

# The FDF and UK trade unions: working together to feed the nation



The Food and Drink Federation (FDF), GMB, Unite, Usdaw and BFAWU have joined together for the first time to commend the efforts of all those working in food and drink manufacturing who are doing so much to keep the nation fed and to maintain the UK's food security.

In a joint statement, the FDF and the unions highlight the critical importance of working together at this exceptionally demanding time to ensure our workforce is safe, protected and respected. As the UK's



largest manufacturing sector, food and drink employs 430,000 people in every part of the country.

**“** The current crisis has shown just how essential GMB members are in the food and drink supply chain, ensuring food gets from farm to fork.

**Eamon O'Hearn, GMB National Officer**

The statement highlights the good practice underway in many workplaces, including social distancing and hygiene standards, and support for the workforce. By continuing to work constructively together, our factories can continue to produce the food and drink we need to feed the people of the United Kingdom.

**Eamon O'Hearn, GMB National Officer GMB, said:**

“The current crisis has shown just how essential GMB members are in the food and drink supply chain, ensuring food gets from farm to fork.

“GMB hopes this crisis can be the catalyst for further joint working to raise standards across the entire industry, so that essential workers in both the public and private sector are recognised for the contribution they make to our communities.”

**Ian Wright CBE, FDF Chief Executive, said:**

“If you can't feed a country, you don't have a country. Workers in food and drink are the hidden heroes, making everyday sacrifices so fellow citizens can access the food and drink they want and need. Partnership between employers and unions has been crucial to continuing production over the last eight weeks. Our member companies will go on supporting their workers through the difficult weeks to come. We look forward to working closely with our trade union colleagues to do so.”

**Joe Clarke, Unite National Officer for food, drink and agriculture, said:**

“Unite the Union are proud of the cooperative approach that has been established with trade unions working jointly with FDF to ensure the health and safety and good practice within the sector to support our food workers in feeding the nation. Hopefully the foundations that have been formed will stand us in good stead in the future when we come out the other end of this national crisis.”

**David Gill, Usdaw National Officer, said:**



“Usdaw are pleased the FDF continue to engage with unions, share best financial practices and ensure the health and safety of Usdaw members

working in the food and drink manufacturing sector. The health, safety and wellbeing of these key workers feeding our nation is of paramount importance to Usdaw and the FDF during this unprecedented time.”

**Sarah Woolley, BFAWU General Secretary, said:**

“We welcome the opportunity at the BFAWU to work together with the FDF and other trade unions across our sector to ensure that our members remain safe and healthy and their workplaces survive the economic impact of COVID 19.”

*[Read the joint statement in full here](#)*

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