelling to ensure we make it easier for customers to choose healthier options in our stores.

### 2.1 Future of Food plan

#### The Future of Food

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We launched Future of Food in September 2018, setting out Co-op's recipe for sustainability to 2030. You can view the ambition in full [here](#).

Co-op's commitments for a healthier future sit within this Future of Food plan and are outlined below. These commitments will help shift our customers towards a diet closer to the [Eatwell Guide](#).

- 1) We will design Co-op products with quality, sustainability, and health front of mind
  - We'll increase the amount of fruit and veg as ingredients in Co-op own brand products.
  - We'll increase the choice and accessibility of healthy and delicious products in Co-op stores.
  - We'll continue to take a responsible approach to reducing the amount of salt, sugar, and calories in Co-op own brand products.
- 2) We will educate and empower the generations of today and tomorrow, so they can make informed choices.
  - We'll inspire healthy, sustainable behaviour in communities through behaviour change trials with partners.

We are held accountable to deliver this Future of Food plan via an internal audit, checking our progress against deadlines and ensuring plans are in place to achieve goals. Monthly reports are collated to show our progress. These reports are presented at our monthly Policy Development Forum to update the wider business on our progress.



## Section 3.0 Healthy and lifestyle product ranges

### 3.1 Nutrition and 5 a day claims

Since 2009, we have been adding nutrition and 5 a day claims on front of pack to help customers choose healthier options every day. For Co-op products to carry a nutrition or 5 a day claim, or to sit in our health design, they must be developed to meet strict nutrition criteria, which include the following:

- It must not display a red traffic light\* as determined by the UK front of pack labelling scheme (this ensures we are not making claims on products which are high in fat, sat fat, sugar or salt)
- It must meet our reformulation targets (salt and calories)
- It must meet the requirements for a permitted 5 a day claim or a permitted nutrition claim set out in EC Regulation 1924/2006 on Nutrition and Health Claims Made on Food as amended

\*Except for when it's naturally occurring e.g., high sugar in dried fruit.

If a product cannot meet these criteria, then it will not carry a claim or sit in the health design. These criteria are used across all own brand food and drink categories except for alcohol (alcohol isn't permitted to carry nutrition claims apart from nutrition claims referring to low alcohol levels, or the reduction of the alcohol content, or the reduction of the energy content for beverages containing more than 1,2 % by volume of alcohol).

In June 2020, 950 nutrition and 5 a day claims were displayed on our own brand products, making it easier for customers to find healthier choices. 5 a day messages are our most used front of pack claim from a nutrition perspective.

### 3.2 Co-op Free From

**Co-op Free From** is a range of great tasting everyday and seasonal Free From products across key categories that customers diagnosed with food allergies or intolerances can trust to meet their dietary requirements.

Free From products can be found across our store in ambient, chilled, frozen and in Food to Go. We also offer Free From party food solutions at Christmas.

As well as Co-op Free From products we aim to remove allergens in the formulation of our everyday products where there is no compromise on flavour. All Co-op sausages, burgers, standard meatballs, breaded fish and fishcakes, chilled soups and ambient Irresistible pasta sauces are now gluten free.

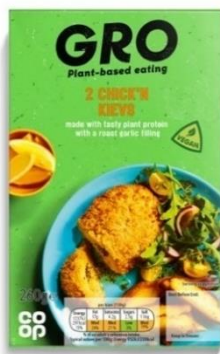


In 2020 we launched two own brand Free From sliced breads – white and brown seeded.



### 3.3 Co-op Vegan and Vegetarian

Having seen an increased interest in our customers sourcing plant-based products, we launched our GRO range in 2020. In January 2021 we launched further GRO lines across Food to Go, produce, ready meals and frozen taking the range to 50 products.



We also add vegetarian and vegan logos to front of pack of other products, as well as providing a full list of ingredients on back of pack to ensure customers are confident that the product is suitable for them.



### 3.4 Infant food

Co-op does not produce or sell own-label infant food or formula.





## Section 4.0: Improving the nutritional profile of Co-op products

We are committed to improving the nutritional profile of our own brand products through reformulation and new product development.

Co-op products must adhere to the nutrition requirements laid out in our Nutrition Code of Practice. This document contains requirements such as salt reduction targets and calorie reduction targets. Our Product Development team and Technical Managers work closely with our suppliers to ensure that these requirements are met. We also have an online platform for our suppliers which we use to post content on our nutrition requirements and guidance on how to meet them.

