



news

from the

food groups

available on-line: www.local-food.net

Winter 2006

*Limited edition
for Food Group members only*

*Dear Food Group Members,
On behalf of the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes and Oxfordshire Food Groups
I would like to wish you a Happy New Year!*

May it be rich in harvests, favourable in weather, successful in business, achievable in new beginnings and may your friends, family and supporters always surround you! Thank you for being at the heart of the local economies, for being there for adults and children who want to learn about local food and thank you for your very hard work!

*Tamara Schioppa,
Co-ordinator of BBO Food Groups federation*



Congratulations!

To all 2005 Cheese Awards winners at the Great British Cheese Festival in October:

- Neustift Dairy Goats** - Bronze for fresh Neustift, Bronze for Neustift Maiden, Silver for Neustift Parkland
- Rowan Tree Farm** - Bronze for Rowan Tree Spread
- Two Hoots Cheese** - Gold for Loddon Blewe (ewes milk)

Congratulations also to Local Tastes in Thame, who won A Flavour of the South East award at Tourism South East's regional awards in the Autumn.

2005 British Food Fortnight – facts & figures



The fourth British Food Fortnight, which took place from 24th September to 9th October 2005, was bigger and more successful than EVER before. Celebrating the very best in British food, British Food Fortnight is now a firm fixture in the retail, catering and education sectors.

The event was backed by the government, sponsored by Nationwide, Budgens and Booths

more on page 2

In this issue:

Win a free Food Group Membership for 2006 worth £150

by completing and returning our Questionnaire on page 3-6. This is your chance to have a say in how your Food Group is run, what services you should receive and how you want to see the Food Group in the near future.

Contents

- Activities, events & opportunities 2
- Questionnaire 3
- Noticeboard 7
- News from the region 8
- Supporters & funders 8
- Contact details 8



continued from page 1

and supported by restaurants, pubs and other food outlets around the country

- Over 24,000 shops, pubs and restaurants were provided with detailed information on sourcing and promoting British food and drink.
- 26,000 schools were provided with definitive advice on how to teach children about food within the National Curriculum.
- First time support across the retail sector from Budgens, Londis, Asda, Morrisons, Booths, 350 of the UK's leading delicatessens and 4,000 members of the Rural Shops Association .
- The UK's biggest caterers - Compass, Aramark and Brakes – took part in British Food Fortnight for the first time. Four major pub chains also supported the event, including Punch Taverns, Enterprise Inns, Union Pub Company and Everards.
- There were thousands of festivals, food tastings, demonstrations and events around the country including church services, Hampshire Hog Day, Food Olympics, welly walks, ploughing marches, cider tastings, girl guide events and chef competitions.
- Preliminary figures suggest that the campaign had a staggering audience reach of over 200 million. On the web, British Food Fortnight was the top listing on the BBC website, whilst the British Food Fortnight website was visited by over 78,000 people.

Activities, events and opportunities

The New Year, 2006, looks very exciting and busy for the Food Groups in our attempt to improve our services and to open more and new market opportunities to you. Please mark your calendars for a series of events which promise not only to offer you an enjoyable time but also – to showcase your wonderful products and to bring new customers to your businesses:

Local Food for Hospitality

2nd three-county Trade Show

28 February, Adams Park Conference Centre in High Wycombe, Bucks

This is one of our main projects for the year! Many of you attended the first show in January 2005 at Springs Hotel in Wallingford, Oxfordshire. We have learned a lot from it and are confident that the 2nd show will be even better and will become the desirable marketplace for local chefs and restaurateurs to meet local producers.

Buckinghamshire County Council and High Wycombe District Council have offered to host the trade show this year, and among sponsors we have SEEDA, Chilterns Conservation Board, Tourism South East and Business Link.

3,000 hospitality businesses have been sent fliers about the Trade Show and we expect a much larger number of visitors compared to last year.

This is a three-county Trade Show, so producers from the entire area are welcome to attend and display at the show. It is your biggest chance to meet local Hospitality businesses in one go. *If you would like to attend, please send an email to our office (localfood@brookes.ac.uk) or call Jane Carlton-Smith who is helping us to recruit producers to the show (01865 484116).*

The Henley Food Festival

28 - 29 April, The Market Place & Henley Town Hall in Henley, Oxon

The Market Place will be transformed into an atmospheric covered arena where stalls will offer some of the finest food and drink available in Henley and the surrounding area. Inside the Town Hall local and nationally recognised chefs will provide fantastic daily food demonstrations and tastings. There will also be regular topical discussions, and competitions aimed specifically at the amateur cook. To keep up to date with the food festival and for a programme of events see www.henleyfoodfestival.co.uk

If you would like to participate in the Festival with a stall, please contact Jacqui Williams at Lenwadeuk@aol.com

The Royal Windsor Food and Drink Festival 2006

12 – 14 May at the Royal Windsor Horse Show, Berkshire

The Food and Drink Festival will be an addition to the Royal Windsor Horse Show, and has been developed to showcase the very best of British regional produce. The intention is to increase and promote greater awareness of regional food by providing the opportunity, as a substantial guaranteed footfall, to small producers. *Have a look at the enclosed Information Pack and if you would like to participate, send us an e-mail or contact the organisers directly on 01756 626916 (Kaila Bell) or by e-mail k.bell@balmilane.com*

Blenheim Palace Tattoo and Country Fair

with a Local Food Marquee in the Country Living section

15 – 16 July, at Blenheim Palace, Woodstock, Oxfordshire

Fair organisers expect a footfall between 18,000 and 20,000 visitors and the idea is that food producers would take separate stands within the Local Food marquee, for which costs shall be kept as low as possible. *Nicola Shepherd is the Sales Manager and if you are interested in attending, please contact Nicola at 01753 847900 or nicolas@hpower.co.uk.*

For other local and regional events please follow our Newsletters, monthly updates and Events on our website.

