

# Research results

2 August 2013

## The great fruit experiment

Fruitful Office teamed up with the Ethical Property Company to conduct a workplace trial in order to measure the impact fresh fruit has on the lives of its office workers. Ethical Property owns 15 buildings across the UK, a total of 161,000 sq ft, providing office, event and retail space to charities, social enterprises, voluntary and campaign groups. The trial to assess the impact of providing free fruit to staff took place at their largest centre, Development House, in the City of London, between 18 June and 17 July 2013.

The building provides office space over seven floors for more than 20 organisations with a particular focus on international development issues. In total some 320 people work in the building. Fruitful Office delivered 216 fruit baskets during the trial, containing seven varieties of fruit, with the 1,584 bananas being the fruit of choice. The baskets were placed on desks, filing cabinets and window ledges to ensure they were always within easy reach.

Watch a video of the research in action at: <http://youtu.be/r8crJIFVTyw>



Branded *Free Fruit Month*, the initiative was launched at a tenants' meeting and promoted with posters around the building. The building's residents were asked to complete a pre-trial and post-trial survey to monitor the change in attitude, perception and outlook on both their productivity and their working environment, together with questions about their eating habits.

## Results

The key findings of the workplace fruit trial were an 11 per cent increase in respondents agreeing that their workplace “enabled them to work productively” and large majorities saying that the provision of free fruit had improved their quality of life at work and made them feel more valued.

### > Workplace productivity

Respondents were asked whether they agreed that “their workplace enabled them to work more productively”.

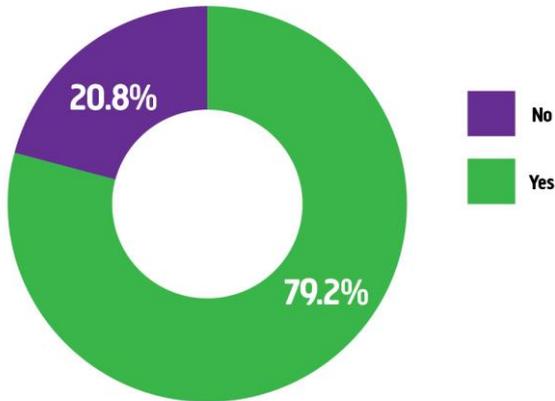
Following the free fruit trial, the percentage agreeing or strongly agreeing increased by more than 10%, from 61.6% to 72.3%



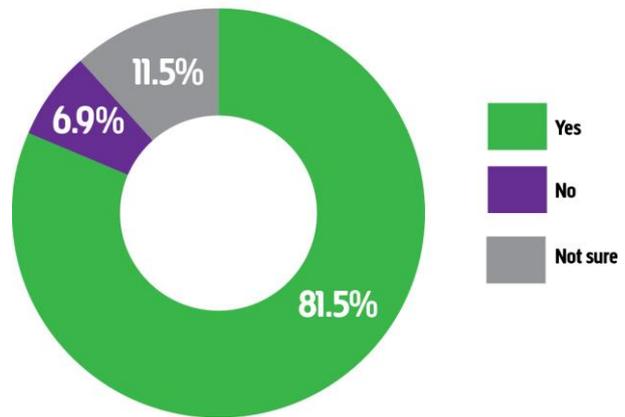
**> Quality of life at work**

Asked whether the provision of free fruit made them feel “more valued as an employee or tenant,” 79% said yes. Over 81 per cent thought having fresh fruit available at their desk had “improved their quality of life at work”.

**Did the provision of free fruit in Development House make you feel more valued as an employee/tenant**



**Do you think having fresh fruit provided weekly at your desk has improved your quality of life at work?**

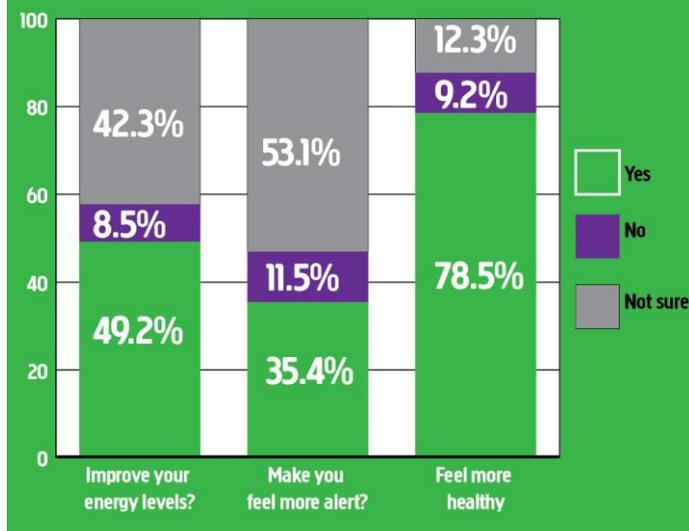


**> Eating habits**

The fruit trial certainly changed behaviour. 70 per cent said they were eating more fruit; 45 per cent were eating fewer “unhealthy” snacks and 13 per cent were choosing healthier options at lunch.

For those that ate the fruit, over 78 per cent said they felt more healthy, with just under half reporting higher energy levels and just over a third claiming the fruit made them feel more alert.

