

Centralized allocation and space planning

Q&A

General

What is changing?

LCBO stores currently have some discretion to make listing decisions, while the remaining assortment is centrally managed by LCBO. Meanwhile planograms are manually created and they have inconsistent application in stores.

This level of discretion has created a landscape where store managers must dedicate a significant portion of their time to assortment administration. At the same time, suppliers and agents are actively engaging with individual stores to secure product listings, resulting in a decentralized and often resource-intensive process. This limits our ability to respond to customer demand, makes it more difficult for our suppliers to predict demand, and provides inconsistent experiences and outcomes for both small producers and customers.

As part of LCBO's Future State Modernization, in late 2026 to early 2027, we will use new systems and enterprise-wide data to centralize assortment and space planning decisions, ensuring product is placed where and when it is most likely to meet customer demand. Local craft shelf space will be reserved centrally and integrated as a structural and strategic feature of in-store space planning.

What does this mean for suppliers and agents?

Since suppliers are no longer trying to secure listings at the store level, they will have more capacity for:

- Staff education and tastings
- Reviewing shelf space execution
- Application of value-adds
- In-store tastings with Customers
- Focus on new private retailers

Suppliers are encouraged to continue to share product distribution plans during product submission.

What date do managers stop listing products?

These changes will come into effect when Future State Modernization (FSM) Release 4 goes live. This is currently estimated to be between late 2026 until early 2027. We will continue to keep you updated on progress.

Will this new centralized assortment space planning allow for a certain percentage of decisions by stores?

While stores will not be making assortment decisions, we continue to value the localized knowledge of store managers and their teams, and we will be creating a mechanism for them to provide feedback on local assortments. A limited percentage of a store's assortment will be reserved for localized assortment selections, largely tailored for Ontario craft assortments informed by a store feedback loop.

Will new SKUs be guaranteed by a number of stores?

All new products listed in the retail channel will be assessed for potential sales and distribution in collaboration with agents/suppliers. Based on this analysis, new products will be assigned an optimal distribution to stores upon launch. Established in-season management reviews will determine if any changes to distribution are required prior to the next category reset to maintain optimized performance measures.

Will new general listings be forced to more stores now that stores do not have the ability to decide what gets listed?

Prior to FSM release 4 go-live, new products launched within a specified timeframe will be reviewed to determine the optimized points of distribution. These changes will be implemented centrally and timed for the release date.

As a supplier who participates in the direct delivery to store program, how will I be impacted?

The Direct Delivery Program to LCBO retail stores ([wine](#) and [small distillers](#)) will remain unchanged. New products listed as part of the direct-to-store program will follow the same process for determining potential sales and distribution in collaboration with agents/suppliers. Based on this analysis, new local products will be assigned an optimal distribution amongst stores. Established in-season management reviews, alongside feedback from retail store managers and their teams, will determine if any changes to distribution are required prior to the next category reset to maintain optimized performance measures.

Will CPFR provide planned buys?

Within this release, we will be introducing new forecasting tools to improve the CPFR process for relevant suppliers. As part of this we will move from forecasted sales to planned buys based on inputs from centralized assortments, taking the guesswork out of production planning and making it easier for suppliers to manage their business.

We will provide more information on these changes in the coming months.