

FIT **FOR THE** FUTURE

HELPING CONSUMERS EAT MORE
FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

NFU Horticulture & Potatoes Board

April 2016

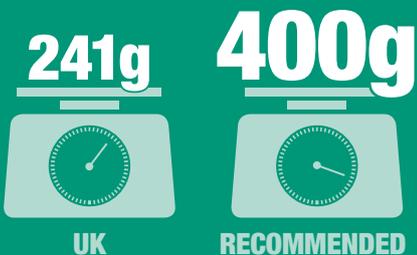


WHERE ARE WE TODAY?

“

AN ESTIMATED
5.2 MILLION DEATHS
WORLDWIDE
WERE ATTRIBUTABLE TO INADEQUATE FRUIT
AND VEGETABLE CONSUMPTION IN 2013. ”

World Health Organisation (WHO)



The UK consumes 241g of fruit and veg a day, but the recommendation is 400g

Nutrition does not sell. Taste and convenience do. The new buzzwords:

“**READY TO GO**”
“**CONVENIENT**”
“**FOOD GRAZING**”
“**ON THE GO**”

F&V are critical to tackling

TYPE TWO DIABETES

Only

18%

of households menu plan, 31% only decide on the day what to eat. The new norm is to shelf graze.



Obesity (\$2 trillion/annum) is the

#3 GLOBAL SOCIAL BURDEN

after smoking (\$2.1 trillion/annum) and war & terrorism (\$2.1 trillion/annum)



The cost of obesity to the NHS is

£5.1 BILLION
per year



86%

of consumers know the recommendation for fruit and veg is 5 a day - we now need to move towards **enabling** consumers.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the NFU, we believe the UK horticulture and potatoes sector has never been as important as it is today. Growers of fruit, vegetables and potatoes are in prime place to offer consumers fresh, delicious and, most importantly, nutritious foods that are unrivalled in their role of improving consumer health.

Numerous studies have shown that when individuals increase their fruit and vegetable consumption, this can result in lower mortality rates and is critical to combating obesity, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, cancer and many other diet related illnesses.

Furthermore, the commercial value of the UK horticulture and potatoes sector cannot be underestimated. Today, over 4000 UK growers produce around 9 million tonnes and over 300 types of fruit, vegetable and potato, contributing around £3bn to UK GDP and employing tens of thousands of workers every year.

It is particularly worrying, therefore, that since 2007 fruit purchases have fallen by 14%, vegetables by 5% and fresh potatoes by 20%. Furthermore, the impact of public health initiatives (PHI), such as the UK 5-A-Day campaign, on increasing fruit and vegetable consumption on a sustained basis remain modest. Taking in-home food waste into account, average consumption per capita is still only around 3 portions of fruit and vegetables a day.

Eating habits are changing, with less emphasis on the traditional three meals a day, giving way to more focus on food that is 'ready to go', convenient and supports a 'food grazing' lifestyle. The concept of consumers 'shelf-grazing' in retail stores is demonstrated with the increase in shopping for food a number of times a week and only 18% of UK households planning their meals for the week ahead.

The increase in food grazing is a particular issue for vegetables that are most commonly eaten during evening meals, often a time of day when people choose to eat a meal replacement. Therefore, food choices at this time of day may be an important factor that reduces total vegetable intake.

Arguably, the fruit and vegetables sector has not kept up with this changing environment. With relatively fewer 'convenient' fruit and vegetable offerings, 'food swamps' have developed, crowding out fruit and vegetables not only in terms of the fruit and vegetable to snack food ratio on retail shelves, but also in terms of fast food outlets and the swamping of nutrient-rich food choices by energy dense alternatives.

"Childhood obesity should not be seen as a result of lifestyle choices by the child. Government and society have a moral responsibility to act on behalf of the child to reduce the risk of obesity." – The World Health Organisation (WHO) Commission for Ending Childhood Obesity (ECHO)

This report sets out a number of Options for Action to increase consumption of fruit and vegetables, support improved consumer health, and deliver growth for the UK horticulture and potatoes sector. Detailed later in this report, the Options for Action encompass the following themes:

RETAILERS

Retailers are very often the face of the food industry and have a responsibility to ensure store layouts, product availability, in-store labelling, on-pack and online messaging is conducive to selling more fruit and vegetables. They can also enable consumers to eat more healthily by selling more 'snack ready' fruit and vegetable products and increasing the volume of fruit and vegetables both within, and also sold alongside ready meals.

