**What is the CCS Buying Better Food agreement?**

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| This will be an agreement managed with a single access point, using a Tier 1 supplier as an umbrella to simplify the customer journey. The agreement covers all public sector customers and all food and drink sub-categories, and offers opportunities for single suppliers, a consortium or a Special Procurement Vehicle (SPV) style approach to meet the requirements will be welcomed.  Key principles we are working towards for the commercial agreement are:   * Free at the point of use for public sector customers * Customers will be able to access and purchase via a digital platform * Next day delivery capability * Fast and simple invoicing and payment process * Local / regional supply and distribution networks across the country |

**Why has CCS changed its approach? What happened to the Future Food Framework?**

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| Our revised approach replaces the previous three stage procurement process initially planned by CCS. The RM6227 (Technology and Management Agent - Food Supply and Delivery Platform), RM6228 (Logistics Processors with associated Consolidation Hub functionality) and RM6131 (Food Dynamic Purchasing System - DPS) previously made up the ‘Future Food Framework’.  Market engagement has prompted a move away from this initial procurement strategy. The critical factors behind this being:   * The delivery of a Customer First solution * Cost prohibitive start-up costs for platform solution * Ongoing customer costs for platform service delivery * Extended customer journey via the traditional DPS route   CCS have rebranded this solution Buying Better Food. This could be buying BETTER quality, safer, sustainable food that meets the Government Buying Standards; or BUYING better by offering customers the optimum route to market, at the right price. This includes supporting small local food producers in accessing public sector opportunities and delivering Carbon Net Zero goals. |

**Why has there been a delay?**

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| CCS had been asked to support the government’s response to the Covid-19 pandemic, with, amongst other things, Test Track and Trace activity. CCS projects had to be prioritised and resources allocated accordingly.  Additional resources have been allocated to the CCS Food Category and work has been continuing with supplier and customer engagement continuing on delivering the Food & Drink commercial solution. |

**When will I be able to join the CCS Food & Drink agreement?**

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| The current timelines (shared below) have CCS going to market with the Food & Drink solution in Q1 of the 2023 calendar year. The agreement will be awarded in Q2 of the 2023 calendar year. Following a mobilisation period, the agreement will ‘Go Live’ in Q2 of the 2023 calendar year.  CCS will ‘soft launch’ the Food & Drink agreement in one region before rolling out further. This region will be based on customer demand and supplier onboarding. |

**What assurances will I need to secure a place on the CCS Food & Drink agreement?**

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| CCS are working closely with Defra on the development of the Food & Drink agreement. Defra are currently reviewing the [Government Buying Standards for Food (GBSF)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sustainable-procurement-the-gbs-for-food-and-catering-services) and a refreshed version is now out for consultation in 2022. All suppliers will be expected to meet the standards (as a minimum) to secure a place on the offering. Food producers will indicate the assurance schemes they are members of, customers will be able to work with the Tier 1 supplier to ensure only suppliers meeting their requirements fulfil their orders. |

**How will I be paid?**

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| The Tier 1 supplier will manage the payment of its food producers and suppliers via the contract.  The Food & Drink agreement will meet the government prompt payment policy which is to pay 90% of undisputed and valid invoices from SMEs within 5 days and 100% of all undisputed and valid invoices to be paid within 30 days. |

**Is there a fee for being on the Food & Drink agreement?**

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| For the successful Supplier Yes.  CCS is a trading fund under the Cabinet Office. A levy charge of 0.25% will be in place for all customer orders placed under the Food & Drink agreement, and the Tier 1 supplier will pay this levy on a monthly basis to CCS.  The agreement is free for customers to use. |

**What do the timelines look like?**

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| CCS current timescales are as follows:  Issue Prior Information Notice (PIN) to Market – August 2021  Publish Find a Tender Contract Notice to Market – Q1 2023  Award Contract Q2 2023  ‘Go Live’ – Q2 2023 |

**How can I register an interest in the Food & Drink agreement?**

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| Via the CCS Food [mailbox](mailto:food@crowncommercial.gov.uk) providing the following information:  -Your Organisation name  - Contact name  -Contact email  -Contact telephone  A member of the CCS Food Category will add you to the list of interested suppliers and will engage with you at the appropriate time.  A pre recorded webinar is available on the CCS RM6279 webpage under the Supplier engagement heading. Please click on the link “watch our introduction to the food and drink commercial agreement webinar”. |

**What will the procurement process look like?**

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| CCS will issue a Contract Notice to the market via the [Find a Tender Service](https://www.find-tender.service.gov.uk/Search) during Q1 of 2023 containing links to the bid pack, which will include a selection questionnaire, award questions and pricing model requiring completion to be submitted as part of the tender process.  You can get more information on becoming a CCS supplier via the [CCS How To Sell Through CCS webpage](https://www.crowncommercial.gov.uk/buy-and-supply/how-to-sell-through-ccs/). |

**How much information do I need to provide? Are there any circumstances in which I would be excluded?**

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| All bidders for the Food & Drink agreement will be required to complete a Selection Questionnaire in line with [Procurement Policy Note (PPN) 08/16](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/procurement-policy-note-816-standard-selection-questionnaire-sq-template). This is a standard questionnaire that must be completed by all bidders. Page 16 onwards details the company information required.  There are circumstances when CCS will exclude bidders from the opportunity. This is detailed in the PPN note from page 20 onwards. |

**How can I improve my chances of winning a contract?**

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| Start by reviewing [Tips For Bidding on Government Contracts](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/doing-business-with-government-a-guide-for-smes#tips-for-smes-bidding-for-government-contracts) on the Gov.uk webpage. |

**How are contracts monitored?**

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| CCS will work collaboratively with the Tier 1 food and drink supplier to ensure performance is measured and monitored throughout the lifetime of the contract. This will include delivery against key performance indicators. |

**How does the government support local businesses and SMEs in accessing public sector opportunities?**

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| CCS and the Cabinet Office have developed support for SMEs in doing public sector business. The [Doing Business with Government: A guide for SMEs](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/doing-business-with-government-a-guide-for-smes#tips-for-smes-bidding-for-government-contracts) is a good starting point. |

**What does social value mean to me in terms of my tender submission?**

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| In line with [Procurement Policy Note 06/20](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/procurement-policy-note-0620-taking-account-of-social-value-in-the-award-of-central-government-contracts) CCS will evaluate Social Value as part of central government procurement.  CCS have not finalised the Social Value element of the procurement at this time. However, it is likely CCS will ask bidders to demonstrate what they are doing to support in some of the following areas:   * Covid 19 recovery * The tackling of economic inequality * Fighting of climate change * Equal opportunities * Wellbeing and community cohesion in their local community   Full detail will be shared with bidders when the Contract Notice is issued and CCS issue Invitation to Tender documentation. |

**How will I know how much a tender is worth?**

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| The RM6279 Food & Drink Find a Tender Service Contract Notice will provide an estimate of spend over the lifetime of the Contract.  Customers will provide details of their spend when they place an order under the agreement. |