

Freshfel Europe Launches EU-Wide Information Campaign Targeted At Young Europeans



BY NICOLA PISANO

The new “Follow me to be Healthy!” digital information campaign launched this month by Freshfel Europe and Aprifel (the French agency for research and information on fruits and vegetables) encourages Millennials Europe-wide to transform their dietary habits and eat more fruits and vegetables. Jointly funded by the European Union, this digital-first campaign will ask young Europeans to integrate more fruits and vegetables in their daily diets.

Launching on July 4, 2019, at the Eurokèennes music festival in Belfort, France, the “Follow me to be Healthy!” campaign will run until the end of 2021 and operate live online under the hashtag #400gChallenge. Influencers and monthly challenges will prompt young Europeans to share their own tips on how to reach 400g of fruits and vegetables per day.

While all content is available on the campaign website, to capture a Europe-wide target audience, all content is being developed in English and French, with key messages translated into German, Spanish, Italian and Polish. This year “Follow me to be Healthy!” also will be present at the Paris Manga Sci-Fi show on Oct. 5-6, with event details coming soon.

“Follow me to be Healthy!” is one of many fruit and vegetable campaigns operating under the European Commission’s promotion of agricultural products programs. In 2018 and 2019, a budget of €8 million was allocated to multi-information provision and promotion programs aimed at increasing the consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables in the context of balanced and proper dietary practices.

Currently, five campaigns, including “Follow me to be Healthy!” are running under the 2018 program. This includes “Vegetables are the New Sneakers”, “Snack 5”, “European Fruits” and “Refresh,” operating in Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Germany, Greece and Poland. The approved 2019 campaigns are set to be announced in September.

“Follow me to be Healthy!” and other EU co-funded campaigns are only some of the fruit and vegetable campaigns taking the spotlight in the food arena. VegPower, the latest highly successful campaign from the Food Foundation targeted at children in the UK, is driving the need for more advertising space for fruit and vegetables. For this reason, VegPower was selected by Freshfel Europe to be showcased to fruit and vegetable industry experts and stakeholders from across Europe at its Annual Event held during The London Produce Show and Conference on June 5-6.

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margins in the UK, only 1.2% of food and drink advertising on television is dedicated to vegetables. Unfortunately, this does not reflect dietary needs, where vegetables have a high daily intake recommendation for all demographics in Europe.

To combat this lack of advertising space dedicated to vegetables, in a campaign first, £100,000 was raised through crowdfunding to finance television advertisement time for the VegPower campaign in the UK. What made this crowdfund especially unusual was that along with celebrity chefs, government departments, growers and community groups, retailers themselves also provided significant funding for the launch of the campaign.

This global support among the community and throughout the supply chain marked a significant breakthrough and allowed the campaign to finance prime television advertisement time, which has the largest and most impactful outreach across the country. To date, 11 supermarkets have funded the campaign, and a new partnership with ITV has also been set up to continue the VegPower mission.

Similar to Freshfel Europe’s “Follow me to be Healthy!” campaign, VegPower also maximized its outreach through a strong online presence rather than merely focusing on on-the-ground activities. Like Millennials, children are increasingly exposed to digital content, which through creative engagement, informs their lifestyle and dietary choices. Consequently, a powerful online presence is necessary in any successful promotion campaign to effectively reach younger generations.

Using an eye-catching design and a simple clear message to ‘EAT MORE VEG’, VegPower is inspiring children to eat more vegetables, no matter their diet choices. As a campaign first, VegPower is carefully evaluating the campaign’s effect on children’s attitudes and behavior to vegetables across the UK. With full publication of the overall campaign impact still to be released, preliminary data was shared with Freshfel Europe members at the Annual Event showing a marked increase in willingness to eat and consume vegetables in children who were exposed to the campaign compared to children who had never seen the campaign.

Nevertheless, the long term success of the campaign in stimulating vegetable intake over multiple years remains to be proven. A second rollout of the campaign is expected in late 2019 or early 2020 to ensure that UK children’s vegetable intake continues to rise. **pb**

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