

Oxfordshire
FOOD

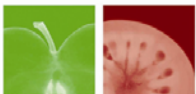


GROUP

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.

BERKSHIRE
Food Group

Buckinghamshire &
Milton Keynes



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

NOVEMBER 2007

NUMBER 6

Dear Food Group Members:

This is the monthly update from your Local Food Group.

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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

Congratulations!

To **Tolhurst Organic Produce**, finalists in the 2007 BBC Food & Farming Awards, "Farmer of the Year" Category!

To all cheese producer-members, medal winners of the 2007 British Cheese Awards: **Neustift Dairy Goats, Crudges Cheese, Two Hoots Cheese, Oxford Cheese Company**. If you are a retailer or Chef and would like to source some of their wonderful cheeses, you can find their contact details on our website www.local-food.net

Won any awards recently? Please ensure you tell us about any awards you have won throughout the year.

Take the Chefs on a Tour



Wine and Ale tasting at Chilterns Valley Winery



Fruit & Veg and many more at Emmett's Farm Shop

Thank you! to all our producer-members who hosted the Chefs from BBO on a first tour of **Local Flavours** – Copas Turkeys, Emmett's Farm, Chiltern Valley Winery, Brightwell Vineyard, Upton Smokery, Neustift Dairy Goats. The Chef's Tour on Tuesday, 20 November was a day for chefs and caterers from some of the regions top dining venues, where they were taken on a tour of local producers to help them overcome the barriers to sourcing local produce.

Our caterer-members – Giselda Parkin, Charlotte Penn and Ruth Lachmann also joined the day in search for new ingredients for their dishes. Says Charlotte: I really did enjoy the day immensely, and I shall be in contact with Upton Smokery to source their products.

The day started at Antony Worrall's Thompson's restaurant, the Lamb. Antony talked about his efforts to source produce locally and to wish us well for the day. "More and more customers are asking about the provenance of our food and this is one of the most important factors when choosing a restaurant" said Antony.

Simon Pitney-Baxter, Head Chef from the Carnarvon Arms said afterwards "I found it useful and the tasting I did with the team back at the Carnarvon went down very well and I'm sure will progress into regular purchases from producers we met!"

The project was sponsored by SEFGP and Food from Britain and the obvious success of it inspired us to roll it out as a regular road-show, with a second tour on **11 March 2006, in the Vale of White Horse.**

The Annual Trade Show "Local Flavours" Food & Drink from BBO



2007 Trade Show at Chieveley, Berks



Dews Meadow Farm

Our forth annual Trade Show **Local Flavours, Food & Drink from Berks, Bucks & MK and Oxon** will this year be organised in partnership with Tourism South East.

The Show will again be aimed at the Hospitality industry – restaurants, hotels, B&Bs and pubs, and we shall also invite local retailers, delis and farm shops.

Last year's show was a tremendous success with leading food writer Sophie Grigson, and John Campbell, Executive Chef of Michelin-starred The Vineyard at Stockcross sampling the finest Flavours of the Thames Valley. As one visitor said, the Show “gives our region a culinary identity” and we are very proud of all exhibitors who make this annual event a tradition and something to plan and look forward to.

Mark the day – 26 February 2008 and let us know if you are interested to exhibit. Our members will enjoy 50% discounts for stand fees as a Membership benefit.

Details of the venue and application forms will follow shortly by email and post.

Other Trade Opportunities

New Covent Garden Market tenants are looking for

Seasonal supply of berries, examples provided included elderberries, blackberries, raspberries, wild red & white strawberries, bilberries, tayberries. It is important the product is English, preferably local to London, of a premium quality, volumes initially would only be in the region of 30kgs per week per product line. Some lines like elderberries could be taken in to freeze, others would need to be fresh. An interesting story behind the product would be advantageous.

Lion Brand Eggs. Please contact Tom Beeston direct on 07957 357 201

Budgens Crouch End and Belsize Park stores

are looking for amazing local products to offer to their customers. Interested? Contact Amanda Kolstad-Evers at amanda@sefgp.co.uk

Midcounties Coop rolls out 'Local Harvest'

Midcounties Cooperative Society has rolled out its local food scheme to all its stores. Following a successful trial in 25 stores, the scheme has been extended to all 178 stores. Products from more than 30 suppliers are included. A minimum of 80% of a product's ingredients must have come from local sources for it to qualify. To discuss supply to CO-OP, contact Peter Couchman at peter.couchman@midcounties.coop

Berks, Bucks, MK & Oxon Primary Produce Study

Thank you! all who helped us complete the Survey. With SEEDA funding and guidelines, we have completed the study into “who farms what “ in our 3 counties. The purpose of the study was to make the food group more aware of the primary crops produced in the area. This will help us in the recruitment of members, linking primary producers to processors, and linking in with Public Sector and London wholesale markets. SEEDA have been compiling surveys from all Food Groups and a final report will soon be posted on our website. All participants who sent the Questionnaires back by 20 September were offered a cheque of £20. If you think you should have received your cheque too (form sent back before 20 September), please let me know. We shall use all your suggestions and comments in developing our 2008 plan of activities and also – in redesigning our Membership Pack, to be re-launched in January 2008.

Job Opportunity for BBO Food Groups – Membership Coordinator, 50%

You may have seen the job advert in your email recently. Although the deadline for applications is very short – 5 December, I would like to encourage you to apply, if you think you have an extra 18,5 hours a week to spare.

We very much hope that the new Membership Coordinator will come from among our members, who else can better understand Members' needs and expectations?!

