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The Iceland Group reaches new milestone of 900 UK stores

The Iceland Group this week reached the new milestone of 900 UK stores, with the opening of the 53rd of its larger stores under The Food Warehouse fascia in South Bristol. The Group has grown its total UK estate by 100 stores in just over four years, creating more than 2,000 new jobs in the process.

The Food Warehouse has been expanding rapidly across the UK since the opening of its first store in September 2014, and has plans to accelerate its growth from the current opening rate of 25 new stores each year. Trading in units of 10-15,000 sq ft, more than twice the size of a typical Iceland high street store, The Food Warehouse offers the full Iceland range complemented by extended ranges of luxury and speciality frozen food, chilled meat and fresh produce, fine wines and craft beers, a wide selection of value bulk packs of grocery products, and selected bargain homeware lines.

Meanwhile the core Iceland estate of 847 UK stores has been benefiting from comprehensive refurbishments at the rate of one per week, bringing new fascias and frontages, digital signage, improved in-store navigation, and new checkouts that are quicker and easier to use for customers and staff alike. Customers are also benefiting from the introduction of new product ranges throughout the stores, from frozen and chilled food to fresh fruit and vegetables, food cupboard staples, and beers, wines and spirits. Three major extensions to existing Iceland stores are due to open before Christmas 2017 and sites for more completely new Iceland stores are being sought throughout the UK, with four already in the pipeline.

Iceland Founder & Executive Chairman Sir Malcolm Walker said: “On 18 November it will be exactly 47 years since I opened the first Iceland store in Oswestry – and back then nine stores looked a towering ambition, never mind 900. I am delighted that we have reached this new milestone as a distinctive British company with a unique culture, fantastic colleagues, and so many great products that you genuinely can’t find anywhere else.

“The Food Warehouse has grown to 53 stores from a standing start in just three years, and is winning many new customers for the Group. The success of our new concept refits in the Iceland estate is also extending our appeal and delivering sales uplifts that give us confidence in our ability to open more new Iceland stores within the UK. We have proven that Iceland and The Food Warehouse can trade successfully together in a growing number of towns and cities, and we look forward with confidence to the future development of both store formats.

“On top of all this we have the UK’s best online shopping service, as attested by our first place in the Which? annual supermarket survey for the last two years, our Online Supermarket of the Year award from The Grocer and Online Retailer of the Year award from the IGD.

“Our major investments of at least £750,000 in each new The Food Warehouse store and over £500,000 in each Iceland refurbishment underline our confidence in the future of our business, and I very much look forward to celebrating the opening of our 1,000th store around the time of Iceland’s 50th anniversary celebrations in 2020.”

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About the Iceland Group

The Group comprises Iceland Foods, Iceland Online, The Food Warehouse, Iceland Manufacturing and Iceland International.

Iceland Foods is recognised as the leader in frozen food with 847 Iceland stores across the UK. The company prides itself on being a convenient and friendly place to do the family’s weekly shop, as well as to meet everyone’s daily top-up shopping needs for fresh, chilled and frozen food and groceries. It offers a unique free home delivery service for in-store purchases of £20 or more.

Since 1970 Iceland has been proudly demonstrating to shoppers just how the Power of Frozen can deliver an extensive choice of high quality, great-tasting food from fine sources around the world at great value prices.

With the Power of Frozen at its heart, Iceland naturally generates low levels of food waste. The company is also known as a pioneer in removing artificial colours, flavours and non-essential preservatives from its own label products. It has ranked as one of the UK’s Best Big Companies to Work For in each of the last 11 years, and was number one in both 2012 and 2014.

Iceland Online is a fast-growing nationwide online shopping service that was named the UK’s best in the 2016 and 2017 Which? supermarket surveys, Online Supermarket of the Year in the Grocer Gold Awards 2017 and Online Retailer of the Year in the IGD Awards 2017.

The Food Warehouse is the Group’s chain of 53 larger UK stores, operating on retail parks with ample car parking, and carrying extended ranges of food and drinks, great value bulk packs and outstanding offers on general merchandise.

Iceland Manufacturing is dedicated to the production of meals under the Slimming World brand, sold exclusively through Iceland and The Food Warehouse stores.

Iceland International operates Iceland stores in the Republic of Ireland and Czech Republic, and exports Iceland’s own brand foods to more than 40 countries worldwide, including to a network of franchised stores in The Channel Islands, Spain, Portugal, Malta and Iceland (the country).