



Scottish  
Wholesale  
ASSOCIATION

# CHAMPIONING SCOTLAND'S FOOD AND DRINK WHOLESALE

Delivering Growth  
Powering Resilience  
Enabling Change



# Championing Scotland's Food & Drink Wholesalers:

## Delivering Growth, Powering Resilience, Enabling Change.

Scotland's wholesale sector is a critical backbone of the nation's food and drink supply chain and a driver of economic growth. As the gateway between producers and the businesses and public services that feed Scotland, wholesalers ensure that Scottish products reach over 5,000 independent convenience stores and 30,000 catering, hospitality, tourism, and public-sector establishments.

With around 90% of Scottish wholesalers being SME, family-run businesses, the sector is large in scale yet often under-recognised. Worth approximately £3.3 billion and employing over 6,500 people, Scotland's wholesale channel is outperforming counterparts in England and Wales, demonstrating strong growth potential and competitive strength.

## Our Goal

To be the driving force behind a well-connected, skilled, and sustainable wholesale food and drink supply chain - supporting a sector equipped to modernise, grow, and deliver for businesses and communities across Scotland.

## Our Ask

The Scottish Wholesale Association calls on political parties to support a fair, resilient, and future-focused wholesale sector through targeted investment, skills development, and policies that unlock growth and create opportunity.



# SUPPLY

## Strengthening Scotland's Food and Drink Supply Chain

### Asks

- Formally recognise wholesalers as part of Scotland's critical food infrastructure within national food security, resilience, and circular economy strategies.
- Invest in transport links, digital connectivity, and logistics hubs to improve distribution efficiency and reduce emissions, with specific consideration for rural and island communities.
- Establish a Scottish Wholesale Modernisation Fund offering matched grants or low-interest loans for investment in:
  - energy-efficient, low-carbon fleets, facilities, and refrigeration
  - digital management systems and automated/advanced warehousing
  - cold-chain and logistics enhancements to support resilient, high-quality distribution
  - sector-wide data and analytics capabilities to identify trends, risks, and opportunities

### Why it matters

Formal recognition of wholesalers as part of Scotland's critical food infrastructure ensures the sector is fully integrated into national food security, resilience, and circular economy planning. This strengthens Scotland's ability to anticipate and respond to supply chain shocks, maintain continuity of supply for public services, and plan effectively for future risks.

A modern, digitally connected wholesale sector, supported by targeted investment and infrastructure improvements, further enhances Scotland's resilience, ensures reliable access to food and drink across all communities, and accelerates the transition to net zero. Together, recognition and modernisation create a stronger, more secure, and future-ready supply chain for Scotland.



# SUSTAIN

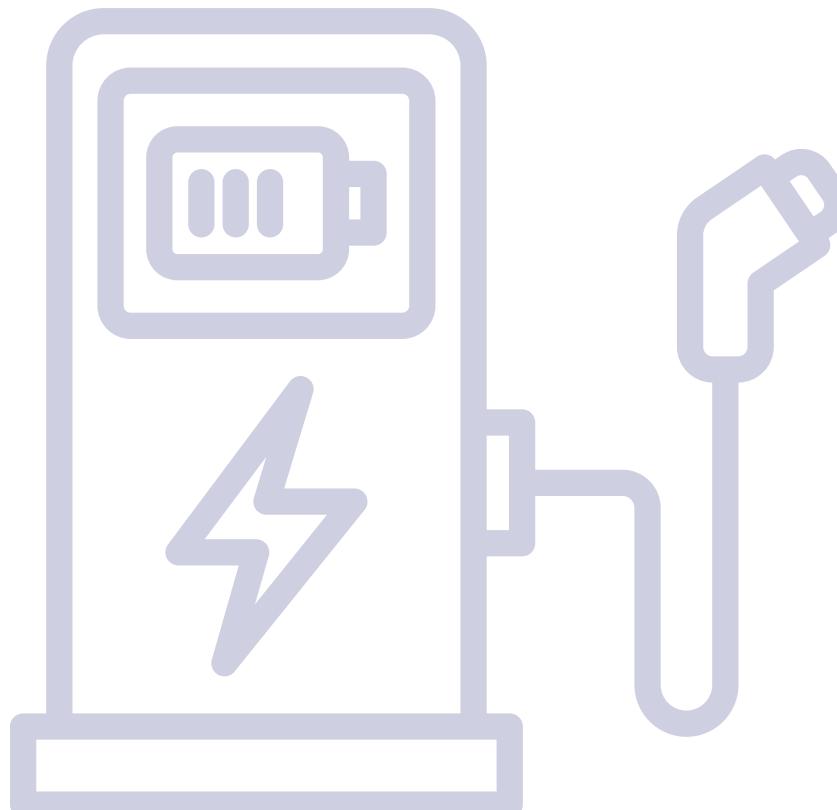
## Building a Skilled, Sustainable, and Resilient Industry

### Asks

- Expand apprenticeships, upskilling, and leadership programmes aligned with Scotland's digital, logistics, and green skills priorities.
- Provide funding for SWA to develop tailored training and upskilling tools covering digital transformation, logistics, sustainability, and leadership.
- Introduce targeted incentives, business rates relief, or funding to support wholesalers of all sizes in investing in fleet decarbonisation, energy efficiency, and new technologies.
- Ensure fair access to growth capital through government-backed programmes or sector-specific finance mechanisms.

### Why it matters

Investing in people and sustainable operations builds a skilled local workforce, tackles recruitment challenges, boosts productivity, supports net-zero ambitions, and helps wholesalers modernise and stay competitive.



# SUPPORT

Supporting Growth,  
Market Access, and a Fair  
Operating Environment

## Asks

- Reform public procurement to maximise the use of Scotland's wholesale networks for local, healthy, and sustainable sourcing - supporting Good Food Nation ambitions and strengthening regional economies.
- Continue co-funding programmes such as Delivering Growth Through Wholesale, linking local producers with wholesalers to scale supply, reach new markets, increase exports and support regional and island economies.
- Establish a Wholesale Industry Advisory Group within government to ensure wholesalers have a consistent policy voice alongside producers, retailers, and hospitality.
- Commit to fair, proportionate regulation that balances public health and environmental aims with commercial viability.

## Why it matters

Supporting wholesalers strengthens local producers, drives economic growth, builds resilience, embeds sustainability, and ensures policy and regulation are fair, evidence-based, and commercially viable. Efficient wholesale distribution is essential, not only to ensure strong local supply chains, but to the competitiveness of Scotland's food and drink exports, helping maintain the quality, reliability and global reach of iconic Scottish products.

For more information and support, contact us at

**[info@scottishwholesale.co.uk](mailto:info@scottishwholesale.co.uk)**

**[scottishwholesale.co.uk](http://scottishwholesale.co.uk)**

**0131 556 8753**



# Scotland's Wholesaler Journey

## Supply • Sustain • Support

