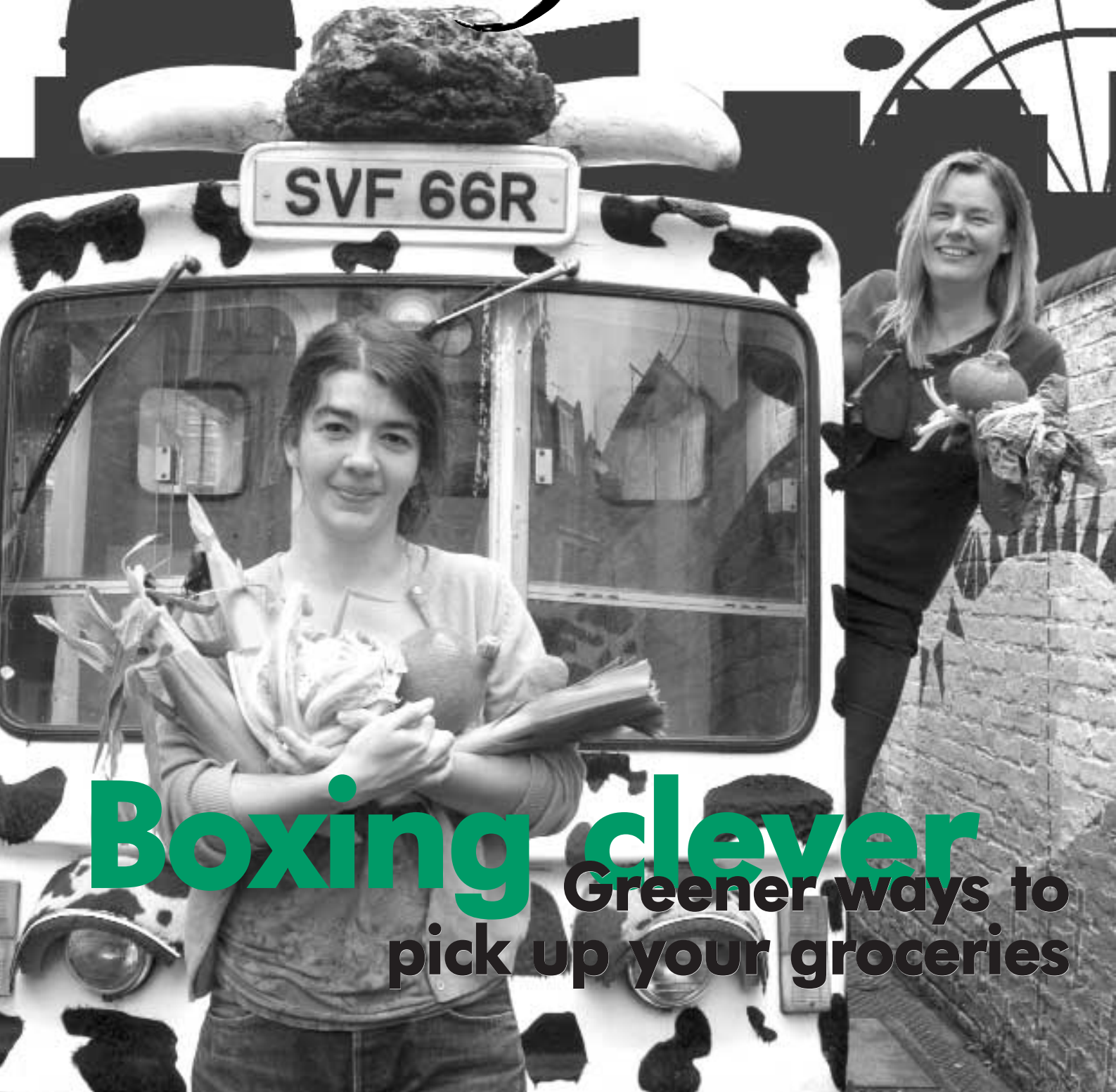


the jellied eel

London's leading magazine
for ethical eating



Boxing clever

Greener ways to
pick up your groceries

- 4 London food grants scheme launched
- 6 Feeding the Olympics - new report
- 7 Mayors food implementation plan
- 10 Online shopping
- 13 Biofuels: the facts



Contents

AROUND TOWN	3
BULLETIN	4-5
IN PRINT: FEEDING THE OLYMPICS	6-7
ON THE MENU : HASTINGS	8-9
ALLOTMENT SLOT	9
ONLINE SHOPPING	10-11
LOCAL FOOD FINDER	12
SHOP WINDOW: WEDGE CARD	12
BIOFUELS	13
LOCAL TO LONDON: CHESHAM	14-15
DIARY	16

The Jellied Eel is the magazine of London Food Link coordinated by Sustain: The alliance for better food and farming. It aims to keep readers abreast of developments in the food and agriculture policy arena that have an impact on London. Sustain takes every effort to summarise and reproduce accurately the information in *The Jellied Eel*.

