



NEWS RELEASE

EAT FOR GOALS!

UEFA, THE WORLD HEART FEDERATION AND THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION COME TOGETHER TO TACKLE CHILDHOOD OBESITY

Brussels, 29 September 2008 – The Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) and the World Heart Federation, with the support of the European Commission, came together at the British School of Brussels today to launch the children’s cookery book, *Eat for Goals!* Through the book the message that a healthy lifestyle is also based on healthy food is conveyed by children’s role models, a multicultural group of 13 internationally renowned male and female football players, who share what they love to eat and give recipes for their favourite dishes.

“Eat for Goals! is about good food, cooking and football,” – Miroslav Klose, FC Bayern München.

A detailed list of the ingredients and step-by-step instructions for preparing each of the 13 dishes makes it easy for even the less-experienced child to make delicious, healthy meals. And for those who want to know more about the relationship between a balanced, healthy diet and performance, which is crucial to footballers, the book gives the nutritional values per portion and plenty of food tips.

“Eat for Goals! shows young players and lovers of football how to cook and eat like champions,” – Steven Gerrard, captain of FC Liverpool.

Children are increasingly adopting unhealthy lifestyles and the current annual rate of increase of childhood obesity in Europe is ten times higher than in the 1970s¹. Through the active support of *Eat for Goals!* UEFA, the World Heart Federation and the European Commission are focusing attention on obesity, one of the major public health issues of the 21st century. “The world of football has long inspired people of any age and gender to exercise. It has now set out to inspire them to eat well too,” said William Gaillard, director of communications and public affairs at UEFA.

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Chronic disease (heart disease, stroke, diabetes) along with their major causes, excess weight and obesity, poor diets, passive and active smoking and physical inactivity, are now being seen at an alarmingly early age. Chronic disease is largely preventable if the main risk factors are reduced by avoiding tobacco and eating a balanced diet with plenty of fruit and vegetables, whole grains, lean meat, fish and pulses, plus low-fat and low-salt products. Regular physical exercise such as playing football is also vital. “Twenty per cent of all European children are currently overweightⁱⁱ, showing how important initiatives such as *Eat for Goals!* are as they encourage healthy nutrition and active lifestyles among children and their parents in a fun and inspirational way,” said Professor Pekka Puska, president elect of the World Heart Federation.

“It’s vital that children have a healthy lifestyle based on healthy food and exercise. I’m looking forward to cooking the recipes in Eat for Goals! with my children when they’re older,” – Ruud van Nistelrooy, FC Real Madrid.

The European Commission views activities that encourage healthy lifestyles among children as an investment in the future of Europe. “I welcome this joint initiative by UEFA, the World Heart Federation and the European Commission and I have no doubt that this book will score goals among young Europeans,” said Androulla Vassiliou, European Commissioner for Health.

UEFA, as part of its ongoing football and social responsibility efforts, identified the *Eat for Goals!* initiative as a good way to talk to a large and young public about the importance of good food and daily exercise by bringing together footballers’ favourite recipes.

“I’m very happy to share my favourite recipe as a healthy lifestyle is not just about exercise but also healthy food,” – Birgit Prinz, 1. FFC Frankfurt.

“To excel at sports and to perform at one's best, diet is crucial,” said Dr Brenda Despontin, Principal of The British School of Brussels. “Eat for Goals! reinforces our philosophy of teaching children from an early age to feed themselves in a healthy way.”

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Eat for Goals! was created for children aged 5 to 11 and is published in English, French and German by publisher Falkemedia based in Kiel, Germany. The book is in hardback and costs EUR 12.90. It will be available in bookshops throughout Germany, Austria, Liechtenstein and Switzerland from the end of October. The book is already available to be ordered online at www.falkemedia-shop.de and via the UEFA and World Heart Federation websites. Postage and delivery cost an additional EUR 5 to European countries outside Germany. Discussions are at an early stage regarding publication in other formats and in other European languages and countries.

Purchasers of the book will be helping more children as UEFA will donate EUR 1 from the sale of each book in support of the World Heart Federation's programmes encouraging children to be physically active.

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Union of European Football Associations (UEFA)

UEFA is an association of associations based on representative democracy and the governing body of football in Europe. UEFA's core mission is to promote, protect and develop European football at every level of the game, to promote the principles of unity and solidarity, and to deal with all questions relating to European football. For further information visit: www.uefa.com

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The World Heart Federation

The World Heart Federation is a nongovernmental organisation based in Geneva, Switzerland, dedicated to the prevention and control of heart disease and stroke, with a focus on low- and middle-income countries. It comprises 196 member societies of cardiology and heart foundations from over 100 countries covering the regions of Asia-Pacific, Europe, East Mediterranean, the Americas and Africa. For further information, visit: www.worldheart.org

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High resolution images from *Eat for Goals!* can be downloaded for publication from www.cwnewsroom.ch

ⁱ The Challenge of Obesity in the WHO European Region and Strategies of Response, WHO Europe 2007

ⁱⁱ WHO European Ministerial Conference on Counteracting Obesity, November 2006