

Britain's favourite fresh produce magazine since 1895



By Michael Barker

Thursday 4th March 2021, 16:21 GMT

Nationwide delivers 7,500t of food to the vulnerable



Comment: Scott Hollins, director at Nationwide Produce, describes how the supplier has leant its support - and its facilities - to FareShare

FareShare is the UK's national network of charitable food redistributors. They take good-quality surplus food from right across the industry and get it to almost 11,000 frontline charities and community groups, and every week FareShare provides enough food to create almost a million meals for the vulnerable.

We have supplied FareShare with surplus stock from our Evesham depots for some time and have been happy to support them. They approached us at the end of last year as they were looking for a National Distribution Centre (NDC) for a £16 million Defra-funded project to feed the most vulnerable in England, and we were keen to help.

The project was timed to start in early December and run through to the end of March. They needed a chilled warehouse with excellent distribution links, and our Evesham business fits that model

perfectly. We have two depots in Evesham, West Midlands and had some spare capacity due to the drop in demand from the hospitality sector caused by the pandemic.

With some operational alterations we were able to turn over a large percentage of one of the sites to FareShare. So we took on all their storage, picking, loading and transport for the whole project and because it's FareShare and we want to help as much as possible, we have supported this project financially with regards to the rates we charge them as well.

It has settled down into a steady pattern of about 800-1,000 pallets a week, which is significantly more than was originally discussed. But, testament to the team involved in this project from front to back in Evesham, we have delivered week in/week out for FareShare and all the charities they support.

Full range of goods

Around 80 per cent of the volume is dry goods – anything from tomato soup to tea bags. The remaining 20 per cent is chilled – cooked meats, cheese, dairy and, of course, fresh produce, of which we are one of the main suppliers. We are delivering to around 50 FareShare depots and third-party organisations all over the country from Barnsley to Bodmin and Plymouth to Preston.

FareShare expects us to deliver 7,559 tonnes of food to the vulnerable in England by the end of the project. Some 4,000 charities have received food so far from this project.

Christie Garratt of FareShare comments: "Nationwide Produce are managing the central distribution of the food. Full loads are moved into the NDC, they are mixed and consolidated, before being moved out to the Regional Centres

in full loads. They are processing around 900 pallets a week and are managing some of the in-bound transport, the internal warehouse ops (receipting, storing, picking, loading etc) and the outbound transport. All of the above is at a significantly reduced rate vs commercial partners”.

The project comes to an

end at the end of next month, just in time for the gradual opening up of the UK hospitality industry. We enjoy working with FareShare and we will, of course, continue to supply and support them however we can long after this project is over.

Enjoyed this free article from Fresh Produce Journal

and its team of editors? Don't miss out on even more in-depth analysis, plus all the latest news from the fresh produce business. Subscribe now to [Fresh Produce Journal](#).