

Thames Valley Farmers' Market Co-operative

31 March 2009 for immediate use

Bicester Farmers' Market under new management from 9 April

Bicester Farmers' Market is celebrating the move to management by Thames Valley Farmers' Market Co-operative Ltd at the market on Thursday 9 April. Helen Peacocke, renowned local food writer and columnist, will join representatives from Bicester Town Council at 10.30am to declare the market open under new management.

For the last six months the farmers' co-operative group has managed the market on Sheep Street on behalf of Bicester Town Council – but now it's official!

Shoppers keen to buy food for the Easter weekend will find new stalls and more tasty, fresh and seasonal products all grown and produced within 50 miles of Bicester.

Market manager Suzanne Willson explains: "Joining us for the first time is The Fine Beef Company with an excellent range of beef from native and rare breeds. They will be alongside our usual meat, fish and cheese producers. Baker's Basket will have Easter specials including Hot Cross Buns. Pippin Doughnuts are a firm favourite, and UGM Nursery from Banbury will have a colourful display of spring flowers."

Bicester Farmers' Market is held on the second Thursday every month in Sheep Street from 8.30am to 1.30pm.



Farmers' markets have been held regularly in Oxfordshire for 10 years. Thame Town Council set up the first one in Thame in August 1999.

Jane Bowler, chair of Thames Valley Farmers' Market Co-operative Ltd (TVFMC) says: "When the small group of farmers and producers started out in Thame 10 years ago we had no idea how the farmers' market movement would develop. It took us a few years to create our association and then the co-operative. We were also hit by the Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak in 2001, which meant some markets had to stop, but they restarted as soon as possible.

"We wouldn't be here if it wasn't for our customers. More and more people are discovering that local food is tasty, fresh and not expensive," says Jane. People want to know where their

food comes from, and want to reconnect with farming; buying direct from the producers is the best way to do that.”

Bicester Farmers' Market is the 17th market to be run by TVFMC, which now has farmers' markets in 15 towns across Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Berkshire.

Ends

More information:

Wendy Tobitt, PR for TVFMC on 0774 864 1452 or email: local_food@btinternet.com

Suzanne Willson, Market Manager on 01295 276771

Notes for Editors

Thames Valley Farmers' Market Co-operative (TVFMC) supports local farmers, small producers and market organisers in the three counties of Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire. TVFMC is a not-for-profit organisation and is affiliated to FARMA, which accredits Farmers' Markets to ensure quality standards are maintained. The Thames Valley has an abundance of natural resources available for farmers and producers. Award winning meats, cheeses and preserves can be bought at markets. The first farmers' market started in 1999; there are now 17 held in 15 towns across the Thames Valley.

www.tvfm.org.uk.