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SUSTAINABILITY > FOOD & HOUSEHOLD SUPPLIER MANAGEMENT



SUPPLIER MANAGEMENT

Find out more about our approach to supplier management



We live in an increasingly globalised society. Many of the products we enjoy in everyday life have been sourced and produced in locations from all over the world. All companies depend on economically strong and stable communities to trade successfully. This is just as true for the communities we buy from as the communities we sell to. Retailers are increasingly scrutinised on the strength of their relationships with suppliers and their local communities as well as efforts to continually improve working conditions and promote fair trading practices.

As one of the most trusted brands on the high street, we believe our role is to reassure our customers and key stakeholders that we are a fair partner. Being a fair partner covers the prices we pay to suppliers and producers of raw materials as well as the support we provide to communities where we trade. It also includes our responsibilities to ensure good working conditions throughout our supply chains and to source our products with integrity.

Commitments and targets

We're only as strong as the communities in which we trade. We're committed to paying a fair price to suppliers, supporting local communities and making sure everyone working in our supply chains enjoys good working conditions.

Approach

We are a food specialist, not a supermarket. Our products are made exclusively for M&S and this unique position means they are not comparable with the rest of the market. However, we don't own any farms or factories or make the products that are sold in our stores. Our reputation for quality, innovation and sustainability is built on excellent long term relationships with our suppliers.

Our food supply chain is very complex. We directly contract with around 400 suppliers who produce our products at over 800 sites located in 44 countries – 90% of which are in Europe. Raw materials and commodities are sourced from more than 70 countries. We estimate that our suppliers source raw materials from around 30,000 farms. At the same time, the nature of our portfolio means that production volumes are not always constant, especially within agriculture, where large variations – both predictable and unpredictable – are driven by seasonality and variations in customer demand. We also renew around 30% of our product ranges each year.

We've published an interactive map which shows where our M&S food and household products are made. The map highlights production countries as well as individual factory locations and profiles for sites used by our direct suppliers. [Visit the interactive map here](#).

We will not compromise on quality and maintain a competitive stance on price. We only source from suppliers who meet our standards or who have given a commitment to achieve our standards within an agreed timescale.

Against this backdrop, our priority is to develop a supply base which is fit for the future, aligned, utilised and efficient, which drives innovative products, profitability and allows everyone to reinvest. We have embarked on a number of projects to restructure our supply base aimed at improving our efficiency and our margins without compromising product quality. We've also reinvested this money in price and quality, and shared it with suppliers to help them create further efficiencies.

We comply with the [UK Groceries Supply Code of Practice \(GSCOP\)](#), dealing with our suppliers fairly and lawfully. We also support the work of the [Gangmasters Licensing Authority](#) to remove worker exploitation from the food supply chain and have signed up to its Supplier Retail Protocol.

As a business we are committed to respecting human rights and we support the goals of the [UK's Modern Slavery Act](#) and have a zero tolerance approach to forced labour of any kind within our operations and supply chain. [Find out more about our approach to respecting human rights](#).

Our [Technical Terms of Trade](#) set out our minimum technical requirements for suppliers in order to meet our commitment to customers to deliver products that are safe, legal and high quality and which have been produced with integrity.

Our [Technical Terms of Trade](#) are supported by specific policies (e.g. [Packaging](#), [Pesticides](#), [Non-GM](#), [Nanotechnology](#), and so on), Codes of Practice (which set out our requirements in detail for a particular topic) and Guidelines (which are advisory in nature). Our suppliers can access these through Connect – our online Quality Management System – and should be read alongside our Terms of Trade. Our technical requirements are expected to be fully understood at a senior management level and communicated to all staff involved in producing our products.

All suppliers are required to commit to supporting the [delivery of Plan A – our sustainability programme](#). This includes progressively introducing [Plan A product attributes into finished products](#).

We also routinely carry out audits of suppliers to ensure that our expectations on food safety and integrity are being met. All suppliers must agree to be audited on a specified frequency by M&S or its approved third parties against brand values, policy statements, Codes of Practice and Guidelines, and commit to taking action as a result of any findings.

Our approach to supplier management focuses on:

Ensuring that our suppliers have effective management systems in place

EFFECTIVE AND COMPREHENSIVE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS	▼
STAFF COMPETENCIES AND AWARENESS	▼
RESPONSIBLE EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES	▼
CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT	▼

Establishing positive relationships with our suppliers

SUPPLIER COLLABORATION PROGRAMME	▼
GROCERIES SUPPLY CODE OF PRACTICE	▼
FAIR PRICES AND PAYMENT	▼
WORKING TOWARDS A FAIR LIVING WAGE	▼
MEASURING SUPPLIER SATISFACTION	▼

Checking that our food safety and integrity standards are met

FOOD SAFETY AND INTEGRITY AUDITS	▼
SELECT FARM AND SELECT GROWER AUDITS	▼
ETHICAL AUDITS	▼
AGENT AUDITS	▼
PACKAGING	▼

Building capability within our supply chain

SUPPLIER TRAINING AND SUPPORT	▼
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Working with others

Listening, learning, responding and working in partnership is an important part of how we do business.

We're working with a large number of organisations to support our supplier management activities. We were founding members of the [Supplier Ethical Data Exchange \(Sedex\)](#), which aims to drive improvements and convergence in responsible sourcing practices. Operationally we're supported by a number of organisations including the [Cangmasters Licensing Authority](#), the [Groceries Code Adjudicator](#), FSIC, [SAI Global](#), and [BRC Global Standards](#), to name but a few.

We support a number of programmes that help improve working conditions in our supply base, in partnership with organisations such as [Emerging Leaders](#) and [Fairtrade Foundation](#).

Throughout this website, we explain how they, and our many other partners, are helping us address specific issues of relevance to supplier management.

Key documents

 Food Technical Terms of Trade SEPTEMBER 2015

 Non-GM Foods Policy OCTOBER 2015

 Foods Pesticides Policy JULY 2016

 Foods Nanotechnology Policy JULY 2016

 Packaging Policy JULY 2014

 M&S Global Sourcing Principles AUGUST 2018

 Ethical Trading Code of Practice JULY 2016

 M&S Child Labour Procedure NOVEMBER 2016

 Global Community Programme Report JUNE 2015



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