Growers and fresh produce supply chain operators around Europe are struggling with soaring energy prices up to ten times higher than last year. The energy crunch is causing serious threats to food safety and food security, as well as to European environmental sustainability and health. Without mitigation measures to alleviate the situation the energy bills will become unsustainable and many operators risk serious economic hardships, and even bankruptcy. The sector is facing unlevel playing fields depending on their country, energy contract and type of product.

What’s going on?

- Fruit and vegetables are perishable products, which need specific conditions to stay fresh and tasty. Energy is required to ensure safety and quality from production down to retail.
- Without proper temperature control, there is an increased risk for microbiological contamination, putting your health at risk!
- Products might not be harvested or grown given high production and storage costs. The food loss would limit supermarket assortment and increase prices.
- High energy bills also affect consumers purchasing power of healthy fresh produce, leading to a reduced consumption.
Fruit & Vegetables: the Energy Issue

The essential role of fresh fruit and vegetables

- Fruit and vegetables are an essential sector. But its **competitiveness might be at stake** due to tight financial margins of fresh produce business.
- Fruit and vegetables are sustainable choices - with numerous **nutritional benefits and low environmental impact**, and need to be sustained.
- **All Member States produce** an array of fruits and vegetables, and so the effects are felt all across the EU.

What must be done?

- **Create a level playing field** in the EU to avoid distortion of competition among operators. Setting energy price caps on an EU level is desirable.
- Fresh fruit and vegetables needs to be **exempted from potential energy consumption cuts** to ensure quality and safety.
- **The sector needs to move towards self-reliance in energy production**. Support for innovative technologies and electricity production for self-usage with the possibility to inject surplus back to the grid is key.
- These are **exceptional circumstances**, and so exceptional measures need to be taken to overcome this energy crisis.

Eating fruit and vegetables must be promoted to ensure a healthy diet for European citizens and a transition to a greener Europe.