

# Press release



**1 March 2006**

**Embargoed until 5:05pm.**

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## **Food industry must come clean on Benzene in soft drinks**

Sustain, the alliance for better food and farming, has reacted with concern to reports on the BBC that the soft drinks industry has known for years that cancer-causing Benzene can form in soft drinks that contain Vitamin C.

Richard Watts of Sustain said: *“Benzene is a known cause of cancer. It seems the soft drinks industry has known for 15 years that adding Vitamin C to soft drinks can create this harmful substance.”*

*“Tests show the levels of Benzene that can be created are up to eight times higher than the recommended level for drinking water in the UK. The scientific evidence suggests that we simply do not know how much Benzene can trigger cancer and so industry attempts to dismiss this issue are wishful thinking.”*

*“It is ironic that many of the affected products are marketed as health drinks. Much of the marketing is aimed at children.”*

*“The soft drinks industry must come clean about what they know about Benzene in soft drinks. And they must tell us for how long they’ve known it. Parents and children deserve to know the truth.”*

*“The Government should bring in limits for Benzene in soft drinks. The limit in drinking water is one part per billion (ppb). Why should this be any different for soft drinks?”*

**ends.**

**All media enquiries should be directed to:**

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### **Notes to Editors:**

1. *Sustain: The alliance for better food and farming* advocates food and agricultural policies and practices that enhance the health and welfare of people and animals, improve the working and living environment, enrich society and culture and promote equity. *Sustain* is a registered charity and has a membership of around 100 national public interest organisations. For more information, see: [www.sustainweb.org](http://www.sustainweb.org)