



FPC PRESS RELEASE

2 November 2009

UK CUTS TAPE ON EU MARKETING STANDARDS

The UK Government deserves credit for cutting out red tape with its implementation of the new EU Marketing Standards compared to other EU states, says the Fresh Produce Consortium. Elsewhere across Europe the industry is suffering from the imposition of a poorly thought out regulation resulting in additional layers of bureaucracy, with the introduction of new standards for up to 400 different types of produce.

Following strenuous lobbying by FPC, the Rural Payments Agency (RPAI) ensured that General Marketing Standard (GMS) products would not have to be entered onto the PEACH system, which will save the UK fresh produce industry significant time and costs estimated at £250,000 every year. The implementation of the new EU Marketing Standards has gone smoothly in the UK, unlike the experiences of other European counterparts who have been angered by claims by the European Commission of savings to the industry of up to 970 million Euros.

“Many small to medium sized businesses in the UK would have faced a mass of additional bureaucracy as well having to deal with the current economic pressures. RPAI recognised the issue and thanks to their common sense the UK market remains attractive to growers/exporters from around the world, making the UK the key European destination for imports. This is a great example of industry working effectively with a receptive government agency to deliver benefits for the sector. We look forward to working with RPAI to develop the Approved Trader Scheme which should provide additional benefits.”

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 recognized 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. Around 60 per cent of fruit and vegetables are imported into the UK, providing us with produce outside the UK season as well as varieties which simply cannot be grown in the UK. Imports of fruit in 2007 were 3.5 million tonnes, and vegetable imports were 1.8 million tonnes.
4. The ten products covered under the Specific Marketing Standards are: apples, citrus fruit, kiwifruit, lettuce (including curled and broad leaved endives), peaches/nectarines, pears, strawberries, sweet peppers, table grapes and tomatoes.
5. For more information on the implementation of the EU Marketing Standards visit:
www.rpa.gov.uk

Ends