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**13th November 2023**

Isobel Archer  
Senior Researcher, Labour & Migrant Worker Rights  
Business & Human Rights Resource Centre  
The Foundry, 17 Oval Way  
London  
SE11 5RR

Dear Isobel,

Thank you for your email, inviting our response to comments made within the recent report by the House of Lords' Horticultural Sector Committee.

At Tesco, we take our commitment to supporting suppliers seriously and work closely with the British growers working hard to supply our customers with the freshest produce.

We recognise the role we play through our purchasing practices, and as per our current [Modern Slavery Statement](#), this year we are reviewing our purchasing practices to ensure they support sustainable livelihoods. We are already taking steps to safeguard against unintended consequences. For example, as part of ACT on Living Wage, we are piloting protecting labour costs in some product categories from being impacted by price negotiations. Additionally, expectations around fair pay are included in supplier requirements/assessments for ranges at higher risks of wage pressures.

Whilst we recognise our responsibility to upholding high standards of purchasing practices with our many trusted suppliers, we welcome the committee's call for greater support for the sector. In particular, we would draw attention to the ongoing struggle faced by British growers in providing solutions to labour shortages, especially through the Seasonal Workers Scheme. Tesco is working closely with our suppliers and the industry to address these challenges but understand greater support is needed from the government to provide longer-term solutions. We are calling on the government to ensure the following:

- 1. Recruit from fewer, less risky source countries**
  - a. Closer to single digits than the >50 countries of last season
- 2. Zero worker-paid fees and costs as a contractual requirement – guarantees from licensed scheme operators**
  - a. Government and industry support must enable and enforce this

- b. This will result in higher costs that will need to be shared across the supply chain
- 3. Clarify & enforce accountability for worker welfare**
  - a. Through every step of worker engagement within the scheme
  - b. Include governance and remediation when issues are identified

Yours sincerely,

Eric Anderson

**Head of Human Rights – Food & Procurement**