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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Gardenex announces Joe Denham as new chairman

Gardenex is pleased to announce that Joe Denham, CEO of VegTrug Limited, has taken over as chairman of the Federation.

“After 10 years in the industry I am delighted to be taking on the chairmanship to assist Amanda Sizer Barrett and her team in any way I can, helping businesses to improve their exports from the UK,” said Joe.

“We are living through exciting times with challenges which have never been faced before. Every business needs all the help and advice it can get, and the team at Gardenex do a fantastic job for our industry.”

Joe founded VegTrug in 2009 and the company now operates in many countries – including Germany, America, Australia, India and Japan – as well as the UK.

Before setting up VegTrug Joe had a varied career as a serial entrepreneur, having founded and then sold his Dubai-based IT training company CBT Systems in 1997 under a NASDAQ merger with Smartforce.

He went on to start a TV shopping supply company and had his own show on the ‘Ideal World’ channel for many years in the late 1990s before running a specialist horse feed business from his farm in Brittany. He returned to the UK and started VegTrug with business partner Paul Owen, and the company is now the largest supplier of raised garden beds worldwide, having sold around 600,000 units of its iconic product globally.

Joe was appointed to the Board in 2016. He has taken over as Gardenex chairman from Richard Matthews, of the Summerfield Consultancy. Richard had been actively involved in the Federation for many years: first working in one of the firms in membership, then from 1982 as a committee member and non executive director, following this in the role of vice chair and then chair twice; then taking on the role of full time chair of the federation when it was decided to appoint one in 2008.

Amanda Sizer Barrett, Director General of the federation says: “In his role as chairman, Richard supported the team as it delivered the highest standards of services, benefits and expert specialist advice and sales leads to member companies. He also encouraged the federation to use its expertise to help support the pet product market and the commercial horticultural sector as well as taking on the secretariat for the home gardening market association, GIMA.

“Representing a much broader spectrum of suppliers has brought the Federation additional clout with government and more opportunities to bid for funding for its member companies and the Federation now represents the wide gardening and leisure sector on several government committees which has enhanced further its reputation and influence.”

Amanda concluded: “On a personal note, Richard has been scrupulous in carrying out his duties and responsibilities as chairman, being loyal and supportive. I will miss his contribution as colleague and chairman but understand that after 40 years, he definitely deserves a happy and fulfilling retirement!

“We are now looking forward to working closely with Joe Denham, who has always been an enthusiastic and active user and supporter of Gardenex services.”

Always keen to share his knowledge, new Chairman Joe Denham has advised many start-up businesses within the industry and helped them particularly with sales organisation and exports.

“Gardenex was so helpful to us in the first few years with VegTrug. I had good business experience but very little knowledge of the lawn and garden industry. I am now delighted to be able to offer something back,” confirms Joe.