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- England Captain and Coach excited about the summer challenges vs Sri Lanka and India ahead
- Waitrose unveils details around first year of cricket sponsorship including extensive community plans, in-store and in-ground promotion
- Waitrose drive towards content distribution continues with new hub waitrose.com/cricket

England captain, Alastair Cook, and newly appointed Head Coach, Peter Moores, today officially launched Waitrose sponsorship of the England Cricket Teams. Ahead of an exciting summer of cricket, the pair joined forces to outline their hopes and expectations for the forthcoming series against Sri Lanka and India. Waitrose, the new team sponsor, also unveiled further details about its planned cricket activity as it embarks on a three year sponsorship.

With the England team kicking off the international summer on May 9 with a Royal London One-day International against Scotland in Aberdeen, the England duo were invited to the Waitrose Cookery School to test their culinary skills by preparing a Sri Lanka themed lunch for the assembled media.

Cook was excited about the opportunities that lay ahead for his team and the support of a new sponsor. He said: "Everyone involved in the England set up is excited about this new era and looking forward to the international summer ahead. It's great to have Waitrose on board and I sincerely hope the partnership coincides with success on the field."

Peter Moores spoke specifically of the challenges faced by his side when they come up against the sub-continent teams over the coming months. He said: "It is a pleasure to welcome Waitrose as England's new Team Sponsor - and I am delighted to see that they intend their sponsorship to have a positive impact on the entire sport. The start of the international summer is just around the corner, and while it is pleasing to see England players and hopefuls performing well in the LV= County Championship - the hard work for us is about to begin against Sri Lanka and India. There is lots to do in the coming weeks, starting against Scotland in Aberdeen, but it is a challenge we are all relishing."

Rupert Ellwood, Waitrose Head of Marketing, outlined the brand's excitement at embarking on the sponsorship: "Cricket is an inherent part of our heritage and brings people from all ages and backgrounds together. Through our sponsorship we're looking forward to helping celebrate a shared love of food and sport with cricket fans this summer."

As part of its first year of association with the England and Wales Cricket Board, Waitrose provided further details of the sponsorship activity planned for this summer. This includes a commitment to developing the grassroots of the game and making a difference in local communities as well as extensive in-ground activation targeting existing and new customers of the retailer's loyalty scheme, myWaitrose. Waitrose will also be continuing its drive to provide inspirational content by launching a new hub for its sponsorship, www.waitrose.com/cricket, which launches today. At the heart of the content available on the site through the summer is a competition between 10 chefs from county cricket grounds around the UK, with further details due to be released later in May.

Commitment to community activity and grassroots

Waitrose has signalled its commitment to support local communities and grassroots activity through the cricket sponsorship with a number of initiatives:

ECB Club Open Days with Waitrose: supporting 1000 cricket clubs all over the country as they hold Open Days on international cricket weekends, with clubs throwing open their pavilion doors this summer to welcome guests from their community to play and watch cricket. Waitrose will be helping to provide food and drink as clubs host and fundraise from their Open Day, as well as signing clubs up to the myWaitrose scheme for ongoing rewards and benefits. Clubs will be able to register to hold an event from May 19 at www.ecb.co.uk/clubopendays

Partner Volunteering: Waitrose employees will be encouraged to spend some of their volunteering hours

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helping out at local cricket clubs or for other cricket related causes in the community, while being paid by the retailer.

Waitrose Charitable Donations: for every four or six scored across the entire international summer (England, England Women, England Lions, England Under-19s and all England disability teams), Waitrose will donate £100. The resultant funds will be paid in to the Waitrose Small Grants Scheme, which is managed by the England & Wales Cricket Trust (EWCT), and will be accessible to all clubs to apply for funding for their club facilities.

Asian Cricket Awards: Waitrose is sponsoring the Team of the Year Award as well as two Asian Cricket festivals this summer, furthering its support of grassroots cricket.

Extensive In-Ground activation across all England matches this summer

Waitrose plans to reward cricket fans and its customers at all England cricket matches this summer. A Waitrose activation unit will be installed at all matches, with the chance to sample Waitrose products, and benefit from exclusive offers and rewards.

Ends

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Please email waitrose@essentiallygroup.com

Please contact David Laundry (07795 616 930) or Alex Brown (07803 037 530)

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Notes to Editors

Waitrose starts its three year term as official Team Sponsor of England Cricket on May 1 2014. The high profile sponsorship covers all teams - including England men's and women's teams, England Lions, England Under-19s and all England disability teams.

Following launch on to ICC IT20 shirts, the Waitrose logo will feature on all England teams' playing and training wear from the Royal London ODI v Scotland on May 9 and the partnership includes prestigious home series against Sri Lanka and India (2014) and Australia (2015), the ICC World Cup in Australia and New Zealand (2015), the ICC T20 World Cup in India (2016), and the tour of South Africa (2016).

Waitrose, Britain's favourite food retailer*, has 317 shops in the UK and Channel Islands and has consistently achieved sales growth significantly ahead of the market**. Its strong performance has been driven by the success of the essential Waitrose range, Brand Price Match, the success of the myWaitrose card and free delivery for online shopping, as well as a long-term commitment to sourcing the UK's finest local and regional foods. Waitrose is dedicated to offering quality food that has been responsibly sourced combined with high standards of customer service.

* Favourite Food & Grocery Retailer at Verdict's annual Consumer Satisfaction Awards; Favourite Supermarket at Good Housekeeping Awards. ** Kantar Worldpanel

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