



Produce World Director Challenges Retailers to 'Be Bold'

November 2011



Produce World's Group Agricultural Director Andrew Burgess has called on the retailers to 'be bold and back something that is making a difference in our Great British countryside'. Speaking at the LEAF (Linking Environment and Farming) President's Event in London, Andrew said that there needed to be changes in the grocery supply chain model in order to make it truly sustainable.

"Sustainable means that something can continue forever," he said, "In order to do that we need to achieve the right balance with nature, but we also need people to be happy and for the financial rewards to be right. All of these things are woven together.

In order to do that we must move the grocery supply chain model to much more collaborative relationships and a greater degree of long-term thinking, and away from transactional deals, which I believe threaten the sustainability of British growing."

Andrew was one of a number of experts speaking at the event about the efficient use of the world's precious resources. He explained how working with LEAF had been a critical part of the company's approach to sustainable agricultural and attributed part of the group's growth and success to its involvement with LEAF.

Andrew said: "Working with LEAF has been a huge part of our journey in increasing our understanding of the wider farming environment and influencing the way that we work both on our own farms and on the farms that we source from. We are one of the largest vegetable growers in UK. All our UK production is 100 per cent LEAF Marque accredited.

"I believe that LEAF was a huge catalyst in helping us grow the business from £25m to £180m over the ten years between 1997 and 2007. LEAF gave us the confidence to sell the benefits of environmentally-friendly farming practices to our customers. The LEAF Marque has provided a third party seal of approval and added value at the point of purchase.

"We have been involved in LEAF and organic groups as trendsetters and 'thought leaders', and we have helped our customers to lead the way in this area through engagement with agronomy groups and sustainable farming initiatives. LEAF has been instrumental in encouraging us and other farmers to speak out and be proud of what we are doing."

Ends

Hi Res versions of all pictures are available from the Produce World Press Office (See below)

Notes for Editors

Produce World is one of the largest expert growers and suppliers of high quality fresh vegetables in Europe. It is a privately owned business, founded by the Burgess family in 1898, and the family ethos and values remain in place. The Produce World business is customer and category focused and it is an industry leader in sustainable and responsible agronomy, growing and lean supply chain management. Its sourcing is a combination of produce from its own farms, joint-ventures, and collaborative working with dedicated grower groups, supplying a variety of root vegetables, potatoes, brassicas, alliums, and organic produce to leading retailers, food service and manufacturing customers.

Produce World Group companies include Produce World Solanum Ltd, Produce World IFP Ltd, Produce World RBO Ltd, Produce World Rustler Ltd, Produce World Marshalls Ltd, Agromark SA, and Growing Trust with Las Lomas (joint venture).

The company received the Waitrose Technical Excellence Award in June 2011, as well as the re:fresh Innovation of the Year and Packer of the Year awards in May 2011. Its Growing Trust CSR programme, established in 2007, prioritises Responsible Sourcing, along with Environmental Stewardship, Community Impact and Workplace Culture.

Media Enquiries:

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