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- Press Release -

Fruit and vegetables processors and fresh producers jointly call for closer cooperation to answer European food challenges

PROFEL, the European Association of Fruit and Vegetable Processors, and Freshfel Europe, the European Fresh Produce Association, joined forces in Brussels at a conference held on Tuesday 20 June 2017. Central to the summit was the need for strengthened cooperation between policy makers and the fruit and vegetable industry, who jointly hold the answers to Europe's food challenges of providing sustainably produced, healthy foods.

Recent decades have seen the consumption of fruit and vegetables decrease across Europe, and diet related health concerns (obesity, diabetes and heart disease) have risen. Governments and policy makers are challenged by climate change; how to feed increasing populations, and how to improve dietary health. Despite the growing recognition that a fruit and vegetable-rich diet can play a major role in addressing these concerns, there appears to be little joined-up discussion between government departments addressing the different areas, and even less cooperation between policy makers and the processed fruit and vegetable industry.

Since interest is growing into the search for novel and exciting ways to introduce fruit and vegetables into our diet, the processed fruit and vegetable sector, representing canned, frozen and dehydrated vegetables and jams, fruit preserves, compotes, canned and frozen fruit, is both ready and well equipped to cover consumer needs. However, the sector will rely heavily on policymakers to facilitate and support its activities.

The countless benefits of fruit and vegetables were highlighted throughout last Tuesday's conference, with several speakers emphasising the marketing potential of fruit and vegetables and the opportunities for the sector around new trends such as veganism, vegetarianism and 'flexitarianism'.

PROFEL and Freshfel Europe concluded the event with a mutual declaration and industry commitment, to reinforce the role of fruit and vegetables and to promote the key messages of the sector: health, nutrition and sustainability, and the need for increased cooperation with policy makers.

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PROFEL(Europe) is the European Association of fruit and vegetable processing industries (canned vegetables, frozen vegetables, dehydrated vegetables, jams and fruit preserves, canned fruit and compotes and frozen fruit), representing over 500 companies in 12 EU countries.