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MEDIA RELEASE

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Ten-year-old's artwork advertises free fruit scheme in 100 local shops

Talented artist Olivia Loveday from Horncastle is set to see her artwork used to promote a free fruit scheme across all **100 Lincolnshire Co-op food stores**.

Lincolnshire Co-op's free fruit scheme allows children that are linked to an adult member's account to pick up either **a gala apple, banana, or orange** for free on each day during selected school holidays.

The youngster's design was selected out of over **300 entries** to the co-operative's recent drawing competition, which was open to children under 13, and is being used on all marketing materials for the campaign, expected to be seen by **hundreds of thousands of people**.

Instore, shoppers will see the design on posters, floor stickers, shelf markers, and more. It will be used digitally on email graphics and website images, as well as on the free fruit cards and letters that are sent out to the registered children.

Olivia's mum, Kelly Wilkinson, said: *"Olivia is always drawing, so it's amazing that she's been recognised in such a big way for doing something that she loves so much.*

"When we first found out Olivia had won, we were so excited! Her face lit up when I told her the great news.

"At first, we thought her artwork was being displayed in the Horncastle Food Store, and I was already so pleased for her, but when we realised it was all Lincolnshire Co-op food stores, I was absolutely blown away."

Olivia's designs feature a blue background with 'co-op' printed across. In the foreground, there are different fruits as cartoon characters, each with arms and legs and a cheeky expression on their faces.

To celebrate Olivia's achievement, she was invited into Horncastle Food Store for a presentation, where she was able to see her designs instore and was awarded a selection of art supplies.

Olivia, who only recently celebrated her tenth birthday, said: *"I love to draw, and have been so excited to see my artwork up in store – I still can't believe it's going to be in 100 shops!*

"When I'm older, I want to be an illustrator or children's author, because I love being creative and telling stories."

Almost **12,000 children** are registered to the free fruit scheme, and during the last roll out between 13th Jan and 23rd February, the retailer gave out over **18,000 pieces of fruit**, with banana proving to be the most popular option.

Members of Lincolnshire Co-op can also access offers and discounts on local attractions and collect cashback for themselves and local good causes as they shop.

Rik Greig, Membership Manager at Lincolnshire Co-op, said: *“We were overwhelmed by the number of competition entries we received, and the designs themselves were amazing; there was certainly some tough competition!*

“Olivia is a talented artist and a deserving winner. We hope that her design inspires even more families to make use of our free fruit scheme.

“If your child is not yet registered, it’s not too late. Simply add a child who’s aged under 13 to an adult membership and opt into postal communications or provide the details as part of the sign-up process to become a new member.”

According to The Trussell Trust, three million children in the UK are facing hardship and hunger, meaning they are more than 25% below the Social Metrics Commission’s poverty line.

Sam Turner, Community Manager at Lincolnshire Co-op, said: *“People facing food poverty may need support from a food bank, and can struggle to get hold of fresh produce.*

“Our free fruit scheme makes fresh fruit accessible to local families, as well as helping to promote healthy eating, and making it easier for families to establish these healthy eating habits within their children.”

Ends

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Notes to editors:

1. **Lincolnshire Co-op** is an independent co-operative society. Its purpose is to bring together ideas, energy and resources to make life better in communities. It has around 300,000 members and 2,900 local colleagues in Lincolnshire and the surrounding counties and an elected board of directors who oversee the business.
The society provides **valued services** and supports the **local economy** from outlets across its trading area including food stores, filling stations, post offices, travel branches, funeral homes, a florist, a crematorium and community libraries. It also cares for people’s **health and wellbeing** through its pharmacies and support for a network of wellbeing walks. Local good causes benefit through its Community Champions scheme and together, colleagues and members also look after the **local environment** through volunteering.
As well as its trading outlets, Lincolnshire Co-op owns properties, from flats and houses to commercial premises. The society brings land and buildings back into use to create attractive environments. With Lincolnshire Co-op as landlord, rents stay local and are invested in schemes that benefit the community.