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PRESS RELEASE

Wales is pick of the crop at the 2021 Peas Please Prizes

Today, Wales made its mark at the second annual Peas Please Prize Ceremony during which the winners and runners up for progress in 2019/2020 were announced. With five nominations in total, Peas Please Pledgers from Wales went on to win two of the seven categories – with **Cardiff** taking the top spot in the **Veg City Prize** and **Cardiff and Vale University Health Board** winning the **Veg-O-Meter Prize**.

Peas Please is a UK-wide ground-breaking initiative focused specifically on veg and is a partnership that includes The Food Foundation, Food Sense Wales, Nourish Scotland, Belfast Food Network and Food NI. Since the project launched four years ago it has delivered 162 million additional portions of vegetables into our food system working across all four nations.

With our vegetable consumption levels declining, Peas Please aims to bring together producers, retailers, restaurants, caterers, wholesalers, processors and government departments with a common goal of making it easier for everyone to eat veg. Across the UK, over 100 Organisations have already pledged to play their part to help everyone in the UK eat an extra portion of veg a day as part of their Peas Please 'Veg Pledges'.

Hosted by Hugh Fearnley Whittingstall at a specially recorded ceremony at River Cottage, he today announced the names of the companies, organisations and individuals who are leading the way in the way that they're transforming their businesses and organisations to drive up vegetable consumption.

The **Veg City Prize** won by **Cardiff** recognises impactful and integrated place-based approaches to increasing veg uptake at a local level for cities participating in the Veg Cities campaign while the **Veg-O-Meter Prize**, won by **Cardiff and Vale University Health Board** celebrates the biggest % increase in vegetable portions sold or served by our pledgers during the 2019/20 reporting cycles.

“I’m delighted that Cardiff has today won the Veg Cities Prize – another great achievement for the city and another accolade that recognises the amazing work that’s happening across Cardiff,” says Pearl Costello, Sustainable Food Places Co-ordinator in Cardiff.

“Food Cardiff co-created the Veg Cities campaign with Sustainable Food Places as part of the wider Peas Please initiative and is now a feature campaign of Sustainable Food Places with 25 places across the UK taking action to drive up veg consumption,” adds Pearl. “Cardiff was declared a Veg City in 2017, providing an umbrella structure for much of the amazing food work being developed in the city and as part of the Food Cardiff Veg Cities campaign we now have 26 pledgers, 39 registered on platform and total of 46 pledges – and it’s estimated that 123,000 additional portions of veg will be served per year in Cardiff if all those pledges are met.

“Restaurants have been working collaboratively, for example on reducing veg waste and Farmers Markets have been expanding their veg offer and their market locations. From 2019 onwards, children in Cardiff schools were also receiving an extra portion of veg with their lunch for no additional cost,” continues Pearl. “I’m so proud of what we’ve achieved – especially as this award follows on from Cardiff recently gaining Silver Sustainable Food Places status, recognising the city’s pioneering work in promoting healthy and sustainable food.”

Cardiff and Vale University Health Board is also celebrating today’s win having made the shortlist in the Innovation category at last year’s awards ceremony.

The **Veg-O-Meter Prize** recognises the fact that Cardiff and Vale University Health Board has increased the amount of veg it’s serving year on year by a staggering 701.7% from just one of its sites.

“I am so pleased to see Cardiff and our Health Board being recognised for the fantastic work that has been taking place to ensure everyone has access to healthy choices,” says Fiona Kinghorn, Executive Director of Public Health for Cardiff and Vale University Health Board. “Cardiff and Vale University Health Board is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of its staff and local population, with particular focus on a healthier food environment. I am so proud of all that our teams have achieved, being the first Health Board in Wales to formally adopt Healthy Eating Standards for Hospital Restaurant & Retail Outlets that focus on making the healthy choice, the easy choice.”

Helen Griffith, chair of Cardiff and Vale University Health Board’s Healthy Eating Standards for Hospital Restaurant & Retail Outlets Steering Group adds: “It is great to hear the Cardiff and Vale University Health has been recognised for a Peas Please Prize. A considerable amount of work has

gone in to increasing the vegetable consumption of those who purchase food across the Cardiff and Vale sites. As part of the Healthy Eating Standards and the Peas Please Pledge, the aim is to set the highest standards possible, incorporating more vegetables into hot meals as well as in all the freshly made products available to purchase at the Health Board's own food outlets. Everyone involved should be really proud of the work so far."

