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TheVoice

FDF: Speaking for the food and drink manufacturing industry

Food and drink firms lead the way in tackling climate change

Members of the Food and Drink Federation are showing real leadership in tackling climate change – and their efforts to cut CO₂ emissions in their factories through efficiency measures, greater productivity and, increasingly, investment in renewable sources of energy, is starting to make a real difference.

We have set our members collective and stretching targets against which they have already delivered savings averaging 58,000 tonnes of CO₂ emissions per year, the equivalent of taking 22,000 cars off UK roads each year.

The latest figures available under our voluntary Climate Change Agreement with Government show that our members reduced their CO₂ emissions by 17% in 2006, compared with 1990. FDF's target is for our members to reduce CO₂ emissions by 20% by 2010 and by 30% by 2020 compared with 1990 – and our work will ensure that the food and drink sector is on the front foot as the drive towards a low carbon economy gathers pace under the auspices of the Climate Change Act.

See back cover for more details of our environmental work

FDF employers' toolkit praised by DH

FDF's work with Business in the Community to develop a Healthy Eating Toolkit for employers has been highlighted by Public Health Minister the Rt Hon Dawn Primarolo MP.

Speaking at a recent summit, the Minister said the industry had a vital role to play in helping all citizens lead healthier lives – and highlighted our toolkit as an example of how our sector is already working hard to make a difference.

Building on the food industry's nutritional expertise, the toolkit is a no-nonsense guide for employers of all sizes who are looking to boost their productivity by promoting healthier eating in their workplaces as part of an overall wellbeing programme.

Looking to 2009: big issues for the UK's food sector

Food issues are never far from the top of the political agenda – but the first quarter of 2009 looks set to be busier than ever.

On the health front, the launch of the Government's Change4Life campaign to tackle obesity will spark much debate as will the Food Standards Agency's £2.7m campaign to raise consumer awareness of saturated fat. Food marketing will also be highly topical on the back of reviews by Ofcom and DH.

The issue of food security will also be taking centre stage, with a new inquiry by the EFRA Committee into the strengths and weaknesses of the UK food system.

In Brussels, meanwhile, the debate about a proposed EU Food Information Regulation will enter a critical phase in the New Year.

As the voice of the UK's biggest manufacturing sector, FDF is always happy to give you our perspective on these important – and often complex – debates. Please do get in touch if you have any questions.

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Food and Drink
Federation



If you want information about anything in this newsletter, please call Kate Turner 020 7420 7129

Healthy debate on the menu at event organised by FDF

Senior industry executives, Parliamentarians and other key stakeholders came together for a lively debate at an event to mark the first anniversary of publication of the Foresight report on obesity.

That report is widely credited with having reframed the debate on the causes of obesity and for setting out a long-term vision of how Government, industry and citizens should respond to the challenges it identified.

The event – organised by FDF and the Government's Foresight unit – debated the role of 'convenience foods' in a healthy diet.

Speaking at the event, FDF Director General Melanie Leech said: "Tackling obesity is a significant and long-term challenge. Our ambition is to continue working in partnership with the Government to help consumers lead healthier lives."

How FDF works for its members

The Food and Drink Federation speaks on behalf of one of the most important manufacturing sectors in the country, directly employing almost 470,000 people.

In promoting and protecting the interests of our members, FDF is focusing on the issues that matter most to their businesses and to the consumers our industry serves:

- Food Safety and Science
- Health and Wellbeing
- Sustainability and Competitiveness

Our front cover picture shows one of the wind turbines at the McCain Foods' factory in Whittlesey. McCain is one of the FDF member companies profiled in a new report to mark the first anniversary of publication of our Five-fold Environmental Ambition.

Environment: UK food sector is making a real difference

New data shows that FDF members are making a real difference to the environment in five key areas.

A report published to mark the first anniversary of publication of FDF's Five-fold Environmental Ambition shows that member companies have slashed their CO₂ emissions by 17% since 1990 – and are on target to meet a commitment to reduce emissions by 20% by 2010, compared with 1990.

The report also shows they recycled or recovered more than 82% of the food and packaging waste created in their factories; doubled their participation in the Courtauld Commitment on packaging; have 237 sites working to improve their water efficiency under our Federation House Commitment; and 47 of them have signed up to a new initiative to achieve fewer and friendlier food miles.

Speaking at a seminar to mark the first anniversary of Ambition, Fiona Dawson, Chair of FDF's Sustainability and Competitiveness Steering Group and Managing Director of Mars UK Snackfood, said: "As with other sectors we are currently experiencing challenging economic times. However, companies remain determined to meet the commitments contained in FDF's Five-fold Environmental Ambition."

The Rt Hon Hilary Benn MP, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, who gave the keynote address at the seminar, said: "This is an impressive example of what businesses can do to improve their environmental performance by working together. We need to see more of this."



The Rt Hon Hilary Benn MP gives the keynote address at a seminar to mark the first anniversary of publication of FDF's Five-fold Environmental Ambition.

New Bill will help to close skills gap

The Children, Skills and Learning Bill outlined in the Queen's Speech is an important development for the food and drink manufacturing industry.

There is a notable skills gap in our sector, and in particular, there is a shortage of food scientists and technologists. We need to attract young people into food and drink manufacturing at all levels to ensure the industry's sustainability for the future.

We're particularly pleased to see the establishment of a Skills Funding Body to help address adult skills; the duty being placed on the Learning and Skills Council to provide apprenticeship places; and the new Young People's Learning Academy to support local authorities in providing apprenticeships for all those suitably qualified.

FDF will work with Improve, our sector skills council, and Government to improve food science and technology courses for the sector and to raise its profile as a modern career of choice for food scientists and technologists.