



## **News Release** (Broadcast/Media)

### **FOOD RADIO - FIRST EVER BROADCASTER DEDICATED TO FOOD**

**18 May 2007** - A new radio concept announced today integrates for the first time, the immediacy of radio with the power of the web and the fascination of food. Food Radio is an integrated web portal and audio programming channel, which will go live and make its first radio broadcast on 20 May 2007 on the Classic Gold Network between 1400 and 1600 hrs and continue on subsequent Sundays, trailed regularly during the week. It will also broadcast on Oneword Radio.

"This is an original concept for commercial radio," said Sir Rodney Walker, chairman, Food Radio at the launch. "Until now there has not been a single radio or audio service devoted to this enormously popular subject. Food Radio does not have a single competitor in this sector; a sector that spends almost £700m a year on advertising, excluding that spent on drink, health, diets and other related areas. We intend to be the premier, interactive stop for everyone interested in food. We shall be championing quality local food suppliers, seasonality, reduced carbon footprints, Food Miles, sustainability, Fairtrade, the organic message and food provenance - all key issues of importance to anyone who cares about what they or their family eat.

Sir Rodney added: "We are confident there is consumer appetite for Food Radio. In recent YouGov research commissioned by Food Radio 75 percent of respondents said seasonality was important when purchasing fresh goods (indeed: half the sample said out of season food should not be sold). 63 percent had visited a local farmers' market and the results indicated strong interest in issues such as Fairtrade, Food miles, nutrition, locality and production methods."

Food Radio has been launched with the help of Absolute Radio. The Food Radio management team includes renowned programmer and international radio consultant Clive Dickens and Adrian Robinson, both founding directors of Absolute Radio. Food Radio production director, Phil Critchlow, has been responsible for some of the highest profile content across BBC and commercial radio. CEO, Robin Ford, is an experienced business

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manager with an extensive track record in business start-ups, marketing and sponsorship.

Food Radio launches with a star cast of food and broadcast personalities supported by highly experienced professionals in radio programming, production and management. Editorial director, Michael Bukht, launched Capital 95.8 and Classic FM as well as a further 20 stations worldwide. He is also known to a wider public as the culinary expert, Michael Barry, from the BBC 2 Food and Drink series. The 'face' of Food Radio is Katie Derham, who co-presents the ITV Lunchtime News and London Tonight on ITV 1. They are joined by Jilly Goolden, Allegra McEvedy, Dr Sarah Schenker and Nigel Williams.

The radio service and web portal will be totally integrated, providing the opportunity to achieve the media buyer's dream of a realistic classified section. Said Clive Dickens: "This is where Food Radio can outperform other commercial services. Food and drink horizons are endless, with the portal acting as a trading space in its own right.

"Within such a high-spending industry the potential for an integrated multi-media channel is enormous. In addition to mainstream advertisers who will be targeted, there are hundreds of small suppliers who do not wish to, or are finding it difficult breaking into supermarket distribution. With Food Radio they will achieve both extensive listing facilities and direct sales of product at a retail margin."

Content will be distributed across as many platforms as possible, both analogue and digital. With the potential, in time, to become a stand-alone station, the immediate aim is to reach consumers through as many existing media as possible.

Food radio delivers a genuinely interactive radio service. The web portal will allow the listener and the online visitor to participate in real time, as well as giving advertisers and promoters the opportunity to back up their airtime exposure with micro sites, videos and downloads.

Programming will range from healthy eating and diets, through to food news, ethical issues, food producers and personalities, comparative reviews and what's happening in the world of farmers' local markets, supermarkets and specialist food retailers. Although predominantly concerned with food it will also carry music and features about major food-related political and news stories. Editorial tone will be popular, accessible and principled. Emphasis will be placed on audience participation.

The portal will be updated daily by a team of professional online editors. It will also provide research opportunities and provide a platform for lively forum discussion.

Food Radio has negotiated a 'first' with Food from Britain, to share its 3,000 strong regional producer database. Other partnerships already signed include Country Markets (formerly WI Country Markets) to list over 450 approved retail outlets. Similar agreements are in progress and the Soil Association has partnered to advise on organics.

**ends**

**Editor's Note:**

Research was carried out by YouGov Plc . Total sample size was 2,287 GB adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 3rd - 5th April 2007. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all GB adults (aged 18+).

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