



PRESS RELEASE

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GROCERY CODE ADJUDICATOR – WILL IT BE MONTHS, YEARS OR NEVER?

On April 5th a significant number of MPs from all parties contributed to a Westminster Hall debate on the setting up of the post of Groceries Code Adjudicator (GCA, otherwise known as the Groceries Ombudsman). MPs from all parties pointed out the impact that supermarket monopoly buying policies are having on farmers' incomes, particularly in the dairy industry. They highlighted the fact that although the Competition Commission had called for this role to be set up two years ago, progress on actually doing so is woefully lacking. This is clearly an issue that enjoys extensive cross-party support amongst MPs.

Ken Parsons, Chief Executive of the RSA, commented, "Those of us who have worked for multiple retailers know the speed at which the industry works, with new ideas often implemented in days rather than weeks. We do understand that the political system does not work at this pace, but we would have expected to see some progress in months rather than years.

We understand that there is currently no timetable for when the legislation to set up the GCA role will be introduced. This is unacceptable. We call upon the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills to give a clear date for when this crucial Bill will be introduced to Parliament".

Notes for editors:

The Rural Shops Alliance (RSA) is the national voice for about 7,500 rural retailers. We campaign on their behalf and also help these shops to become more competitive with practical advice and support, to the benefit of thousands of rural communities. Many 'blue chip' suppliers and county councils sponsor and partner the work of the RSA. Our direct contact with rural shops and with these organisations means that we keep in close touch with emerging issues and concerns in our fast changing business sector.

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