

Embargoed until Monday 9th July 00.01

New Fruit and Vegetable Alliance launches in Parliament today to boost British production by 25 billion more portions, in line with ‘seven a day’

- **As the new UK Agriculture Bill approaches; big and small producers, trade associations and charities are convening to form the new Fruit and Vegetable Alliance which will promote fruit and vegetable production and consumption to support the nation’s health**
- **Analysis shows that to help us meet the Government’s dietary guideline of ‘seven a day’, UK farmers have the opportunity to grow two million more tonnes of fruit and vegetables each year, amounting to 25 billion more portions and increasing the value of the sector to £3.1 billion**
- **Currently less than 1% of the UK’s agricultural land is used for fruit and vegetables, but together they rival the economic impact of poultry, lamb and pig meat production.¹**

Monday 9th July – The Fruit and Vegetable Alliance will launch in Parliament today to mark the beginning of a coordinated drive to boost production and consumption of fruit and vegetables in the UK in order to improve public health.

To follow Government dietary guidelines on fruit and vegetable consumption (seven portions a day²), the UK needs to eat 5.7 million tonnes more than we currently consume. Allowing for the fact that the UK will always need to import some produce, the production opportunity for UK growers is still two million more tonnes, which would amount to an additional 25 billion portions each year and increase the sector’s value to £3.1 billion.³

The Fruit and Vegetable Alliance brings together representatives from across the sector to develop a vision for edible horticulture that reflects the health needs of the population and is supported by the Government. Small and large producers, producer organisations, trade associations and health/food charities have joined forces to make the collective case for supporting fruit and vegetable production and consumption. The diverse range of organisations involved will make the Alliance the go-to source for input and advice on edible horticulture for the Government and other actors in the industry and public health community.

The Alliance is being launched in Parliament with the support of Helen Whately MP and the APPG for Fruit and Vegetable Growers. Members will form a new Edible Horticulture Roundtable that is also being launched with the support of the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA). The Roundtable will provide DEFRA with regular advice on edible horticulture and will convene for the first time in the autumn.

Current members of the Alliance include (alphabetical order): British Growers, Bristol Food Producers, British Summer Fruits, Chris Rose Associates/Asplins PO, Community Farm, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Network UK, Food Foundation/Peas Please, Growing Communities/Better Food Traders, G's Fresh, Kindling Trust, Landworkers' Alliance, Organic Farmers and Growers, Organic Growers Alliance, Produce World, Social Farms and Gardens, Soil Association, Sustain, Tamar Grow Local, and Tyfu Cymru – Grow Wales (Lantra).

Full details of the Fruit and Vegetable Alliance's membership, objectives and approach are available [here](#).

Anna Taylor, Executive Director of the Food Foundation, said: "We desperately need to drive up fruit and vegetable consumption in the UK to support public health, especially for those who don't have much money. The Alliance is an exciting new mechanism for ensuring UK agriculture policy promotes both the production and consumption of fruit and veg: it's an innovative and collaborative approach of which we're thrilled to be a part."

Farming Minister George Eustice said: "It is great to see this initiative to encourage people to eat more of the UK's excellent fruit and vegetables as way of improving public health.

"As we set out in our recent consultation, we also want to see food production go hand in hand with our farmers' work to protect and enhance the natural environment."

Jack Ward, Chief Executive of the British Growers Association, said: "The Fruit and Veg Alliance brings together a range of organisations with a shared interest in promoting the consumption and production of fruit and veg in the UK. It will also help the sector to capitalise on opportunities which arise from Brexit and the introduction of a new domestic agricultural policy."

Rebecca Loughton, Landworkers' Alliance and Growing Communities, said: "The range of scales and horticultural techniques represented by the new Fruit and Vegetable Alliance provides the best chance of finding creative solutions to the challenge of boosting UK fresh produce production and consumption. If we succeed, the health, environmental and economic benefits could be huge."

Notes to Editors

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Social media

Twitter: @Food_Foundation

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1. Fruit and vegetables have an output of £0.7 billion and £1.3 billion (a total of £2 billion), while poultry is £2.2 billion, lamb meat £1.1 billion and pig meat £1 billion. Source: Agriculture in the United Kingdom 2016. Available from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/672119/AUK-2016-08jan18.pdf
2. The Government recommends at least five portions of fruit and veg per day. However the latest Eatwell Guide shows that an adult's diet should contain 554g of fruit and veg, which amounts to seven portions (80g portions) (PHE, personal communication). The Eatwell Guide. Public Health England, 2016. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/551502/Eatwell_Guide_booklet.pdf
3. Prepared for this release by Peas Please and the Food Foundation and using the same methodology as *Farming for 5 a Day* (allowing for 20% waste) but with the most up to date datasets (2016) available. Food Foundation 2017. *Farming for 5 a Day*. <http://foodfoundation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Farming-for-five-a-day-final.pdf>.