

A group of investors who had pressured Tesco to provide higher sales of healthy food got their wish this week as the UK retailer announced plans to improve nutritious options in its stores.

Tesco, which had committed to lifting sales of healthy products to 65% at UK stores, promised to carry the commitment to its Booker and Central European businesses, which led to Share Action's 100-plus investors effectively dropping a proposed resolution at its annual general meeting, according to a Financial Times report.

"Investors are increasingly recognizing the importance of people's health, including the role that supermarkets play in shaping our diets," Simon Rawson, Director of Corporate Engagement at ShareAction, said.

"Following our engagement over the past year, we warmly welcome Tesco's new commitments to support healthier diets. The Healthy Markets investor coalition is looking forward to continuing our engagement with Tesco, other retailers and with food manufacturers."

"The food industry has a unique opportunity to help us improve health and resilience in society as we begin to build back from the unprecedented impact of the COVID-19 pandemic."

Tesco says its UK and ROI health initiative will effort to boost sales of healthier foods - both own brand and branded - including "plant-based meat alternatives" compared to overall sales. That will include both larger format stores and convenience stores.

"We want to make it as easy as possible for customers to shop for healthier food," Sarah Bradbury, Tesco Group Quality Director, said.

"We've already set broad and ambitious commitments for our UK & ROI business, where we have the greatest scale and our work is most advanced."

"However, we also have stretching plans for the wider Tesco Group, and these new commitments will ensure that every customer - wherever and however they shop with us - will have even greater access to affordable, healthy and sustainable food."