



# FPC PRESS RELEASE

14 December 2009

## **CELEBRATE BRITISH AT THE OLYMPICS - BUT LET'S ENJOY GLOBAL PRODUCE**

Participants and spectators at the London 2012 Olympics should be able to enjoy the wide variety of fresh produce available from all over the globe, without unnecessary restrictions being imposed on UK suppliers in the name of sustainability.

FPC believes that London 2012's 'Food Vision' for the wholesale and food service sector should have a better balance between the need to encourage healthy eating, promoting British seasonal locally supplied fresh produce and allowing suppliers to source produce from overseas.

"We support the move to source indigenous UK fresh produce when it is available. British seasonal fresh produce at its best should be available at the London 2012 Olympics, and UK suppliers are well positioned to be able to source and provide a wide variety of fresh produce, some of which cannot be grown in the UK due to our climate. The fresh produce industry is keen to be able to demonstrate that it can cater for extremely diverse tastes, preferences and dietary requirements of the Olympics," said Nigel Jenney, Chief Executive of FPC.

Some imported products will have been grown in less greenhouse gas intensive ways than the same products in the UK, with savings from greater efficiency far outweighing the negative impacts of additional transport. Consumption of fruit and vegetables accounts for just 2.5 per cent of the UK's total greenhouse gas emissions. Some 60 per cent of fresh produce is imported to the UK, mostly from within the European Union. In some instances fresh produce at the Games could have travelled less distance from another EU member state than produce grown within certain regions of the UK.

FPC is concerned that the requirements of the Vision and its sustainable sourcing code will undermine London 2012's intention to encourage local and small suppliers to participate and win contracts. Suppliers will be expected to source locally, be registered with Sedex and have accreditation under the Assured Produce Scheme and Globalgap.

FPC also contests the inclusion of organic fresh produce among the Vision's aspirational standards. The Food Standards Agency has stated that there is no additional health benefit to eating organic produce compared to conventionally grown produce so the provision of organic produce should be solely on the basis of providing consumer choice.

"We'd like to see London 2012 doing more to support local suppliers to meet these additional specifications which go beyond the usual legal requirements. The Vision aims to deliver food at affordable prices yet a number of the criteria such as sourcing locally, providing organic products and additional accreditation will impact on viability for small businesses, as well as the cost for supplying fresh produce, and ultimately consumers' enjoyment of a wide variety of affordable fresh produce at the Games," commented Nigel Jenney.

London 2012 aims to increase the visibility and variety of fruit and vegetables available at the Games and to encourage both health and environmental benefits lasting beyond the life of the Games. A key factor in helping people reach their 5-a-day target is to provide a wide variety of safe, affordable fresh produce, irrespective of its country of origin.

"It's disappointing to see proposals to limit consumers' choice and access to a wide variety of produce by imposing limitations on seasonality and provenance, whilst the Games' major sponsors will be offering predominantly highly processed food. On this basis we are challenging London 2012's criteria for fresh produce," added Nigel Jenney.

## **Ends**

### **Notes for editors:**

1. The Fresh Produce Consortium (FPC) is the UK's fresh produce trade association and is based in Peterborough. The FPC has represented the fresh produce sector for many years and is recognised across the UK and EU as the voice of the industry.
2. Extensive membership covers the complete spectrum of industry businesses including growers, importers, wholesalers, retailers, distributors, processors, packers, food service companies and other allied organisations.
3. Eat in Colour campaign [www.eatincolour.com](http://www.eatincolour.com)
4. London 2012's Food Vision is available from: <http://www.london2012.com/news/2009/12/london-2012-will-serve-best-of-british-food-at-the-games.php>