

Lesley Griffiths AS/MS  
Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd, Ynni a Materion Gwledig  
Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-963  
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/01207/20

Janet Finch-Saunders MS  
Chair of the Petitions Committee

Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

26 May 2020

Dear Janet

Thank you for your letter of 7 May, regarding the petition seeking that supermarkets are required to donate excess food to charity.

The current Covid-19 pandemic has seen the food supply system come under intense pressure, and the Welsh Government recognises there are people in Wales who are particularly vulnerable, facing financial difficulty and needing urgent support.

Welsh Government has engaged with two major Welsh food bank stakeholders – Trussell Trust and Fareshare. These organisations have embedded experience of providing food supplies to the food bank network across Wales.

We have sought to understand the current situation for all food banks across Wales, including those which come under the Trussell Trust umbrella (approximately 50% of Food Banks across Wales) and the independent food banks run by third sector organisations, such as charities and churches. We have also been in discussion with the WLGA, WCVA and Local Authorities across Wales, to assess the situation regarding food supplies to food banks at this point in time.

To date during the crisis, UK food banks have been assured donations of £10m from Morrison's and £15m from Tesco to be delivered through the Trussell Trust and Fareshare. The Co-op has also donated £1.5m and Asda donated £5m to food banks through the Trussell Trust and Fareshare. At a local level individual stores are regularly donating surplus stock to local food redistribution schemes.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Trussell Trust Wales has confirmed to the Welsh Government they do not require financial support from the Welsh Government at this time. Their network of food banks across Wales currently have food supplies to meet demand and volunteers to work in the food banks during the crisis.

Reducing food waste remains a priority for the Welsh Government, and we continue to work with the food supply chain to ensure waste is minimised and surplus stock redistributed as necessary.

The voluntary actions being undertaken by the industry to address the issue, especially during the current pandemic, are to be commended. We will monitor the returns made from the food supply chain via the voluntary Courtauld initiative to see if there is potential for even more surplus food to be redistributed instead of being wasted. Should more action be necessary, we should have the option to mandate surplus food redistribution under powers being sought for Welsh Ministers under the UK Environment Bill.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lesley Griffiths". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

**Lesley Griffiths AS/MS**

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