FOOD SERVICE

Redesign of food service areas and positioning of food products can influence increased sales of fruit and vegetables, as can increased availability of healthier foods in vending machines and other quick service outlets. Food service providers can also increase the range of food products that contain fruit and vegetables and develop new products that are 'fun' and attractive to children.

FARMING AND PROCESSING SECTOR

Producers can work with other sector partners to develop a demand led strategy that could encompass the development of new crop varieties, the need for new forms of packaging, promotion and presentation and the mechanisms for promoting health messages and in-home storage instructions to a multi-dimensional audience. They can also implement growing techniques that improve substrate and soil nutrient value and mechanisms for increasing the nutrient content of the fruit and vegetables grown, harvested, stored and processed in the UK.

GOVERNMENT

It is important for government to deliver consistent programmes through schools and local communities that encompass both educational and practical initiatives. Also, food service provision in public areas such as schools, hospitals and government workplaces needs to have increased fruit and vegetable availability. Government policies on planning and community grants should support healthy high streets and improving access to nutritious food. Healthy eating advice must engage consumers with positive messages that enable consumers to eat more fruit and vegetables.

INTRODUCTION

Today's consumers are exposed to an unprecedented amount of information around food, health and nutrition, often focussing on the reasons **why** they should eat more fruit and vegetables. For most people this message has got through, a 2012 FSA survey showed that 86% of consumers knew the recommendation for fruit and vegetables was five portions a day. There is also a common understanding that fruit and vegetables play a vital role in tackling type 2 diabetes, obesity, cancer, heart disease and many other common diet related illnesses.

So it is now more important than ever to **enable** consumers so they can eat more fruit and vegetables without making dramatic lifestyle changes. **Fit for the Future** does exactly that.

In this report, the NFU has set out clear **Options for Action** for government, retailers, food service providers and producers to each play their part in increasing consumption of fruit and vegetables, thereby delivering commercial growth for the sector while executing our moral obligations for improving consumer health.

The evidence behind these actions is published in a report from the Royal Agricultural University, by lead author Dr Louise Manning, alongside an industry and government consultation by the NFU. *Enabling UK consumers to increase their consumption of fruit and vegetables*, commissioned by the NFU in 2015, is a thorough and comprehensive review of scientific research, global health programmes and industry initiatives designed to enable increased consumption of fruit and vegetables.

In launching this report, the NFU invites all key stakeholders to engage with us and to work with us to develop and implement these **Options for Action**. There has never been a better time. Now is our chance to turn ambition into reality.

THIS IS NOT (FRUIT) PIE IN THE SKY

Though consumers are increasingly aware of the importance of a healthy balanced diet, Defra reports that in 2014 UK sales of fruit were 14% lower, vegetables 5% lower and fresh potatoes 20% lower than in 2007.

Compared to the government's recommended intakes, sales of fruit and vegetables equate to around 4 of the recommended 5-A-Day. Although this does not take into account in-home food waste which, at around 22% for fruit and vegetables, would mean that average consumption is actually closer to 3 portions a day.

By contrast, nearly three times as much food and drink high in fat and/or sugar was purchased (22%) compared to the Eatwell plate percentage of 8% of daily consumption.

While the landscape with regard to enabling fruit and vegetable consumption is nuanced and multifaceted, these numbers are particularly worrying given the focus many healthy eating campaigns have put on fruit and vegetables and the important role they play in the diet.

When the 5-A-Day campaign was first launched in 2003, the government's ambition was to reach 5 portions a day for the whole of the UK population by 2015. We are still a long way from achieving this.

But this situation **can** change.

Enabling UK consumers to increase their consumption of fruit and vegetables pulls together a wide range of studies and practical initiatives that have shown to increase fruit and vegetable consumption both in the short and long term. From educational programmes that embed their teachings right through the school canteen, to developments of convenient fruit and vegetable options that have seen sales soar, and evidence around product placement, space allocation and in-store messaging that all enable consumers to eat more healthily without having to make wholesale cultural changes, increases in consumption of between 12% and a staggering 200% have been achieved.