During reformulation, our Product Development team will not increase the nutrients of concern (fat, sat fat, sugar, salt, calories) in our products unless it is required for technical or quality reasons. Further, we encourage them to increase the fruit and vegetable content where possible.

### 4.1 Sugar

In 2017, Public Health England (PHE) set a target for the food industry to reduce the amount of sugar sold by 20% between 2015 to 2020 in the top categories contributing sugar to children's diets.

Co-op has been reducing sugar and measuring progress since 2014, with focus on the PHE sugar reduction categories: breakfast cereals, cakes, morning goods, puddings, ice-cream, spreads, dessert toppings, chocolate confectionary, sweet confectionary, yogurts, biscuits.

Co-op ask our suppliers and product developers to reduce sugar as far as is possible in our products, without having a negative impact on quality, taste or shelf life and without any increase in total calories or saturated fat.

Since 2014, 674 million teaspoons of sugar\* have been removed from our products.

#### Teaspoons of sugar moved each year (based on annual sales) from Co-op products

2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
100million	142million	26million	63million	253million	74million	18million

\*assuming sales remain flat year on year

PHE has been reporting on Co-op's progress towards these targets. Co-op has given PHE permission to publish our data.

**Table showing Co-op progress towards the -20% sales weighted average reduction in sugar per 100g (From December 2015 to September 2019)**

Category	Co-op progress
Biscuits	-6%
Chocolate confectionary	-11%
Ice-cream	0%
Morning goods	-4%
Sweet spreads	0%
Dessert toppings	0%
Yogurts	-22%

Public Health England (PHE) also published sales weighted average targets for a 5% sugar reduction in juice-based drinks and a 20% sugar reduction in milk-based drinks by 2021 (from a 2017 baseline). Co-op completed a massive piece of work to reduce the sugar in our milk-based drinks in 2016 - before these targets were set - so our reformulation work wasn't captured by PHE. In 2016, Co-op chocolate milk was reduced in sugar by 30%, strawberry milk by nearly 22% and banana milk by 27.5%.

**Table showing Co-op's progress towards the PHE targets for milk- and fruit juice-based drinks (From December 2017 to September 2019)**

Category	PHE target	Co-op progress
Pre-packed milk based drinks	-20%	-2%
Pre-packed mono juice drinks	-5%	0%
Pre-packed blended juice	-5%	+3%

Co-op were first in the market to move our entire own brand range of dilutable drinks (2014) and chilled juice drinks (2015) to no added sugar. In April 2018 when the soft drinks industry levy was introduced, Co-op only had a small number of products which were captured by the levy. We have carried out reformulation and currently only one own brand product is captured by the levy.

## 4.2 Salt

Co-op has been voluntarily signing up to the government salt reduction targets since 2006.

At the end of 2020, 98% of our own brand products met their maximum Department of Health 2017 salt reduction targets. We sold 70 of the 76 categories of products listed in the 2017

targets. We did not sell own brand canned frankfurters (category 1.7.1), cheese spread (category 4.5.1), lightly salted butter (category 5.2), meat free bacon (category 25.3), dehydrated instant mash (category 26.3), stocks (category 28.1).

Public Health England published 2024 salt reduction targets in September 2020. From May 2021, Co-op will be working towards the 2024 maximum salt targets for all categories which we sell. We will aim to not increase salt in our products during reformulation unless it is required for technical or quality reasons.

## 4.3 Calories

Co-op have set internal calorie caps to manage the calorie content in our products. Per serve calorie (kcal) guardrails have been in place since 2012 on products within our ready meals, pizzas, food to go sandwiches and salads ranges.

To reduce the overall calorie content of more products and more ranges, in July 2019 Co-op set maximum calorie targets for 22 food categories, including ready meals, pizzas, sandwiches and cakes, which are to be met by the end of 2021. These targets are based on the calorie content of our products per serve, not sales weighted averages.

PHE set their calorie reduction targets in September 2020, with both the maximum and range average targets to be met by the end of 2024.

