



Local Produce Company Scores Top Marks Three Years Running

April 2012

Produce World RBO, based in Yaxley, Peterborough, has received the highest grading for the third year running following a British Retail Consortium (BRC) unannounced audit.

Produce World Group's organics specialist, which grows and supplies potatoes, carrots, swedes and parsnips, was the very first produce site in the industry to achieve the coveted A* status three years ago and has received the award each year since. In 2011, the group's roots specialist, Produce World IFP, joined the handful of food businesses in the UK and across Europe which have achieved top marks. The 31 businesses with A* status account for just 1% of all food businesses that use the BRC accreditation system.

The audit on Produce World RBO was carried out over two days at the end of March. In addition to Produce World RBO's continuing success, this was the first audit of the site under the new Version Six specifications, meaning there were a lot of new audit areas to be covered. To add to the pressure, UKAS, the body in charge of witnessing the BRC auditor, was also on site over the two day period.

Every food business in the UK wishing to supply products through retailers is subject to the BRC audit process and must achieve a B grade or higher. However, it is up to the business whether it opts for an unannounced audit, which can take place anytime up to six months after its last announced audit. In opting for an unannounced audit a business commits to ensuring the maintenance of extremely high standards throughout the year, guaranteeing total conformity to the food safety standards set out by the BRC.

Andy Mitchell, Roots Technical Director at Produce World, said: "During all my BRC audits, which run well in to double figures now, this has been the toughest and most rigorous I have faced, it was a long and tough two days that really has tested Produce World RBO's system to the absolute limit. I am proud to say that feedback from the auditor was very positive and he praised the business for how brave it is to be audited against the new version as well as doing it unannounced. I am thrilled that Produce World RBO has achieved the highest status three years running!"

Maria Taylor, Certification Manager at Cert ID Europe Ltd, commented on Produce World RBO's audit: "The whole Produce World RBO team are very positive, helpful and professional and they should be commended. We have audited many businesses in the last three months against the new BRC v6 Standards which, unlike with Produce World RBO, have been pre-announced and they have not fared as well. Produce World RBO is a credit to the fresh produce industry and demonstrates outstanding standards."

Ends

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:

For further information, please contact the Produce World Press Office on 01223 884600 or alternatively email Peter Crowe or Zoe Scorer in the following format: firstname.lastname@war.uk.com