



Monthly Update from the Local Food Group for Berks, Bucks & MK and Oxon

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Dear Food Group Members:

This issue is dedicated to upcoming grants and funding opportunities for local food & drink producers.

2008 will see LOCAL FOOD & DRINK in the spotlight with £ millions allocated to various national and local programmes in a major effort to herald a renaissance in local food culture.

BIG Lottery Fund will release a record-breaking £100 million good cause investment in local food and environment revamp. And the **Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE)** has put in place a mechanism for delivering £60 million allocated from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD).

Here is a summary of relevant programmes and opportunities. Please take some time to read through and let me know if you have any questions. The Food Group will be happy to signpost you or advise on any potential applications on your side.

Royal Society for Wildlife Trusts “Local Food” programme 2008 - 2015, funded by Big Lottery – 50M. ‘Open for business’ date – 7 January 2008. More than 1,100 projects will be awarded funding. Projects can be up to five years in length.

Will fund: Catering (cafes/subsidised meals), School grounds (education & practical), Education & learning (food related), Food co-ops, Allotments, Sharing best practise/information dissemination/networking, Community seed exchanges, Social enterprise, Farmers markets, Box schemes, Recycling of organic waste, Celebrating food cultures, Community supported agriculture, Community food growing projects, Re-distribution of food.

Grant size and fund matching:

- £2,000 - £20,000 nil match funding
- £20,001 – £100,000 10 % match funding
- £100,001 - £300,000 20 % match funding
- £300,001- £500,000 30 % match funding

Minimum of 50 per cent match funding has to be cash, the remainder can be in-kind

Development of Local Food is still at an early stage, Application packs will be available from 7 January 2008.

For further information, contact localfood@rswt.org

The Plunkett Foundation “Making Local Food Work” Programme 2008 - 2013. Funded by Big Lottery, the programme will see £10 million invested in local food initiatives throughout England. The programme will support 650 sustainable community enterprises across England, including farmers’ markets, community-owned shops and community-supported agriculture schemes. Please note that this is not a fund that is open to applications - the money has already been allocated to a range of projects and organisations that were included in the bid. In order to benefit from it, you should contact one of the portfolio partners, those who are nearest to your type of business and ask for details and upcoming initiatives: the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE), Co-operatives UK, Country Markets Ltd, National Farmers’ Retail & Markets Association (FARMA), Food Links UK (now part of Sustain), Soil Association, Sustain, and Village Retail Services Association (ViRSA). **For further details, please contact Elizabeth of Mar on behalf of the Plunkett Foundation on 07870 276 375 or at elizabethofmarpr@yahoo.co.uk.**

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

The South East of England Development Agency (SEEDA) “Rural Business Leader” programme (£ 22M) funded by the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE), 2008 – 2013, £ 60 M in total. The Programme will operate through Local Action Groups (LAGs) who decide how the funding is spent in their local area, aligned with RDPE priorities.

In our BBO area there are currently 6 LAGs applying for funding: North Bucks, Colne Valley Park, Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), North Wessex Downs AONB, Cotswolds, South Oxfordshire. All these groups are now working on their final bids for funding (2,5 M – 3 M each) and this is the time when you should try and get involved, if you'd like to benefit from grants.

At this point, letting the LAG coordinator know of your name and ideas of a project might be enough to secure a place in the future grants distribution, but it is essential that you try and attend their meetings to make yourself known.

There is a big list of contact names, addresses and meeting dates which I am not going to attach here, but if you are within any of the above LAGs, and are interested in what's going on, email me and I shall be able to help.

The funding will then be available for Farmers, Foresters, Growers, businesses & community groups. Trust us: each LAG is particularly keen to hear from Farmers, Foresters and Growers & rural businesses operating in the area. You need to put forward your ideas now to ensure they are included in the bid to then be able to apply for a grant during the 5 years of the Leader programme. It is vitally important for you to be involved with Leader because we anticipate Leader groups covering up to 50% of the South East region, and it could be the only source of grant support for some types of projects in the region. Final LAG groups-winners will be announced in May and October 2008.

The South East of England Development Agency (SEEDA) New source of funding for farmers, growers and foresters. Apply direct to SEEDA: For the larger, collaborative projects that involve, for example, adding value to food & forestry products, farm diversification, renewable energy, tourism, and new product development. While Leader supported projects will tend to be small to medium size, SEEDA will only directly support the larger/collaborative projects.

SEEDA will encourage the following types of activities, and these could potentially attract grant support in the range of 30-50%.

- Renewable energy projects and anaerobic digestion plants.
- Adding value to livestock products, food crops and non-food crops.
- Harvesting and improved management of woodlands.
- Adding value to forestry products.
- Tourism and other recreational activities.
- Innovation and co-operation in the development of new products, processes, technologies and markets.
- Retailing activities.
- Manufacturing and service enterprises.
- Winter abstraction irrigation reservoirs (these do not need to be collaborative).

If you would like to receive regular email updates on the RDPE as it develops please email terrybradfield@seeda.co.uk

It is A LOT, I know, but try to eliminate what is not relevant to your business and look closely at opportunities available to you.

The Food Group will organise three briefing seminars on all of these funding schemes, and will invite relevant people to talk to our members and explain what and how it can be done. We plan to have these in February 2008, so watch the space! In the meantime, try to attend your local Leader Group next meeting (ask me for details) and email us with any suggestion/requests for help you may have. In the past, the Food Group issued letters of support to those members who applied for grants, it seems to have worked, to say the least of what we could do to help you access the grants.