**We are reducing calories\* in 22 key categories\*\*, in line with Public Health England's reformulation programmes and will report on progress annually from 2022.**

\*Category-specific maximum calories per serve set by Co-op, aligned with or lower than Public Health England targets, to be met by December 2021 in 95% of each category

\*\*22 sweet and savoury categories based on those within the PHE sugar and calorie reformulation programmes

### Categories in scope of Co-op calorie targets

- Ready meals (complete meals)
- Pizzas
- Sandwiches
- Food to go salads and sushi
- Meal centres
- Savoury pastries
- Hot Food
- Potato products
- Pasta/noodles/cous cous etc. with additions



- Chilled filled pasta
- Crisps and savoury snacks
- Chilled savoury snacks
- Garlic and Cheesy breads
- Breakfast cereals
- Sweet biscuits and cookies
- Cakes
- Chocolate confectionery
- Ice cream and lollies
- Morning goods
- Puddings
- Sweet confectionery
- Yoghurts

We include recommended portion sizes on our labels to help guide our customers. We do not encourage excess consumption or inappropriate portion sizes through on-pack photography.

## 4.4 Fruit & Veg

We signed up to the Peas Please campaign in 2017 to help the nation eat more veg. The Peas Please campaign has been extended until 2023. Our commitments until 2023 are as follows:

1. Encourage and actively promote the use of veg in new products and seek out reformulation opportunities to increase veg
2. Continue to add storage advice on veg product packs
3. Continue to promote cooking sauces with 1 of your 5 a day where possible
4. Inspire customers to add more veg to their meals through messaging on our labels
5. Ensure that 5 a day claims are highlighted on online, social and magazine recipes
6. We will highlight at least one seasonal vegetable each month for customers (social media and magazine)
7. Social media will include an appealing highlighted feature of veg every week
8. On average, at least 50% of recipes used in the Co-op food magazine will carry a 5 a day claim each year
9. Commit to explore and support new ways for securing access to vegetables for young families on low incomes in line with the Government's two UK schemes, including supporting the digitization of Healthy Start in England and Wales, boosting the fruit & veg that families using the healthy start vouchers receive

## 10. Continue to make veg more affordable through Co-op Fresh 3 promotions

In 2019, we set out targets for our developers to increase the vegetable content in ready meals and food to go salads, by 2021. Unfortunately, Covid 19 had a detrimental impact on our product development plans during 2020 and so we are not on track to meeting these targets. We are currently reviewing these targets.

We are held accountable for the progress we make on increasing the veg content of our products each year as we must provide information to Peas Please for their progress reports. We scored 'yellow: on the road to success' in their [2020 progress report](#).

For the 2020 Peas Please progress report, we reported the following:

- Our Sausage and Mash ready meal increased from 5g veg to nearly 50g.
- Our Cottage Pie increased from 76g veg to 112g.
- We added nearly another 30g veg to our Shepherd's Pie and over 20g to our Lentil Cottage Pie.

Our vegan range 'GRO' provides us with opportunities to increase veg in our customers' diets by making vegetables the centrepiece in products such as pies, curries and burgers.

As well as finding opportunities to add more veg into our Co-op products, we have also been using product labels to help inspire customers to add more veg to their meals.

- We add serving suggestions to frozen pizza, ready meals and cooking sauces to encourage customers to add more veg to their meals. For example, 'try me with a side salad' has been added to our frozen pizzas.
- We do not allow 5 a day claims to be added to products which carry red traffic lights. Therefore, we have created a back of pack statement to inform customers where a product contains a portion of veg (80g). We have started to add this to our ready meals where applicable.
- We have made a conscious effort to include some form of vegetable/salad side dish in the majority of our photography for the Ready to Cook range.
- We have also used a lot more vibrant veg in the photography on our protein products to make the products enticing and to encourage customers to pick up veg to complete their meal when in store.

For information on our progress on our communications commitments, please see section 8.1.

To help ensure we don't waste fruit and veg, all packaged produce follows a standard price reduction process, starting up to 24 hours before end of life. If it remains unsold it will either go to waste, or to a Foodshare partner. This applies in all stores which sell packaged produce.

## 4.5 Trans Fats

In 2007 we removed hydrogenated vegetable oil from all our own Co-op brand products.

The use of hydrogenated fat as a direct ingredient is prohibited in all Co-op own brand products. Use within an additive may be permitted if no suitable alternative is available.

