



FPC PRESS RELEASE

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EU set to increase food prices and put food security in jeopardy

Fruit and vegetable prices will rocket and long-term food security will be put at risk if the European Parliament continues on its course to introduce proposals to reduce growers' ability to fight common pests, weeds and diseases says the Fresh Produce Consortium.

The European Parliament's Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety voted on Wednesday on proposals to reduce the use of crop protection products which are vital to the production of fruit and vegetables across Europe.

"We are checking the fine detail of the Committee's voting on a wide range of amendments and their implications for European horticulture. We are bitterly disappointed that the Committee rejected the call for a full impact assessment. It seems crazy that the European Parliament could get away with making decisions without any scientific basis and with no regard to the devastating impact their proposals," said Nigel Jenney, Chief Executive of the Fresh Produce Consortium.

"We must hold MEPs accountable for the repercussions of their decision making when the European Parliament votes on the final proposals. We shall be giving further guidance to our members and contacts across the globe to continue to fight for the future of horticulture and to defend the right of the consumer to enjoy good quality healthy produce."

Food security will be affected, with pressures on the availability of agricultural land and lack of sustainable supplies of commonly eaten produce. The outcome of the Committee's

debate means it is even more likely that increasing production costs would make it uneconomic to grow certain crops in the UK and contribute significantly to rising food prices.

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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. In an earlier assessment the UK Pesticides Safety Directorate indicated that the Commission's proposals alone could result in the removal of up to 15 percent of substances, some of which are important for commercial horticulture, and that any potential withdrawal of these substances has not been shown to have benefits to human health or the environment. The quality and availability of fresh produce such as carrots, peas, parsnip and onions will be reduced drastically, and the regulations would affect both conventionally grown and organically grown produce. Under the Parliament's more stringent proposals disease control of major diseases like black spot on fruit such as strawberries would be affected significantly. For a number of crops there would be no viable alternatives to control certain prevalent pests and diseases, resulting in significant losses in yield.

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[http://www.pesticides.gov.uk/uploadedfiles/Web_Assets/PSD/Impact_report_final_\(May%202008\)\(1\).pdf](http://www.pesticides.gov.uk/uploadedfiles/Web_Assets/PSD/Impact_report_final_(May%202008)(1).pdf)) An executive summary and report by ADAS on the potential impacts of the proposals are available at: <http://www.adas.co.uk/index.html?did=347&pg=1>