

## Rebuilding the food industry, renewing the food system Industry launches plan for Covid recovery

Panic buying, empty shelves, the fear of food shortages. Within days of the Covid lockdown, the UK food system faced its biggest challenge since 1945 – to keep the nation fed.

The next challenge is for our food system to recover from this crisis and take forward the lessons learned from the past four months.

Today, the Food and Drink Sector Council launches its Covid-19 Recovery Plan, outlining six key areas that will be central to restart all sector of the food industry, protect food industry employees and serve the changing needs of the public.

This will take:

1. A phased, coordinated and flexible restart plan
2. The extension and tapering of industry support schemes
3. A united effort to support the industry's worst-hit sectors
4. Protecting the health of food industry employees and ensuring reliable availability of labour
5. Protecting the UK's supply chain integrity and competitive position
6. And accelerating plans to increase UK exports

Terry Jones, industry co-chair of the FDSC and Director General of the NFU, said: "The Covid-19 crisis has demonstrated the strength of the UK food chain, and it has shown just how well industry and government can work together. However, it has also laid bare the fragility of our food system and reminded us all of its importance. "Despite the challenges, everyone came together to ensure food supplies were maintained, shelves stacked and our most vulnerable people protected. This report clearly outlines what needs to be done to ensure the entire sector can restart successfully and build a greener, healthier food system for all."

Ian Wright, industry co-chair of the FDSC and Chief Executive of the FDF, said: "Throughout the pandemic, the hidden heroes operating across the farm-to-fork supply chain have kept the country fed in the most difficult of circumstances. Collaboration has been a key theme during this time, and we must take our shared learnings forward as we look to support all parts of the supply chain with their recovery. The FDSC's recovery report is a clear and comprehensive plan that ensures we can do just that, while helping to build a sustainable food system for the future."

Gavin Darby, former CEO of Premier Foods and industry lead on the FDSC Covid-19 Recovery Group said "it is widely acknowledged that the food industry responded to the crisis quickly and effectively. These Sector Council recommendations maintain the momentum."

**ENDS**

### **Notes for editors:**

1. The Food and Drink Federation (FDF) is the voice of the food and drink manufacturing industry – the UK's largest manufacturing sector. For more information about FDF and the industry we represent visit: [www.fdf.org.uk](http://www.fdf.org.uk). For more information on the release and FDF please contact [Tanya Barringer](mailto:Tanya.Barringer@fdf.org.uk).

2. For statistics on the food and drink industry please visit:  
<https://www.fdf.org.uk/statsataglance.aspx>
3. The Food and Drink Sector Council (FDSC) is a formal industry- led partnership with Government to increase the productivity and sustainability of the UK food and drink sector. For more information about the FDSC please visit:  
<http://www.fdsc.org.uk/fdsc/>. For more information on the release and FDSC please contact [info@fdsc.org.uk](mailto:info@fdsc.org.uk).
4. The National Farmers' Union (NFU) represents British Farming. For more information about the NFU please visit: <https://www.nfuonline.com/>. For more information on the release and NFU please contact the NFU Press Office on 02476 858686.