Furthermore, nearly 50 organisations, including major retailers, food service providers and public sector institutes have made a pledge, under the government's Public Health Responsibility Deal, to "do more to create a positive environment that supports and enables people to increase their consumption of fruit and vegetables."

"I believe that in our lifetime, we can shift the dial on the epidemic of childhood obesity. But in order to realise this, we need a moment of change, and I believe that moment is now."

Jamie Oliver, letter to David Cameron, November 2015.

In implementing and developing the **Options for Action** in this report, government, retailers, food service providers and producers will be able to contribute significantly towards this goal by **enabling** consumers to eat more fruit and vegetables and realise the health benefits that it brings.

INCREASING CONSUMPTION OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

CHOICE ARCHITECTURE

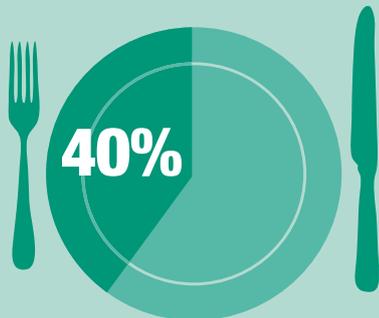
Changing canteen layout and signage can increase consumption of healthier foods. In one study

FROM **19%**  TO **33%**

Behavioural change school programmes have seen F&V consumption rising by as much as

200%

The Eatwell Guide shows that around



of our daily consumption should be fruit and veg.

REFORMULATION



of consumers, when questioned, wanted to see more ready-to-eat, single-serve F&V offerings become available on the market

Children consume up to

85% MORE

F&V when they have fun names or shapes

Consumers want convenience. Between 2012 and 2015, sales of frozen jacket potatoes increased



Source: AHDB/ Kantar Worldpanel

INFORMATION



In-store information which reinforce social norms, such as trolley placards, have been shown to increase F&V purchases by up to

12.4%

48

ORGANISATIONS

have signed the PHRD pledge to provide a positive environment for encouraging consumption of F&V

BETWEEN **70-80%** OF SHOPPERS

want product sampling and healthy meal ideas in the store to help them make nutritious food choices

THE EVIDENCE

In December 2015, the NFU commissioned a study to determine the constraining and enabling factors that influence United Kingdom (UK) consumption of fruit, vegetables and potatoes with a view to providing **Options for Action** on how such consumption could be increased. The objectives of *Enabling UK consumers to increase their consumption of fruit and vegetables* were to consider:

- The degree of consumer engagement with policy initiatives such as “5-A-Day”, “Change for Life” and the “Eatwell plate” (now Eatwell Guide) and whether purchasing and consumption of fruit and vegetables has changed over the timeline of the projects;
- The constraining and enabling factors in the consumption of fruit and vegetables described in the literature; and
- The potential options for actions that could be implemented at policy, industry and personal levels to increase the consumption of fruit and vegetables in the UK.

A holistic approach was used in the study to draw together themes from a range of academic and policy literature. The report’s Options for Action were considered in terms of the positive steps that could be taken by government, retailers, food service and the farming and processing sector in order to play their respective roles in enabling the increased consumption of fruit and vegetables in the UK.

Increased consumption of fruit and vegetables is considered to be a critical step to prevent excessive weight gain.

The MacKinsey Global Institute report of 2014 determined that obesity is one of the top three global social burdens generated by human beings: smoking and armed violence, war and terrorism as two issues represented a direct economic impact of \$2.1 trillion each, with obesity sitting third at \$2 trillion per annum, well above climate change at \$1 trillion. In a debate in the House of Commons in 2016, Dr. Sarah Wollaston stated:

“9p in every £1 we spend in the NHS is spent on diabetes. We estimate from the evidence that the Health Committee took during our hearings that the overall cost of obesity to the NHS is now £5.1 billion a year, and the wider costs to society have been estimated to be as high as £27 billion, although the estimates vary. We simply cannot afford to take no action.....”

First Report from the Health Committee, Session 2015-16. Childhood obesity—brave and bold action, HC 465.

