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## **NEW FIGURES SHOW BRITISH CONSUMERS BUY JUST OVER A THIRD OF THE VEG THEY SHOULD**

**Notable regional variations: English consumers buy the most veg, Scottish the least.**

**New online guide to help retailers sell more veg, boost profits and help customers to eat more healthily**

New data released today shows that UK consumers are buying two thirds less veg than the amount recommended by health experts. According to Government guidance on a healthy diet, 20% of our shopping should be made up of vegetables, but in reality we only reach 7.2%. Figures from the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation show that as many as 20,000 premature deaths annually in the UK could be avoided if we all ate more veg.

The analysis, released by The Food Foundation is based on data from consumer behaviour experts Kantar Worldpanel and shows notable regional variations, with English consumers buying the most veg (7.3%) and Scottish consumers the least (6.6%). Welsh shoppers beat their Scottish counterparts, but lag behind England, with 7.1% of their purchases being veg.

Food Foundation Director Anna Taylor says, "Education programmes designed to get people to eat more veg have had limited success. We need to change tack and look at all parts of the food supply chain and ask ourselves what more we can do to make it easier for consumers to eat more veg.

"Today we are publishing a new online guide, which is packed with practical ideas for retailers, big and small, to increase their fresh, frozen and tinned vegetable sales. International and domestic case studies in our guide show that a strong vegetable offer can boost profits, so we hope they'll be interested."

Practical tips used by successful retailers and flagged in the guide include measures such as mid aisle displays (which boosted sales of overlooked veg by 400% in Denmark), using floor stickers and marking space in trolleys for fruit and veg.

The guide is endorsed by British convenience store franchise group Simply Fresh, which is based in the Midlands and has 85 stores.

Sukhjit Khera, Director of Simply Fresh said: "Leading on vegetables, making them a prominent part of our displays and overall offer, has been key to our success. In our Alcester store alone, we were able to double turnover and increase our margin by 2% with the introduction of a more substantive vegetable offer, despite being surrounded by a number of the larger high street supermarkets."



This is backed by the Association of Convenience Stores, who say that 49% of all convenience store shoppers consider healthy options as important.

James Lowman, Chief Executive of the Association of Convenience Stores agrees. "HIM research shows that only 23% of UK consumers think that their local convenience stores have enough healthy options but shoppers tell us that they would recommend stores to friends based on the quality of their fruit and veg. Providing a full range of fruit and veg not only helps consumers make healthy choices, but makes sound business sense."

The move by the Food Foundation to help retailers improve their veg offer is part of the think tank's Peas Please initiative. Peas Please is a ground breaking new initiative to address declining levels of veg consumption. It aims to bring together farmers, retailers, fast food and restaurant chains, caterers, processors and government departments with a common goal of making it easier for everyone to eat veg.

As part of the initiative, the Food Foundation will hold a Vegetable Summit which will take place in London, Cardiff and Glasgow on October 24<sup>th</sup> 2017.

## **Ends**

For more information on the Food Foundation, the retail toolkit or the Peas Please initiative, please contact Alex Ward on 020 3086 9953.

The Food Foundation is an independent think tank that tackles the growing challenges facing the UK's food system through the interests of the UK public. We provide clear analysis of the problems caused by the food system and the role of policy and practice in addressing these. We develop and articulate food policies that support and guide the UK public to make choices that improve their health and well-being and we inform and generate demand for new and better public and private sector policy and practice.

For information on how the figures were calculated please see [here](#) [will be live from 00.01 Fri – please ask for an advance copy if necessary]