

Supply chain fairness: Groceries Code Adjudicator to move to Defra

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GCA sponsorship to move from DBT to Defra on 1 July 2026 to support a more joined-up approach to food supply chain fairness

To strengthen fairness across the UK's food supply chain and better support farmers and food producers, responsibility for the Groceries Code Adjudicator (GCA) will transfer from the Department for Business and Trade (DBT) to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) from 1 July 2026.

Moving GCA sponsorship under Defra aligns the regulator's work with the department's wider role.

The change also implements a key recommendation from Baroness Minette Batters' landmark Farming Profitability Review to streamline oversight of the grocery supply chain and strengthens links to the Agricultural Supply Chain Adjudicator (ASCA).

Farming Minister Dame Angela Eagle said:

We are backing our farmers by creating a level playing right across the supply chain to ensure productive and profitable businesses can flourish.

Moving responsibility for the Groceries Code Adjudicator to Defra will support a more joined-up approach to fairness across the food supply chain, while fully protecting its independence and statutory role.

Groceries Code Adjudicator Mark White said:

I am looking forward to working more closely with Defra to continue to ensure fair treatment of direct suppliers to the designated retailers.

The GCA regulates the relationship between the UK's largest grocery retailers and their direct suppliers by encouraging, monitoring and enforcing compliance with the Groceries Supply Code of Practice.

Its transfer builds on wider action taken by government to ensure supply chains in the food sector are fair and transparent, including already introducing Fair Dealing rules for dairy and pigs.

The GCA will remain fully independent. There will be no changes to its statutory role or enforcement powers, and the Groceries Supply Code of Practice will continue to be owned by the Competition and Markets Authority.

The transfer forms part of the government's commitment to smarter, more joined-up regulation. Further detail on implementation will be set out by the July transfer date.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/supply-chain-fairness-groceries-code-adjudicator-to-move-to-defra>