In 1990 the World Health Organisation (WHO) recommended a minimum consumption of 400g of fruit and vegetables per day and in the UK this was translated into the 5-A-Day initiative and other initiatives globally. However, the impact of these public health initiatives (PHI) on increasing fruit and vegetables consumption on a sustained basis remains modest (Rekhy and McConchie 2014). Various interventions to promote the consumption of fruit and vegetables have been initiated by government, industry and not-for-profit organisations and many of these have conducted informational and educational PHI with mixed results.

Success has been reported for those PHI that have forged partnerships between industry, retail, government and not-for-profit organisations promoting public health (Rekhy and McConchie 2014).

Whilst the relative affordability of energy dense foods compared to nutrient rich foods has been suggested as a primary constraint, the report demonstrates that the landscape with regard to enabling fruit and vegetable consumption is in fact much more nuanced and multifaceted. Thus whilst affordability is important, there are other positive steps that can be taken that show the potential to make a real difference and increase the level of fruit and vegetable consumption in the UK.

Defra statistics highlight that there is a disparity in fruit and vegetable purchases between average and low income households and an overall reduction in fruit and vegetable purchases between 2011 and 2014. However it should be noted that a proportion of this reduction is the reduced consumption of fruit juice which is included within the 5-A-Day campaign. From a health perspective this reduction in fruit and vegetable consumption has contributed to a fall in fibre intake (7.1% between 2011 and 2014) and also in a range of micronutrients, notably Vitamin B6 and folate.

However, it is important to note that purchasing statistics alone have limited value in measuring actual fruit and vegetable consumption as they do not take into account wastage in the home. Defra statistics suggest the cost of fruit



You can view the full *Enabling UK consumers to increase their consumption of fruit and vegetables* online at <https://goo.gl/Vf0G3x>

and vegetable wastage in the home is £2.6 billion per year. Improving storage of fruit and vegetables in the home is a crucial step to lengthen shelf-life and maintain the quality of fruit and vegetables and help consumers save money too.

Combining the purchasing and wastage figures from different Defra reports (FSP, 2015; DFFR, 2015) suggests an average consumption of 241g per day per person, equivalent to three out of the five recommended fruit and vegetable portions a day.

Enabling UK consumers to increase their consumption of fruit and vegetables has considered the proactive steps that can be taken to facilitate increased consumption of fruit and vegetables. These include:

- **Choice architecture** which is relevant to community environment, retail store, food service, work place canteen and school canteen layout, and managing portion control with a view to influencing choice, promoting convenience and high calorie food/ beverage availability.
- **Reformulation** - including more fruit and vegetables in convenience food options and other food offerings. Relatively simple changes such as increasing the use of fruit and vegetables in convenience foods could make a significant improvement to the nutrient profile of meals.
- **Information** - reminding people at the point of purchase about their choices, drawing attention to social norms and framing information.

Choice architecture can be described as the informational or physical structure of the environment that influences the way in which choices are made including reducing the portion size of unhealthy foods and changing the relative pricing of foods (Dodds, 2014; Thaler and Sunstein, 2008). However “nutrition doesn’t sell, but convenience and taste do” (Hanks et al. 2012:1) thus choice architecture has to include making fruit and vegetables more convenient as food options.

Furthermore, eating habits are changing with less emphasis on the traditional three meals a day, giving way to more focus on food that is ‘ready to go’, convenient and supporting a ‘food grazing’ lifestyle. The concept of consumers ‘shelf-grazing’ in retail stores is being demonstrated with the increase in shopping for food multiple times a week and only 18% of UK households planning their meals for the week ahead (Co-op, nd). Reasons highlighted for this include: not wanting to buy too far in advance, uncertain weekly schedules, a wish to move away from menu planning and concerns over food waste.

Certain food items may have increased perceptions of value for the very reason that they reduce the need for making a decision (Vohs et al. 2014). Yet, shelf grazing can create a problem for retailers in terms of aligning the product offering and the buying behaviour of shoppers. A mismatch can lead to increased shrinkage (the loss in margin or profitability incurred from product spoilage or wastage) especially

in short shelf-life products. Current fruit and vegetable shrinkage levels vary between 4.8% and 15% of retail sales (Buzby et al. 2015; Buck and Minvielle, 2013). Critically, shrinkage will influence retail space allocation as retail food stores seek the best financial return for the shelf space available in a given location.