Sustain's Work

To represent around 100 national public interest organisations working at international, national, regional and local level.

Sustain's Aim

To advocate food and agriculture policies and practices that enhance the health and welfare of people and animals, improve the working and living environment, promote equity and enrich society and culture.

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Editorial

Now I'm not one to say no to a free sandwich, and I'm sure our office is not alone in upholding the principle not to waste food and Hoover up the left-over sandwiches from events. More and more, however, am I hearing from the network about meetings where the catering is at odds with the subject of the meeting. In many cases these low standards are despite the requests of the organisers. Even though the sustainable food movement is picking up momentum, most caterers still seem to be side-stepping the issues. As we mentioned in *Jellied Eel* 17, this is an issue that London Food Link is particularly keen to address, so we will be running a series of workshops in early 2008 for event caterers and events organisers (p4).

We will also be running a small grant scheme for food events next year (p4). The grants will raise the profile of sustainable food at new and existing events next spring and summer, as part of the implementation of the London Food Strategy. The implementation plan for this strategy has now been published (p7) so expect to see more activity on sustainable food in the coming months.

Meanwhile, we're very pleased to welcome Charlie Willsmore, Vanessa Domenzain and Pamela Brunton to the team. Charlie (Charlie@sustainweb.org) is providing advice for applicants to the small grants scheme and also running the workshops mentioned above (p4). Vanessa will be coordinating membership activities, so if you want to attend or speak at the next network get-together on 13th February (p4), please contact her on (Vanessa@sustainweb.org). Pamela (Pamela@sustainweb.org) is working on a public sector catering training project

which will be featured in the next issue.

As many of you will know, we launched our online producers' directory, the Local Food Finder, in October (see p12 for more information). Well done to Laura & Robert Strathern of Fairfields Farm Crisps who win a bottle of bubbly as part of the producers competition. This online directory is part of an overhaul of our website (www.londonfoodlink.org), which includes a new members' section with details of potential funders and back issues of the *Jellied Eel*. There's also dedicated sections for interested individuals on what action they can take to improve the sustainability of the food system, and for policy makers on different aspects of sustainable food. We have plans to add a section for food businesses, a calendar of events put on by members, a members' directory and much more. Please contact Vanessa if there's anything that you would find useful.

Following on from last issue's focus on climate change and air travel, we shift our attention to the roads, exploring some of the issues around box schemes, online ordering (p10) and biofuels (p13). Next issue we will be focusing on urban agriculture, looking at allotments, roof gardens, commercial production in the city and much more. Well done again to Hammersmith community garden for winning the food container category at the City Harvest festival. As a prize, the garden will be taking a party of 15 helpers to a free 'shelf life' workshop at the Chelsea Physic Garden, which will demonstrate some of the wonderful ways of growing food in small containers.

Ben Reynolds

We would like to thank the following volunteers for their time and assistance:

Stephanie Fisher
Rachel Manley
Rhona McAdam
Guillermo Obregon
Jenny Passmore
Rowan St Clair

Disclaimer - Inclusion of information in *The Jellied Eel* does not imply that the product or service is endorsed by London Food Link or Sustain.

Around Town

Central Slow Food's Christmas food festival at London's South Bank Centre

Slow Food London in conjunction with the South Bank Centre is launching its first food festival in the run up to Christmas, from 20th to 23rd December, 11am to 8pm daily. The Christmas market will be located at the Royal Festival Hall in front of Canteen, and will feature food producers who reflect the Slow Food Movement's values that food should be 'good, clean and fair'.

Small scale artisan producers will be selling a range of meat, game, cheeses, vegan specialities, biodynamic vegetables, local honeys, chutneys and preserves, perry, wine and juices, with a number of bespoke items commissioned for the market, in addition to produce featured in the Slow Food 'Ark of Taste'. Craft items will range from London-hive beeswax candles to pottery and kitchenware commissioned by Slow Food Headquarters in Italy.

