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PRESS RELEASE

10 June 2016

Blue Skies wins four gongs at UK FreshAwards

Blue Skies picked up four gongs at the FreshAwards in London this Week including a Lifetime Achievement Award for its Founder Anthony Pile and the overall Fresh Produce Business of the Year.

The Awards were organised by the Fresh Produce Consortium (FPC) and held at the Intercontinental Park Lane on Thursday 9 June 2016. The evening was hosted by actor and comedian Craig Charles and attended by over 500 people from across the fresh produce industry.

Blue Skies also won the CSR Excellence Award for the second year running and the Best Place to Work.

Chairman and Founder Anthony Pile said “It is an absolute honour to be recognised in this extraordinary way. To receive a FreshAward means a huge amount to Blue Skies and is credit to each and every person who has played a part in our wonderful business, to receive four FreshAwards including a Lifetime Achievement Award and the Fresh Produce Business of the Year, leaves me speechless! Thank you to everyone at Blue Skies. This is for you.”

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For more web-based info go to www.blueskies.com

NOTES TO EDITORS

Blue Skies has been producing fresh-cut fruit and freshly squeezed juice products since 1998. The company was founded by Anthony Pile and began by exporting premium quality freshly cut fruit to supermarkets in Europe. From the beginning the company's approach differed to its competitors because it believes in 'adding value at source'. This means the majority of Blue Skies products are cut and packed in the country of origin, rather than shipped overseas and processed elsewhere. This philosophy not only enables Blue Skies to deliver a better quality product, but also helps to generate social and economic development within the country where the fruit is grown. Today Blue Skies continues to supply a variety of retailers throughout the world with exceptional quality 'fresh from harvest fruit'. It employs over 3500 people at its factories in Ghana, Egypt, South Africa, Brazil and the UK.

The Joint Effort Enterprise

The Joint Effort Enterprise (JEE) is the Blue Skies model for a sustainable business. It is a set of principles formed in 1998 by the Founder of Blue Skies to ensure that the organisation endures. The JEE has been necessary for Blue Skies to respond effectively to actual and immediate challenges, and to be innovative and profitable in a highly competitive market.

The JEE is principally made up of three strands; a diverse society, a culture of respect and a drive for profit but not at the expense of the other strands. This model ensures that we can recruit and retain the best people, and conserve the resources we rely on, so that we can produce the best quality products, keep customers happy and generate the income that keeps the organisation going. Put simply it espouses the idea that a business works best if it is inclusive, socially equal and profitable.

The Blue Skies Foundation

The Blue Skies Foundation is a charity which we run in partnership with two of the retailers we supply in Europe; Waitrose in the UK and Albert Heijn in the Netherlands. To date the Foundation has completed over 35 community projects in Ghana and South Africa, including the construction and renovation of schools, toilets and clinics in remote rural areas where such facilities often don't even exist.

Technical Standards

To help us select the best quality fruits, Blue Skies employs a team of agricultural experts who work closely with our suppliers (group wide) to provide continuous training and support. Together we work to the highest technical, social and environmental standards to ensure all our fruit comes from a sustainable source and delivers on freshness and taste. The standards we work to include GlobalGAP for food safety, SMETA (Sedex Methodology Ethical Trade Audit) and Fairtrade for ethical compliance, and organic and LEAF for environmental sustainability.

Recognition and Awards

Our approach to business has won us a number of awards including three Queens Awards for Enterprise in the Sustainable Development Category (in 2008, 2011 and 2015) and in 2013 we awarded Social Enterprise of the Year at the Private Business Awards in London.

If you need clarification on any part of this guidance or if you are in doubt about how to apply it, please contact Simon Derrick, Communications Manager on +44 (0) 1604 881230 or via simon.derrick@blueskies.com

For further information please visit our website at www.blueskies.com