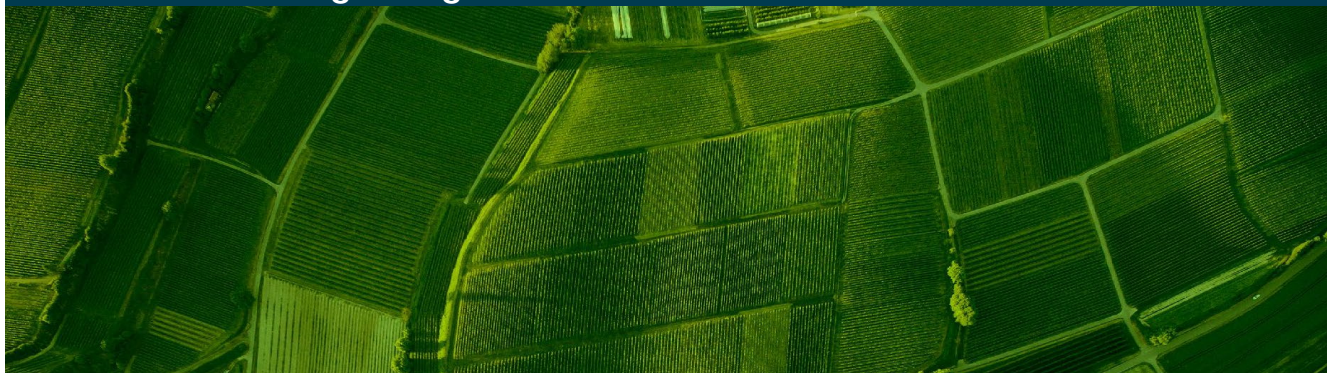


Practice Abstract No 4

The Co-op's British Farming Groups: boosting the economies of communities across the UK while ensuring the highest standards of animal welfare



Description	Author(s)
<p>The Co-op Group committed to support British farmers by sourcing 100% of the fresh meat in the UK. To this end, in 2011 the consumer co-operative retailer established the Farming Groups, consisting of partnership agreements with 400 producers of meat, poultry, eggs, salmon, and dairy.</p> <p>The general objectives are to contribute to the UK economy and employment, as well as to meet consumers' expectations in terms of supply of British food, increasing trust in the food safety and sustainability standards.</p> <p>More specifically, the establishment of Farming Groups aims to guarantee high animal welfare standards (e.g. Red Tractor, RSPCA Assured schemes) and veterinary practices focused on a 'Reduce, Replace, Refine' framework for the responsible use of antimicrobials. In a Co-op Farming Group, farmers commit to the Co-op's production policies covering sustainability, seasonality, animal welfare & antibiotics. Farms are also encouraged to incorporate the '5 Farming Pillars' into their practices, which are assessed every year by an independent auditing body, with farmers being awarded Bronze, Silver or Gold. In exchange, the Co-op offers long-term supplier contracts and commits to sourcing 100% British for certain products, thus guaranteeing a stable market for the farmers.</p> <p>The Co-op also developed the Farming Pioneers programme which takes groups of young farmers (aged 21 - 35) through a free 30-month training. The aim is to help develop their business and personal skills to better equip them for future demands.</p>	<p>Giulia Tarsitano <i>European Community of Consumer Co-operatives (Eurocoop)</i></p> <hr/> <p>Stakeholders</p> <p>Agri-Food Practitioner, Consumer</p> <hr/> <p>Country/Region</p> <p>UK</p> <hr/> <p>Keywords</p> <p>Cooperation, local, regional</p>



This type of 'partnership approach' based on cooperation, education, risk, and knowledge sharing is crucial for supporting farmers implementing innovative changes, thus contributing to a transition towards sustainable food systems.

Additional Information (context, links, etc.)

https://assets.ctfassets.net/bffxiku554r1/r1vSKLIA0odx8pbopA1pR/6a177aedc1208b42640af6edda1fa8c4/Farming_Pillars.pdf (Farming Pillars)
<https://www.eurocoop.coop/>

About CO-FRESH

The CO-FRESH project aims to provide techniques, tools and insights on how to make agri-food value chains more environmentally sustainable, socio-economically balanced and economically competitive. The project pilots several agri-food value chain innovations to see how they, in combination, can improve environmental and socio-economic sustainability.

Visit us!



<https://co-fresh.eu/>



[COFRESH-H2020](#)



[CO-FRESH](#)

CO-FRESH Partners



Disclaimer

This practice abstract reflects only the author's view. The CO-FRESH project is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains.



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 101000852.