From the Chairman of the Committee

Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
Secretary of State for Environment Food and Rural Affairs
Nobel House
17 Smith Square
London SW1P 3JR

11 January 2018

Groceries Code Adjudicator

My Committee has recently been contacted by the Groceries Code Action Network. This organisation has written to us to highlight potential reforms to the work of the Groceries Code Adjudicator (GCA).

These reforms are aimed at creating a fairer trading environment for farmers and small food enterprises by extending the remit of the Adjudicator to cover the whole food supply chain, including indirect suppliers. We are happy to endorse both of the main suggestions in that letter, namely:

- That the Government publish its response to the consultation, *Groceries Code Adjudicator: extending its remit*, which closed in January 2017. We see no acceptable reason why publication of the Government response to this consultation has taken over 12 months. We request that you take all practicable steps to ensure that a full Government response to the consultation is published as soon as possible, and no later than the start of the parliamentary recess in February.

- That the remit of the Groceries Code Adjudicator be extended to include indirect suppliers and so cover the whole food supply chain. This appears to us to be an eminently sensible suggestion and is one with which we agree in principle. I would be grateful if, in receipt of this letter, you provide us with a written submission setting out the Government’s policy position on the extension of the GCA’s remit to include indirect suppliers and share with us copies of any impact assessments (or similar) undertaken on that proposal. Upon receipt of that submission we will
consider any future actions, including whether to take oral evidence on this matter.

I will be publishing this correspondence, along with your response, on my Committee's website. I would be grateful for a response by 29 January to allow consideration of this matter by my Committee before the February parliamentary recess.

I am writing in similar terms to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

Neil Parish MP  
Chairman of the Committee