



# FPC PRESS RELEASE

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## **Fresh produce industry puts best foot forward**

The fresh produce industry has a new tool to measure and help reduce carbon emissions – a tailor-made carbon footprint calculator produced by the Fresh Produce Consortium (FPC) and environmental consultants Brown & Co. The online calculator allows fresh produce companies to assess their current emissions and to identify where they can make improvements.

“By having a clear understanding of where carbon emissions are found within the industry, and the extent of those emissions, the fresh produce sector can target environmentally-friendly initiatives where they are needed most, and also counter any exaggeration of the environmental impact of the production and distribution of fresh fruit and vegetables,” said Nigel Jenney, Chief Executive of the FPC. “Increasing focus on the concept of food miles means that it is important for the fresh produce industry to have these facts to hand.”

In some cases the carbon footprint of imported food can be lower than that of produce grown locally but out of season due to the complex balance between providing optimal growth and storage conditions in the UK, compared to energy required in transportation.

“Having online access to an effective and recognised carbon footprint calculator is a key way in which the fresh produce industry can help to promote itself and reject misleading arguments based on inaccurate data or incomplete interpretations,” added Nigel Jenney.

According to Brown & Co’s environmental consultant Tony Hargreaves measuring the carbon footprint of a cauliflower, a kilogramme of raspberries or a bunch of leeks is complex.

"A key aspect is the boundaries used in its measurement, that is, what is included and what is excluded," said Tony. "The end-product inherits a proportion of the carbon emissions of any product or process that is involved in its production and supply, right up until its final state on the retailer's shelves or in the caterer's kitchen. This includes any energy inputs in the processing, storing and packaging stages of the chain, as well as any waste produced."

Covent Garden Market Authority has worked with Brown & Co to test the parameters needed and gather the data required to calculate its carbon footprint for its site and tenant businesses, some 260 individual businesses, in London.

Covent Garden Market Authorities' Chief Executive Officer Jan Lloyd said: "To gather the information required to provide as accurate as possible a carbon footprint calculation across a business the size of Covent Garden Market and over 260 individual businesses looked to be arduous and sometimes a little daunting. However, working closely with Tony Hargreaves of Brown & Co we were able to set appropriate boundaries for our footprint and devise a way to gather sufficient information to conduct the calculation. The calculator itself is very simple to use and provides a report that presents your carbon footprint calculation, along with opportunities on how to make reductions in your emissions."

"Due to the nature of our tenant businesses involving the distribution of fresh produce, there is a reliance on fuel and energy for chilling, so our footprint reflects this. What we now have is a baseline upon which to target and measure our reduction achievements. Every organisation should assess their emissions and look to reduce their carbon footprint and this new calculator provides an excellent tool for businesses in the fresh produce sector," added Jan Lloyd.

"Until there is a legal requirement to assess the carbon footprint of an organisation or its products, many businesses may consider it wise to get ahead of the game," says Nigel Jenney. "The advantages are wide ranging. Not only can businesses identify where efficiencies can be made and costs reduced, particularly in energy use, but companies can market their produce as having a low carbon footprint and help meet the demands of environmentally-aware consumers."

“This carbon calculator is an excellent tool for our members, giving them the information required and the facility to calculate their carbon footprint, as well as offering useful guidance and advice on how to reduce their carbon footprint,” commented Nigel Jenney.

“The complexities of calculating the footprint of an organisation or its products vary and are very specific to that organisation or product,” said Tony Hargreaves. “We are encouraging FPC members to make use of this tool, and hope it will lead to reductions in carbon emissions in the sector. The potential for reductions is assisted by a range of grants, which make various capital investments more viable.”

A link on the FPC website is provided for FPC members to access the calculator, hosted by the Brown & Co website.

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**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 or assistance in calculating your Carbon Footprint visit: [www.freshproduce.org.uk](http://www.freshproduce.org.uk) , e-mail FPC: [infor@freshproduce.org.uk](mailto:infor@freshproduce.org.uk) or contact Tony Hargreaves, at Brown & Co, on [tony.hargreaves@brown-co.com](mailto:tony.hargreaves@brown-co.com)

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