

PRESS RELEASE

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OMSCo optimistic about direction of trade negotiations

The Organic Milk Suppliers Cooperative (OMSCo), the largest UK organic dairy co-operative and the second largest dedicated organic milk pool in the world, is 'optimistic' about the direction of trade negotiations following comments made by Michael Gove at the Royal Welsh Show last week.

OMSCo's chairman, Nicholas Saphir, made the remark following a statement from the Secretary of State, in which he indicated that a free trade deal with Europe is in everyone's interests.

"A comprehensive free trade deal with Europe is vital for UK agriculture, particularly the livestock and dairy industry," says Nicholas. "However, it must not be at the expense of global opportunities that would flow from ensuring market access for UK products in other markets."

As agriculture is increasingly made to look to the market for its returns, Nicholas stresses that the UK industry must address the fact that our agricultural exports in many sectors lag behind those of the main competitors overseas.

"There is no fundamental reason as to why that should be the case," he adds. "UK farmers are as innovative as any in producing high-quality farm produce to meet growing global markets.

"However, innovation and added-value, rather than commodity, markets must be the way forward."

Not only does OMSCo supply the majority of the UK's organic dairy processing needs, but they are now the leading exporter of organic dairy products such as cheese, powders, whey and specialist infant formula ingredients, made to a number of global organic certification standards.

"It is no accident that in eight years OMSCo has developed the only European organic cheese that meets USDA organic equivalence standards, as well as supplying organic dairy ingredients to the fast-growing infant formula market in Asia.

“As we focus on Brexit and maintaining relationships and trade agreements in Europe, let us not forget the fast-growing global opportunities and the need to ensure that they remain open through recognition of standards and hard won existing ‘equivalence’ agreements.”

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Notes to editors:

About OMSCo

The Organic Milk Suppliers Co-operative (OMSCo) was formed in 1994 by a group of dairy farmers with a shared belief that there was a ‘better way to farm’. Now, nearly twenty-five years old, the passion and belief of those original members has inspired others; OMSCo has transformed its member base, customer base and market reach.

It is now the largest UK organic dairy co-operative and the second largest dedicated organic milk pool in the world. It is the longest established organic dairy co-operative in the UK, with an annual turnover of £100m and remains the only national 100% organic farmer-owned and farmer-run British dairy co-operative in the UK with 270 members.

OMSCo supplies the majority of the UK’s organic dairy processing needs and is the leading dairy exporter of organic raw milk, bulk ingredients, specialist ingredients and consumer products. OMSCo has also established itself as the only UK supplier of organic whey.

To spread risk OMSCo has created diverse and geographical spread markets, and as part of this strategy they were the first European dairy company under the EU-US Equivalency Agreement, to sell USDA certified organic dairy products in the US.

Effective trading partnerships are a cornerstone of OMSCo’s growth strategy and in 2013 OMSCo partnered with US organic giant Organic Valley, the world’s largest dedicated organic milk pool and \$1bn brand at retail, to drive its US export business. In 2015 OMSCo and Organic Valley agreed a mutual financial stake in each other’s co-operatives, cementing a long-term alliance.

In 2017 OMSCo announced a second global strategic supply alliance with Europe’s third largest dedicated milk pool, Eko Holland.

A new joint venture with Somerset based cheddar maker Wyke Farms was also announced in 2017, operating under a joint business identity, The British Organic Dairy Company, the



collaboration combines organic dairy excellence from OMSCo, with award winning standards from the most sustainable cheese maker in the world.

Read more about OMSCo here: <http://www.omSCO.co.uk/> and follow us on Twitter for our latest updates: <https://twitter.com/omSCO>