The term ‘food swamps’ can be used to describe this crowding out of fruit and vegetables not only in terms of fruit and vegetable to snack food ratio on retail shelves, but also in terms of fast food outlets and the swamping of nutrient-rich foods by energy dense alternatives. There are health implications too. A study in ten countries concluded that there was a relationship between a lower national body mass index (BMI) and a higher percentage of shelf space allocated to fruit and vegetable products (Norman et al. 2014).

A range of global and national public health initiatives (PHI) have been described in the full report along with the enabling and constraining factors that have influenced the success of PHI and mechanisms such as the Public Health Responsibility Deal (PHRD) that have sought to engage voluntary support from industry. The evidence suggests that PHI in the UK have failed to enable the general public to consume an average of 5-A-Day as recommended by the WHO. Therefore new and innovative methods need to be developed and implemented by the whole industry in order to increase consumption. These form the basis of the **Options for Action** in this report.



**“A STUDY IN TEN COUNTRIES
CONCLUDED THAT THERE WAS
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LOWER NATIONAL BODY MASS
INDEX (BMI) AND A HIGHER
PERCENTAGE OF SHELF SPACE
ALLOCATED TO FRUIT AND
VEGETABLE PRODUCTS”**

(Norman et al. 2014)



OPTIONS FOR ACTION - RETAILERS

- **Make fruit and veg an intrinsic part of today's shop** to overcome decision fatigue. Only 18% of UK household's menu plan for the week, and 31% only decide on the day what to eat. Address this by putting fruit and veg in front of every customer, every time, in multiple parts of store.
- **Increase fruit and veg content in ready meals** by one portion per meal.
- **Multi-site fruit and veg 3-4 times in every store**, making it available in multipacks, snack packs, with lunchtime meal deals, alongside ready meals and at the checkout. There has been good evidence that fixture location, product category location, item location within categories, off-shelf displays and point of sale promotional support affects purchasing decisions.
- **Increase the proportion of fruit and veg snacks available** as the trend increases to replace meals with snack alternatives. For children, work with the supply base to develop fruit and veg snack products that are 'fun shaped' e.g. animals, letters etc. 'fun named' or with fun characters and positioned in store to increase child purchasing requests.
- **Introduce 'chilled' checkouts** to enable fresh, healthy products to be sold at point of purchase for immediate consumption.
- **Embed storage instructions onto pre-packed fruit and veg outer packaging** so it can be seen on purchase and when stored in the home. It is important that this is visible when the packaging is still intact on pre-packed fruit and veg and is available at the point of purchase for loose fruit e.g. via information on bags, shelf cards, stickers that can be applied to clear bags, paper bags with storage information etc. The ambient display of produce is often confusing for consumers when the recommendation is to then refrigerate food at home.
- **Introduce mechanisms such as the use of floor markers, grocery trolley or basket mirrors, sectioning of fruit and veg area in trolleys or basket, and trolley/ basket placards** to reinforce the social norms associated with fruit and veg choice. Use of such placards in one study increased the spending on fruit and veg by 12.4% in one store and 7.5% in another. Provide information for consumers on the top five fruit and veg items purchased in the store on shelf markers or visual boards.
- **Improve the positioning of fruit and veg products on shelf**, especially snack products as positioning has been shown to influence choice so that fruit and veg are not disregarded due to positioning.
- **Improve the use of shelf labels** that identify healthy products, provide more information on healthy meal ideas and recipes and consider a rewards programme for purchasing healthy products.
- **Increase staff knowledge about healthy food choices and nutrition**. In one study, only 35% of shoppers felt that supermarkets enabled them to make healthy food choices for their children, and only a quarter of shoppers felt that grocery store staff were knowledgeable about nutrition or nutrition supplements.
- **Promote product tastings and recipe cards featuring fruit and veg** that are ideal accompaniments for ready-meals and promote the presence of healthy ingredients.
- **Build health into existing food products with a programme of reformulation and refocus** such as with ready-meals, and revitalise the components of meal deal options to ensure there is an increased availability of convenience fruit and veg products.



