



freshproduceconsortium

NEWSLETTER

29 May 2009

Industry celebrates achievements at Re:fresh Awards

The Florette Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Alick Glass. During a career already spanning 54 years, Alick built up the Glass Glover business from a family fruit wholesale business based in Edinburgh, to the third UK fresh company to be listed on the Stock Exchange, steering Glass Glover to become one of Europe's largest fresh produce organisations. He was also a founder member of the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Information Bureau and of CIMO (now part of Eucofel) and actively participated in negotiations to remove fresh produce from the European Community retaliatory sanction list against US imports.



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The standard of entries was very high this year – and congratulations go to all the finalists and the winners who have shown their commitment to the industry. Other Awards winners are:

Overall Produce Trader of the Year – The Co-operative

5-a-day Supporter of the Year – Foods from Spain

Innovation of the Year – Love Food Hate Waste

Foodservice Supplier of the Year : National Winner - Pauley's



Foodservice Supplier of the Year: Regional Winner – Chef's Connection

Wholesaler of the Year – Bristol Fruit Sales

Retail Florist of the Year – Hayford & Rhodes

Packer of the Year – Albert Bartlett

Importer of the Year – Capespan UK

Multiple Retailer of the Year – The Co-operative

Convenience Retailer of the Year – Nisa Today's

Independent Retailer of the Year – Wareings of Tarleton

Marketing Campaign of the Year – Foods from Spain/RED Communications

Young Person of the Year – Lucy Wiggins, HerbFresh

Topical debates at Re:fresh conference

The Re:refresh conference had a lively start led by MasterChef presenter Greg Wallace, who stressed the importance of the flavour and taste of fresh produce and the importance of encouraging consumers, particularly children, to try different produce.

Earlier that morning Greg had launched the 'Eat Seasonably' campaign (www.eatseasonably.co.uk) which is encouraging people to eat fresh produce in season, as part of a new initiative called 'We Will If You Will' led by Dame Fiona Reynolds of the National Trust and Ian Cheshire, Chairman of B&Q. Whilst Greg made the point that the campaign did not intend to stop imports of produce which cannot be grown in the UK, several delegates stressed the benefits of enjoying a wide variety of fresh produce all year round, irrespective of its origin.

Defra's own definition of 'locally in season' is 'seasonal food produced both in the UK and overseas', and Farming Minister Jane Kennedy's address also covered the need for sustainable production. The Minister thanked the industry for its input to the consultation on the Marketing Standards, promising to take on board comments and she stressed the Government's efforts to regulate more smartly.

Debbie Robinson gave an excellent summary of the success of The Co-operative and how it offers fresh produce. When asked about her views on 'seasonality' Debbie's response was enjoy British produce in season, but don't make it complicated for consumers or demonise other sources.

Both James Walton of IGD and John Giles of Promar International highlighted the impacts on the industry and changing face of retail, and looked ahead to the potential issues and challenges facing the industry. Rounding up the day, Rachel Green steered the panel (Mark Newton of Florette, Chris Hutchinson, chairman of FCP's wholesale division, Tony Reynolds of Reynolds, and James Lowman of the Association of Convenience Stores) to cover a range of questions from the audience about



the potential 'feast of opportunities beyond the big 4', rounding off a well attended and informative conference.

For more information about the awards' winners and highlights from the conference visit www.refresh.eu

FPC calls for equality in GLA Supermarket Protocol

FPC is calling for greater scrutiny of the Gangmasters Licensing Agency (GLA)'s draft GLA and Supermarket protocol to ensure equality for suppliers and retention of GLA independence.

"There are some key concerns for suppliers raised in this protocol which demonstrate the need for the GLA to seek a better understanding of the views of suppliers/labour users before developing the protocol further. We welcome the GLA's consultation launched today and will be encouraging our members to participate," commented Nigel Jenney. "It is essential to ensure that the GLA and all sectors of the supply chain understand fully the impact of this proposed protocol."

The protocol raises concerns about the sharing of sensitive commercial information obtained during joint retailer/GLA visits to suppliers and the potential use of retailers' commercial power in the supply chain as an extension of the operational powers of the GLA. The GLA should apply the powers provided within its remit rather than depend upon commercial relationships between retailers and their suppliers.