There will also be the opportunity to buy very particular food hampers, either pre-ordered via the SF London website, or on a pick up and fill-as-you-go basis.

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WWW.SLOWFOODLONDON.COM

North Good food swap

Hackney-based enterprise Growing Communities is holding a Good Food Swap on Saturday 8th December. Last time around the event was hugely enjoyable and successful so it is being repeated this year complete with mulled wine and a festive theme! The idea is to come along with food you've made, grown, picked or foraged for, and swap it for other food on display. The emphasis is on fresh, local and organic produce and it is a great excuse to spend time talking and making food with family and friends or to show off your favourite recipes.

On the day, drop off your food before the swap starts then, during the first part



Slow Food

of the swap starting at 6pm, walk around to see what other people have brought and make a note of the number of people that you might be interested in swapping with. This is followed by the swap itself, where you pick up your produce and track down your desired items by locating people with the numbers on their badges.

There will be a healthy element of competition but anything goes, from cherry vodka and cakes to samosas and pesto! The website lists seasonal produce and has suggestions of what to make and bring, so get inspired and begin planning and preparing your food now. Remember to register online as they need to know numbers. It is being held at a different venue from last year - St Paul's Church Hall, Evering Road entrance (just off Stoke Newington Road), N16 7UE, from 6pm to 10pm.

WWW.BTINTERNET.COM/~GROW.COMMUNITIES/ SWAP.HTM

North Food retailers project in SW1

A Moveable Feast (AMF), South Westminster's Healthy Living Centre is in the early stages of piloting a food retailers project which aims to improve the availability and affordability of healthy food in south Westminster (SW1). Three or four

local food retail outlets will be approached by AMF in partnership with Westminster City Council and offered a flexible package that will benefit both the business and the local community that AMF serves.

The package offered will vary depending on each business and how involved it wants to become. Businesses will be offered advice and support from the AMF dietician and social enterprise development worker, along with food hygiene training and financial support to buy display units and shelving to promote fruit and vegetable purchasing. The AMF team could also offer advice and support on buying fruit and vegetables, and marketing incentives.

In return, AMF will be asking the retail outlets to act as a vehicle for health promotion, which could include housing a healthy recipe stand or giving out health promotion leaflets. Along with stocking more healthy food, such as fruit and vegetables, these activities should encourage people to improve their diets.

The project is being developed in direct response to recommendations from the SW1 Food Access Needs Assessment Report which was carried out by Groundwork and published in March 2007.

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Bulletin



Feeding into London food events

Small Grants for Sustainable Food for London

The Mayor's Food Strategy Implementation Plan, published in September 2007, acknowledges that vibrant food events not only celebrate the quality and diversity of food in London, but also the city's long history of being open to the world. Food events, led by communities to meet their own needs, allow us to enjoy fantastic, healthy food. As part of a community event, we can not only enjoy food but also use our purchasing power to demand improvements in the way food is produced, distributed and disposed of.

London Food Link has £70,000 to award small grants - from £500 to £5,000 - for a wide range of events across London. The money can be used, for example, to help community groups and businesses to introduce sustainable food into established events, create a new event, or forge new relationships between local producers, retailers, caterers and manufacturers. We'll be advertising Small Grants far and wide, so all LFL members should expect to receive an attractive poster to display in local retailers, community centres or faith buildings.

Small Grants will be launched on 17th December 2007 and the money will be awarded in two funding rounds. The deadline for the first round of applications is 3rd March 2008, so get your thinking caps on!

Serving up Sustainability - workshops for event caterers

At London Food Link we have witnessed a growing interest in sustainable food and sustainable catering over recent years (see

JE17). We are increasingly asked to provide details of event organisers that implement policies on sustainability, and for contact details of sustainable caterers. There is also growing interest in sustainable food in the mainstream media and among the general public, as demonstrated by several industry surveys showing an increasing awareness of and demand for local, fresh and seasonal produce. Food businesses that are unable to prove their commitment to sustainability are likely to become increasingly marginalised and uncompetitive - and we are concerned that this will include many food businesses from London's diverse ethnic communities.

