

M&S names former Tesco executive Freudmann as new food chief

A former Tesco executive who has spent more than a decade working for Australian grocery retailers is to become the new head of food at Marks & Spencer (M&S).

Britain's best-known retailer confirmed a Sky News report on Monday morning that Alex Freudmann, who worked in buying roles for Tesco until 2009, is to replace Stuart Machin, who was promoted earlier this year to become M&S's chief executive.

Mr Freudmann's appointment completes the leadership team at M&S under Mr Machin and his co-CEO, Katie Bickerstaffe.

In a stock exchange announcement confirming the move, M&S said Mr Freudmann would join in November and take a place on the company's executive committee.

He arrives from his role as managing director of Dan Murphy's, one of Australia's biggest beer, wine and spirits retailers.

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Prior to that, he held senior jobs at Coles, another Australian retail giant.

Mr Machin said the new head of food – which has been M&S's strongest-performing category for years – would bring “experience and passion”.

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“He has worked in food retailing for nearly two decades and in all of his roles he’s been a change-maker – bringing intellect, pace and energy,” Mr Machin added.

Mr Freudmann described M&S Food as “a unique and very special business with world-leading food values”.

“The team has done a great job of building a bigger, better food business through investing in trusted value and core categories while maintaining the outstanding quality and innovation the brand is famous for,” he said.

His appointment comes during a period of rampant food price inflation and supply chain disruption exacerbated by Russia's invasion of Ukraine.