

September 2011

# TheVoice

FDF: Speaking for the food and drink manufacturing industry

## Food sector beats manufacturing downturn

The food and drink industry has bucked the general trend of declining manufacturing output with a 0.5% increase in June 2011 compared to the same month in 2010 in the UK. The Office for National Statistics results published on 9 August highlighted a stark contrast to the manufacturing sector as a whole, which decreased its output by 0.5%.

These figures echo the results of the latest FDF business confidence survey (quarter two: April-June 2011) which revealed that our sector is one of the most resilient. UK sales remain strong and have grown over the past quarter for almost two thirds of respondents, with 76% expecting growth over the next three months. Encouragingly most companies expect exports to rise over the next quarter.

Terry Jones, FDF's Director of Communications said: "The stability in our sector is due to our industry's ability to innovate, develop new products and market them effectively to appeal to consumer tastes."

## Common Fisheries Policy reform received positive response

News of the European Commission's highly anticipated proposals for reform of the Common Fisheries Policy and plans to end the highly wasteful practice of discarding edible fish at sea, have gained a positive response from FDF and our members.

Our Seafood group member companies worked with a wide range of stakeholders, including an industry alliance with WWF and retailers, to press for radical changes. Long-term plans for protecting and rebuilding stocks will deliver sustainable supplies of quality fish to consumers at prices they can afford, allowing them to reap the health benefits from eating seafood.

We support plans to discuss increased information for consumers about the origin and sustainability of supplies. However, changes to labelling must be proportionate and contribute to genuine consumer choice.

## Call for Groceries Code Adjudicator Bill to be introduced

FDF is calling on the Government to introduce an amended Groceries Code Adjudicator (GCA) Bill as soon as possible, following the publication of the Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) Select Committee report - 'Time to bring on the referee?'

We were delighted that the BIS Committee supported our two key recommendations. Firstly to allow trade associations, like FDF, to provide information on abuses of market power. Trade Associations are in a unique position to identify patterns of behaviour that breach the Code, providing additional anonymity for suppliers.

Secondly, the Committee agreed that the Adjudicator should have the power to fine those breaching the code from the outset, a more effective deterrent than 'naming and shaming' culprits.

We are now one step closer to implementing the twin remedies proposed by the Competition Commission.

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

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

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## FDF activity during Party Conference season

FDF is involved in a number of fringe events at the three main political party conferences this autumn, promoting the importance of our industry during challenging economic times.

We will be involved in the Dods UK Manufacturing Dialogue events at all three conferences, working with the NFU to discuss food and farming policy at Labour and Liberal Democrat conferences and holding a breakfast roundtable at Conservative Party Conference to promote our careers campaign, 'Taste Success: A Future in Food.'

If you would like a full list of events or to meet with us at conference, please visit:

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

or contact Selga Speakman-Brown on 020 7420 7127.

### Forthcoming events:

#### All-Party Parliamentary Food and Drink Manufacturing Group SME Dinner

**Monday  
7 November 2011**

**19.00 – 21.30**

**Dining Room B**

**Numbers strictly limited.**

**RSVP essential to: Selga.  
[Speakman-Brown@fdf.org.uk](mailto:Speakman-Brown@fdf.org.uk)  
or 0207 420 7127**

*Our front cover picture:  
Food and Drink Manufacturing APPG visit to  
Coca-Cola Enterprises Edmonton on  
14 June 2011*

## FDF showcases careers initiatives at Parliamentary Reception

FDF promoted the progress of our careers campaign 'Taste Success: a Future in Food' to parliamentarians and stakeholders at our summer Parliamentary reception on 12 July. The campaign aims to change the perception of our sector and our achievements were highlighted by guest speakers Minister for Agriculture and Food, Jim Paice MP, and FDF President, Jim Moseley.



*The Rt Hon Jim Paice MP speaking at the reception*

Taste Success encompasses a range of initiatives to dispel the myths surrounding our industry, promoting it as an exciting and fulfilling sector to be in. An ambassador programme, funding permitting, will bring those careers to life. The creation of a new degree course and our support for graduates through sponsoring, mentoring or work experience, as well as the creation of new apprenticeship opportunities, demonstrates our commitment to providing opportunities for young people seeking employment in the industry.

The reception also previewed prize winning biscuits developed by pupils at Sgoil a' Bhac School in Lewis, Scotland. The biscuits were produced as part of a competition run by Stag Bakeries and Scottish Food and Drink Federation (SFDF) to find a product idea to put into commercial production. To create the biscuits pupils carried out market research and identified their target market, conducted scientific analysis, investigated issues around sustainability and food miles and set a commercially viable price for their product. The winning strawberry and white chocolate biscuit will now go on sale to the public throughout Scotland with packaging acknowledging the pupils input.

For more information about FDF's careers campaign or SFDF's schools programme please visit FDF's website:

<http://www.fdf.org.uk/campaigns/careers.aspx>

or contact us using the details below.

### Innovation showcased at APPG factory visit

The All-Party Parliamentary Food and Drink Manufacturing Group visited Coca-Cola Enterprises (CCE) Edmonton site on 14 June 2011.

The visit gave parliamentarians a better understanding of what goes on inside the food and drink industry. Parliamentarians saw the high speed production, automated warehousing and sustainable packaging innovation that goes into maintaining CCE's daily output of millions of soft drinks each day. Visitors were also shown CCE's award winning Education Centre - a purpose built facility hosting educational visits from over 4,000 students a year.

APPG Chair, John Stevenson MP said: "It's always fascinating to see the high level of innovation that goes on inside a factory and I am proud to showcase the food and drink industry to parliamentarians."

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