So, during spring 2008, we will run three workshops that each offer advice and support to London's caterers in providing more healthy and sustainable food, covering the following topics:

1. Serving Up Sustainability I: meeting the growing demand for food with values.
2. Sourcing the Sustainable Supply Chain: where to find, and how to specify, supplies of sustainable food.
3. Serving Up Sustainability II: How to win new contracts by marketing your sustainable business.

These workshops will explore, with attendees, the broader concepts of sustainable business management and how this can be marketed to new clients in order to win contracts and open up new revenue streams. We're also aiming to facilitate discussion with the attending businesses to find out what they need to increase the scale of their business and / or work collaboratively with other caterers to win higher-value catering contracts.

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London food link network do

The next biannual London Food Link gathering will take place on February 13th, where members and other interested parties can get together to discuss the work being done in the capital to increase the availability of local, organic and Fairtrade food. The last meeting was a lively affair held in Geetie Singh's Duke of Cambridge Organic Pub, on St Peters Street, Islington, attended by over 80 people. The next meeting will be convened here again, with several speakers taking centre stage to talk about issues of ethical eating and providing attendees the chance to network and catch up with colleagues over an organic glass of beer or wine and an organic buffet. The event - held between 4.30 - 7pm - is free to London Food Link members, and £10 for

non-members. If you want to attend or give a five minute talk about your work, please contact vanessa@sustainweb.org.

Local food funding programme

The Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts (RSWT) has been awarded £50 million to run an open grant scheme on behalf of the BIG Lottery. Their local food scheme will support a variety of local food related projects that will help to strengthen local communities across England. Grants from £2,000 up to £500,000 will be awarded to not-for-profit organisations in England running projects such as growing, processing, marketing and distributing local food; composting, and raising awareness of the benefits of such activities.

This scheme will achieve its main aim of making 'locally grown food accessible and affordable to local communities' by funding projects on the following five themes:

- Enabling communities to manage land sustainably for growing food locally;
- Enabling communities to build knowledge and understanding and to celebrate the cultural diversity of food;
- Stimulating local economic activity and the development of community enterprises concerned with growing, processing and marketing local food;
- Creating opportunities for learning and the development of skills through voluntary training and job creation;
- Promoting awareness and understanding of the links between food and healthy lifestyles.

The guidelines for applying for this fund will be made public in February 2008, with a rolling deadline for applications starting straight away. Projects can last up to five years and the fund will run to March 2015, with projects finishing by March 2014.

WWW.RSWT.ORG/LOCALFOOD

Scores on the doors

On 8th October the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) published online food hygiene ratings for 80,000 London eateries, from cafés to restaurants. This score, between zero and five stars, gives consumers the chance to make informed decisions about where they want to eat and acts as an incentive to improve hygiene standards. A two star rating is defined as largely compliant with national food hygiene requirements. Restaurants that fail to gain two stars are advised on how to improve and, where necessary, could be subject to enforcement action. At the moment, displaying the scores on restaurant windows is voluntary, but work is underway to make display of hygiene scores a legal requirement.

WWW.YOURLONDON.GOV.UK/FOODSCORES

Farmers market update

October saw the opening of a new farmers market in Walthamstow, which has proved very popular with the locals. It's open every Sunday 10 - 2 next to the Town Square and the Mall. Produce includes fresh bread, free range eggs, organic vegetables, cheese, poultry, succulent cooked sausages and plants.

In the run up to Christmas, there should be free mince pies at many of the markets, so get down early on the weekend of 22nd and 23rd December! Carol-singers will also be a festive treat at the markets close to Christmas. Scattered across the markets will be Christmas trees, Christmas wreaths, holly, ivy and cones.

Christmas dinner can be provided to you courtesy of London Farmers Markets, as the markets should be full to the brim with Christmas produce, such as plump turkeys, geese and extra-large, organic or free-range chickens. The markets will be bursting with seasonal veg and Christmas sweets and treats. If the cold gets to you during shopping, hot spiced apple juice will be available at various markets to warm your cockles, courtesy of Chegworth Valley Juices and Millets Fruits.

All London Farmers' Markets will be open as usual in the run-up to Christmas, with all weekend markets taking a one-week break the weekend after Christmas, reopening on the 5th and 6th January. Finchley Road weekday market will take a two-week break, reopening on the 9th January.

WWW.LFM.ORG.UK

Food and farming show

by Jenny Linford

In September, in an eye-catching attempt to bring the reality of farming life to the capital, shepherdess Jane O'Neill organised a Food and Farming show in the heart of London, right outside City Hall.

