



19 November 2017

Five A Day could become unaffordable for millions

Government urged to link horticulture and health in a crucial opportunity to form a new Agriculture Bill that supports farmers, ordinary families and the NHS after Brexit.

- Brits could face increased fruit & veg bill of up to £158 a year for a family of four
- Fruit & veg amounting to 46% of the food & drink budget of the poorest 10% of households
- 16 of our 50 favourite fruit and vegetables could be grown more in the UK
- Only 8% of children aged 11-18 years achieving 5 a Day⁽⁵⁾

New analysis by the Food Foundation shows that Brits could be spending at least £150 more on fruit and veg per year. The new report, which examines the potential impact of different Brexit scenarios on fruit and veg prices, raises concerns for the 92% of teenagers in the UK already struggling to get their 5-a-day.

The report shows that a triple impact of exchange rates, labour costs and tariffs are likely to make it even harder for us all to get our 5-a-day. Those on a low income, such as the 1 in 5 people earning below the Real Living Wage, will be impacted the most⁽³⁾. In a No-Deal scenario, price rises would mean the poorest 10% of the population could spend half of their entire food and drink budget to meet current government guidance for fruit and veg. Low earning Brits already consume, on average, 1 portion less of fruit and veg each day⁽⁴⁾, compared to more wealthy households but very few of us eat enough and treatment of diet-related disease is crippling the NHS.

The report, which groups fruit and veg as Hardy Heroes, Brexit Boosters and Channel Hoppers depending levels of UK self-sufficiency, explains the opportunity Ministers have to develop a policy which deliberately sets out to benefit the nation's health. Included are a number of measures which could be adopted in the forthcoming Agriculture Bill which offer genuine public good for public money. The report identifies 16 of our 50 favourite fruit and veg which could be grown more in the UK, meaning less reliance on imports and more competitive prices⁽⁶⁾. It also suggests actions which could be included in the Agriculture Bill to drive up supply and demand of British produce.

"The government faces a clear choice to boost British harvests of fruit and veg or the NHS will reap the consequences. Five-a-day needs fresh ideas and an Agriculture Bill which increases supply and demand of British fruit and veg is a huge opportunity.

It is absolutely crucial that the government grabs the bull by the horns before the Brexit boat sails" says Anna Taylor, Executive Director of the Food Foundation.

"British growers of fruit and veg are being squeezed by difficulties in securing labour and limited demand from British consumers. The Agriculture Bill provides an opportunity to boost the sector to deliver more for the economy and the health of the nation" said John Shropshire, Chairman of G's Fresh.



"The Agricultural Bill is a major opportunity to help fruit and veg growers, as well as helping consumers to get their 5-a-day. The risks that the industry face are too huge to miss this vital moment" said Kerry McCarthy MP.

This report forms part of the Food Foundation's Peas Please initiative, which looks at supply side barriers to vegetable consumption. Peas Please brings together farmers, retailers, fast food and restaurant chains, caterers, manufacturers and government departments with the common goal of making it easier for everyone to eat more veg.

Notes to Editor

1. The Food Foundation is an independent think tank funded by Esmée Fairbairn and Nuffield Foundation
2. Link to the report: [Farming for 5-A-Day](#)
3. Living Wage Source <https://home.kpmg.com/uk/en/home/insights/2017/11/kpmg-living-wage-research-2017.html>
4. Source: National Diet and Nutrition Survey 2008/9 – 2011/12
5. Source: National Diet and Nutrition Survey 2012/13 – 2013/14
6. 16 of our favourite fruit and veg that could be grown more in the UK: Apples, Broccoli, Cauliflower, Cherries, Courgettes, Cucumbers, Garlic, Lettuce, Mushrooms, Onions, Pears, Peppers, Spinach, Spring Onions, Sweetcorn and Tomatoes