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## May 2012

### Produce World makes impact at inaugural Waitrose awards

The Produce World Group, a leading grower and supplier of high quality fresh vegetables, has been highly commended in all three categories it entered in the inaugural Waitrose Way Awards. Waitrose Way is the supermarket's Corporate Social Responsibility strategy made up of four pillars, including championing British, treading lightly, treating people fairly and living well. The awards were designed to recognise Waitrose suppliers' sustainability initiatives which ultimately enhance the food on the consumers' plates.

Produce World entered three categories: 'Treading Lightly - Waste Reduction', 'Treading Lightly - Water Reduction' and 'Treating People Fairly'. The Group had to submit detailed entries, as well as supporting material for each category which was then judged against 200 other entries.

Waste management is a key component of Produce World's Environmental Stewardship Agenda and this formed the basis of the 'Waste Reduction' award entry. Across its operational facilities the company has driven a 'Total Waste Management' solution to target waste reduction at source. It has encouraged the re-use and recycling of waste on site, in order to divert as much as possible from landfill. This work has had a positive impact on the local and wider environment and this was highly commended by Waitrose.

Water reduction, which Produce World has been focussing on over the last four years, was the subject of the second award entry. Although not all of its operations are high water users, the company has concentrated on raising awareness of water use and wastage amongst its employees, using training programs and instruction on best water use practice.

The 'Treating People Fairly' category goes hand in hand with Produce World's own 'Workplace Culture' CSR pillar. Produce World employs over 1000 people in the UK and Spain, and works with many growers around the world. Successfully managing such a complex and dynamic business requires exceptional people who possess the values and skills that make Produce World a great workplace. For this reason all employees, regardless of role or seniority, have access to training and development. This ranges from basic numeracy and literacy to study support for professional qualifications. Treating people fairly is underpinned by a series of workplace and community initiatives that have focused attention on improving workplace culture and creating a positive community impact.

William Burgess, Produce World Group CEO, said: "Sustainability matters to our business and to Waitrose. We truly believe that by working collaboratively we can drive real business benefits for our supply chain and have lasting positive impacts on the environment. To be highly commended for all three awards we entered is a great honour and a tribute to the work of everyone at Produce World."

## **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:**

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