



# FPC PRESS RELEASE

10 August 2009

## **FRESH PRODUCE INDUSTRY SET TO PLAY KEY ROLE IN SECURING UK FOOD SUPPLIES**

The fresh produce industry will play a leading role in the UK's food security by providing a sustainable supply of fresh fruit and vegetables, affirms the Fresh Produce Consortium (FPC) as it welcomes Defra's consultation on the UK's food security.

The Government recognises the importance of delivering long-term security, sustainable food production and healthy consumption in a global context, stating that: 'Global supply ultimately underpins the availability and affordability of the diverse range of food we enjoy. Increased production and productivity will be required to meet the needs of a growing global population, supported by a well-functioning international trading system which spreads the risks of supply shortages in individual countries, incentivises production where comparative advantage exists, allows supply to respond to movements in international prices, facilitates the spread of new technologies, and brings development benefits through agricultural and rural growth to the developing world.'

Around 60 per cent of fruit and vegetables are imported to the UK, providing consumers with produce outside the UK season as well as varieties which cannot be grown in the UK due to our climate. Defra recognises that the UK should not aim to be self-sufficient, even in indigenous food stuffs, but wants a 'thriving, competitive UK good sector... It should produce as much food as possible'.

The FPC took part in the recent Round Table discussion on ways to increase production and consumption of fruit and vegetables and has provided evidence to the Government's Council of Food Policy Advisors which is tasked to look at some of the barriers facing production in the UK.

"There is a significant opportunity for UK growers to increase the sustainable production of indigenous crops which are suited to our climate. We believe that Defra should help provide a focus for the industry to evaluate the potential for increasing these crops and ensure that the sector has the necessary tools to maximise this potential," commented Nigel Jenney, Chief Executive of the FPC.

"The fresh produce industry is putting in place measures to achieve food production in a low-carbon world, calculating greenhouse gas emissions, reducing excess packaging and increasing re-use and recycling, as well as reducing food waste and recovering energy," said Nigel Jenney. "There are some tough challenges ahead to continue to deliver sustainable food production, and we shall be participating in Defra's 'Food 2030' discussions on behalf of the industry."

There is a need to encourage greater consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables as part of a healthy diet and the industry's Eat In Colour campaign has made great strides to increase enjoyment of fresh produce. FPC looks forward to a greater focus on key consumer groups by the Department of Health through its 5-a-day action plan.

**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. For details of Defra's consultation visit: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/foodrin/security/index.htm>

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