Local, Seasonal Produce & Procurement Policy

Fresh Connection Ltd (company no. 05805560), trading as The Vaults & Garden, No. 2 King Edward Street, Oxford OX1 4HS

Approved by: William Pouget, Managing Director

Last reviewed: June 2026. Next review: June 2027.

1. Purpose

This policy explains how we buy our food and drink. We aim to use local and seasonal produce wherever we can, to build long-term, direct relationships with producers who share our values, and to avoid food waste.

2. Who this policy covers

This policy applies to all our sites and activities: MRB/Glasshouse (Manor Road Building), Vaults & Garden Café, Salsas del Sol, Alpha Bar, our Stanley Road production kitchen, and event catering. It applies to everyone who plans menus, orders or buys food and drink for us.

3. Seasonal food

To help us feature seasonal vegetables and fruit on our menus, our kitchen team uses a seasonal food chart that shows what is coming into and going out of season.

Our serving staff use it too, so they can tell customers which produce is currently in season and how it features on our menu.

4. Local farms and market gardens

Since 2003, we have had a unique relationship with Worton Kitchen Garden Farm. Each week, we take their surplus vegetables after their farm shop and café have finished trading. This supports their business and avoids waste.

Worton is a smallholding 5 miles from Oxford. It combines a permaculture horticulture system with an orchard, cut flowers, foraging chickens and ducks, and honey bees, and it has attracted national and international interest.

We have similar relationships with several other local farms:

- Laggots Farm (Hinton Wildrist);
- Sandy Lane Organics (Tiddington);
- North Aston Organics;
- Medley Manor (Binsey);
- Rectory Farm (Stanton St. John).

We also buy surplus vegetables from local market gardens, including David Blake market garden.

5. Dairy

Our ice cream and cheeses come from the Ethical Dairy, an organic “cow-calf” dairy that is pioneering the highest standards of animal welfare. Its dairy cows stay with their suckling calves for up to six months while they are being milked. This is a bold and radical approach to sustainable and humane dairy farming.

6. Coffee

Our shade-grown coffee is uniquely sourced from a certified organic agroforestry farming system in Colombia. It keeps much of the natural forest structure and biodiversity, particularly for bird, insect and soil

fauna populations. The coffee is bought directly by the Missing Bean, an Oxford micro-roastery, and roasted each week to supply our cafés.

In 2008, William Pouget visited the farm to learn about its integrated growing practices, which produce subsistence food and improve food security for the growers and workers. After this visit, we made a long-term commitment to buy our coffee for the Vaults & Garden Café from the Missing Bean, to strengthen our direct trading relationship.

7. Supplier stories

We would like to feature “supplier stories” about the uniquely inspiring and pioneering work of some of our suppliers. These stories are an important way to communicate our ethos and concept, and would be promoted at the point of sale, on social media and in press releases.

8. Choosing suppliers

When we choose and review suppliers, we consider:

- the quality and freshness of their produce;
- whether the produce is local and in season;
- food safety, and accurate allergen and ingredient information (see our Health and Safety Policy);
- traceability, so we know where our food comes from;
- fair treatment of their workers, in line with our Human and Labour Rights Policy;
- animal welfare and care for the environment;
- reliability and value for money.

9. Reducing food waste and packaging

- We buy surplus vegetables from local farms and market gardens, as set out in section 4.
- We order realistic quantities and plan our menus around what is in season and available.
- We plan to sell leftover food towards the end of service at below cost price to avoid waste. Any food we sell must still be safe and correctly labelled for allergens.
- We ask suppliers to keep packaging to a minimum, and choose reusable or recyclable packaging where we can.

10. Monitoring

We keep in regular contact with our suppliers and check the quality, safety and seasonality of what we buy. Any problem with a supplier is raised with them straight away.

11. Who is responsible for what

- William Pouget, Managing Director, approves this policy and has overall responsibility for it.
- Natacha Cirou, Operations Manager, runs the policy day to day.
- The kitchen team uses the seasonal food chart when planning menus and ordering.
- Serving staff tell customers about seasonal produce and our suppliers.

12. Review

We review this policy every year, or sooner if our suppliers or ways of working change.

This policy was last reviewed in June 2026. The next review is due in June 2027.

Version control and approval

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Day-to-day policy owner	Natacha Cirou, Operations Manager