



Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes

The Food Groups in Berks, Bucks, & MK and Oxfordshire work as a federation - BBO Food Groups - and are supported by the South East England Development Agency and by various local authorities and sponsors.



## Monthly Update from Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes and Oxfordshire (BBO) Food Group

November 1st 2008

NUMBER 17

Dear Food Group Members:

This is the monthly update from your Local Food Group.

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Please note that our Monthly Updates are now posted on the News page of our website [www.local-food.net](http://www.local-food.net)

If you no longer wish to be part of this mailing list, or if you receive this message twice, please email

[localfood@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:localfood@brookes.ac.uk)

### BBO Food Group CIC

October has been a milestone for the food group with the first Board Meeting having taken place, which concluded a year long process of changing the food group into a bona fide company – Community Interest Company (CIC).

Directors of the BBO Food Group CIC pictured below (from left to right) are:

Colin Wainwright - Director - Quince Products

Mary Rumsey – Director – Rumsey's Hand-Made Chocolates

Geoffrey Whittle – co founding Director and Treasurer – Ranger Organics

Susie Ohlenschlager – Director and Chair – OCC

Clare Marriage – Director – Doves Farm

Tamara Schiopu – co founding Director and Secretary – BBO Food Group



The company would welcome 2 more directors on the board. All full members of the food group are eligible. Please contact Tamara on 01865 484116 or [localfood@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:localfood@brookes.ac.uk) if you are interested.

The minutes of the Board Meeting are available on the food group website [www.local-food.net](http://www.local-food.net) in the News section.

### **Apple Day**

The food group organised a celebration of Apple Day supported by Oxfordshire County Council. Delicious crunchy and juicy apples from Oxfordshire orchards were distributed free to OCC staff, visitors and councillors on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> October in Macclesfield House, Speedwell House and County Hall. The purpose was to raise awareness of the role of the BBO Food Group in delivering the council's policies for a sustainable local economy and environment.

Susie Ohlenschlager from the Council's Environment and Economy directorate said 'It's been a brilliant harvest this autumn and enjoying the tasty fresh apples just off the tree is a great way of encouraging people to buy more local produce. We are very grateful to the local producers for the apples they donated.'

Many thanks to **Millets Farm, Waterperry Gardens** and **Cross Lanes Farm** for their very generous donations.



### **Members Networking Event**

Following the SALSA evening in October when members who attended were able to hear about the accreditation scheme for small and local suppliers, the BBO Food Group is delighted to offer full members a £200 refund for their first SALSA audit. For further information contact Tamara 01865 484116 or [localfood@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:localfood@brookes.ac.uk)

### **Awards**

Hearty congratulations to **Two Hoots Cheese** on sweeping the board at the recent British Cheese Awards in Cardiff. An amazing night for Sandy and Andy where they won gold medals for their delicious Barkham Blue and Barkham Chase. Barkham Blue then went on to win Best Blue Cheese, Best English Cheese and Supreme Champion. The pair commented 'We have had our hearts set on winning 'Best Blue' for a number of years and would have been really happy with that, but they just kept coming'!

Following these prestigious awards Two Hoots Cheese learnt that Barkham Blue and Barkham Chase both gained gold

medals in the world Cheese Awards in Dublin. Spectacular!



**The Old Farmhouse Bakery and The Gallery** at Steventon has been nominated for the Rural Enterprise Award in the 2008 Countryside Alliance Awards. They are in good company with well-known names such as TV star and pig farmer Jimmy Doherty, environmentalist Zac Goldsmith and keen shot and cricketing legend Mike Atherton also receiving nominations for Awards. The Countryside Alliance say "The Awards have a simple aim: to recognise and celebrate rural individuals and businesses who are ambassadors for both local produce and the communities to which they are central". If you'd like to vote for them you can pick up a leaflet at The Bakery or The Gallery or log onto [www.countrysideallianceawards.co.uk](http://www.countrysideallianceawards.co.uk) , but be quick the deadline is today Monday 27<sup>th</sup> October.

#### **Public Procurement opportunity**

In addition to the information sent out to all members recently about the meet the buyer event at the County Council, please also note that Oxfordshire County Council uses external caterers to provide refreshments for meetings and events. If there are food group members, who are caterers and are potentially interested in this opportunity they are welcome to attend the meet the buyer event on 4<sup>th</sup> Dec and should get in touch with Jacqui Mansfield at: The Old Dairy 5 Denmark Street Oxford OX4 1QS

T: 01865 726997

E: [jacquimansfield@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:jacquimansfield@tiscali.co.uk)

#### **News**

**Winner of the 2009 Full Membership Prize** Thanks to all members who completed their BBO Food Group Local Flavours Festival questionnaire. Following your responses it has been decided that the first festival will be held in September 2009. The winner of the prize draw is:

**Janey Cumber of Cumbers of Theale**

who will receive free 2009 full membership of the BBO Food Group. Congratulations.

**Appleton Farmers Market** The BBO Food Group was delighted to be able to support the Appleton Farmers Market with £1000 to enable the market to be brought up to FARMA membership

standards and promote it in the local media.

