



## FPC PRESS RELEASE

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### **EATING FIVE-A-DAY SHOULD BE CHILD'S PLAY**

Children's packed lunches are failing to provide a healthy diet, lagging behind school meals in terms of nutrient quality. According to a recently published survey of the contents of children's packed lunches, only 54 percent of lunch boxes included fresh fruit, and just 19 per cent included vegetables.

"We must help parents to encourage more children to eat fresh fruit and vegetables at school and the fresh produce industry's Eat In Colour campaign is well placed to show how this can be easy and fun. Through the Beaver Scouts' healthy eating badge, sponsored by Eat In Colour, over 42,000 Scouts have demonstrated that it can be child's play to put together a healthy nutritious snack," said Nigel Jenney, Chief Executive of the Fresh Produce Consortium.

The healthy eating badge is one of the most popular for Beaver Scouts who have to show that they understand what makes a healthy diet by preparing a fruit salad, creating a healthy snack, and designing a nutritious sandwich. Many of these children are taking their recipes back home and sharing their knowledge with their families, with two thirds of badge holders eating more than the national average of fruit and vegetables.

Whilst the Department of Health has achieved significant consumer awareness of 5-a-day this has not translated into widespread adoption of a healthy diet and greater consumption of fresh produce, and FPC wants to see a greater focus on key consumer groups in the 5-a-day action plan. On average consumers are eating just 2.5 servings of fruit and vegetables a day.

“FPC has been lobbying the UK Government to expand the successful Schools Fruit and Vegetable Scheme which has proved that it can increase consumption of fresh produce and establish healthy eating habits among young children,” commented Nigel Jenney. “Many UK fresh produce businesses are involved in the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme. We want more children to have the chance to eat fresh fruit and vegetables at school and to develop good eating habits at an early age.”

The School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme in the UK has contributed to a successful increase in consumption: a September 2007 report found that five-a-day consumption among school children had risen from 32% in 2004 to 44% in 2006.

“Obesity and poor diet among children are a rising epidemic across Europe, and nearly one in three 10-11 year olds in the UK is overweight. We need to tackle this public health issue in with an ambitious programme, and we urge the UK Government to build on the success of the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme,” 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. For more information on the Eat In Colour campaign visit [www.eatincolour.com](http://www.eatincolour.com)
4. ‘A cross-sectional survey of children’s packed lunches in the UK: food and nutrient-based results’: Nutritional Epidemiology Group, University of Leeds.

**Ends**