



London Zoo animals feast for market's anniversary Free 301224

Description



Fruit and veg sellers marked the 50th anniversary of New Covent Garden Market by sending some of their produce to their regular customers – the animals at London Zoo.

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Gorillas Alike, Effie and baby Venus, and Amara the pygmy hippo enjoyed a breakfast of vegetables and greens from one of the traders at the south London market.

Its 175 businesses provide fresh produce to hundreds of retail and hospitality businesses including Harrods, Claridge's, Michelin-starred restaurants, and more.

To mark the milestone anniversary, wholesalers also shared their memories of the market over the years.

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Originally based at Covent Garden in central London, which gave the market its name, it relocated and officially opened for business at the 35-acre Nine Elms site in 1974.

The late Queen Elizabeth II ceremonially opened the site the following year.

Now the wholesale traders sell fruit, vegetables and flowers throughout the year and typically work through the night, bringing in nearly £900m in annual turnover.

Owner of Bevington Salads and chairman of the New Covent Garden Tenants' Association, Gary Marshall, said he has been working at the market for nearly 45 years and has watched things change over the decades, with "happy memories of the market stretching all the way back to being a teenager".

"I followed my father and grandfather into the market trade and like other wholesalers here, I'm proud to say that my business is being passed on through the generations," he said.

"New Covent Garden Market is more than just a market. We're the lifeblood of the supply chain in London and the south east of England."

The chair of New Covent Garden Market Authority, Wanda Goldwag, said: "Providing the freshest produce to our vibrant city is so much more than a job for our wholesalers, it's their passion and their livelihood and for many of them, it has been a baton to pass on through generations."

She added the authority wanted to look ahead to the next 50 years and new challenges "from sustainability to evolving customer demands", but stressed its "commitment to nurturing the market and supporting the communities it serves has never been stronger".

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