### **Grants**

The food group welcomes members' questions, and offers one to one advice on grant applications to SEEDA, National Lottery and local districts councils' Leader funding. Just e mail Tamara with any queries at [localfood@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:localfood@brookes.ac.uk)

### **Events**

**The NFU 1908 to 2008:** The Museum of English Rural Life (MERL) in Reading, Berkshire will host an exhibition to celebrate the centenary the National Farmers' Union. The exhibition features artefacts from the NFU's national archives, which are in its care, and it is open from October 7 until December 23. The Museum's website has directions and more information – see [www.reading.ac.uk/merl](http://www.reading.ac.uk/merl)

**Christmas Market** The Oracle Shopping Centre in Reading is organising a Christmas market, and would like to invite food group members to participate, as the theme is regional, small producers (both food and non-food).

There will be wooden log cabins (to create a Christmas atmosphere) in which 'stall holders' can present their products. These log cabins will be constructed alongside the river that runs through the shopping centre site i.e. it is an outdoor site, and the area will be festively decorated and supported with carol singers.

- Dates: November 27th to December 21st 2008 (participants can attend for all or only part of this time) – Thursday to Sunday of each of these weeks
- Location: the Riverside (outdoor) at The Oracle, Reading
- Event: Christmas Market
- Theme: Regional, small producer products (food and non-food)
- Layout: Log cabins (lockable) along the river front
- Equipment: the log cabins will be decorated outside but not inside – power will be laid to each cabin if required
- Environment: Christmas trees, lights, carol singing, vin chaud (TBC) etc
- Support: advertising in local press and radio
- Opening hours: 12 - 9pm
- Consumer audience: most wealthy catchment area in UK - over 1 million customers over Christmas period receptive to premium products
- Log cabins available for rent by the week (a week being Thursday to Sunday inclusive)
- instead of the normal fee of £500, food group members are being offered a special rate per log cabin per week (Thursday to Sunday) of £200.

If this is of interest contact Harriet Fidler at The Oracle - 01189 659 097 to reserve a log cabin/for further enquiries.

**Launch of the Oxford Bread Group (OBG)** A group of local bread enthusiasts have joined forces to create an 'Oxford Bread Group' (OBG) to help consumers obtain sensibly-priced artisan-style bread that is baked locally by a master baker using 100%

locally-grown organic flour. Supermarket bread is usually made with imported flour, and contains chemical flour improvers and processing aids which many believe are linked to an epidemic of gluten intolerance and coeliac disease. 'Local' bread also usually contains a large amount of imported flour because most 'locally-milled' flour is made from a mix of British and imported grain. Importing grain contributes significantly to CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. OBG bread will be baked by an experienced master baker, using a traditional, long ferment, process that allows the loaf to rise slowly and develop its natural flavours. The flour will be stone-ground from a unique blend of over 150 ancient 'heritage' wheat varieties grown on organic fields near Oxford. The straw by-product will be used to thatch local buildings, and profits will be used to support the group's goals and local 'heritage seed' projects. Members will help choose the style of bread and rolls that would be baked for the group once a week (with flexibility for holidays). Members would pay for their bread in advance, and collect their loaves from convenient pick-up points throughout Oxford and the region (eg. shops, farmer's markets, veg box schemes, etc.). If there is enough demand, bread fresh from the oven could also be delivered to members by bicycle.

Please contact the Oxford Bread Group at [info@oxfordlocalbread.org](mailto:info@oxfordlocalbread.org) if you are interested in becoming a member, or would like information on our upcoming 'tasting and information' evening.

### **Training**

**The Livestock Health South East project** now has its website up and running, you can find information on their courses. Livestock Health South East is a two year project funded by SEEDA via RDPE offering farmers in the region the opportunity to benefit from high quality training, focused on improving animal health and welfare as well as knowledge transfer activities. The project has a number of partners including EBLEX, BPEX, DairyCO, NFU, NADIS, ADAS, Kingshay and local veterinary practices, the project is managed on a day-to-day basis by staff from Westpoint Veterinary Group.

Further information on the project can be found on the website [www.livestockhealthsoutheast.org.uk](http://www.livestockhealthsoutheast.org.uk) by telephoning 07549 843380 or by email to [info@livestockhealthsoutheast.org.uk](mailto:info@livestockhealthsoutheast.org.uk)

Forthcoming events are advertised in the South East Farmer magazine and can be found on Lantra's Course Finder website – [www.lantracoursefinder.co.uk](http://www.lantracoursefinder.co.uk)

Full details of courses and booking forms for the open Training Programme at Vale Training are available to see on the food group website [www.local-food.net](http://www.local-food.net) covering the period from now until May 2009.

### **Contact Us**

BBO Food Groups

Tamara Schiopu, Manager

Wendy Hole, Membership Co-ordinator

Gipsy Lane

Oxford, OX3 0BP

Tel 01865 484116 [localfood@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:localfood@brookes.ac.uk), [membership@local-food.net](mailto:membership@local-food.net), [www.local-food.net](http://www.local-food.net)

For previous newsletter please visit [www.local-food.net](http://www.local-food.net)