

February 2009

# TheVoice

FDF: Speaking for the food and drink manufacturing industry

## Cross-party support grows for environmental Early Day Motion

Parliamentarians are showing cross-party support for our members' work to make a real difference in tackling climate change, with almost 40 MPs signing an Early Day Motion (EDM) tabled by Paddy Tipping MP.

EDM 326 welcomes publication of a report to mark the first anniversary of the Food and Drink Federation's Five-fold Environmental Ambition.

The EDM highlights the significant contributions manufacturers are making to achieve reductions in carbon dioxide emissions; factory waste to landfill; the amount of packaging reaching households; the amount of water used in factories; and achieving fewer and friendlier food miles. The EDM also notes the investment in new environmental technologies and infrastructure by FDF member companies.

Our Five-fold Environmental Ambition was developed as part of the ongoing commitment of food and drink manufacturers to reduce the sector's environmental impact, and we remain confident that work will continue despite the current economic turbulence.

We are encouraging more members of the Commons to sign the EDM in the current parliamentary session – and hope we can count on their support.

## Ross Warburton is FDF's new President

Ross Warburton, executive Director of family bakers Warburtons, has been elected President of FDF.

Warburton has enjoyed a long career in the industry – and was awarded an MBE in 2004 for his services to the food sector. He was Chairman of Warburtons from 1991-2001 after which he became an executive Director of the company. He is also non-executive Chairman of Uniq and Jordans Ryvita – having previously been Chairman of Richmond Foods and Marlow Foods. Ross is a former Chairman of the Federation of Bakers.

He said: "I look forward to working with all our stakeholders in the food chain as we address the challenges and opportunities that face our industry."

## Labelling debate: new research will not pick a 'winner'

The nutrition labelling debate will enter an interesting phase in the next few months, with the Food Standards Agency (FSA) due to publish the results of its front-of-pack labelling research in the spring.

But don't expect it to provide all the answers! The FSA itself says this research project is not designed to pick a 'winning' scheme nor is it designed to identify which labelling approach performs best overall. Rather, it will join other accumulating research as one component of any future consultation by the FSA on front-of-pack labelling.

A full cost-benefit analysis will also be critical to future decisions, and we believe any consultation must also take full account of the discussions on an EU-wide labelling regulation now underway in Brussels.

We think it would be entirely inappropriate to propose any new UK-specific approach to labelling before this European regulation is adopted.

[www.fdf.org.uk](http://www.fdf.org.uk)

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

Food and Drink Federation 

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## Industry concerns over new EU rules on crop protection

The European Parliament has approved new restrictions on the use of key crop protection products, such as pesticides.

While the package voted through in Brussels recently represents a compromise on what had previously been proposed, the food industry remains concerned that the measures are not soundly based and may cause significant reductions in yields of important crops, which will lead to higher food prices.

The proposed regulation must now be ratified by EU Agriculture Ministers. The UK will vote against the proposals – however, we expect there to be a qualified majority in favour of the regulation. Our hope now is that the UK will be able to push for a rational and proportionate implementation of this new European measure.

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## 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 440,000 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

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*Our front cover picture was taken at the Enfield factory of Warburtons, a member of FDF since 2002. Ross Warburton MBE is FDF's new President.*

## Food manufacturers continue their salt reduction work

Industry's ongoing efforts to reduce the salt content of popular food products are reflected in new figures published by independent market researchers TNS Worldpanel.

The researchers looked at consumer purchasing habits in five grocery categories and found that the salt content of the products bought had been reduced by 3,794 tonnes between September 2006 and September 2008. According to TNS Worldpanel, the reductions were made in the crisps, breakfast cereals, bread, savoury home cooking products and canned foods categories over the past two years.



*The widespread use of GDA information on food products is helping educate consumers that they should eat no more than 6g of salt a day.*

This huge ongoing reduction can be attributed to the food industry's continued reformulation of products as well as increased consumer awareness of the importance of eating a diet that is lower in salt. The introduction of nutrition labelling based on Guideline Daily Amount information has also helped consumers see, at a glance, the salt content of the food they are buying.

Julian Hunt, FDF's Director of Communications, said: "This research provides an important snapshot of how our members' reformulation work is making a real difference. Of course, the results cover only the past two years, although our industry's work has been taking place over many years – more than a decade in some categories."

He added: "There is growing consumer understanding that we should consume no more than 6g of salt per day – and that educational effort has clearly been helped by the widespread use of front-of-pack GDA labelling."

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## New standards to boost sustainability

FDF is working with Improve, the food and drink sector skills council, to develop a set of National Occupational Standards which will underpin the development of sustainable and environmentally friendly practices in our sector.

Employers are currently consulting on the draft standards, which will define the knowledge and skills that all employees should have to make the industry as a whole more sustainable. Once implemented, the standards will be used to develop qualifications and training programmes aimed at boosting sustainable practices at every level of every food and drink business.

FDF recently hosted an event for members to explain why it was important to tackle issues such as saving energy and reducing water use, waste and emissions.

Angela Coleshill, FDF's Director of HR, said: "These standards will not only help to improve our industry's environmental credentials, they will also boost the efficiency of businesses for the long term."

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