## 4.6 Fibre

According to the National Diet and Nutrition Survey, only 7.5% of adults meet the recommended daily fibre intake of 30g, with average intakes at just over 18g a day. In February 2021 we relaunched our core white and malted sandwich range with fibre-enriched bread. Wheat fibre was added to the standard recipe, increasing the fibre content by up to 100% with an average increase across the range of 66% making it easier for our customers to increase their fibre intake without needing to change their purchasing behaviour.

## Section 5.0: Labelling

### 5.1 Labelling Policies

Co-op is committed to using front of pack traffic light labelling on our own brand products to allow customers to make easy, healthier choices. We provide information on

- energy, fat, saturated fat, sugar and salt content per 100g and per serving
- the percentage reference intake of these nutrients
- whether the product is high, medium or low in these nutrients through use of the traffic light colours.

Our history of clear labelling is below:

#### **History**

**1985** – We were first to put dental advice on all confectionery

**1986** – We introduced HIGH, MEDIUM and LOW nutrient labelling on food products – the first consumer friendly, nutrition labelling system used by any retailer

**1995** – We became the first retailer to commit to front of pack nutrition labelling for fat and calories (salt was added in 1998)

**1997** – We added more dental warnings, this time on to sugary drinks and fruit juices

**1998** – We were first to add salt to front of pack, and Guideline Daily Amounts information for calories, fat and salt on back of pack



**1999** – We became the first UK retailer to label the ingredients within our own-brand wines. At first this move was technically illegal, but our customers and members told us via a Customer Jury that it was important to have access to this information. The law has been subsequently changed in support of this labelling standard. By the end of 2007, all of our own brand alcohol beverages included the ingredients on their labels.

**2002** – We were first to add calorie information to own brand alcoholic drinks

**2006** – We became one of the first retailers to adopt and support the FSA traffic light labelling scheme

**2009** – We introduced a front of pack logo to highlight healthier choices across all ranges

**2009** – Co-op started including traffic light nutrition information on recipes on our corporate website, magazine, digital media and recipe cards/point of sale.

**2010** – Co-op moved to hybrid scheme combining colour coding and GDAs. Co-op included energy and reference intakes on front of pack panel in line with new Department of Health guidance.

**2018** – We launched our Well & Good (W&G) range and moved to W&G nutrition claims (a new icon which replaced the ‘front of pack logo’ highlighting healthier choices)

For most of our pack nutrition information, Co-op uses analysed nutrition carried out by an accredited laboratory. We use data from McCance and Widdowson’s The Composition of Foods data for fruit and vegetables and plain protein (meat/fish).

## 5.2 Traffic light labelling

Co-op is committed to adding traffic light labelling to front of pack on all Co-op own brand processed products, apart from the exemptions set out in Annex V of Regulation (EU) 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, and on gifting products e.g. Christmas chocolates.

Product categories where we do not add traffic light labelling, as per [Department of Health guidance](#):

- In-store bakery items\*
- Milk
- Eggs
- Cooks' ingredients such as herbs, spices, oil, vinegar
- Plain meat e.g. chicken breast, lamb leg, steak, mince
- Fresh/frozen unprocessed fish
- Frozen veg
- Dried pasta
- Home baking products such as icing, nuts, seeds, dried fruit, flour, sugar
- Prepped veg/salad
- Lentils/pearl barley/soup mix
- Whole fruit and veg- potatoes, apples etc



- Gifting e.g. Christmas chocolates
- Products where the labels are too small
- Bottled water
- Alcohol
- Coffee/tea

\*We provide kcal/kJ info on the shelf edge label. We will implement any requirements of the out of home calorie labelling regulations.

We also include a full table of nutrition on back of pack with traffic light labelling where space allows.

**Commitment:**

At least 30% of our own brand recipe products will not carry a red traffic light on front of pack

**Percentage of own brand products which do not carry a red traffic light, since 2012:**

2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
38%	40%	40.5%	42%	44%	44%	45%	46%	46%

We provide nutritional information per 100g and per serving (where applicable) for all our own label products, sold through both Co-op online delivery and the Deliveroo channels. We also include an image of the front of pack so that the traffic lights are visible.

All Co-op own brand products carry a recommended portion size on front of pack. For meat and fish, we provide nutrition information per 100g to allow for easy comparison between products, and for fruit & veg we give a portion of 80g, which is based on Government's 'one of a 5 a day'.

