



THE VENDOR FORECASTING APPLICATION (VFA)

VENDOR GUIDE TO ALDI'S FUTURE FORECASTING

Welcome to the future of ALDI forecasting! This guide is your go to resource to understand the key forecasting improvements and navigate this positive change effortlessly.

For all non live regions, The Edge is the system used to find sales forecasts and Suggested Order Quantities (SOQ's) (PTZ Business Partners only) for regions not on our new systems.

Please no longer use The Edge for live regions.

KEY IMPROVEMENTS



UPGRADED SALES FORECASTING ENGINE

Introducing SAP UDF (Unified Demand Forecasting) –smarter, efficient, and ready to elevate forecast accuracy. Sales forecasts will be in the VFA for all regions.



INTRODUCTION OF ORDER FORECASTS

Exciting news! We're giving you order forecasts for the first time. You can find them in the VFA, [available for each region as they transition onto our new systems.](#)



VENDOR FORECASTING APPLICATION (VFA)

Get ready for the VFA! It's your go-to tool for checking the latest sales and order forecasts. It has a user-friendly feel, better functions, and effortless data exports. Access it [here.](#)

WHAT AND WHEN?

AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

Please ensure you have an activated Empower ID account with the Supplier Admin / Employee role assigned. Not sure if you have an account or need to create one? Please contact the key Empower ID user (with the 'Supplier Admin' role) in your business, or email BPET.GBIE@aldi.co.uk.

ACCESSING YOUR DEMAND IN THE FUTURE

From February 2024, this is where you will access your demand data:



Sales forecasts and SOQ's* for regions not on our new systems

Please no longer use The Edge for any Sawley information.

*SOQs - Suggested Order Quantities (for PTZ vendors only). See FAQs for more information.



Sales forecasts and order forecasts for regions on our new systems

(Order forecasts for Sawley were made available and ready to use towards the end of February. We will let you know in advance when each region is live)

Sawley was the first region that were onboarded to our new systems in February 2024.

PLEASE NOTE

Sales forecasts are available on the VFA for all regions you supply to. Please only use the sales and order forecasts in the VFA for live regions.

We'll keep you posted with the key updates, changes, and milestones, including when each region transitions onto the new systems.

SUPPORT

For any queries relating to EmpowerID, please contact the EmpowerID Key User within your organisation, or BPET.GBIE@aldi.co.uk.

For any queries relating to the VFA or forecasts, please email your availability contact.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



How do I access the VFA?

The VFA will be available as a tile on the Supplier Portal. Alternatively, you can access the VFA here: [VFALINK](#).



I would like to learn more about the order forecasts.

Order forecasts will be available in the VFA for regions on our new systems. They are driven by our new sales forecasting engine, SAP UDF, whilst considering factors such as current stock levels, order optimisation requirements, article grouping requirements, and existing open orders. You can view order forecasts on a daily view for the next 14 days, or a weekly view for the next full 4 calendar weeks. Our pilot region, Sawley, was the first to have an order forecast, in February 2024.



My forecasts do not look quite right. What do I do?

Please consider if there are any upcoming key events; recent comms about forecast adjustments; changes to recent sales; new / disc articles etc. Still unsure? Please reach out to your availability contact with the affected article code(s), region(s), date(s), vendor ID, forecast type (sales or order forecast) and what the query is.



Someone has joined/ left the business; how do I manage their VFA access?

One must have an Empower ID account with the Supplier Admin / Employee role to automatically gain VFA access. Please contact the key Empower ID user (with the 'Supplier Admin' role) in your business who will be able to support with the creation/ deletion of an Empower ID account. Please email BPET.GBIE@aldi.co.uk if you have any queries about this.



How often does the VFA update?

The VFA is updated daily (around 6am) with the latest demand data. You will know the VFA has updated when the first sales forecast date you see is tomorrow's date.



There is a problem with the VFA. What do I do?

Please refresh the page or clear your cookies and cache and re-open your browser. If the problem persists, please kindly reach out to your availability contact.



When will I see forecast adjustments for key events?

Our new forecasting engine, SAPUDF, naturally captures many key event and seasonal trends. The timing of any final adjustments may vary based on the specific nature and timing of each key event. The closer we are to the event, the more precise and accurate our forecasts become. Your availability contact will continue to communicate any key adjustments to you.



I would like some more information on SOQs(Suggested Order Quantities) PTZ vendors only.

