

17 February 2009

Sodexo strengthens public sector credentials with new high-profile hire

Sodexo, a leading food and facilities management services provider, has today announced the appointment of Tony Cooke as director of government relations in a newly created role.

Cooke will be responsible for the further strengthening of Sodexo's position and business in the public sector where it now cites approximately 50 per cent of its business.

He joins Sodexo from his previous role as DEFRA programme director for the highly successful Year of Food and Farming campaign.

During the programme, Cooke led the sourcing and engagement of 2,760 organisations, reaching 1.5 million children and generating £20m worth of investment, including involvement from Sodexo.

Cooke has considerable experience of driving change in the food industry, having spent five years as part of the national leadership team of the UK Government's Sustainable Farming and Food Strategy under Sir Don Curry.

Cooke previously spent ten years running businesses in food production and distribution.

During his career, he has developed particular expertise in climate change, sustainable production and consumption, corporate responsibility, stakeholder engagement, social marketing and campaign management.

Cooke is currently a board member for the Department for Children, Schools and Families / Department of Health 'Food in Schools' programme, and also an associate of St George's House, Windsor Castle, an independent think tank.

He is a Fellow of both the Royal Geographical Society and the Royal Society of Arts and a Freeman of the Worshipful Company of Farmers.

Cooke said: "I am delighted to be joining Sodexo at a time when maintaining a solid relationship with government has never been more important. As a leading player in the public sector, Sodexo is highly conscious of its responsibilities. My aim will be to further strengthen the existing relationships, influence and business that Sodexo has with government."



Cooke will report into Phil Hooper, corporate affairs director, Sodexo UK and Ireland.

Hooper said: "Sodexo is already a leading food and facilities management provider in the public sector. Tony's impressive portfolio of public sector engagement will enable us to nurture the relationships we currently have, and to ensure that Sodexo's strategic objectives meet ongoing government initiatives."

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About Sodexo

In the UK and Ireland, Sodexo employs 43,500 people, and provides food and facilities management services to clients at over 2,300 locations in the corporate, education, healthcare, leisure and defence sectors.

Many companies rely on Sodexo for cost-effective solutions to their employee or hospitality catering, or to deliver services such as cleaning, reception, switchboard and help desks, mailroom, reprographics and grounds maintenance.

Sodexo is part of the Sodexo Group, the leading global provider of food and facilities management services, with more than 375,000 employees at 30,600 sites in 80 countries.

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