See section 3.1 for information on our nutrition and 5 a day claims on front of pack.

## 5.3 Allergens

On pre-packed food items, any allergens in our Co-op products are highlighted in bold in the ingredients list on the back of pack. We will always try to highlight the allergy update flash on front of pack to highlight changes.



Foods prepared and packed in-store (pre-packed for direct sale) also highlight allergen information on their labelling. Over 2021 we will extend this information to include all ingredient information ahead of Natasha's Law coming into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> October. We will do this across the entire estate of our stores in England, Wales, Northern Ireland, Scotland and the Isle of Man.

For foods prepared in-store and sold loose, allergen information is displayed on the shelf edge ticket for the product with notices for customers to ask store colleagues if necessary, who have access to the full ingredients list of the product on our internal system. A list of all loose bakery items and the allergens they contain is also available on our [Co-op website](#).

## Section 6.0: Accessibility

We use several methods to ensure the accessibility of healthy products for our customers.

### 6.1 Range

We focus on developing ranges that meet all customer needs, particularly through well balanced nutritious foods and the availability of fresh fruit and vegetables, meat and dairy.

More widely we offer tasty healthy products that are easy to purchase for our convenience customers. More can be found about our product ranges in Section 3 which are constantly developing to meet future needs as customer expectations evolve.

### 6.2 Price

Price may be a barrier for some customers to choose a healthy nutritious lifestyle. That is why at the Co-op we are proud that our own brand healthier choices (i.e. 'light' or 'reduced' alternatives) are no more expensive than the standard products. This applies across all our stores and Co-op online delivery.

We report on our compliance with this commitment in our annual [Sustainability Report](#), published each April. At the end of 2020, we found one product which was not compliant, our Low Fat Chicken Tikka Masala ready meal. The weight of the product is slightly lower than the standard which helps to manage the calorie content but means the price per kg is above the standard equivalent product.

#### Commitment

100% of our own brand healthier choices are no more expensive than their standard equivalent product (based on price per kg).

# Health and Wellbeing at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



We have increased the value of the Government's Healthy Start vouchers by £1 (£3.10 to £4.10) in Co-op stores in England, Wales and NI. The scheme provides pregnant mothers and families with children under the age of four who are eligible for certain benefits a weekly voucher that can be spent on milk, fresh, frozen, and tinned fruit and vegetables, fresh, dried, and tinned pulses, and infant formula milk. This commitment has been part of our work as a founding member of Marcus Rashford MBE's Child Poverty Task Force, which aims to ensure that all children have access to healthy and nutritious food.

## 6.3 Placement

Our aim is to ensure that healthy options are available to customers and that they are clearly visible in store. In our larger convenience stores the layout ensures that fresh produce is the first section customers find when they enter the store.

In July 2020, the Department of Health and Social care published Tackling Obesity: empowering adults and children to live healthier lives. This has laid out plans to restrict the placement and promotion of HFSS (high fat, sugar, salt) foods and drinks. We will incorporate any legal requirements into our policies as applicable.

## 6.4 Sweets at checkout

In June 2016, Co-op banned the sale of sweets and chocolate confectionery from checkout stands in all our stores in the UK. Co-op implements this ban through store plans, which are provided for our in-store colleagues, and these include a plan for the checkouts, detailing what is to be merchandised there.

Checkouts are expected to be within scope of the legislation to restrict the placement of HFSS products.

### Commitment

**Ban the sale of sweets and chocolate confectionery from checkouts in all stores in the UK**

## 6.5 Promotions

In July 2020, the Department of Health and Social care published Tackling Obesity: empowering adults and children to live healthier lives. This has laid out plans to restrict the placement and promotion of HFSS foods and drinks. We will incorporate any legal

requirements into our policies as applicable. We will use the OFCOM nutrient profiling model (2004-2005) to determine if our Co-op products and branded products are HFSS when the legislation is enforced.

We know our customers are looking to increase their intake of fruit and vegetables, and we have a promotional strategy to help them do so. This proposition is called Fresh 3. This promotion makes our fruit and vegetables more affordable for customers: reducing the price of 3 fresh products over a 3 week period, in all stores where space allows (around two-thirds of our c. 2500 stores). We promote the offer on our Co-op website and on our social media channels. Where possible, we will add links to Co-op recipes that use the products on promotion to inspire customers on how to use them.

