

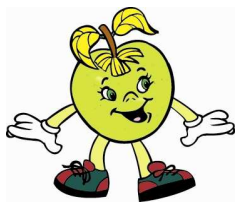


# NEWS RELEASE

Rel08/001LC  
11/09/08

## LE CRUNCH PACKS A PUNCH

LE CRUNCH is getting the French apple season off to a strong start this month unveiling a UK marketing campaign to include a national schools programme, a heavy-weight trade event and in-store promotions spanning the entire season.



The schools programme begins this month spreading healthy eating messages among 6,000 primary school members using 'Le Crunch Crew Playtime Club' apple characters designed especially to appeal to children. A nation-wide Le Crunch Apple Day competition will

offer schools the prize of £3000 to spend on playground equipment or healthy eating initiatives as well as offering smaller prizes for pupils.

Parents will also be targeted through healthy eating information leaflets.



A trade event is planned for March surrounding the England Vs France six-nations rugby match dubbed 'Le Crunch' giving key decision makers the chance to discuss future opportunities for Le Crunch apples within the UK market.

Six major retailers and the main UK wholesale markets will be involved in promotions continuing the healthy eating and active lifestyle theme. Activities will include on-pack promotions and competitions, in-store POS, online games as well as coverage in retailer magazines.

The French apple season runs from August to May. As some key Southern hemisphere countries look to take advantage of emerging markets outside the UK, an opportunity opens up for French producers, who with their cold-storage know-how are well placed to fill any gaps the UK may feel as the Northern and Southern hemisphere seasons cross over. Daniel Corbel, co-president of INTERFEL's external market commission said: "French producers are used to responding quickly to UK

market demand. Our proximity to the UK market and a sophisticated supply chain are big advantages of Le Crunch. A well-established transport system means apples can be delivered quickly, efficiently and at relatively short notice. What's more, our quality standards with GlobalGAP certifications and BRC standard packing reflect what the UK buyers expect."



Quality for the 2008 / 2009 season is looking promising and total Le Crunch exports to the UK are expected to be over 150,000 tonnes. Daniel Corbel said: "The UK is still the most important export market for French growers, and we work equally on quality and quantity to meet the demands of UK buyers. Our climate, geography and varietal expertise position Le Crunch as world-class apples."

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**Notes to Editors:**

Photographs available.

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Le Crunch, the umbrella brand set up by INTERFEL (the professional association for French fruit and vegetables) predominantly covers five main varieties: Golden Delicious, Gala, Granny Smith, Braeburn and Reds. Other main French varieties are Pink Lady and 'Club' varieties such as: Jazz®, Ariane®, Caméo®, Tentation®, Honeycrunch®, Sundowner® and organic varieties such as Juliet®.

Overall French apple crop forecasts for the 2008/2009 season are confirmed as:

France is set to produce 1.52 million tonnes of apples this season, of which:

Golden Delicious: 541,000t

Gala: 263,000t

Granny Smith: 170,000t

Braeburn: 112,000t

Red: 60,000t

France devotes more than 40,000 hectares to apple production and is the fifth largest producer of apples in the world (source: FAO).

In total, around 40% of the French crop is exported, 45% will meet domestic demand and the remaining 15% will be sold for food processing.

From 2000 – 2007 the UK saw a 12% growth in apple consumption volume (source UbiFrance).