



# Press Release

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## FAIR TRADING WITH SUPERMARKETS

Today the British Brands Group launches a range of new member services to promote fair dealing when trading with supermarkets. The services are designed to support suppliers of branded grocery products of all sizes, building a stronger environment for investment in brands leading to more choice, more innovation and better products for consumers.

Following Competition Commission concerns in 2008 over large grocery retailers passing excessive risks and unexpected costs to their suppliers, a Groceries Supply Code of Practice (GSCOP) was introduced in 2010 to encourage fair dealing, to be monitored and enforced by a Groceries Code Adjudicator. The GSCOP and the Adjudicator rely on suppliers to come forward with information but they may be inhibited to do so with important trading relationships at stake.

The new services launched today by the British Brands Group will help companies keep fully informed on the GSCOP, what it covers and new developments. It also allows companies to notify the Group of harmful unfair trading practices, allowing this information to be passed to the Adjudicator when relevant. This approach safeguards the identity of individual companies.

With membership, companies enjoy an advice line on whether or not a specific practice may be covered by the Code, an hour's legal advice, a one-day training session, a report on retailers' compliance with the Code and the ability to raise with the Adjudicator, on a collective basis, specific unfair trading practices. Membership fees are graded according to a company's UK sales turnover, ensuring they are affordable for companies of all sizes.

John Noble, Director of the British Brands Group, said, "For the GSCOP to be effective, suppliers need to be clear on what it covers and to be confident in providing information on how it is working in the marketplace. This is particularly true for smaller and medium-sized companies. Membership of the Group fulfils these functions, helping to create a fairer trading environment that encourages companies to invest in the quality and innovation of their brands. That is good for consumers."

The new services are outlined in a [brochure](#) published today and described on the British Brands Group's [website](#).

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## NOTES TO EDITORS

1. The Competition Commission's investigation into the grocery market in 2008 found that the transfer of excessive risk and unexpected costs by grocery retailers to their suppliers, if unchecked, would have an adverse effect on investment and innovation and ultimately on consumers (see paragraph 3, [Final Report](#)). Its remedy was a revised code of practice monitored and enforced by an adjudicator.
2. The Groceries Supply Code of Practice (GSCOP) came into force in February 2010. It covers grocery retailers with a turnover over £1bn – Aldi, Asda, The Co-operative, Iceland, Lidl, M&S, Morrisons, J Sainsbury, Tesco and Waitrose.
3. A Bill to appoint a Groceries Code Adjudicator (the [GCA Bill](#)) has completed its passage of the House of Lords and House of Commons and is due for Royal Assent this Spring. [Christine Tacon](#) has been appointed as the Adjudicator.
4. The British Brands Group was founded in 1994 as a non-profit-making membership organisation with a mission to build in Britain the optimum climate for brands to deliver choice and value to consumers, through constant innovation and fair competition.

It speaks on behalf of brand manufacturers and seeks to deepen understanding of how brands benefit consumers, society and the economy through the provision of choice, value for money and innovation. It also speaks out on regulatory issues that influence the ability of brands to deliver value and to be a positive force in society.

The British Brands Group is part of a global network of similar brand associations and is the UK representative of AIM, the European Brands Association, based in Brussels.

For more information and further background briefings on this subject please visit the British Brands Group website: [www.britishbrandsgroup.org.uk](http://www.britishbrandsgroup.org.uk).

### **For more information, please contact:**

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