



Monthly Update

from

Berkshire,

Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes

and Oxfordshire

(BBO) Food Group Community Interest Company (CIC)

March 2009

NUMBER 21

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 posted on the News page of our website 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

2009 Local Flavours Guide

These will be out in print this month and we hope to have them distributed to the public by Easter. This year we will not be selling them, so our members can have free copies for their customers. The Guides will be packed in boxes of 40, so please let us know how many boxes you would like, by 25 March. Failure to order your Guides now will result in a delivery charge later.

Food Group Membership Renewal

Several members asked us whether they have paid for their membership and we would like to explain here that all Memberships will be renewed after 1 year from your last payment. As most members joined/renewed in March to May 2008, we shall be sending Renewal Invoices shortly by post. Unless you receive a "Membership Renewal Invoice" you should not worry about your status; it means you are an active member. From this year Members will have the option to sign up to a standing order mandate and enjoy 7-10% discounts, should you choose this option. This will free up our management time and will make your Food Group Membership renewal so much easier, as your bank will be taking care of it. Membership benefits will remain very similar in 2009 (check our website www.local-food.net), apart from the discounted joined membership to Blackberry Barn On-line Farmers Market. Due to economic pressure the company is closing the business as of 31 March 2009. On the other hand, we are able to offer a new benefit to our members - Free Entry in the Local Flavours Festival Programme (1 - 30 September), worth £ 50.00

BBO Food Group CIC Board meeting 19th March

At this meeting we will be starting a structured discussion about our 2010 - 2015 strategy, to be developed by March 2010. We would like to invite all members to attend this meeting which will be in a workshop format. So if you are available and would like to have a say in the future strategy of the food group and maybe lend a hand in the coming months to develop the strategy please let us know by emailing Tamara at localfood@brookes.ac.uk

The workshop will be from 1.30pm to 3pm. Local food and refreshments will be available. After the workshop, non-directors will be free to leave.

Local Flavours Festival 1 - 30 September

You all should have received by e-mail our first Festival Newsletter. We really hope that you will take part in this three-county wide celebration of local food and farming. You can participate in a number of ways:

1. **Host an event** or a number of events throughout the month - FREE basic entry
2. **Include a special offer or discount voucher** to encourage visitors to spend, either at your event, venue or market stall - FREE
3. **Include your accommodation details as a place to stay** during the Festival - FREE basic entry
4. **Advertise in 60,000 Local Flavours Festival programmes**

Festival Entry forms have been sent to you all by post and should arrive in the next couple of days. Please, do not throw those away, but rather have a look through the form and think if you would like to enhance your business through a wide publicity campaign that we will be organising before and during September. In a nutshell, you organise an event at your site in September (a lot of you are anyway) and we will make it part of the Festival, in hope that more people will get to learn about it and visit your site/shop/restaurant. If you think you need more information from us about this Festival, just send us an email or call us and we will be happy to explain the concept, which we "borrowed" from the highly successful Hampshire Food Festival 1 - 31 July.

The second Festival Newsletter will be issued next week and a sister website www.local-flavours.net will also be activated in this month to offer you more ideas, advice and inspiration and to link your business to the public. So, watch this space!

Member of the Month

Local Roots opened in April 2008, in the beautiful market town of Abingdon, Oxfordshire. It retails quality goods (produce, art, furnishing, gifts, home wares, etc.) that have been produced within a 30 mile radius of the shop. From vegetables to cheese, gourmet baby food to handbags.

Owners Chris and Sukey Jones very much believe in promoting an ecological approach to retail, with their produce sourced from organic farms and smallholdings, and their emphasis on fair trade and minimal environmental impact in all aspects of the business - for example, minimising their packaging, transportation and heating requirements. They also offer a cycle

delivery service, supportive promotion of the Three Rs (reduce, reuse and recycle) and a programme of children's activities to engage younger ones in local environmental issues.

Local Roots aims to provide quality at a reasonable cost, in a family friendly environment, where children can safely wander, with baby change facilities, hot beverages, fruit and cakes available and space to relax and read the paper. It is not a large shop, but Chris and Sukey hope it to be the sort of business where you would like to spend some time.

This first year has been wonderful for the couple, with their range of products increasing on almost a weekly basis. Abingdon is the perfect location for the shop, although they realised within a month that they desperately need more space, especially in the small cafe area. One of the most pleasurable things for Chris and Sukey is to see how often complete strangers sit and talk as if they were old friends around the lovely big table.



Please visit Local Roots new blog to see what is new in the shop this week. Details of their vegetable boxes are available here too. <http://locally.localroots.co.uk>

Local Roots 4 East St Helen Street Abingdon Oxon OX145EA

01235 534894 www.localroots.co.uk

Awards

2008 Countryside Alliance Award Winners

The Old Farmhouse Bakery and The Gallery at Steventon is absolutely delighted to have won the Best Rural Enterprise Award for the South of England in the 2008 Countryside Alliance Awards.