Berkshire Food Group

The Steering Group members met on 28 November in Windsor. Minutes of the meetings are available on-line <http://www.local-food.net/berkshire/> Berkshire Food Group members are strongly encouraged to join the Steering Group if they want to have a say in how the county supports local food producers. Your local contact for the Berkshire Food group is Elaine Cook, Community Council for Berkshire, Elaine.cook@cberks.org.uk

Bucks & MK Food Group Meeting

The last Bucks Food Group meeting was held on 7 December. Read more about the meeting on the website <http://www.local-food.net/BucksAndMK/> Your local contact for Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Food Group matters is Nancy Pound from Bucks County Council, npound@buckscc.gov.uk

Oxfordshire Steering Group Meeting

Held in Frilford on 6 December. Minutes of the meeting are available on-line <http://www.local-food.net/oxfordshire/>

Before the meeting the hosts at the Millets Farm Show welcomed Steering Group members for a brief shopping session in their fantastic Farm Shop. The Steering Group would like to invite producer-members to join our meetings and/or host a meeting in the future.

Waitrose Due Diligence

Waitrose are conducting a review of their Due Diligence Procedures, particularly in the area of Local and Regional suppliers. They have developed a new questionnaire which will be sent to potential suppliers in order to evaluate their technical knowledge and operational control. Waitrose will assess the questionnaire responses, adopt a scoring system and follow up as appropriate. This may include technical visits dependent upon the score achieved. If you would like more detail please contact Linda Riley Linda_Riley@waitrose.co.uk.

Bar Codes Fact Sheet

For a small business, adding bar codes to your products can open up many opportunities and help your business grow. **Why do you need bar codes? Where do you go for bar codes? What types of bar codes are there?**

You can obtain an A4 Fact Sheet with answers to all these questions and more if you ask for a copy from our office 01865 484116, localfood@brookes.ac.uk

News from the region



Good News from Berkshire

TV chef Mike Robinson was in Whitchurch on Saturday 3 December to celebrate the

opening of The Beehive Farm Shop with mulled wine and mince pies.

Local farmers David Court (Berkshire Food Group member) from Echinswell and Richard Fielder from Sutton

Scotney have joined forces to open their new farm shop in the heart of Whitchurch on one of the busiest shopping days of the year.

In addition to fine quality meat The Beehive Farm Shop will also sell a mouth-watering array of fish, award-winning cheeses, yoghurts, crème fraiche, juices, honey, preserves, and delicious home-made cakes.

Fresh from his UKTV series Heaven's Kitchen, chef Mike Robinson from The Pot Kiln at Frilsham in Berkshire was at The Beehive. "I always use the finest local ingredients, because the tastes and flavours are just the best you can get. David and Richard are giving the lucky people of

Whitchurch a great opportunity to enjoy high quality real food in season,” says Mike.

The Beehive shop customers will be able to choose from a wide range of home-produced meats including Saddleback pork, Norfolk black turkeys, Hereford beef and Hampshire Down lamb. All animals are raised carefully with due regard to breed and welfare, and the meat is expertly prepared in a traditional way.

“People are really interested in their food, where it comes from and how it’s been reared, so Richard and I will be working in the shop on most days to meet our new customers. We are also starting up a box scheme and will deliver locally,” says David Court.

The Beehive Farm Shop is in the 15th century former town hall on the Market Square in Whitchurch, Hants.

Opening hours are Tuesday to Friday: 12 pm - 6 pm
Saturday: 9 am - 6 pm

If you'd like to visit the shop or supply your produce, please contact David Court at 01635 269076.

Sad news from Oxfordshire - No wines at Bothy Farm Shop

There maybe a better equivalent for this in English, but in Moldova where I come from, food producers say “One summer day will feed the year... or will kill it...”

You may recall the late frosts in mid-May. Sian and Richard Liwicki from Bothy Vineyard near Abingdon (our long standing members) certainly do. In one night they lost over



80% of their crop in spite of lighting bonfires round the vineyard in the early hours. After the predations of birds, badgers and foxes, they finally harvested just 6% of their average crop over the past three years. They only needed about 8 person days to pick while they would normally have needed about 70! Richard and Sian are gradually getting over this “challenge”, but it means that there will be no 2005 vintage Bothy wines available for sale.

Unfortunately this means that their shop will close when the 2004 vintage sells out. The Bothy Shop will not reopen until English Wine Week in May 2007. This seems a long way off but they would ask for your patience and for you to remember the quality of their wines when they are available again! And keep your fingers crossed for more favourable weather for everybody!

*On behalf of Sian Liwicki,
Bothy Vineyard, Frilford Heath, Oxon*

Supporters and funders



For further information contact: Tamara Schiopu, BBO Food Groups, School of the Built Environment, Oxford Brookes University, Headington Campus, Gipsy Lane, Oxford, OX3 0BP T: 01865 484116 F: 01865 483559 E: localfood@brookes.ac.uk W: www.local-food.net