If you missed the advert, please go to the Oxfordshire County Council website, Jobs, www.oxfordshire.gov.uk to download the Application pack and details (Ref: FGMC433). For an informal discussion about the job, please do not hesitate contacting me at 01865 484116 or by email localfood@brookes.ac.uk

Support for Farmers' Markets



AWT and Richard Benyon, MP, opening the 2nd Newbury Market

With generous support from the Food Group, the Thames Valley Farmers Market Co-operative launched a second market in Newbury, officially opened by Antony Warrall Thompson on 21 October.

The Farmers' Market will now be held twice a month, on the first and third Sunday, in the Market Place from 9am to 1pm, due to popular demand. The Food Group paid all the costs for press releases, adverts, flyers, road signs and cooking demonstrations, which amounted to £1,200.

Another support package of £2,000 went to East Berkshire Farmers Markets – Maidenhead, Ascot and Windsor in an attempt to support farmers affected by the Foot and Mouth outbreak, with Farmers' Markets promoting local meat through tasting and cooking demos, so customers can try before they buy. Diane Harker, coordinator of the Maidenhead FM says: we will run a cookery demo at the Maidenhead market on 13 January 2008, which is a week before the Big Breakfast Week, when we would promote products available for Farmhouse Breakfasts. At the same time we will run some competitions for children to get them thinking about where their food comes from (and also possibly the parents)." The project is supported by the South East Food Group Partnership, our umbrella organisation in the region.

In partnership with FARMA, we organised a joint presentation, on **23 October**, where interested FM coordinators were able to understand what FARMA membership involves. If market coordinators are interested but unable to cover membership fees, we shall be looking at supporting them, with the aim to enlist more certified Farmers' Markets in the future. All participants felt that it was advantageous to be FARMA members and we would encourage more local markets to consider FARMA membership.

Flavours of the Thames Valley



Chocolatier Gorvett & Stone from Henley featured in December

The November and December issues of Berkshire and Chilterns Life magazine feature festive and winter dishes and producers in the area offering those, written by Bernice Hurst and Lynda Brown.

Buy the magazine throughout the region.

Look out in January for a feature by Helen Barnard on cheese producers throughout the Thames Valley.

Training

Year of Food & Farming

Are you a farmer or food producer offering educational visits to groups of children on your farm? Are you considering making your farm available to schools in the future?

Access to Farms has established a scheme to help ensure that schools are guaranteed a safe and valuable farm experience. This 3 day course offers an opportunity for farmers to share experiences and develop knowledge and skills. Following completion of the course you will get a qualification from the Open College Network and an ATF Certificate of Achievement to demonstrate your skills and help market your opportunity. Forthcoming 2008 CEVAS courses in the South East: Marsh Hill Farm, Nr Aylesbury, **Monday 14 January, Wednesday 16 January & Monday 21 January.**

The cost of the course is £75 + vat (with a holding number). Limited spaces available so please book early. BBO Food Group members can apply for a 70% refund. To book, e mail: ian@fcfcg.co.uk

Business +

Business + programme helps small and medium-sized businesses to improve their productivity and competitiveness by providing skills and ideas of high quality graduates backed by University knowledge and resources. A graduate works full-time on a project (between 3 and 12 months) with regular support from the University staff. Benefits to your company include direct access to technology base; an opportunity to work closely with potential employees who will be trained in various aspects of SME management; and no direct employee costs as the graduate is employed by the University. The monthly cost for the company is £1,400. SEEDA provides additional £1,900 per month. To get more information, register your interest and to apply online, please follow link to www.seeda.co.uk/businessplus

Events

If you are organising your own local food and drink event and would like it promoted on **Events** page of our website contact us on localfood@brookes.ac.uk. Please also let us know in good time if you would like to offer other BBO Food Groups members a stall so we can add your event to our lists. If you are interested in offering talks or demos in the future (either free or for a charge), contact us with details – it's useful for us to know so that we can point outside event organisers in your direction!

Speciality and Small Producer Pavilion at Hotelympia 17 - 21 February 2008, London Exel Trade only.

European Seafood Expo 22 - 24 April 2008 - Brussels

The Real Food Festival Thursday 24th-Sunday 27th April 2008, Earls Court Exhibition Centre, London

<http://www.realfoodfestival.co.uk> Special rate for small producers: **£150 for a 6m² stand for 4 days**. Bargain!

New! BBC Good Food Show Summer 11-15 June 2008, The NEC Birmingham

150,000 visitors expected over the 5 day event. Rates start from £212 per m².

Click <http://www.goodfoodshow.com> or call 02082 678300.

New! Food & Drink Expo 6-9th April 2008, The NEC Birmingham

Visitor audited attendance in 2006 for Food & Drink Expo, was 25,789 and with only 600 exhibitors, the ratio per exhibitor/visitor is high, giving excellent opportunity for product promotion and awareness. Prices from £257 per m of space. For further details click <http://www.foodanddrinkexpo.com> or call Sarah Thomas on 01293 867616



New Website – Check your details!



www.southeastenglandfoodanddrink.co.uk host stacks of information for consumers, trade buyers, buyers in the public sector and producers. It also features events, news articles, downloads and much more.

Food group members' details will automatically be taken from the 'buy local food' and our website, but we urge producers to check their entry regularly to make sure that the 50,000 consumers and buyers who will visit every year, get the right information.

Additional information areas have been added to make it easier for consumer and trade buyers (both private and public sector) to find the product they are after, so make sure your details are complete.

Contact Us

BBO Food Groups
Tamara Schiopu, Manager
Gipsy Lane
Oxford, OX3 0BP

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