They want to say a huge thank you to all of you who voted for them and supported their nomination.

The Awards celebrate the communities, produce, traditions and skills of the countryside through the people who work so hard to make the British Countryside work. They recognise the best of

those who've taken up the challenge of diversification as well as excellence in traditional businesses.

The Countryside Alliance say this year's crop of winners are an inspiring group of people, all of them dedicated to their communities, supporting each other and ensuring a future for rural Britain and its enterprising businesses, whatever the wider economic climate.

The Old Farmhouse Bakery and The Gallery, along with all the other regional winners, now go forward to the national final for the chance to add a UK title to our regional one, competing against fellow Enterprise winners from across England, Wales and Scotland. Held at a reception at the House of Lords on Wednesday 18th March and hosted by The Baroness Golding the overall national winners will be announced on the day.

Kate and Beccie Bitmead are really looking forward to their trip up to the House of Lords and meeting all the other regional winners. You can see the details of winners across all categories at www.countrysideallianceawards.co.uk

Smallholder of the Year Competition 2009

The search is on for Britain's top smallholder. *Country Smallholding* magazine, in association with Life-Guard domestic poultry feed, has launched an exciting national competition offering a cash prize of £1,000 to the winner.

The competition celebrates the dedication of smallholders as self-sufficiency becomes ever-more relevant at a time of great change and uncertainty in the countryside, and the winner will be a smallholder judged to exemplify best practice and have an inspiring vision.

Editor Simon McEwan said: "These are exciting times for smallholders, and we hope this competition will help to raise their profile as interest in self-sufficiency increases and the grow-your-own revolution gathers pace.

Entrants in the competition will be asked about a range of issues, including their care of livestock, land management, the extent to which they are self-sufficient, their care of the environment and their involvement in the wider community.

Six of the leading contenders will be featured in *Country Smallholding* during the autumn. The judges will then draw up a shortlist of three, and the winner will be announced at a special presentation event towards the end of the year.

Smallholders can enter the competition on the *Country Smallholding* website, www.countrysmallholding.com Alternatively, they can obtain an entry form by emailing editorial.csh@archant.co.uk or calling 01392 888481. Entries close on May 1, 2009.

For further information contact: Simon McEwan, Editor, *Country Smallholding* tel: 01392 888481 or e mail to simon.mcewan@archant.co.uk

SALSA Accreditation

Members who have applied for SALSA accreditation are reminded they have until March to apply for their £200 refund on their first SALSA audit. To apply or for further details please contact Tamara on 01865 484116

Events

Remember to check the Events Page on our website at www.local-food.net for all the opportunities for sales in 2009.

IFE 2009 17 March Free Meet the Buyer Event

Excel London. This project is being organised by Sustain and South East Food Group Partnership (SEFGP) whose main aim is to locate suppliers who are interested in supplying sustainable product lines into Public Procurement especially the London supply chain. As part of this project they are able to offer assessment, advice, supply chain brokerage, and training for food preparation for staff all free of charge with introductions to a number of customers from the Public Procurement sector. The event will take place in the afternoon allowing time to visit the show in the morning as VIP guests.

IFE is the UK's ultimate food and drink product sourcing event for buyers in retail, foodservice, manufacturing, wholesale and distribution. It is the prime opportunity to meet hundreds of UK and International suppliers from over 50 countries and source the latest innovative products. The visitor attractions will provide a global insight into current trends, consumer behaviour and product innovation presenting an invaluable reason to attend IFE09. For more information on the event <http://www.ife.co.uk>

For further information contact David Rose 07855252151 mob 05603144832 office

Sustain: The alliance for better food and farming 94 White Lion Street, London N1 9PF Tel: 020 7837 1228 Fax: 020 7837 1141

Email: david@sustainweb.org Web: www.sustainweb.org

Also available on our food group website www.local-food.net is a questionnaire to register an interest in public procurement (separate from the meet the buyer event). The object of this project is to create a database of qualifying and interested food businesses which can be interrogated by public food procurement personnel. Deadline for responses is 18th March.

Best of Britain and Ireland Exhibition 28-29 March – Excel, London. The Show's core will be a major focus on the wonderful array of food and drink from Britain and Ireland reflecting the resurgence in demand for quality products made by time-honoured methods. Members interested in exhibiting at this show should contact Nicky Rhodes on 020 7654 0622 or email

at nicky@bobevents.co.uk

Food Glorious Food at Living Heritage Game & Country Fair 11th, 12th & 13th April

– food group members are invited to take a stand at this show at Thame Showground. Shedding units are available at the following rates:

10ft frontage x 10ft depth £150

20ft frontage x 10ft depth £195

20ft frontage x 20ft depth £300

For further details please contact show organiser Mark Hulme 01283 820548

Chilterns Easter Festival of Food 10/11/12/13 April

The Memorial Hall Park, Great Missenden, Bucks

Open 10am - 5pm each day

This year the organisers are looking to increase the number of local producers at the event and are planning to have a section of the show titled Chilterns Larder. The arrangements and pricing structure for this area will be slightly different to the rest of the event as it will run on a commission basis. To register your interest and for further details please contact Karen Saunders 01895 820202 or info@hdfairs.co.uk ASAP. Further information on the event is also available at

www.chilternscountryfoodfair.co.uk

Village Life Spring Markets 13 April, 26 April, 9 May, 24 May

still have a number of spaces available for their spring markets in April and May which have a real focus on quality and originality. If you would like to a stand for £30, please complete a booking form, which can be found on our website at www.local-food.net in the events section and return with payment to the address on the form

For further details please contact Rudi Schogger on 07956 623 198 or email rudi@myvillagelife.co.uk.

