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## **LEVI ROOTS TO BRING SUNSHINE TO SOFT DRINKS MARKET**

One of the nation's best loved personalities and entrepreneurs, Levi Roots, is building on his £30m brand by unveiling his own exotic blend of Caribbean flavours for the soft drinks market.

The Levi Roots range of fruit juice and fizzy drinks features a selection of delicious fruit flavour blends that have been given that extra Levi 'twist' to create unique products that set it apart from the rest of the market.

The new Levi Roots fizzy range will introduce Fiery Root Ginger Beer with Lime 'n' Honey, which is made with Jamaican ginger extract, and Caribbean Crush, which is a tropical blend of mango, grapefruit and pineapple. Both flavours will be available in 2Litre PET bottles and as 500ml PET bottles and 330ml cans.

Levi Roots fruit juice has been created as 1Litre Tetra cartons for ambient fixtures in three flavours: Orange, Papaya 'n' Lime, Blood Orange 'n' Pomegranate and Spicy Reggae Reggae Tomato Juice.

Set to be released to trade from March 2011, the fruit juice will be available through the Grocery channel alongside the 2L fizzy, which will also be available with the 500ml bottle and cans through the Impulse channel to support independent retailers and forecourts. The UK's major multiples are already behind the launch of the brand with the first batch of the Levi Roots range to hit the shelves nationwide from 28 March.

Packaging for the Levi Roots range is in keeping with the existing brand identity. Using the bright, bold colours that are so closely linked with Levi's musical Reggae culture and featuring his silhouette with trademark dreadlocks, the products will create a big impact on-shelf to drive trial.

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The launch of the Levi Roots brand into the UK's £6.1bn soft drinks market is expected to further boost the flavoured carbonates and fruit juice categories, which are both expected to continue to grow\*. The new range also capitalises on consumer's growing thirst for exotic flavours in both categories but offers something different to the current choice\*.

Levi Roots said: "More and more people have embraced the exotic flavours of the Caribbean that I love so much and I've created some delicious and exciting blends that will offer totally unique tastes. I want my range to add a bit of colour, fun and sunshine in to the soft drinks market!"

Since appearing on Dragons' Den in 2007 to attract investment for his Reggae Reggae Sauce, Levi Roots' rise to become a major player in the market has been meteoric, making him the most significant contributor to the increasing influence of Caribbean flavours within the retail sector. The entrepreneur's entry in to soft drinks follows the development of sauces, nuts, burgers, sandwiches, pasties and ready meals and consumer support is ever increasing his brand popularity, which has led to a TV show and best selling cook book.

The development of the Levi Roots soft drinks range has been supported by Vimto Soft Drinks, which is spearheading the brand's launch in to the trade. The major soft drinks supplier has worked alongside Levi Roots on the design and delivery of the products and is driving the nationwide sales and marketing campaign for the range. Vimto Soft Drinks has a track record of success, responsible for some of the country's best loved and well-known brands including Vimto, which is now the UK's fastest growing soft drink\*\*. The supplier will be using its years of experience and nationwide reach to achieve extensive distribution across Multiple Retail, Cash & Carry, Wholesale and independent outlets.

Neil Gibson, Head of marketing for Vimto Soft Drinks said: “Introducing Levi Roots in to the soft drinks market is very exciting as we know there’s fantastic potential for the range, given its unique proposition in a growing category. The UK consumer is becoming more experimental as more exotic flavours are being introduced on to the market. This new range has all the right ingredients to be loved by consumers, especially as it is headed up by a people’s champion who is well known for creating quality products packed full of character and taste.

“Levi has successfully used his unconventional style to challenge the ‘big boys’ in the market and, as we’re a company that also likes to do things differently this gives us the right ingredients to come together and create a recipe for success.”

\*Source: Total Coverage MAT 19.02.11 - Fruit Carbonates experiencing +10% growth and is worth £506m. The Fruit Juice drinks market is growing at +6% YOY and is valued at £701m.

\*\*Source: Nielsen Total Soft Drinks (Top 25 Brands) MAT Value w.e. 22.01.11 - Vimto has 20% YOY growth.

### **Notes to editors**

#### **RRSPs**

##### **Levi Roots fizzy drinks:**

2 Litre bottle- £1.69 (Grocery) / £1.89 (Impulse)

500ml bottle - £1.09 (Grocery) / £1.19 and 99p PMP (Impulse)

330ml can – 65p (Impulse)

##### **Levi Roots fruit juices:**

1Litre Tetra - £1.59 (Grocery)

**Issued by Smarts on behalf of Vimto Soft Drinks**

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