Pledgers from Wales made the shortlist in five categories in total, including Castell Howell being shortlisted in the **Peas Please Innovation category** and both Lantra and Social Farms and Gardens shortlisted in the **Peas Please Good Society Category**.

[Food Sense Wales](#) – an organisation working to influence and impact how food is produced and consumed in Wales – leads on the Peas Please work in Wales and currently manages 8 national pledgers, 24 local pledges through Food Cardiff and 25 Veg city pledgers in partnership with Sustain/Sustainable Food Places.

The **Peas Please Prizes** follow on from the **Peas Please Veg Summit** that was held on June 18th – a day of discussion and debate, with the first session focusing on horticulture policy and investment, and the second exploring the food environment. Food Sense Wales also recently curated **Ffres!** - Wales' first Festival of Veg that highlighted and showcased the incredible work that's taking place across Wales' gardens, farms, communities, organisations and businesses.

"With 2021 being the [UN International Year of Fruit and Veg](#) and with [COP26](#) taking place in Glasgow this November, it's great to see such a focus and excitement around what we eat," says Katie Palmer, Programme Manager at Food Sense Wales.

"In terms of public health, our diets are leading to high levels of obesity, type 2 diabetes and other diet-related disease - and as we all know, we need to eat more veg. Food Sense Wales delivers the [Peas Please](#) programme in Wales, which explores the levers along the supply chain which have the potential to increase vegetable consumption in a sustainable manner, and we recognise that in order to support consumers to make healthier choices, we need to see changes across our food system.

"We take a systems approach to food and farming, forging strong working relationships with public, private and civil society organisations in Wales, and this is why I'm really pleased that the work done by our pledgers and partners in Wales is being recognised in these UK-wide awards. It's great to be able to celebrate the work of dedicated and enthusiastic individuals, groups, businesses and organisations - all of whom are working really hard to champion vegetables, helping not only to benefit people's health but the environment too."

Rebecca Tobi, Peas Please UK project manager adds: “It’s fantastic to see so many organisations making such great progress when it comes to promoting, serving, and selling more veg. Particularly during what has undoubtedly been one of the toughest years on record for the UK’s food sector. However, we’ve some way to go before we meet our goal and get everyone in the UK eating more veg, and continued support from pledging organisations will be crucial in helping us to go further faster.”

-ENDS-

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About Food Sense Wales

Food Sense Wales is working to create a food and farming system that is good for people and good for the planet. We want to influence how food is produced and consumed in Wales, to ensure sustainable food and farming is at the heart of a just, connected and prosperous food system.

To achieve this we believe that the environment; health and wellbeing; social justice, and the economy should be integrated in all policy thinking in Wales. We believe that this “food in all policies” approach can be achieved through research, cross sector collaboration and mobilising citizens and stakeholders as part of a “Wales Good Food Movement”.

Food Sense Wales is a fund within the Cardiff and Vale Health Charity and hosted by the Cardiff and Vale Public Health team. Food Sense Wales takes a systems approach to food and farming in combination with strong working relationships with public, private and civil society organisations operating in and cutting across the food space in Wales and the UK.

Food Sense Wales delivers a number of programmes across Wales – many as part of UK partnerships – including [Peas Please](#), [Food For Life Get Togethers](#) and [Sustainable Food Places](#).

About Peas Please

Peas Please is a UK-wide initiative that’s all about getting people to eat more veg which Food Sense Wales leads in Wales.

Peas Please is a ground-breaking initiative focused specifically on veg. With our vegetable consumption levels declining, Peas Please aims to bring together farmers, retailers, and restaurant chains, caterers, processors and government departments with a common goal of making it easier for everyone to eat veg.

It’s not just our health that will benefit but the environment and farmers can potentially benefit from more veg too. A recent study showed that if we all eat an extra portion of veg and a little less meat we would reduce the UK’s diet-related greenhouse gas emissions by 17%.

Peas Please aims to secure commitments from industry and government to improve the availability, acceptability (including convenience), affordability, and quality of the vegetable offer in shops,

schools, restaurants and beyond, and in turn stimulate increased vegetable consumption among the UK public, particularly children and those on a low income.

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The partnership is funded by the National Lottery Community Fund, the largest funder of community activity in the UK, who have made this work possible.