



## **Guild of Fine Food calls for a food and drink ombudsman to oversee and protect the nation's food culture**

In the wake of the Competition Commission's (CC) disappointing final report into the grocery market, Guild of Fine Food national director Bob Farrand is calling on the Government to appoint a food and drink supremo to protect our food culture from the power of the giant supermarkets.

Farrand said: "It is clear from the report that the CC is merely concerned with those elements of competition in the grocery sector that impact adversely on consumers. It appears disinterested in the impact the supermarkets have on British farming, food miles and the loss of our indigenous food varieties.

"The Commission has ignored the reasons why this country has, over the last 15 years, lost half its dairy farmers and most regional apple orchards and, more recently, seen pig farmers shutting up shop by the hundred."

While supermarkets may provide consumers with what they want, and mostly at a cheaper price, Farrand said few, if any, supermarket buyers are concerned with the medium to long term damage their harsh pricing regimes and stringent quality control regulations have on our food industry. "Supermarkets are in business to produce enormous annual profits, not to think long-term," he said.

"We need an independent food ombudsman capable of taking a broader, independent view on what is in the longer term interest of food and farming. With rapidly increasing grain and other raw material prices and a switch in emphasis towards farming for bio-fuels, any additional pressure on farmers and food producers to artificially hold down prices for the benefit of short term, profit motivated supermarkets could well have a devastating impact over the next ten years.

"In the final analysis, consumer interests are best served by ensuring we have a sustainable food production infrastructure for the coming generations."

-END-

**The Guild of Fine Food promotes excellence in speciality food and drink through its magazines, training programmes, awards, exhibitions and other food events.**

For more information on the Guild of Fine Food, or to arrange an interview with Bob Farrand:  
Contact [gemma@completemediagroup.co.uk](mailto:gemma@completemediagroup.co.uk) or [sarahl@completemediagroup.co.uk](mailto:sarahl@completemediagroup.co.uk)  
Tel: 020 7420 3550