

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release



NEW WHOLESALE BUYING GROUP TO SHAKE UP SECTOR

To support and champion independent wholesalers and the customers they serve, a brand new buying group has been created

Described as ‘the buying group for the future’ by its leadership team, **The Wholesale Group** will officially launch on 1 January 2025 as the home of the independent wholesaler.

The Wholesale Group has been created to provide extensive retail and foodservice support for independent wholesalers as they navigate the changing dynamics of the wholesale landscape.

Led by four stalwarts of the wholesale channel, each with a wealth of experience in the sector, The Wholesale Group has pledged to be a buying group with a difference. The group will be led by joint managing directors Tom Gittins and Jess Douglas with Martin Williams and Coral Rose as co-chairs. The Wholesale Group will bring together the members of Confex and Fairway Foodservice to create the new group.

“Put simply, this is the buying group that the sector needs,” said Tom Gittins.

“The Wholesale Group will be the only UK buying group to offer an extensive retail and foodservice range and expertise, alongside logistics efficiency via central distribution. It has an award-winning foodservice own brand supported by bespoke, coordinated member marketing and retail member support. And there are no membership fees and every member receives a share of the profits. We are delighted to launch The Wholesale Group as we know it is the solution for the independent wholesaler.”

Jess Douglas agrees: “The sector has changed dramatically and it is crucial that we do things differently to accommodate these changes for both our members and suppliers, and The Wholesale Group will lead the way. Driven by data and technology and with a crystal-clear focus on service, it will be the largest delivered buying group, the largest foodservice buying group and the second largest retail buying group in the UK.”

The benefits brought by the group will be felt across the entire supply chain.

“For our supplier partners, The Wholesale Group provides an efficient and powerful route to market through enhanced scale and capability,” said Coral Rose.

“For our members, it is clear that Confex and Fairway have long held similar cultures and ethos, focussed on celebrating and championing family businesses with members at the heart of everything we do. By coming together, we retain this member-centric approach but are even stronger, while building for the future.”

The Wholesale Group in numbers:

Represents more than 12% of UK wholesale

£4.47bn annual turnover

253 depots across the UK

Serving more than 349,000 customers

Existing members of Confex and Fairway Foodservice will become members of The Wholesale Group on 1 January 2025.

“While the foundations of The Wholesale Group are built upon years of expertise and specialist knowledge of the sector, this is a buying group created for the future,” said Martin Williams.

“This is the solution for the independent wholesaler. It will provide something no other group can, and this will enable us to become the genuine home of independent wholesalers. We look forward to an incredibly exciting future.”

(ends)

NOTES TO EDITORS:

We respectfully ask that all questions are directed to Stephenie Shaw at The Bright Media Agency on 07947 924085 or stephenie@thebrightmediaagency.com. Please do not send these to Tom Gittins, Jess Douglas, Martin Williams or Coral Rose or the Confex or Fairway Foodservice groups directly.