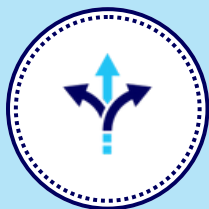
SOQ's are the daily updated figures shown on The Edge excel extract (in column BG) to give you an indication of the order expected to be placed with you later that day. SOQs will eventually be replaced by the order forecasts in the VFA for regions on our new systems. Please use the SOQ information on The Edge for regions not on our new systems and use the VFA for order forecasts for regions on our new systems.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Why do I need an EmpowerID account?

An Empower ID account allows you to securely access relevant ALDI applications, such as the VFA. Your SAP vendor ID(s) are assigned to your Empower ID account.



When will I see the forecast for a new article?

Please typically expect to see your demand data for new articles approx. 4-6weeks before the on-sale date.



How can I see my sales history?

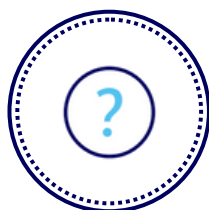
We are hoping to include this in the VFA soon. In the meantime, please use The Edge for regions not on our new systems or reach out to your availability contact.



We have more than one supplier code, can forecasts be merged together for multiple supplier codes to avoid having to view and download multiple different forecasts (which we have to do in The Edge currently)?

Please reach out to BPET.GBIE@aldi.co.uk - they can support with assigning multiple vendor ID's to your Empower ID account. This means you can quickly switch between your vendor IDs directly in the VFA without having to log out and in again. We are hoping to soon introduce a development where you can multi select vendor IDs to aggregate and export the data in one go. We'll keep you posted with any progress.

Please note, that to use the Manhattan SE/AS portal, you will need a separate account for each vendor ID. To learn more, reach out to the Business Partner Enablement Team.



There's a limit to the amount of people on EmpowerID. Will this be increased?

The limit is currently set to 5 users per Business Partner. However, by emailing BPET.GBIE@aldi.co.uk you can request to increase this limit to 25.



Where can we find our Vendor IDs?

Please reach out to BPET.GBIE@aldi.co.uk, they will be able to assist.



Will historical sales data be included in the VFA like The Edge?

We are hoping to include this in the VFA soon. In the meantime, please use The Edge for regions not on our new systems or reach out to your availability contact for AHEAD region sales data.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Will the VFA also show a forecast accuracy measure? For example, how accurate the VFA forecast was once we have some sales data to compare?

No, however on the VFA you can export your forecasting data into a 'Flat File' which is in a format perfect for building into your own analysis tools should you wish.



Will there be a timetable of the roll out for the other regions/when will The Edge be stopped?

We are hoping to fully transition over to the VFA and turn off The Edge in the coming months when we have made improvements to the data quality of other regions. We will keep you updated.



Will we be able to access data for any markets outside of the UK?

VFA utilisation in other countries is being explored and will be communicated by the respective national business once decided.



Will regions liaise so suppliers do not get overloaded with orders on one day from all regions?

Our order forecasts are currently produced by a central team, so this will not be an issue.



Is the AHEAD product code the same as the SAP sellable or display?

The AHEAD code on the VFA is the display code (orderable code).



Does the VFA take into account rolling shortages?

The sales forecast is based on 100% service level. However, the order forecast is considering open orders and current stock on hand so will be reflective of any recent shortages.



Are the dates on the VFA depot or store dates?

Our sales forecasts display what we are anticipating to sell on that date. For our order forecasts, an option is available to toggle between delivery to DC date and order date.



Will seasonal listing sales appear on the VFA once a discontinue bulletin has been raised as currently we cannot access store sales once allocated seasonal volumes have been ordered?

Sales history is not currently available within the VFA, however forecasting data (on the VFA and The Edge), and sales history (on The Edge) will stop once the contract has ended or the article is marked as discontinued.

HOW TO USE THE VFA - CRITERIA SELECTION

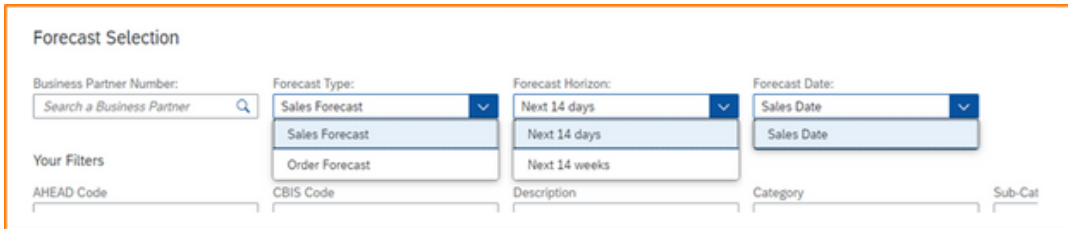
For a video demonstration, please visit the **Vendor Forecasting Application** page on the **Merchandise Business Partner Website** via the link [here](#).