## Section 7.0: Inspiration and marketing

Marketing and advertising help us to inform our customers about our business, our products and our Co-op difference.

To ensure we market and advertise in a responsible way, we comply with industry guidance such as the CAP code, BCAP code, Portman Code and the advertising controls put in place on the Transport for London network. These include:

- Broadcast TV
- Digital Display
- Paid Social
- Online Video
- Out of Home advertising (OOH)

### 7.1 Co-op marketing to children policy

Co-op do not market to children (under 16 years of age) and we don't promote our products in any junior/early teen publications.

- Co-op do not give free samples or promote HFSS products specifically aimed at children
- Co-op do not allow own label equity (cartoon type) characters to be developed as a product or on artwork with the exception of seasonal products (Easter, Halloween, Christmas only) and fruit & veg products. This includes any designs that could be interpreted as being aimed at children, for example, images of dinosaurs or unicorns.
- Co-op do not advertise HFSS products in specific children's titles or adjacent to children's pages in newspapers.
- Co-op do not give free samples or promote by demonstration in stores, any high fat, sugar and salt products aimed specifically at children

- Co-op do not advertise HFSS products on TV during children's television hours
- Co-op banned the sale of sweets and chocolate confectionery from on checkout stands in all stores in the UK.
- Co-op do not advertise HFSS food and drink products across all on-broadcast media (including print, cinema and online/social media) targeted at under 16's
- Co-op banned the sale of high caffeine soft drinks to under 16's.

In July 2020, the Government published their [Tackling obesity: empowering adults and children to live healthier lives](#) policy paper. This set out their plans to tackle obesity with measures including banning the advertising of HFSS products being shown on TV and online before 9pm, and holding a short consultation on introducing a total HFSS advertising restriction online by the end of 2022. The Government plan to use the OFCOM nutrient profiling model to determine HFSS products. Co-op will incorporate any new legislation into our policies where applicable. We will use the OFCOM nutrient profiling model to determine if our Co-op products and branded products are HFSS when the legislation is enforced.

## 7.2 How Co-op define 'healthy' products

Co-op use the Food Standard Agency's OFCOM nutrient profiling 2004-2005 model to determine which food and drink products (both Co-op products and branded products) are classed as non-high fat, sugar or salt i.e. healthy. We use the model without any adaptations across all own brand and branded food and drinks when:

- We use the term 'healthy' on recipes, POS, digital, own brand adverts & advertorials, TV.
- We advertise products during children's television programmes

The OFCOM model applies equally to all food and drink; there are no exemptions or category-specific criteria.

## 7.3 Inspiring through content

We inspire our customers to choose healthy products and live healthier lifestyles through a variety of channels.

- We provide information on nutrition and healthy lifestyles on our [website](#) to support our customers in understanding how to achieve a healthy, balanced diet.



# Health and Wellbeing at the Co-op

## A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



- To help customers choose healthier recipes, Co-op include traffic light nutrition information on recipes on our website, magazine, digital media and recipe cards in store.
- We apply nutrition claims and 5 a day claims to recipes in the Co-op Food magazine and on our website to make it easier for customers to spot the healthier recipes. We add 5 a day claims to social media recipes where applicable.
- Co-op Food magazine provides inspiration and product news for customers and members. We aim that on average 50% of recipes in the Co-op Food magazine will contain no red traffic lights and 50% of the recipes will carry a 5 a day claim.
- Social media is a huge opportunity for the Co-op to share our products and activities in relation to health and wellbeing. Our customers are increasingly active on these platforms and engage widely, meaning that we see these platforms as a crucial channel in engaging future generations and raising the profile of our health and wellbeing offering. We reach across various channels such as blog, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and YouTube.
- The focus of our instore communication and point of sale communications (POS) is to help customers navigate our stores and make their shopping trip easy. Our own brand range has a number of healthy options available and we supplement this at key times with POS to make these more prominent and visible to our customers for example in our healthier choices campaigns which we have ran in January for the past number of years. In addition, we use our instore radio and till screens to provide nudges on healthier choices at key times.



Example of Healthier Choices campaign in Jan 2021

## Section 8.0: Healthy Partnerships

We work with a number of partners to promote and encourage healthier diets.

