

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Freshfel Europe stimulates sector to re-think consumption of fruit and vegetables

This year, Freshfel's Annual Policy event called on the sector to 'think outside the box' and look for creative ways to stimulate consumers to eat more fresh fruit and vegetables. One of the key message of the day was that the supply chain should be proud of its great fresh produce and should dare to further increase its cooperation to take the full benefit of these assets. The sector has been taking great initiatives to overcome the struggles that challenged the sector in the last year and managed to reposition itself by e.g. setting up promotion campaigns and opening up new markets.

The sector should continue to move ahead to stimulate consumption and to enhance the positive image of fresh produce. Freshfel's priorities for the upcoming year are also focused around these messages. Freshfel wants to encourage competitiveness of the European fruit and vegetables production, move ahead on food & plant safety, research & innovation, enhancing trade as well as securing efficient health & nutrition policies and to stimulate consumption. Freshfel's mission for the coming year will be to continue to value the strengths of fresh fruit and vegetable, in the European Union and beyond. *"Investing in fresh fruit and vegetables is investing in our future. Consumers are aware of the healthy aspects of fruit and vegetables, but more can be done to promote the fun and positive effects of fruit and vegetables"* stated Luc Clerx President of Freshfel.

The evening before the Annual Event, the fresh produce sector met with several Members of the European Parliament and policy makers at the European Commission for a networking dinner at the Résidence Palace. Discussions were held with MEPs Clara Eugenia Aguilera García (S&D, ES), Pilar Ayuso (EPP, ES), Angélique Delahaye (EPP, FR), Herbert Dorfmann (EPP, IT), Esther Herranz García (EPP, ES), Jorid Sebastia (Greens, ES) and Michela Giuffrida (S&D, IT). During the Annual Event also MEP Marc Tarabella (S&D, Belgium) showed up to discuss the School Fruit Scheme. Stephan Weist, Freshfel Vice-President stressed that *"even a minimal increase of just 10 gram per capita per day would already greatly assist the sector towards greater stability and move consumers towards healthier habits. But we need still need to be more ambitious as the potential for increasing consumption remains huge all around Europe."*

At the Annual Event several distinguished speakers presented creative ways to promote fresh produce. Samuel Levie, from Food Cabinet in the Netherlands, started the day with a presentation on a successful low-budget campaign called 'Big Bang Broccoli' as well as a campaign called 'Power to the Pieper' to promote the humble potato as a contemporary superfood. Daniel Fritz, a social media expert working among others for the European Commission, raised awareness about how the fresh produce sector can profit more by using social media to spread positive messages on its produce. He showed some surprising key words and recommendations the fresh produce sector can use. As a final guest in the morning session

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Lotfi El-Ghandouri from Creative Society presented and engaged with the audience to step outside of the box. Mr. El-Ghandouri held an inspiring session which clearly had a positive effect on the participants to stimulate them to think differently and dare to create a new movement for the sector.

MEP Marc Tarabella (S&D, BE) presented the current state of play of the EU School fruit scheme and the European Parliament's position in the upcoming trialogue negotiations with the Commission and the Council. After lunch, Jesús Zorrilla from the European Commission DG Agriculture gave an update on the state of play concerning some of the key dossiers for the fresh fruit and vegetable sector, namely the Russian embargo, the CMO reform, the School scheme and marketing standards. Finally, Professor Ludwig Theuvsen from the Universität Göttingen presented an overview of the European fresh fruit and vegetable sector in an international setting. He showed the EU's trade flows and the impact of upcoming economies such as in Asia on the fresh produce business.

The next Freshfel Policy event and AGM is set for 1 & 2 June 2016 in Brussels.

Freshfel's activities for the past year can be found in the Activity Report that was launched during the Annual Policy event as well. The full [Activity Report](#) can be downloaded from the Freshfel website.

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Note to the Editors:

Freshfel Europe is the European Fresh Produce Association, representing the interests of the fresh fruit and vegetables supply chain in Europe and beyond. Freshfel Europe currently has over 200 members, including both companies and associations. For more information, contact the association at info@freshfel.org or visit the association website www.freshfel.org.



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