

**CSR, SMEs AND FOOD RETAILING:
THE ADVANTAGES OF BEING A LESSER GOD**

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ABSTRACT

Large supermarket chains can offer lower prices through economies of scale but their size can be a disadvantage when CSR issues become important because smaller retailers may be more connected to their local community. In an era when disillusionment with globalisation is rife and many consumers are aware of the importance of ethics in trading, Tesco and even the Co-op may be at a disadvantage compared to retailers such as Waitrose and Booths. In the UK, areas of poverty and of high ethnicity exist where people may eat unhealthily; this situation may call for CSR initiatives to improve diet, and so alleviate future dietary-related health costs. As the barriers to a healthy diet are often local in character, smaller food retailers are in the best position to implement meaningful initiatives here. Larger grocery retailers need to adopt a more localised company structure, and to co-operate with smaller companies in the food chain to adopt best CSR practices.

KEYWORDS : CSR, ethnicity, grocery, retailing, supermarkets