Cogges Manor Farm Museum Food Weekend Witney, Oxfordshire 18 & 19 April 2009

Accommodating 15 tables in the barns, plus gazebos in the yard (to be held down with sand bags and not pegs). Some space available in the Manor House.

Cost £10 (donation) per day.

If interested please contact Lorraine Horne Publicity & Marketing Officer Cogges Manor Farm Museum Church Lane, Witney, Oxon OX28 3LA or Francesca Jones on 01993 772602

British Pie Awards 21 April Melton Mowbray. There are 12 categories, including the Melton Mowbray Pork Pie, Fish Pie, Vegetarian Pie, British Apple Pie and Football Pie (each football club has its own pie). To download an entry form for this inaugural competition please visit the website

www.britishpieawards.co.uk

Further details can be obtained from Kathleen Codd Tel: 01673 828 764 Mob: 07749 797274

Food at Quanton Bucks Railway Centre 25 April – producers

are invited to take pitches at this event. For further information and prices please contact Janet Small at gm@bucksrailway.org

3rd Winchester Fine Food and Wine Show 2-4 May – for full details, cost of stands, and further information about the event see the details on the events (for producers) page on the Food Group website/Events at www.local-food.net

Henley Food Festival 16 & 17 May Phylis Court Paddock Henley – for cost, availability and further information about the event contact info@henleyfoodfestival.co.uk

For further information on the above 2 events please contact Jeanette Howse at Tourism South East jhowse@tourismse.com

Goring and Streatley Annual Food and Jazz Fest 2009 13 June Many thousands of people are expected to arrive in Goring and Streatley, as they did in 2008, to sample and buy from local producers whilst listening to live jazz and folk music played in The Rectory Gardens, in the High Streets, and in several pubs.

Goring and Streatley Sustainability Group (GSSG) promotes locally grown food and encourages local retailers and growers to take a stand in The Rectory Garden (£25 per pitch) to display and sell their produce. The large crowd which we expect to visit the Rectory Garden from 10.30 am until 5.00 pm makes this event a must for producers and growers of food who wish to find new customers and spread the word about their products.

For more information, or to book a stand, please email Trevor Coombs at: t.coombs1@btopenworld.com or phone 01491 873166.

2009 Wiltshire and Berkshire Food Festival 7-8 August at Cobbs Farm Shop, Hungerford. For full details, costs of stands, availability and further information please see the Events Page on our website at www.local-food.net or contact Hannah on 01488 686211 or email her at Hannah@cobbsfarmshop.co.uk

Training

As part of their Fresh Skills for Chefs project **Tourism South East** is running a **Local Cheese Master Class** on **Tuesday 17th March** at **Fallowfields Country Hotel**, Kingston Bagpuize, Oxon. The cost to members is subsidised to £35.00 per person (usual rate is £150.00 pp)

Please visit their website at

<http://industry.visitsoutheastengland.com/site/skills-and-training>

for further information and an application form to secure your space. There are limited spaces so book early to avoid disappointment.

Open Farm Sunday

Organiser's LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming) want to help you improve sales, learn new marketing skills, build staff moral and sense of pride, gain new contacts and improve your

neighbours and friends understanding of why farming matters. So they are running ½ day Open Farm Sunday workshops.

17th March Overbury Farms, Overbury, Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire, GL20 7NR

31st March Collings Hanger Farm, Prestwood, Great Missenden, Bucks, HP16 0HP

2nd April Manydown Company, Wootton St Lawrence, Basingstoke, Hants, RG23 8PE

17th April Boyton Farms, Warminster, Wiltshire, BA12 0SR

If you would like to attend one of these workshops or know more about Open Farm Sunday please visit www.farmsunday.org or telephone LEAF on 02476 413911.

Open Farm Sunday is on 7th June 2009. To help you organise an event LEAF will provide you with a pack to include – publicity material (posters, flyers); suggested activities; H&S guidance; polo shirts and lots more.

Staff Training

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 covering the period from now until May 2009.

Contact Us

BBO Food Group CIC

Tamara Schiopu, Manager

Wendy Hole, Membership Co-ordinator

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Tel 01865 484116 localfood@brookes.ac.uk, membership@local-food.net, www.local-food.net

For previous newsletter please visit www.local-food.net