



FPC PRESS RELEASE

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PLEASE SIR, SAVE OUR FRUIT AND VEG!

Two million children who enjoy free fruit and vegetables under the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme could find their healthy school snack removed due to looming spending cuts.

The Fresh Produce Consortium is campaigning to save the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme which provides 4-6 year olds in over 16,000 schools in England with a free piece of fruit or vegetable every day. The Scheme is delivered on behalf of Primary Care Trusts through a best practice central procurement process.

"Given Sir Philip Green's advice to Government to use central procurement it seems ridiculous that the Department of Health is hell bent on removing this element of a highly successful Scheme, and replacing one buyer with 150 buyers. The School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme in England is well placed to give youngsters a head start for eating a healthy diet. We must maintain it," said Nigel Jenney, Chief Executive of the Fresh Produce Consortium.

Already FPC's campaign has secured support from across the fresh produce industry, schools and families, and campaigners for children's health, with debates taking place online such as Netmums. FPC has urged the fresh produce industry and supporters of the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme to write to their MPs, the Department of Health and the Prime Minister to save the Scheme.

“FPC has been lobbying the UK Government for some time to expand the successful Schools Fruit and Vegetable Scheme which has proved that it can increase consumption of fresh produce and establish healthy eating habits among young children,” commented Nigel Jenney. “Many UK fresh produce businesses are involved in the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme. The Scheme’s future is at risk under the Government’s spending review so now is the time to act to save the Scheme.”

“Obesity and poor diet among children are a rising epidemic across Europe, and nearly one in three 10-11 year olds in the UK is overweight. We urge the UK Government to build on the success of the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme by maintaining the central procurement strategy. Ten pence a day is a small price to pay for children’s health,” added Nigel Jenney.

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. F i t i F ’ i v i t: <http://www.freshproduce.org.uk/SFVS/php>

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