

## Fresca Group Increases Stake in Salad Grower, Thanet Earth

Fresca Group Limited, one of the UK's largest fresh produce businesses, has increased its stake in the ownership of salad grower Thanet Earth. The group announced today it had acquired the shares currently held by joint venture partners, Rainbow Growers Group UK for an undisclosed sum.

Speaking of the acquisition, Fresca CEO Martyn Fletcher said "Post Brexit, there has been increased demand for more UK grown fresh produce to ensure food security in our own country. Given environmental pressures and the need for us all to continue to reduce our carbon footprint, our strategy is to continue to invest in the sustainable growing of protected crops."

Thanet Earth Chairman, Chris Mack said "Wim Grootsholten of Rainbow Growers Group was the first person that we turned to when we took on this demanding project. He immediately recognised the potential to build a large scale, totally modern glasshouse complex in the UK, growing a range of products. Thanet Earth would not have happened without Wim's foresight and dedication since we set-out on this together some 15 years ago. In the last 7 years, Rainbow UK has played an active and pivotal role in Thanet Earth's growing success in the UK market. I am delighted with this strategic opportunity to invest further in the Thanet Earth business."

Wim Grootsholten said "*The time is right to hand over the responsibility of our investment in Thanet Earth to our long-established partner, Fresca Group. The business has strong development plans for the future and I have every confidence that Fresca will continue to successfully lead the business, reinforcing Thanet Earth's position as one of the country's leading growers of protected salad crops.*"

The business will now trade as Thanet Earth Peppers and will continue to be led by Pleun van Malkenhorst as Managing Director.

## NOTES TO EDITORS

### **About Fresca:**

Fresca Group is a major part of the fresh produce supply chain in the UK and beyond, with a combined turnover of circa £460m, and over 1,200 people working across 8 locations around the UK.

With roots dating back nearly 150 years in fresh produce, Fresca's businesses are active from seed through to shelf in a fast-moving, competitive marketplace. As growers, importers, clearance agents, wholesalers and major operators in fruit, salads, vegetables and wholesale – Fresca businesses add value by providing ripening, packing and logistics and customs solutions to all the major UK retailers, and also through wholesale markets and foodservice channels.

What makes Fresca different is that c43% of the business is owned by its own employees. Fresca's mission is to be the First Choice Produce Partner.

For further information, contact [Nikki.Churchill@frescagroup.co.uk](mailto:Nikki.Churchill@frescagroup.co.uk)

[Fresca Group](#)

### **About Rainbow Growers:**

Rainbow Growers specialise in growing, harvesting and packaging bell peppers in a sustainable and socially responsible way.

Established in 1991, Rainbow Growers Group is a cooperation of entrepreneurs, based in the Netherlands. They expanded into the UK when they became joint venture partners at Thanet Earth in 2008.

The group has 8 nurseries in the Netherlands, totalling 100 hectares of growing area. They also have operations in Tunisia.

[Home \(rainbowgrowers.nl\)](http://rainbowgrowers.nl)

### **About Thanet Earth:**

Making the most of the coastal setting and natural light in East Kent, Thanet Earth is a development of glasshouses near Birchington. Inside these immense glass structures, expert growers are producing speciality tomatoes, peppers and cucumbers for sale to the public through the UK's multiple retailers.

Thanet Earth is the UK's largest facility of its kind and has been growing protected salad crops since 2009.

The site currently has 6 glasshouses that produces around 400 million tomatoes, 30 million cucumbers and 24 million peppers each year. It has a very low carbon footprint. It harvests rainwater in vast reservoirs that have a capacity for 70million gallons of water, utilises modern energy efficient LED lighting for growing areas, consumes HVO (hydrotreated vegetable oil) for all shunt vehicles, and has a solar network that can provide just under 1 megawatt of energy.

For more information, email [press@thanetearth.com](mailto:press@thanetearth.com)

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