Under the Gangmasters (Licensing) Act 2004 which established the GLA a labour provider is allowed the right of appeal. In the GLA and Retailers' protocol, no such right of appeal is afforded to a labour user that the GLA considers to be complicit in worker exploitation.

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.

"It's vital that the development of the GLA and Supermarkets' protocol treats retailers and suppliers as 'equal and constructive partners' and does not undermine relationships between retailers and their suppliers/labour users. The protocol must work fairly and effectively for all parties involved in the supply chain to maximise the protection of vulnerable workers," added Nigel Jenney. "Unless it works fairly and effectively for all parties involved in the supply chain this protocol should be rejected. We urge suppliers to take part in the GLA's consultation and FPC will be ensuring that their views are heard."

We are considering holding seminars on behalf of FPC members during the consultation to gather views, so let us know if you would be interested in attending. To view the consultation document click [here](#) or visit www.gla.gov.uk and forward your views to sian@freshproduce.org.uk



FPC working group meeting – Wednesday 3 June

The Pesticides and Food Chemicals Working group is meeting on Wednesday 3 June and is kindly being hosted by the US Embassy in London. Our guest speaker will be Cathy Eiden from the EPA, who has just completed a secondment with the Pesticides Safety Directorate. Cathy will be comparing the UK and US regulatory processes and sharing with us her perspective of good practice by regulators and the industry on both sides of the Atlantic.

The meeting is open to all members, but we will require you to register to access the US Embassy. If you are interested in attending please contact sian@freshproduce.org.uk

Waste Prevention Review – offer to members

As part of a wider joint project between WRAP and Envirowise to identify how resources can be used more efficiently in the fruit & vegetable supply chain, Envirowise is offering FPC members the opportunity to take part in a Waste Prevention Review.

The review will focus on one site per company that requests a review and will:

- Identify how processing, handling and storage on site, creates resource inefficiency (including energy use, product and packaging waste and water use).
- Where possible, identify how product processing, handling, storage and packaging affects waste further down the supply chain.
- Identify priorities for waste prevention (and reduced costs) as well as intervention points.
- Develop a quantified action plan for the company.

The number of Waste Prevention Reviews available are limited, so interested companies should contact Matthew Rowland-Jones (0870 190 3419), matthew.rowlandjones@envirowise.gov.uk by 30 June to book a Waste Prevention Review or for further information.

FPC responds to Competition Commission regarding Groceries Ombudsman

The fresh produce industry welcomes the opportunity for sharing best practice and transparency throughout the supply chain provided through the provision of the Competition Commission's Order.

We recognise the Competition Commission's aim to balance the need for minimum standards in supply agreements with the need to maintain scope for commercial negotiations, particularly where these negotiations are mutually beneficial to suppliers and retailers. We believe that retailer and supplier relationships should be supported through the provision of the Order, which carries the intention that any issues are resolved directly and promptly by both parties.

Whilst we recognise the potential benefits of an independent resolution, which could also provide increased assurance of representing the interests of the consumer, the intervention by a Groceries Ombudsman would be viewed in most circumstances as an option of 'last resort' by both suppliers and retailers.



Gangmaster's licence revoked by GLA

The Gangmasters Licensing Authority has revoked the licence of Sapphire Trading Ltd in Southampton after investigations uncovered a number of serious breaches of workers' rights. It was evident from the scale and extent of the breaches that the gangmaster places his workers at risk not only in the workplace but also in the accommodation provided for them.

Who buys your food?

A free workshop for farmers, growers and small food and drink manufacturers (with less than £10m p.a. turnover and fewer than 50 employees) offers to help you to get to know who buys the food you produce and to market a product. Limited places at workshops are being offered by Kent Business School on: 17 June – Salisbury; 23 June – York; 29 June – Canterbury; 1 July – Newmarket.

For more information visit: www.whobuysmyfood.org , call 01227 824 766 or email: c.l.francis@kent.ac.uk

EU Rapid Alert – Update

Information notification:

Date: 19/05/2009; notified by Denmark; ref: 2009.0633 too high content of sulphite (26 mg/kg – ppm) in seedless grapes from Chile.

Correction to previous notification:

Date: 18/05/2009; ref: 2009.0621 oxamyl in fresh peaches from Egypt – 'the product concerns peaches not pears – notification updated'.