

January 2012



FDF: Speaking for the food and drink manufacturing industry

## FDF sets out 20/20 Vision for Growth

The food and drink industry and Government launched a shared vision for 20% growth in food and drink manufacturing by 2020 at FDF's President's reception on 13 December.

This ambitious vision builds on work already underway to unlock the potential of the industry in key areas such as securing new export markets; and ensuring that the food and drink industry can attract and retain the skills and talent it needs over the next few years including in critical areas such as food scientists and engineers.

Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, The Rt Hon Caroline Spelman MP said: "There are going to be huge opportunities for Britain's food industry to supply an increasingly hungry world in coming years and sell high quality products to emerging markets. That's why alongside manufacturers we're leading a range of strategies, focussed on competitiveness, to drive economic growth. 2020 is a welcome project that will fully complement all the ambitious work we're doing."

Her views were echoed by Business Minister Mark Prisk MP: "There is huge potential for growth in the food and drink sector. I welcome the industry's ambition to grow their sector by 20% by 2020 and ensure that food and drink manufacturing in Britain has a bright future."

FDF Director General Melanie Leech said: "Research undertaken for FDF by Grant Thornton has helped us identify the major opportunities and barriers to our growth. It is clear that our industry has formidable strengths: product quality, branding and our ability to innovate are among our key competitive advantages both in the domestic market and abroad. UK food and drink manufacturing companies already have an excellent track record in these areas and a high reputation for quality and we have used these as the base to develop our vision."

"The Grant Thornton report provides a wealth of information about our sector. In the New Year we will sit down with Government to unpack it further and to develop a detailed plan to work towards our shared vision and maximise our sector's potential to contribute to the UK economy."

We now look forward to the New Year and working with Parliamentarians to achieve our vision.

## Food industry pledges to double apprenticeship opportunities

The UK's food and drink manufacturing industry has pledged to double the number of apprentices in the sector from 1700 to 3400 by the end of 2012. Coming at a time when the industry is seeking to replace up to 137,000 skilled employees over the next five years, the pledge is good news to individuals seeking to learn new skills and gain qualifications while building their careers.

The pledge was announced by Tim Campbell, winner of the BBC series 'The Apprentice', at FDF's Community Partnership Awards (CPA) on 12 October. Tim, who is the Mayor of London Boris Johnson's Ambassador for Training and Enterprise, also awarded CPA's first ever 'Apprentice of the Year' which went to Kraft employee Calum Marnock. This award reflects the launch of FDF's careers campaign 'Taste Success - A Future in Food' and our focus on developing talent.

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If you want information about anything in this newsletter, please call Selga Speakman-Brown on 020 7420 7127

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## SME's discussed at All-Party Group dinner

The All-Party Parliamentary Food and Drink Manufacturing Group held a dinner with the theme 'SMEs an engine for growth', attended by 12 MPs and Peers, including the Shadow Environment Secretary Mary Creagh MP, as well as SME representatives from FDF's membership.

The lively debate centred around three key areas that determine the ability of SMEs to grow: market drivers; building capacity; and barriers to growth. Those attending heard that whilst SMEs can be more agile and fleet of foot, they need the freedom to operate without government intervention and red tape to optimise innovation and growth opportunities. Exporting support along with access to a flexible labour pool were highlighted as priorities along with a common concern around severe pressure on margins at this time.

### Get involved

**Support the food and drink manufacturing sector by joining the All-Party Parliamentary Food and Drink Manufacturing Group.**

Regular and varied meetings debate issues in depth and provide access to the latest information on the UK's largest manufacturing sector.

#### To find out more:

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*Our front cover picture was taken at the Best of British Food and Drink Manufacturing Showcase exhibition at the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills' London headquarters. (November 2011)*

## Food and drink showcased at BIS

The potential of food and drink was showcased at a series of events and an exhibition at the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills in Victoria Street from 14-25 November.



*Mark Prisk MP, Business Minister, talking with apprentices Faye Hudson and Chris Brown from Kraft Foods, and Tom Walden from Nestlé UK Nestlé UK and Ireland*

At the careers seminar, 'Attracting Talent to Support Growth,' apprentices Faye Hudson and Chris Brown from Kraft Foods, and Tom Walden from Nestlé UK, shared their top tips for securing an apprenticeship in the food industry. With approximately 1000 candidates going for every six apprentice vacancies, competition is tough. Those attending felt more could be done in schools to help prepare for the world of work and raise awareness of all the career opportunities on offer.

Minister for Business and Enterprise, Mark Prisk visited the showcase on Monday 21 November. Speaking ahead of the visit he said: "This showcase reflects the scale of the work that is being carried out by the industry to really grow its potential and maintain the UK's position as a world leader in innovation, safety and sustainability in food production."

It is estimated that FDF was able to showcase our industry to over 3000 visitors during the fortnight, really communicating the strength of our industry, potential for further growth and contribution to the economy.

## Forward look – Groceries Code Adjudicator

Following the Government's response to the BIS Select Committee report on the Groceries Code Adjudicator (GCA) (Time To Bring On The Referee) FDF is looking forward to the publication of the formal bill.

FDF has lobbied on the issue since the Competition Commission (CC) first investigated unfair practices. More recently, we successfully argued to the BIS and EFRA Select Committees for financial penalties for those who violate the Code and that trade associations should be able to submit evidence.

Although the Government rejected these recommendations, if the adverse effect on competition identified by the CC is not remedied, research, innovation and investment, and ultimately the consumer will suffer. FDF is keen to work with parliamentarians to ensure we end up with an adjudicator with teeth

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