WRITTEN MATERIAL ON HOW TO USE THE VFA

Access the VFA with your Empower ID account via the Supplier Portal, or by clicking [here](#).

Selecting a Sales Forecast:

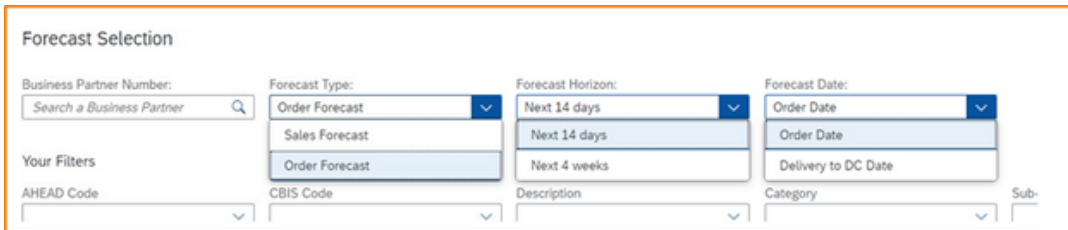
- Data available on a daily level for the next 14 days, or a weekly level for the next full 14 calendar weeks.
- The Sales Date is simply the date we expect to sell the stock in store.
- Sales forecasts are available for all regions (please only use for regions on our new systems for now).



The screenshot shows the 'Forecast Selection' interface. It includes a search box for 'Business Partner Number' with the placeholder 'Search a Business Partner'. Below this is a section for 'Your Filters' with fields for 'AHEAD Code', 'CBIS Code', 'Description', 'Category', and 'Sub-Cat'. The main selection area has four dropdown menus: 'Forecast Type' (set to 'Sales Forecast'), 'Forecast Horizon' (set to 'Next 14 days'), 'Forecast Date' (set to 'Sales Date'), and 'Forecast Date' (set to 'Sales Date').

Selecting an Order Forecast:

- Data available on a daily level for the next 14 days, or a weekly level for the next full 4 calendar weeks.
- You can view the data by Order Date, or Delivery to DC Date.
- Order forecasts are available for regions on our new systems, starting with Sawley, from February 2024.



The screenshot shows the 'Forecast Selection' interface. It includes a search box for 'Business Partner Number' with the placeholder 'Search a Business Partner'. Below this is a section for 'Your Filters' with fields for 'AHEAD Code', 'CBIS Code', 'Description', 'Category', and 'Sub-Cat'. The main selection area has four dropdown menus: 'Forecast Type' (set to 'Order Forecast'), 'Forecast Horizon' (set to 'Next 14 days'), 'Forecast Date' (set to 'Order Date'), and 'Forecast Date' (set to 'Delivery to DC Date').

HOW TO USE THE VFA - VISUAL IN-APP DATA

Here is what the data looks like.

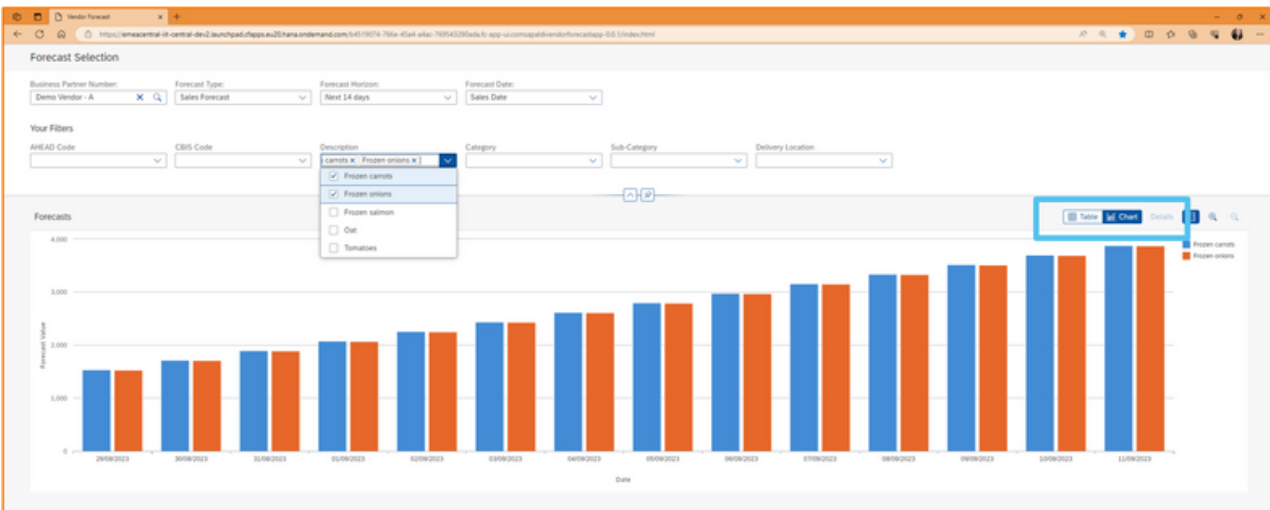
- You can use the filters along the top to narrow down your search, and toggle on/ off sub totals
- CBIS Code = your old article code (what you see on The Edge)
- AHEAD Code= your new article code (display)
- UoM - CAR = Unit of measure in cartons (our new term for 'cases')
- Carton Size= How many units are in a carton
- Sales/ Order FC Total= The total of the visible forecast in the VFA, based on your selection criteria

