



**Embargoed for 00.01 on Monday 8th October**

## **CATERERS LEAD NATIONAL EFFORT TO GET THE UK EATING MORE VEG**

- **10 major UK catering businesses have made commitments to the Peas Please initiative to increase vegetable consumption**
- **Currently it's estimated that for every three meals eaten out of home, we consume approximately half a portion of veg:**
- **New Euromonitor data shows the UK ranks 21 out of 28 in the EU for fresh vegetable consumption:**
- **Caterers will strive to maximise the number of vegetables they procure and sell by promoting veg, creating new veg products and providing nutritional training for staff**
- **Bartlett-Mitchell, TUCO, OCS at City Hall, Dynamic Earth in Edinburgh and Vacherin are among the companies to make a Veg Pledge for 2018**
- **BaxterStorey pledges to make vegetables 15% of food purchased by 2019**
- **The full set of Peas Please pledgers will be announced at the Vegetable Summit at City Hall on 8<sup>th</sup> October**

**Vegetable Summit, City Hall, 8<sup>th</sup> October 2018** – Today ten catering businesses join the national [Peas Please](#) initiative to put more vegetables on UK plates.

Independent think tank the [Food Foundation](#) estimates that for every three meals eaten out and on-the-go, we consume an average of half a portion of veg: but caterers [Albacore](#), [Bartlett-Mitchell](#), [CEC Catering](#) and [Vacherin](#) have joined the Peas Please initiative to play their part in making veg more accessible and more appealing for UK consumers. These caterers join [Sodexo](#) and [Interserve](#) who made pledges in 2017.

The new catering pledgers have a combined reach of more than 833 sites and are all committing to substantially increasing the quantity of veg they procure and serve, pledging to drive up the numbers of portions we eat by millions over the next few years. These commitments are welcome in view of newly released Euromonitor data which show that the UK ranks 8th worst in Europe for per capita fresh veg consumption:

Peas Please is coordinated by partner organisations in each of the four UK nations, and aims to bring together business and brands from across the food system to secure [commitments](#) to improve the availability, affordability and quality of the veg offer in shops, schools, fast-food restaurants and beyond. Peas Please has delivered 4.8 million additional portions of veg in its first year.

For every one of your five-a-day eaten, your risk of all-cause mortality decreases by 5%<sup>3</sup>. Eighty percent of adults and 95% of teenagers eat fewer than 3.5 portions of veg a day<sup>4</sup>, but eating more veg could prevent diet-related chronic illnesses like heart disease, cancer and diabetes, and significantly reduce the subsequent financial burden on the NHS.

When [BaxterStorey](#) with client [PwC](#) joined the Peas Please initiative, 15% of the food it purchased was veg. In just eight months it has increased that to 20%, and is now aiming to reach 25% by 2020. Spurred on by this success, which has delighted staff and both businesses alike, BaxterStorey is now making a business-wide pledge to ensure that by October 2019 15% of the food it purchases will be veg (from a baseline of 12%). This will be rolled out in over 700 sites. CEC Catering will increase the vegetable offering by 20% at each of its four sites within the next year.

Further Peas Please catering success stories include [SA Brain & Co Ltd](#), which has sold an additional 88,000 children's portions of veg since spring 2018 by increasing the vegetable content of children's meals from one to two portions.

**Mike Hanson, Head of Sustainable Business at Baxter Storey said:** "We are proud to be working with PwC to deliver more nutritious options to our customers. To achieve our pledge within eight months highlights that customers are demanding more choice and availability of vegetables on the menu. We have not only enjoyed creating nutritious and exciting dishes which make veg the star of the plate; but are proud to be leading the change towards a more sustainable hospitality industry."

Vacherin is planning to increase the amount of veg it procures by 20% by 2020, and Albacore aims to purchase 15% more veg in the coming year, focusing on its larger sites with a mix of canteen nudges (from table talkers to plasma screens), veg snack pots, salad boxes and grab-n-go items, promoting meat-free alternatives on the menu.

Bartlett-Mitchell has committed to driving up its veg procurement by 10% within the coming year, and will provide a programme of comprehensive nutrition education for staff.

In support of the effort, university catering association [TUCO](#) has pledged to work with its members to encourage their involvement in Peas Please. [Saffron](#), whose software is used by many of the caterers, has agreed to help develop bespoke reporting for the initiative.

**Mike Haslin, CEO of The University Caterers Organisation (TUCO)**, said: “We are delighted to support Peas Please in their initiative to increase vegetable consumption in catering establishments. As the leading professional membership body for in-house caterers operating in the higher and further education sector and public foodservice, we commit to promoting this campaign to our members, to encourage them to include two portions of vegetables as standard in a main meal. The health and wellbeing of consumers is pivotal.”