OPTIONS FOR ACTION – FOOD SERVICE

- **Redesign the layout of food service areas and positioning of food products** in order to have increased fruit and veg availability at the start of the buffet and use convenient options for fruit and veg products on buffets.
- **Implement the labelling of food products in vending machines, buffets and on menus** to signify the health benefits to people choosing both meal and snack options. This has already begun with some food service businesses promoting fruit and veg based products for say under 350 calories for a meal option.
- **Through menu development and recipe reformulation increase the range of food products that contain fruit and veg**, and more specifically in “ready-to-go” products being offered in the food service environment.
- **Increase the proportion of fruit and veg items available for children** by developing fruit and veg options that are “fun shaped” e.g. animals, letters etc. “fun named” or with fun characters and positioned in a way on the menu or table information to increase child purchasing requests.

OPTIONS FOR ACTION - FARMING AND PROCESSING SECTOR

- **Work with your customers to develop a demand led strategy** that could encompass the development of new crop varieties, the need for new forms of packaging, promotion and presentation and the mechanisms for promoting health messages and in-home storage instructions to a multi-dimensional audience.
- **Develop cross sector marketing and promotion campaigns** that start to treat fruit and veg like a brand and get consumers to better engage with fresh produce.
- **Build health into existing food products with a programme of reformulation and refocus** such as with ready-meals, and revitalise the components of meal deal options to ensure there is an increased availability of convenience fruit and veg products.
- **Embed storage instructions onto pre-packed fruit and veg outer packaging** so it can be seen on purchase and when stored in the home.
- **Identify new ways of delivering convenience to consumers** through further processing of fruit and veg so it can compete as a convenience product.
- **Increase the proportion of F&V snacks available** as the trend increases to replace meals with snack alternatives. Work specifically with supply chain partners to develop child-centred F&V snack products that are “fun shaped” for example, animals, letters etc. “fun named” or with fun characters and positioned in a way in store to increase child purchasing requests.
- **Implement growing techniques that improve substrate and soil nutrient value** and mechanisms for increasing the nutrient content of the fruit and veg grown, harvested, stored and processed in the UK.
- **Build engagement with influential communicators, such as popular food bloggers,** to continue to reinforce positive messages to consumers around the role fruit and veg plays in a healthy diet.





**“WE NEED A
FOOD SYSTEM AND
FOOD POLICY THAT
GOES MUCH FURTHER IN
HELPING TO ENSURE THAT
FAMILIES CAN EAT MORE
HEALTHILY.”**

The Food Foundation,
Force-Fed report, Jan 2016

OPTIONS FOR ACTION – GOVERNMENT

- **Put fruit and veg consumption at the heart of the forthcoming Childhood Obesity Strategy** to deliver positive, engaging messages around food and nutrition. And ensure its objectives are followed through, regardless of the EU referendum result.
- **Develop a cohesive strategy for enabling fruit and veg consumption** with a view to promoting the need for increased fibre and micronutrient consumption to ensure the nation's health, in addition to existing initiatives.
- **Provide more information on the nutritional benefits of potatoes** and the essential micronutrients they contain within the messaging around the Eatwell Guide.
- **Revisit planning regulations** with regard to enabling choice architecture at community level and ensuring that healthy foods are not simply 'swamped out' by energy-dense food alternatives.
- **Redesign the layout of food service areas and positioning of food products** in schools, hospitals and government workplaces in order to have increased fruit and veg availability at the start of the buffet setting, plus the use of convenient options for fruit and veg products in vending machines.
- **Promote increased visibility of fruit and veg within the School Food Plan** with an associated choice architecture strategy in the serving setting as outlined above. And ensure delivery of the plan is consistently applied across local authorities. Going forward, as all schools move towards Academy status, ensure that fruit and veg consumption remains a priority in any new school food initiatives.
- **Undertake a feasibility study** to determine applicability within the UK policy environment for the development of an equivalent Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Programme (CFPCGP) in order to implement a nutrition incentive based approach (e.g. fruit and veg prescriptions) as has been developed in the US where it currently involves 110 community based partners, 730 community health care centres, hospitals and food hubs.
- **Extend the Healthy Start programme** to include all families with children under 16.
- **Provide additional advice on juice and juicing of fruit and veg** so consumers understand the balances required to benefit from their nutritional values.
- **Provide an enabling environment for food reformulation** for example through the Public Health Responsibility Deal.