**If you ate the fruit did it:**



## The workplace

The pre- and post-trial surveys also asked people what they thought about their workplace.

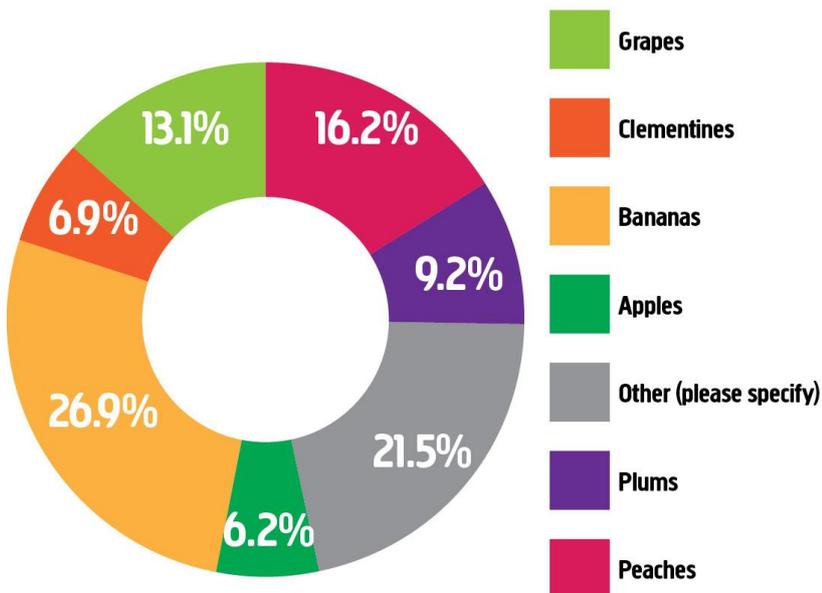
Before the trial half (49.6 per cent) of the respondents at Development House agreed that their workplace “enabled them to work productively” and 12 per cent strongly agreed, while a third (32.8 per cent) were neutral on the question.

Following the free fruit trial, staff were asked the same question again. The percentage of respondents agreeing that their workplace “enabled them to work productively” increased from 49.6 per cent to to 60.8 per cent.

## Top banana losing ground?

The workplace trial confirms the banana as favourite fruit, although by a much smaller margin than previous polls. In Fruitful’s survey of all its clients last year, 68 per cent opted for the yellow fruit. In the workplace trial 27 per cent of respondents chose the banana; 16 per cent opted for peaches and 13 per cent for grapes.

## What is your favourite fruit?



## What they said

The trial was sponsored by office manager Edith Allan: “We thought this would be a great idea. Tenants in our building can be incredibly busy and may not be able to take time to ensure they purchase a healthy lunch and snacks. Having fruit on site will really help with this.”

Sales and development manager Janine Woodward agrees: “Everyone in the building works for a good cause and they are generally caring individuals. Many cycle to work and so on the whole the majority do look after their wellbeing already. Having said that, everyone is so dedicated to their work, they often find it difficult to get out of the office during the day and so may not have as healthy a diet as they would like if they had more time to source healthy food.”

Staff working in Development House really appreciated the free fruit, with many saying not only what a great idea it is but commenting positively on the quality and presentation.

*"I already eat a lot of fruit but it made me eat a different variety of fruit and more of it! Having fruit in the office also helped reduce the amount of stuff I have to carry on the tube in the morning on my way into work."*

*"I think that the benefits make it a fantastically worthwhile investment and it helps make a very stressful job more manageable - thank you!"*

*"It generates a sense of being cared for, and the presentation (in nice packs) makes a difference too."*

*"Excellent idea, people at the office drink so much coffee and tea, it is great to include healthy fruits in the mix. Thanks!"*

*"Very polite and friendly delivery staff, liked the basket, great that it got delivered to the office, good variety of fruit."*

*"Previously I rarely ate fruit - I love veg but wasn't in the habit of buying and eating fruit - the whole unripe / ripe window seemed so small. Since the fruit basket started I've discovered I love peaches and nectarines and have bought these for home. Thanks!"*

*"I think that the benefits make it a fantastically worthwhile investment and it helps make a very stressful job more manageable - thank you!"*

And perhaps the best comment ...

*"It was a great idea. I felt valued and flattered by having fresh fruit at my desk. what a treat. I am 24 weeks pregnant and felt it was just right office snack for me and the baby. Thank you!"*

Janine Woodward from Ethical Property added: "Our staff and tenants thought it was a nice and healthy gesture on behalf of Ethical Property. It added to their understanding of our triple bottom line approach to business – we care about the social and environmental impact of our buildings as well as their financial performance. Having a healthy workplace is part of this."

Commenting on the results, Fruitful Office director Vasco de Castro said: "It's been great to work with Ethical property on the workplace trial. The results shows that in today's hectic working environment, when people don't always manage to eat healthily, the availability of fresh fruit at the desk is really appreciated and can make a real difference to feelings of wellbeing and productivity."

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**About Fruitful Office:**

Fruitful Office is the UK's original workplace fruit supplier and is committed to helping companies to create healthy workplaces for their employees. Fruitful Office delivers baskets of fresh fruit daily to office workers' desks right across the UK, using local teams to provide fruit to local customers.

**For more information:**

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