Virgin StartUp Foodpreneur Festival Returns

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Sir Richard Branson is back with scaled up support for food and beverage entrepreneurs and the opportunity to take the US by storm

- **Finalists to showcase businesses to a panel of Britain's top food buyers, bloggers, entrepreneurs and influencers on 2nd October**
- **New 'Retail' prize gives winners a route to the US market with retailer Target Corporation**
- **Initiative championed by global kids food sensation Paul Lindley, Founder of Ella's Kitchen**
- **Contest open from today for one week only, deadline for submissions is 16th September**

Virgin StartUp Foodpreneur Festival is back for a second consecutive year, with a mission to find Britain's best up-and-coming food and beverage businesses.

Developed by **Virgin StartUp**, Sir Richard Branson's not-for-profit company providing funding and support for entrepreneurs, the popular food festival promises to supersede last year's campaign with amazing new partners and even bigger prizes, including the ultimate business opportunity – the chance for UK foodies to launch their companies in the US.

The initiative is available to enter from today and will culminate on 2nd October in London. Workshops from leading industry figures will start in the morning, with the Finalists showcasing their food businesses in the afternoon to a panel of foodie giants, led by **Paul Lindley, Founder of Ella's Kitchen**, and **Sir Richard Branson** himself.

The Judges will select Winners from two categories, each with their own individual prize package that includes existing routes to market and the chance to raise their business profiles. The two categories and prizes are as follows:

- **Street Food** - Judged in collaboration with *Urban Food Fest* and*Appear Here*
  - One winner will receive a rent-free pop up for 1 week (Monday – Sunday) via Appear Here at Old Street Underground Station
  - One winner will receive a stall for 3 months (Saturdays only) at Urban Food Fest in Shoreditch rent-free

- **Retail** - Judged in in collaboration with *Exporting is GREAT* and*Target Corporation*

  - Four winners will get the opportunity to meet buyers at Target Corporation in the US, whom are seeking up to four new products to trial in their American stores.
  - The trial for any selected products would take place across 300 stores with the option, at Target's discretion, for successful products to be rolled out to all 2000 Target Corporation stores after six months.

The project is supported by Exporting is GREAT: the UK government's ambitious new campaign, which aims to inspire 100,000 new businesses to export by 2020.

Sir Richard Branson, founder of the Virgin Group said:

"Britain is living through a golden age of entrepreneurship with over 5million small businesses providing jobs and helping to boost the economy. At the heart of this are British foodie start-ups which have created a burgeoning industry of entrepreneurs. Last year's event unearthed some fantastic talent and I can't wait to meet the next wave of foodpreneurs driving this movement forward."

Paul Lindley, Founder of Ella's Kitchen said:

"The US market can be a holy grail to young British brands looking to expand internationally. I am excited to be working with Virgin StartUp on our joint mission to find pioneering entrepreneurs and help them gain the momentum needed to crack new markets. Drawing on my own experience and the excellent opportunities on offer through the collaboration with Target Corporation, I am confident that soon US consumers will soon be discovering some fantastic new British food brands!"

To enter the competition, foodpreneurs should head towww.foodpreneur.virginstartup.org, where full

T&Cs are also available. To grab a ticket to the Foodpreneur workshop go to http://foodpreneurfestival2015.eventbrite.co.uk.

The Virgin StartUp Foodpreneur Festival 2015 will take place on **2nd October** at The Vinyl Factory, 18 Marshall St, London W1F 7BE, with workshops starting at 9am followed by business showcasing at 12pm.

To find out more, search for @virginstartup or #VirginFoodFest on Twitter or visit the Facebook pagewww.facebook.com/virginstartup

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Notes

- Entries now open and close at 1700 on 16th September – visitwww.foodpreneur.virginstartup.org to apply
- Workshop Eventbrite tickets are available for £49 9am-12pm – visithttp://foodpreneurfestival2015.eventbrite.co.uk
- Business showcases in the afternoon are invite only

Competition criteria:

- A UK resident with a UK-based business
- Aged 18 or over
- Available 02.10 for a live showcase event in London
- Agree to the Terms and Conditions of the competition

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About Virgin StartUp

Virgin StartUp is a not-for-profit company founded by Richard Branson and Virgin in 2013, to support entrepreneurs based in England who are planning to launch a start-up or are within their first few years of trading as a business. It has supported over 700 businesses with funding, mentoring and advice and is now building on its unique support offer by helping businesses scale up through international trade.

About Target Corporation

Minneapolis-based Target Corporation (NYSE: TGT) serves guests at 1,799 stores and at Target.com. Since 1946, Target has given 5 percent of its profit to communities, that giving equals more than $4 million a week. For more information, visit Target.com/Pressroom. For a behind-the-scenes look at Target, visit Target.com/abullseyeview or follow @TargetNews on Twitter.

About Paul Lindley

Paul Lindley is an award winning British entrepreneur. In 2006 he founded Ella's Kitchen, an innovative brand of organic food for babies and young children whose mission is to improve children's lives by giving them a better relationship with food. It is now the largest baby food band in the UK and has sales of over $100M all around the world. In 2013 he sold the business to The Hain Celestial group but remains actively involved. In 2015 he founded Paddy's Bathroom a brand of natural and organic toiletries for young children, that makes getting clean as fun as it was to get dirty, whilst also creating safe, clean water for children in Rwanda through its integrated Drop Buy Drop program. Also co-founder of The Key is E, a social business that supports entrepreneurs in Africa whose businesses socially benefit children, Paul firmly believes in the power of business to achieve social good.

About Urban Food Fest

Urban Food Fest street food night market is every Saturday in Shoreditch, London and Manchester featuring 15 revolving street food trucks. Plus Urban Food Fest do bespoke corporate events for brands including Apple, GAP and Nike.

About Appear Here

Appear Here is the leading marketplace for short-term space. Used by thousands of brands and landlords every month, Appear Here works with a broad mix of clients, ranging from big brands such as Google, Net-a-porter and Marc Jacobs to start-ups including Eventbrite, PRESS London and SUITCASE Magazine. Named as one of Wired's '100 Hottest Start Ups' and The Financial Times' most 'Disruptive Companies of 2014,' Appear Here has become the go-to destination to make innovative and creative retail ideas happen.

Company Contact:

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