



# News Release

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## KERRY/HEADLAND CLEARANCE

The Competition Commission (CC) has formally cleared the completed acquisition of Headland Foods Limited's (Headland's) frozen ready meals business by Kerry Foods Limited (Kerry).

This confirms the [provisional findings which were published in October](#).

Before the merger in January 2011, Headland and Kerry were the two largest suppliers of frozen ready meals to UK retail customers such as supermarkets. The two companies overlapped in the supply of both retailer own-label frozen ready meals and contract-packed frozen ready meals, where the product is then sold under a third party brand name.

In its final report published today, the CC has concluded that several customers have successfully found alternative suppliers since the merger in response to proposed price rises from Kerry/Headland—and at prices similar to those they had been paying prior to switching. The CC has therefore concluded that the existing and potential alternatives offered by other suppliers will ensure that the merger does not lead to a substantial lessening of competition (SLC) and that customers are unlikely to suffer from significantly higher prices or reduced choice as a result of the acquisition.

### Notes for editors

1. The CC is an independent public body, which carries out investigations into mergers, markets and the regulated industries.
2. The members of the Kerry/Headland Inquiry Group were: Laura Carstensen (CC Deputy Chairman and Chairman of the Inquiry Group), Phil Evans, Jill Hill and Robin Mason.
3. The Office of Fair Trading (OFT) referred the case to the CC on 12 July.
4. The Enterprise Act 2002 empowers the OFT to refer to the CC completed or proposed mergers for investigation and report which create or enhance a 25 per cent share of supply in the UK (or a substantial part thereof) or where the UK turnover associated with the enterprise being acquired is over £70 million.

5. The CC has a 24-week period in which it is required to publish its report, which may be extended by no more than eight weeks if it considers that there are special reasons why the report cannot be published within that period.
6. Further information on this inquiry, including the terms of reference and other key documents, as well as on the CC and its procedures, including its policy on the provision of information and the disclosure of evidence, can be obtained from the CC website at: [www.competition-commission.org.uk](http://www.competition-commission.org.uk).
7. Enquiries should be directed to [Rory Taylor](#) or [Siobhan Allen](#) or by telephoning 020 7271 0242.