For example: We expect to sell 243 cartons of Frozen Carrots in the Atherstone region on August 29th

FYI – The VFA updates daily around 6am. You will know the VFA has updated when the first sales forecast date you see is tomorrow's date.

CBIS Code	AHEAD Code	Description	Delivery Location	UoM	Carton Size	Sales ('000)	Aug 29, 2023	Aug 30, 2023	Aug 31, 2023	Sep 1, 2023	Sep 2, 2023	Sep 3, 2023	Sep 4, 2023	Sep 5, 2023	Sep 6, 2023	Sep 7, 2023	Sep 8, 2023	Sep 9, 2023
FreezeCarrot_036	FreezeCarrot	Frozen carrots	Atherstone DC	CAR	3	6132	243	273	303	333	363	393	423	453	483	513	543	573
FreezeCarrot_036	FreezeCarrot	Frozen carrots	Bullock DC	CAR	3	6202	243	278	308	338	368	398	428	458	488	518	548	578
FreezeCarrot_036	FreezeCarrot	Frozen carrots	Chesham DC	CAR	3	6412	253	293	323	353	383	413	443	473	503	533	563	593
FreezeCarrot_036	FreezeCarrot	Frozen carrots	Darlington DC	CAR	3	6272	253	293	323	343	373	403	433	463	493	523	553	583
FreezeCarrot_036	FreezeCarrot	Frozen carrots	Sawley DC	CAR	3	6402	268	298	328	358	388	418	448	478	508	538	568	598
FreezeCarrot_036	FreezeCarrot	Frozen carrots	Sutton DC	CAR	3	6342	258	288	318	348	378	408	438	468	498	528	558	588
Sub Total						37942	3533	3733	3893	3979	3253	2613	2793	2979	3153	3333	3513	3693
FreezeOnion_036	FreezeOnion	Frozen onions	Atherstone DC	CAR	2	6118	242	272	302	332	362	392	422	452	482	512	542	572
FreezeOnion_036	FreezeOnion	Frozen onions	Bullock DC	CAR	2	6188	242	272	302	332	362	392	422	452	482	512	542	572
FreezeOnion_036	FreezeOnion	Frozen onions	Chesham DC	CAR	2	6398	262	292	322	352	382	412	442	472	502	532	562	592
FreezeOnion_036	FreezeOnion	Frozen onions	Darlington DC	CAR	2	6258	252	282	312	342	372	402	432	462	492	522	552	582
FreezeOnion_036	FreezeOnion	Frozen onions	Sawley DC	CAR	2	6468	267	297	327	357	387	417	447	477	507	537	567	597
FreezeOnion_036	FreezeOnion	Frozen onions	Sutton DC	CAR	2	6328	257	287	317	347	377	407	437	467	497	527	557	587

- You can view your demand data in a graph by selecting the 'Chart' button
- The filters along top are useful for this view
- This view is helpful if you wanted a quick visual of the trends over time. You can select multiple articles.
- If you click on a bar, you can view the forecast details by clicking the 'Details' button



Lastly, you can export all your demand data into excel by clicking the 'Export To Excel' button. You can select a 'Standard File', or a 'Flat File'.

Here is an example of a Standard File – Similar format to the app, instantly shareable, and easy to read:

The screenshot shows an Excel spreadsheet with the following columns: Product Type, Forecast Type, Location, and Forecast Value for each month from 2019 to 2023. The data is organized in a grid format, with rows representing different product types and forecast types, and columns representing the months of the year.

Here is an example of a Flat File – Perfect for those wanting to build the data into their own analysis tools:

The screenshot shows an Excel spreadsheet with the following columns: Item ID Code, Description, Location, Forecast Type, Date Type, Calendar Week, Case Size, Forecast Value, and Export Date. The data is organized in a grid format, with rows representing different item IDs and their corresponding forecast data.