### 8.1 Peas Please

The UK Government recommends consumption of at least five portions of fruit and veg each day, but only 31% of adults and 8% of teenagers are actually achieving 5 portions, with the average intake for adults at 4.2 portions and for teenagers at 2.7 portions each day (National Diet and Nutrition Survey, 2018).

In October 2017, we signed up to the Peas Please campaign founded by the Food Foundation. We committed to increasing the amount of vegetables in our products and also to inspire customers to eat more veg through our communication channels. See section 4.4 for our commitments.

Co-op has increased the presence of veg in our Co-op communications through several methods.

- We aim that on average 50% of recipes in the Co-op Food magazine will carry a 5 a day claim. In 2020, we had an average of 44% of recipes in the Co-op Food magazine carrying a 5 a day claim. The impact of Covid-19 meant we couldn't publish as many magazines as usual over the year and we had less flexibility on the recipes we could use.
- Posting monthly seasonal fruit & veg features on our social media which link through to recipes.
- Adding 5 a day claims to recipes on our website and social media where applicable.
- Promoting our Fresh 3 offer on our social media channels.

### 8.2 Veg Power

We co-funded and supported the Veg Power 'Eat them to Defeat them' campaign in early 2019, supported by ITV. This campaign aimed to inspire children to start eating more vegetables. Some Co-op activity included:

- A joint TV advert with other food retailers on ITV
- Sainsbury's and Co-op taking part in a co-ordinated Twitter battle against the veg. Working together we called on our audiences to share photos of them eating veg and to commit to eat more veg so we could take back control of our Twitter accounts
- Working with Co-op Academies where we captured content of children taking part in sessions at school learning more about vegetables. We used this content to create a blog post and video.

In 2020, we supported the campaign again on our social media channels. We also part funded interactive kids' magazines which went to schools in lower demographic areas to encourage the eating of more veg. Our Member Pioneer network also shared the activity books in their local communities.

Co-op has become a founding member and will be supporting Veg Power again in 2021. The Veg Power school packs will be made available to all our 13 Co-op primary academies and our 2 Co-op Special academies.

## 8.3 Change4life

Change4life is the marketing programme set up by Public Health England to provide parents with the information to make simple changes to have a healthier lifestyle for their families.

We have been partnered with Change4Life since its creation in 2009 and have supported a number of the campaigns in-store via till screens and instore radio as well as on our Co-op website and in the Co-op food magazine.

## 8.4 DrinkAware

We have been working in partnership with The Drinkaware Trust since 2007 to promote responsible drinking. More information on this can be found in Section 12.1.

## Section 9.0: Healthy behaviours

As a responsible retailer we are always looking for ways to help customers make healthier choices. As per our Future of Food commitment 'we will inspire healthy, sustainable behaviour in communities through behaviour change trials with partners', we have implemented behaviour change trials to switch customers to healthier choices.

### 9.1 Consumer Goods Forum trial

The Consumer Goods Forum (CGF) is an organisation that helps retailers and manufacturers to collaborate and drive positive change and efficiency. While Co-op is not a member of the CGF, we decided to join their Collaboration for Healthier Lives UK programme to play our role as a responsible, collaborative retailer.



In summer 2019, we worked with 22 of our London stores in Lambeth & Southwark, and the Consumer Goods Forum, to run a behaviour change trial to reduce sales of sugary soft drinks and encourage sugar free choices. We created point of sale (POS) materials with our Marketing team which we used around the soft drinks fixtures (chilled and ambient) with the aim of encouraging customers to make sugar free choices.

Co-op's intervention aimed to switch sales of sugary drinks into sugar-free drinks, by highlighting ambient and chilled sugar-free drinks using POS, but unfortunately the [evaluation](#) showed there was no impact. While this was disappointing, the trial adds to the body of knowledge around education and labelling in terms of behaviour change.

## 9.2 Co-op behavioural trials

We are committed to playing our part in nudging customer behaviour to choose healthier options. In early 2020 we were scoping two behaviour change trials, which unfortunately had to be paused in light of the impact of Covid-19 on our stores. this is an important area for us which we will continue to explore through 2021.

