



**For immediate release**

**24th June 2008**

**CCLA backs TV chef's shareholder resolution calling for improvements in Tesco's poultry welfare standards**

CCLA, the specialist charity, church and local authority investment company, has today announced that it will vote in support of TV chef Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall's shareholder resolution at Tesco's forthcoming AGM on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> June to significantly raise poultry welfare standards.

Through a well-publicised broadcast and press campaign, Fearnley-Whittingstall, has raised serious questions about Tesco's commitment to ensuring that all of its poultry products meet the Farm Animal Welfare Council's (FAWC) 'Five Freedoms'.

These five measures ensure that broiler chickens experience a good quality of life, free from pain and suffering, in a suitably stimulating environment that encourages natural poultry behaviour. Although adopting the FAWC's 'Five Freedoms' as their animal welfare policy, there is evidence to suggest that Tesco is, in fact, falling short of its own policy.

In addition to the resolution, Fearnley-Whittingstall calls on Tesco to commit itself to:

- the increased level of demand for higher welfare poultry by positively promoting free range chicken

- Offering an RSPCA endorsed Freedom Food option by upgrading their Willow Farm range to this standard
- Introducing a phased upgrade resulting in the Freedom Food range becoming its minimum welfare standard

Says CCLA Chief Executive, Michael Quicke : “As an ethical investment company specialising in managing investments for churches, charities and local authorities, we strongly believe that it is our responsibility on behalf of our clients to engage in debate with companies, such as Tesco, where questions have been raised over their ethical standards, in this instance relating to poultry welfare.”

Says Neville White, CCLA SRI Manager: “The campaign lead by Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall has opened up an important debate that will be of concern to our charity clients. Having given the resolution careful consideration, we believe that it is important that poultry welfare standards are raised by Tesco, particularly in light of evidence that indicates that it may be falling short of its own animal welfare policy.

He continues: “We believe that the resolution itself is measured, reasonable and appropriate. As an ethical, rather than an economic, resolution, we do not believe that this will be financially detrimental to shareholder interests. It is our view that it is "business as usual" and we will continue to engage constructively with Tesco (and others) on promoting and meeting the highest standards of animal welfare provision.”

**Ends**

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**Notes to editors:**

1. CCLA ([www.ccla.co.uk](http://www.ccla.co.uk)) is an independent investment management company owned by its charity, faith group and local authority clients. This puts it in a unique position to help charities achieve their aspirations and enable trustees to meet their obligations. Established in 1958, the company is the largest charity fund manager in the UK
2. The Five Freedoms set out by the FAWC are:
  - Freedom from hunger and thirst
  - Freedom from discomfort
  - Freedom from pain, injury or disease
  - Freedom to express normal behaviour
  - Freedom from fear and distress
3. RSPCA uses the Freedom Foods logo on products where it can be assured that the animal has been reared on farms meeting the high standards for animal welfare set out by the RSPCA