



FPC PRESS RELEASE

4 March 2010

PORT-CENTRIC OR CUSTOMER-CENTRIC – FPC CALLS FOR GREATER CO-OPERATION FROM PORTS TO ASSIST IMPORTERS

Greater co-ordination and communication between the fresh produce industry, the ports and the UK Government is vital to ensure the efficient and cost-effective transfer of perishable fresh produce through ports to the end customer.

Speaking at the Port Centric Logistics conference on 2 March, Nigel Jenney, Chief Executive of the Fresh Produce Consortium said: "There is a need for a robust and detailed end to end supply chain review to realise fully the opportunity to meet the unique requirements of the fresh produce industry. The ports must listen to their customers and understand their business needs."

"There are some good examples of individual ports providing an effective service to the industry, including the installation of dedicated facilities for fresh produce, but too often there is a lack of understanding of the industry and its needs. There are definitely more opportunities for ports to work together with the fresh produce industry."

The fresh produce industry is dependent on deep sea, ro-ro and airfreight, with over 60 per cent of fresh produce imported to the UK, mostly from within the European Community.

"Whilst we continue to fight to reduce unnecessary bureaucracy we need to ports to play their part in focusing on their customers and their products and be more pro-active in finding solutions for the fresh produce industry," commented Nigel Jenney.

“FPC is working to ensure that the Government keeps its promise to cut unnecessary red tape and burdensome bureaucracy and allow the fresh produce industry to trade efficiently. The Government’s action plan has taken on board a number of our recommendations regarding efficiencies and we shall continue to work with SITPRO to ensure that the Government fulfils its promise to improve regulation and removes unnecessary business costs,” added Nigel Jenney.

In its action plan the Government states: ‘we will ensure the delivery of a fair and effective regulatory environment for those engaged in international trade, based on streamlined, efficient regulation and procedures for exports and imports – cutting out avoidable costs and delays for business’.

The UK is ranked 16th in the world, well below its key competitors, for ease of trading across borders, leaving UK businesses at a commercial disadvantage.

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. The Government The Fresh Produce Consortium welcomes the Government’s action plan ‘Simplifying Trade Across UK Borders’ which responds to lobbying by the FPC through SITPRO, the UK’s trade facilitation body, as part of the UK Government’s review into the cost of international trade regulation.

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