## Section 10.0: Lifestyles

Our partnership with parkrun has gone from strength to strength over the past few years. We love encouraging healthy living and healthy eating within our communities and with our colleagues. That's why our partnership with parkrun is so important to us – a community that encourages everyone to get up and go no matter your fitness level. With parkruns traditional free, weekly, timed, 5k events across the country suspended due to the coronavirus pandemic, we've been encouraging people to stay active with (not)parkrun – a run, walk or jog of any 5k route, any day and any time, alone or with those in your bubble which you can submit to your parkrun profile.



## Section 11.0: Access to food

We want to build stronger and more resilient communities by offering fairer access to food for everyone, and Co-op has taken great strides to play its part in tackling food poverty over the past year.

- As part of our work as a founding member of the Child Food Poverty Task Force, led by campaigner Marcus Rashford MBE, we've topped up the value of the government's Healthy Start vouchers by adding £1 to every voucher spent, to help families have access to more healthy and nutritious food.
- Co-op was the first major food retailer to support footballer Marcus Rashford's campaign for free school meals vouchers and provided an additional 6,000 children with free school meal vouchers within our own Co-op Academy schools.
- In 2020, we donated £1.5 million of Co-op stock to food distribution charity FareShare.

## Section 12.0: Responsible Retailing

As a responsible retailer we have a role to play to make sure that the products that we sell and promote do not have a negative impact on our communities. Some detail of the responsible practices we undertake are detailed below.

## 12.1 Alcohol and Drinkaware Trust

Co-op knows it has a duty to sell alcohol and products containing alcohol responsibly; we share widespread concerns on the impact of alcohol misuse on public health. Back in 1996 we led the way by putting sensible drinking advice on our own-brand wines and spirits, in addition to the alcohol units already on the label.

We have been working in partnership with The Drinkaware Trust since 2007 to promote responsible drinking. The Drinkaware Trust is an independent UK-wide alcohol education charity. More recent activity over the past few years includes articles in the Co-op food magazine, events for colleagues and content being added to the colleague app 'Lifeworks'.

We give our store colleagues the right training and provide our customers, colleagues and members with the information they need to make informed choices.

- Since 2007, all our own brand alcoholic drinks have displayed the 'Drinkaware' web address, clear unit content, NHS alcohol consumption guidelines and warnings to pregnant women.
- The Co-op has operated and promoted 'Challenge 25' in all its stores since 2009, in order to reduce the likelihood of underage customers attempting to purchase alcohol in our stores.
- In 2017 we started amending our labelling on alcohol products with the revised Chief Medical Officer's recommendation of no more than 14 units a week.
- Any marketing materials including reference to or an image of alcohol will carry the wording 'drinkaware.co.uk for the facts. Please drink responsibly'.

## 12.2 Tobacco

The health impacts of smoking are well documented. We sell e-cigarettes and smoking cessation products in most of our stores to help support those who are trying to give up smoking.

## 12.3 Energy Drinks

In January 2018, the Co-op introduced a voluntary age restriction on sales of high caffeine soft drinks (soft drinks which have a caffeine content in excess of 15mg/100ml). We will not sell such products to any customer who cannot prove that they are aged 16 or over.





For our in-store colleagues a policy on selling age-restricted products is in place and colleagues must follow the instructions for Challenge 25 on the tills for a specified list of high caffeine soft drinks.

More information on our age restricted items can be found [here](#).

## Section 13.0: Engagement

Working collaboratively across the industry and with our supply base is central to our co-operative way of working, and as such we sit on several nutrition working groups, including:

- British Retail Consortium <https://brc.org.uk/>
- IGD <https://www.igd.com/>
- Campden BRI <https://www.campdenbri.co.uk/>

We work in partnership with organisations such as:

- Change4Life <https://www.nhs.uk/change4life>
- Drinkaware <https://www.drinkaware.co.uk/>
- Food Foundation <https://foodfoundation.org.uk/>
- British Nutrition Foundation <https://www.nutrition.org.uk/>
- Consumer Goods Forum <https://www.theconsumergoodsforum.com/>

Additionally we have important relationships with [Public Health England](#) and [ShareAction](#), as well as NGOs such as [Action on Salt](#) and [Action on Sugar](#).

## Section 14: Co-op health and wellbeing reporting

We report on our progress on our targets and commitments within the Healthy Living section of the Co-operate [Report](#) on an annual basis.

In addition we share great information about our activities and customer facing information on our webpages which can be found [here](#).

Co-op's annual, interim and sustainability reports can be found [here](#).