



FPC PRESS RELEASE

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FPC welcomes combined front by labour users and retailers to tackle labour abuse

Close collaboration between retailers and their suppliers is vital in combating labour abuse, says the Fresh Produce Consortium (FPC) as it welcomes the launch of the Gangmasters Licensing Authority's Retailer and Supplier Protocol today. The Protocol sets out how the GLA, retailers and suppliers will work together to deal with worker exploitation in the food supply chain.

FPC successfully ensured in the early stages of the development of the Protocol that there would be equal involvement of suppliers and retailers in its delivery, including leading a workshop to facilitate input from labour users and suppliers as part of the consultation.

"The GLA has worked hard to develop a better understanding of the views of suppliers and labour users, and we are pleased to see that this is evidenced in the final version of the Protocol," commented Nigel Jenney, Chief Executive of the FPC. "The Protocol sets out how responsible businesses within the fresh produce industry can work together. Labour users have a good working relationship with the GLA, and the Labour User Group is in a key position to help the GLA develop guidance on best practice, training and awareness of issues."

The recently published report 'Forced labour in the UK and the GLA' recognised the definite impact of the GLA in substantially raising standards and working practices. The GLA has worked successfully to curb the exploitation of workers by harnessing the support and goodwill of all elements of the food supply chain, from labour users, suppliers (processors

and packers) to retailers. The GLA has already demonstrated, through a number of its activities, how working with the supply chain can lead to positive outcomes and bring rogue gangmasters to book.

“The GLA estimates that around 25 per cent of labour providers are not licensed. It is critical that the GLA applies the powers provided within its remit and takes a more strategic focus on gangmasters acting outside the licensing system. These illegal practices must be stamped out to protect the workforce and responsible labour users,” added Nigel Jenney.

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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. ‘Forced labour in the UK and the GLA’ by the Wilberforce Institute, University of Hull.

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