

September 2009

TheVoice

FDF: Speaking for the food and drink manufacturing industry

Food manufacturing must be a strategic priority for the UK

The Food and Drink Federation is urging the Government to develop a long-term strategy for food production to ensure UK food security against the combined effects of climate change, higher global demand and increasing pressure on finite resources.

Responding to publication by Defra of its Food 2030 consultation, FDF has stressed the important role that food manufacturers must play in developing any such strategy. As well as being a vital component of the economy, we are critical to the future success of the UK food chain. Without a competitive UK manufacturing base, farmers would lack a ready market, consumers would be more dependent on imported supplies and there would be less resilience across the food chain.

FDF also believes it is time to turn debate into action. It is now a year since the Cabinet Office published its Food Matters report, so we think Government should accelerate its efforts to work with farmers, manufacturers and retailers to develop a strategy that takes full account of our economic, strategic and social importance to the UK.

We will be discussing these issues – and the findings of the EFRA Committee's recent report on food security – at fringe events at this year's political party conferences being organised with the National Farmers' Union and the British Retail Consortium.

Cross-party support for food export success

The strong performance of UK food and drink exporters – who sold more than £9bn worth of products to overseas markets last year – is being recognised by those Members of Parliament who are signing EDM 1715.

The EDM highlights the importance of the food industry to the economy and applauds the efforts of UK exporters who have built a strong international reputation for quality and innovation over many years and continue to perform strongly despite challenging global circumstances.

Industry leads the way on saturated fat reformulation

The considerable work undertaken by our members to reformulate popular food and drink products has been recognised by the Food Standards Agency in a new consultation on saturated fat and energy reductions.

However, we were disappointed that the consultation still commits to setting arbitrary targets for specific nutrients in certain foods, rather than focusing on the need for everyone to achieve a balanced diet and lifestyle.

Our sector's world-class capabilities in research and development have allowed us to tackle the complex task of changing the recipes of much-loved British brands without compromising on quality or taste. In fact, researchers at Mintel say 250 reformulated products were launched in the first six months of this year alone.

We are committed to working in partnership with Government to help consumers eat more healthily – and reformulation is just one of the ways in which we will continue to make a real difference.

www.fdf.org.uk

If you want information about anything in this newsletter, please call Abigail Cross on 020 7420 7127

Food and Drink
Federation



Making a real difference

FDF urges Defra to back anaerobic digestion report

Government is being urged to give a much-needed boost to anaerobic digestion capacity in England by supporting the practical recommendations made in a new report for Defra.

The report was produced by a Government-appointed task group, of which FDF was a member. Key priorities include the importance of developing a proportionate, risk-based regulatory framework; establishing cost effective systems for the separate collection of food waste from both commercial and municipal sources; and promoting greater awareness of the opportunities afforded by this technology among communities.

Anaerobic digestion is one important tool for helping our members achieve their ambition to be sending zero food and packaging waste to landfill from factories by 2015 – so we look forward to a positive response to the report from Ministers later this year.

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.

FDF is focusing on the issues that matter most to members and to the consumers the industry serves:

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

Our front cover picture was taken at the Poundbury factory of Dorset Cereals, a member of FDF since 2006.

Food companies boost water efficiency in their factories

Almost 500,000 cubic metres of water – equivalent to nearly 200 Olympic swimming pools – have been saved by 36 of the UK's leading food and drink companies as part of a voluntary industry commitment on water efficiency.

FDF and sustainability experts Envirowise jointly launched the Federation House Commitment in January 2008 to provide companies with a systematic approach for improving water efficiency in their factories as part of an industry wide target to achieve a 20% reduction in usage by 2020.

The food and drink manufacturing sector is a significant water user and has an important role to play in helping to reduce stress on the nation's water supplies, which is why the Federation House Commitment is one of the pillars of FDF's Five-fold Environmental Ambition.

The new report from Envirowise tracks the progress made by the first signatory companies. While there is clearly much more to be done, we are delighted that companies are already making a positive impact on the environment. Members including Dairy Crest, Mars UK, R&R Ice Cream, United Biscuits, Walkers, and William Jackson Food Group have contributed to a collective reduction in water use of almost 2% during 2008 compared with 2007.

Water-saving measures being implemented by members include improving water recovery and re-use, rainwater harvesting, cleaning-in-place and dry cleaning operations, plus domestic changes such as fitting more efficient taps and toilets.

As well as being good news for the environment, there is also a strong business case for focusing on water efficiency: Envirowise estimates that signatories to the Federation House Commitment will have saved almost £500,000 in the purchase of water alone, not including the cost of water treatment and effluent disposal.

The Commitment is open to all companies in the food and drink manufacturing sector and more information – including the full 2009 progress report – can be found at www.fhc2020.co.uk



The report published by Envirowise shows how leading food companies are taking positive steps to reduce water consumption in their factories

Reformulation on the menu for APPG

The next meeting of the All-Party Parliamentary Food and Drink Manufacturing Group will take place on Monday 02 November from 1200 to 1400 in the Jubilee Room of the Houses of Parliament.

This informal session will focus on industry's work on reformulation. It will allow Parliamentarians to understand the challenges faced by companies as they seek to change product recipes and meet the people behind the innovations on the market.

The APPG's remit is to consider the issues of concern to the food and drink sector and to raise awareness of these matters in Parliament. If you would like to attend the meeting, please contact Abigail Cross on 020 7420 7127 or abigail.cross@fdf.org.uk

www.fdf.org.uk

If you want information about anything in this newsletter, please call Abigail Cross on 020 7420 7127

Food and Drink Federation 

Making a real difference