CHAMPIONING CHANGE

The NFU is passionate about delivering growth in the UK fresh produce sector, to enable growers to have the confidence to invest, to build more collaborative relationships across the supply chain, and to deliver fresh, tasty and, importantly, healthy foods to consumers.

And we know we're not alone. The NFU has been in discussions with a wide range of stakeholders that have all expressed a desire to do more. From major retailers, government departments, growers, processors, NGO's and many more, the creation of this report has been met with wide scale support.

So now is the time to turn the rhetoric into action. It is time to turn the **why** into **how**. It is time to put in motion practical initiatives that enable consumers to choose healthier foods without having to dramatically change their lifestyles.

In delivering this report and presenting the **Options for Action** the NFU is calling on all parts of the industry and government to engage with us and to implement initiatives that drive consumer purchases of fruit and vegetables.

The opportunities are there today to deliver a food environment that is **Fit for the Future**. So let's work together to make it happen!

ALI CAPPER, CHAIRMAN, NFU HORTICULTURE AND POTATOES BOARD



"As a mother to two young children, I know how difficult it is to ensure they have a healthy, balanced diet when they can so easily be influenced by clever marketing campaigns, conflicting information and the proliferation of innutritious foods in stores. And as a grower, I see first-hand the damage that a fall in consumption is having on UK businesses.

Delivering growth in consumption of fruit and vegetables benefits everyone: it enables growers to invest in the future and deliver great value and highly nutritious foods; it delivers profits back into the supply chain; and, importantly, it can help consumers have healthier lives.

That is why I feel so passionate that all parts of the industry and government need to step up their efforts to make this happen. At the NFU, we are prepared to give this the attention it needs and by delivering Fit for the Future we are calling on industry and government to join us in this most important initiative."

ANNA TAYLOR, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, FOOD FOUNDATION



"This is an important and timely report, reminding us that the UK population needs to urgently increase fruit and vegetable consumption. The report's recommendations underline how multi-stakeholder action is needed and that changes in supply chain practices must be supported by an ambitious and cross-cutting Government strategy. The NFU's leadership on this critical issue is very welcome. The Food Foundation is taking forward an ambitious programme of work aimed at improving vegetable consumption in Britain. We look forward to identifying opportunities to work with the NFU and others to push for concerted action to make it easier for people to eat healthily."

CAROLINE DRUMMOND MBE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE, LEAF



“Much of the focus on addressing the increasing challenges facing public health due to dietary related diseases, such as obesity and non-communicable diseases, currently lies with the health and education sector. Yet the need to embed nutrition as a core value when consumers make purchasing decisions is essential. Farming has a key role to play in the health agenda and we need to ensure the agricultural industry takes centre stage in government discussions and policy decisions.

LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming) welcomes and supports this report developed by the NFU which sits well with our own work on developing ‘Healthy Food and Farming – fit for the future’ where we are looking to develop an agricultural sector that is involved in a fully integrated approach to providing solutions for improving the health of our nation. It is essential that we grow the capability of farmers and the related industries so that we can add value pre-farm gate to farmers and growers and raise the ambitions of the sector.

The fresh produce sector has always had a reputation for being at the forefront of adopting innovation. There could not be a better opportunity than now to drive change and inspire and grow this sector further.

We look forward to working closely with the NFU and others to make it happen.”

JACK WARD, CHIEF
EXECUTIVE, BRITISH
GROWERS ASSOCIATION



“There is real opportunity for UK horticulture to have a major influence on the health of the nation and at the same time reverse the decline in the UK production and supply of fruit and veg. The NFU document Fit for the Future is crucial in spelling out how that contribution could work and what needs to be done to get the nation eating a healthier and more balanced diet. A bigger focus on our national nutrition should be a major priority for the current and future Governments.

UK horticulture with its commitment, innovation, willingness to invest and ability to deliver value and quality across a broad range of fruit, salads and veg needs to become a key player in this ‘must do’ activity. Well done NFU in getting the ball rolling on an important topic.”



FIT FOR THE FUTURE

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