



Stronger regulation will improve supplier relations

Your article 'Debenhams requests pre-Christmas discount from its suppliers' highlights the competitive imbalance which exists today between the UK's major high street retailers on the one hand, and our manufacturing and importing businesses on the other.

This imbalance has been recognised in the grocery market, where supermarket/supplier practices are now successfully being regulated by the Grocery Suppliers Code of Practice (GSCOP) and monitored by the Groceries Code Adjudicator.

However, if the UK manufacturing and import sector is to be properly supported by the Government, it must

extend this protection beyond the grocery market so that buyers with significant market power, such as Debenhams, are subject to the same or similar regulation as our supermarkets.

If the Government is genuinely behind UK manufacturing and innovation, it needs to replicate the growing regulatory success of GSCOP in the grocery market, and apply it to the governance of the full retail supply chain.

If it fails to do so, our nation's importers and manufacturers will only suffer.

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