**BRITISH SUMMER FRUITS TO BECOME BRITISH BERRY GROWERS**

This June, British Summer Fruits, the industry body that represents 95% of all the UK’s commercial soft fruit growers, is relaunching and rebranding to become British Berry Growers.

Since 1992, the UK’s crop association for the soft fruit industry has supported UK growers to build a billion-pound industry and the largest within UK horticulture.

British Berry Growers’ ambition is for British seasonal berries to continue to provide 100% of the UK’s needs and for industry exports to be 50% bigger than British sales volumes by 2035.

The new organisation will have four key effort priorities:

* To ensure understanding of the British berry industry’s positive contribution to a sustainable rural economy and the nation’s health, and shape government policy to support British Berry Growers’ mission
* To direct world-leading berry research and development that supports treatment of pest and disease, crop utilisation and drives future efficiencies, including the reduction of the carbon, waste and water footprint of the UK berry industry
* To grow sales for berries by building UK consumer awareness and advocacy, focusing on British berries first and driving overall consumer demand by covering 52 weeks of the year
* To identify and tackle the industry’s key risks to ensure its long-term viability and to provide issues support for UK berry growers

Commenting on the launch of British Berry Growers, chair Nick Marston said: “The launch of British Berry Growers marks an exciting moment for the British berry industry.

“The British berry industry is a true British business success story. Now worth over £1.6 billion year-round, the value of the industry has doubled in just a decade. Our growers sit at the heart of the rural economy and our industry is recognised as a key contributor to UK food self-sufficiency.

“British Berry Growers will champion the tireless work of our berry growers, both big and small, and support them as they adapt to the future challenges of seasonal berry production. We’re here to secure the long-term success of the British berry industry.”

The creation of British Berry Growers brings with it the launch of a new dedicated R&D advisory board. Its purpose will be to enable British Berry Growers to become recognised as one of the best crop associations in the world technically and environmentally.

The evolution of the trade body also sees the appointment of two new non-executive directors to the British Berry Growers organisation. Former MEP Anthea McIntyre CBE joins the organisation to advise and support the organisation on policy matters, while Dr Louise Sutherland brings her years of expertise in agri-tech to scope and set up the newly formed R&D advisory board.

British Berry Growers will continue to fund Love Fresh Berries, the organisation’s all year-round PR and social media campaign to promote strawberries, raspberries, blueberries and blackberries and all berry industry activities.

**-ENDS-**

For more information, interviews and images please contact:

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**NOTES TO EDITORS**

**About British Berry Growers**

British Berry Growers is the industry body for the British berry industry, which is worth £1.69 billion to the UK economy. Its members supply 95 percent of the berries (strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, and blackberries) in UK supermarkets. Formerly known as British Summer Fruits, British Berry Growers directs world-leading berry research, represents the interests of berry growers to Government and funds Love Fresh Berries, a year-round consumer campaign that celebrates the taste, health and value of British berries.

**Anthea McIntyre**

Anthea McIntyre CBE is a former MEP, serving from 2011-2020 on the Agriculture and Rural Development committee, where she authored a number a reports including "The future of Europe's horticulture sector - strategies for growth".

She comes from Herefordshire where she is a partner in her family’s small estate which includes an historic house and vineyard.

Anthea is a successful business woman, and a Director of MCP Systems Consultants, specialising in business intelligence systems. She is a past winner of the European Woman of Achievement Award for Business.

She is also a former Vice Chairman of the Conservative Party and Member of the Party Board where she had special responsibility for training.

She currently chairs the board of an academy trust and was made a CBE in the New Year’s Honours list.

**Louise Sutherland**

Louise Sutherland is the Director of Ceres Agri-tech at the University of Cambridge. She holds a PhD in Plant Pathology and is the Chair of the Raspberry Breeding Consortium.

Previously, Louise was Chair of the AHDB Soft Fruit Panel and a member of the AHDB Horticulture Board, and was Chair of Red Tractor Fresh Produce Scheme, Director of Assured Food Standards.

Louise also spent 8 years in technical and commercial roles at Marks and Spencer including as their soft fruit Technologist.