



**September 2014**

### **Produce World backs National Kale Day**

This October America is celebrating everything that's great about kale on National Kale Day on October 1<sup>st</sup>. The 'Super Food' is being presented in all its healthy glory at an event that celebrates eating, growing and sharing kale throughout the USA.

The vegetable's recent rise in popularity means that now it has its very own day of celebration and Produce World Group's Agricultural Director Andrew Burgess feels that the UK should embrace this American tradition too. After all, figures show that kale sales are up by 79% year on year in major UK multiples\*.

Andrew says: "In recent years kale has boomed, not just in America but also in the UK. I think that having a National Kale Day is a fantastic initiative and should become a permanent fixture in the UK calendar too."

Andrew continued: "It's a great opportunity to not only try out new varieties but learn about the different ways people grow the vegetable and find out what they like about the current varieties already in shops".

The Produce World Group has been trying out some exciting new varieties in its trial fields this year including coloured kale, baby kale and kale sprouts. They are focusing particularly on growing for different flavour, texture and colour profiles.

This innovative work has seen the UK's leading grower and supplier of fresh vegetables into retail produce pink and white varieties, as well as kale sprouts, which look like small green and purple flowers.

Currently there are around 50 different varieties of kale and since the vegetable was first cultivated 6,000 years ago it has grown quite a fan base. The likes of Angelina Jolie, Gwyneth Paltrow and Katy Perry all are avid kale lovers - enjoying not only the great taste but the health benefits too. Kale-enriched nail varnishes are even being launched this year!

This year's National Kale Day, which is the second of its kind, will see an array of events to promote the veg including kale being served to around 1.1 million children across New York state schools.

Produce World's Andrew Burgess says: "If we could bring National Kale Day to the UK, it would not only raise the profile of the vegetable further but encourage people to get excited about all that is kale".

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### **Notes to Editors**

Produce World Group 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 Group 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 farming division Burgess 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.

In September 2013 Produce World Group featured in primetime TV programme Harvest in a bid to raise consumer awareness of how the nation's food gets from field to fork. The Produce World Group also secured three finalist slots at the 2013 Re:fresh awards for its CSR work, employee engagement and team management. Other successes include winning the Treading Lightly Waitrose Way Award, acknowledging the work Produce World Group does with innovative irrigation techniques.

### **Media Enquiries:**

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