Iconic venues [City Hall](#) in London and [Dynamic Earth](#) in Edinburgh are stepping in to support veg consumption too, and will include more veg options for visitors and staff.

And to ensure the kids don't miss out, Scotland's new [Chefs@School](#) programme is pledging to reach 6,000 children with new educational resources, along with football party company [Goals](#) who will introduce veg as a starter to their party menus, and plan to get kids eating an additional 100,000 portions in 2019.

City Hall will play host to the [Vegetable Summit 2018](#) (free press passes available with the code MoreVeg) on 8<sup>th</sup> October as participants in the initiative celebrate the impact already made by Peas Please, announce major new pledges, welcome Northern Ireland as a new partner (Food NI), and launch the Peas Please 2018 Progress Report.

**Anna Taylor, Executive Director of the Food Foundation**, said: “Peas Please shows that it is possible to make it easier for everyone to eat more veg but it needs concerted leadership from progressive businesses. We've made great progress in the last 8 months but the pressure is now on to change pledges into portions to ensure genuine impact on the nation's health.”

**Wendy Bartlett MBE, Founder and Executive Chair of Bartlett-Mitchell**, said: "As a progressive business, we are always looking to provide food which not only tastes good, but also supports the health and wellbeing of our teams and customers.

"We are proud to be recognised by many organisations for our thorough, engaging and creative educational programmes. As part of this pledge, we are committing to ensuring that our customers are provided with additional information and insights which will encourage them to increase their vegetable. We've already enjoyed great success with our '5 days on the veg' campaign which proved incredibly popular with our teams. We are looking forward to building on this through the 'Peas Please' initiative."

**Nicola Harrison, Albacore**, said: "We will record the number of the promoted items that are sold daily. We will monitor the uptake of plant based dishes on a quarterly basis, by comparing the number of vegetable based meals sold per week at the beginning of the campaign against the average number sold per week. We will request purchasing volume data from our vegetable supplier and our food wholesalers at the start, middle and end of our campaign to monitor the increase."

**Chris Davidson, CEC Catering**, said: "CEC-Catering is proud to be involved in the Peas Please initiative. We feel that offering more vegetables to our customers is an important part of our service. It encourages healthy eating throughout the workforce which we hope will filter down to the grass roots of family life. The extra portions of vegetables that we offer are affordable and sustainable, good for both the environment and the consumer."

**Andrew Pond, Head of Business Development at Saffron**, said "From recipe and menu design through to purchasing and stock control we support a range of the leading hospitality organisations in the UK where our solution, Saffron, provides a range of innovative reports evidencing the purchase, uptake and nutritional benefits of increasing vegetable consumption"

## Notes to Editors

1. <https://foodfoundation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/How-much-veg-do-we-eat-out-of-the-home-and-on-the-go.pdf>
2. Euromonitor International is a global market research company, providing strategic intelligence on industries, companies, economies and consumers around the world. Euromonitor data is based on data on the availability of fresh produce gathered from production, trade and, industrial processing and waste statistics. 18 markets are researched

with a full individual country research programme (including the UK), while for the remaining 36 countries, market sizes are built centrally using secondary source information. Modelled countries are not researched, they are estimates based on most similar/representative markets. <https://foodfoundation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Euromonitor-fresh-produce-data.pdf>

3. Wang Xia, Ouyang Yingying, Liu Jun, Zhu Minmin, Zhao Gang, Bao Wei et al. Fruit and vegetable consumption and mortality from all causes, cardiovascular disease, and cancer: systematic review and dose-response meta-analysis of prospective cohort studies BMJ 2014; 349 :g4490
4. <https://foodfoundation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/FF-Veg-Doc-V5.pdf>

Anna Taylor is available for further comment.

**Media pack available here (including Peas Please progress report):** [Media Pack](#)

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### **About Peas Please**

A trail-blazing initiative focused specifically on veg, Peas Please 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. Committed to collaborative working, Peas Please is led by project partners the [Food Foundation](#), [WWF UK](#), [Nourish Scotland](#), [Food NI](#) and [Food Cardiff](#) who have secured engagement and support from over 150 organisations in cities, business and Governments across the UK to bring about change to the whole food system to improve people's health and wellbeing. For more information about the Peas Please, please visit [www.foodfoundation.org.uk/peasplease](http://www.foodfoundation.org.uk/peasplease)