"The whole thing was my idea," explains Jane. "Farming is in a bad way. Joe Public has totally lost contact with where their food comes from, how it's grown or raised, the cycle of food production."

The tough realities faced by Britain's farming community affected the show. "Because of Foot and Mouth and Bluetongue we couldn't have the animals we wanted," says Jane. "We also had terrible weather. We didn't get people in the numbers I'd wanted but we did get nearly 2,000 school children. I drove a flock of geese into the show - it was Michaelmas, which was appropriate - and a chef, Ross Burden, cooked a dead goose and the kids got to eat it, so it was a complete circle. The kids loved the show and the teachers did too."

Undaunted by the struggle to find funding and the work involved Jane's next project is a mini-roadshow for schools involving live livestock. "I'm mad, I think,"

she admits with a laugh, "but if you don't use farmers you're going to lose us. The public are prepared to buy British but the supermarkets need to help."

JANE O'NEILL

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Love food, hate waste website

A new website has been launched by WRAP (Waste Resource and Action Programme) as part of the "Love Food, Hate Waste" campaign, which aims to raise awareness of the need to reduce the amount of food that we throw away, and how doing this will benefit us as consumers and the environment. The website has guidance sections on perfect portioning, what to keep in your cupboard, fridge and freezer, planning your weekly shop and, amongst other interesting things, recipes for leftovers. The campaign has been endorsed by celebrities such as the chef Ainsley Harriott, as well as members of the public who have posted messages of support on the website.

WWW.LOVEFOODHATEWASTE.COM

Is there a common language of food?

In November a small group of food growing professionals and community volunteers met

to discuss how to engage more people from diverse cultures in sustainable production whatever their language.

The event, Working Across Languages and Cultures, was hosted by the Women's Environmental Network, who support a number of women's groups engaged in food growing in Tower Hamlets, as well as facilitating *Taste of a Better Future*, a national network of local growers. The day explored how to cross language barriers to increase access and involvement from all communities.

Participants came from near and far, with speakers Sufia Alam, Manager of Wapping Women's Centre and Chair of the Muslim Women's Collective in Tower Hamlets and Jane Robinson from Bradford Community Environment Project contributing their extensive experience.

Focused discussions investigated ideas and good practice, and will lead to a report, which will be available by the end of 2008. This, in turn, will contribute to the Sustainable Production in Active Neighbourhoods (SPAN) action learning project, funded by Defra through the Environmental Action Fund.

CHRISTINE HAIGH

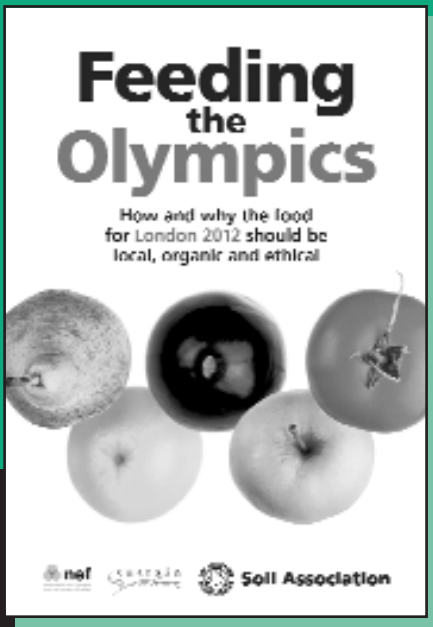
FOOD@WEN.ORG.UK

WWW.WEN.ORG.UK

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Shepherdess Jane O'Neill herds geese by Tower Bridge





Feeding the Olympic

12 Steps to Sustainable Food at the 2012 Olympics

INPRINT

December sees the release of a joint report by Sustain, the Soil Association and the New Economics Foundation, 'Feeding the Olympics: How and why the food for London 2012 should be local, organic and ethical'. It sets out a vision of what a sustainable food games could look like, and to help achieve the promises made in the London bid for the "most sustainable games ever".

Between July and September 2012 London will be the focus of world attention. An estimated global audience of four billion people will watch more than 10,000 athletes participate in the 30th Olympiad. Some 8.6 million tickets will be available for the Olympic Games with another 1.5m for the Paralympic Games and 300,000 tourists are expected to travel to the games from outside the UK.

The environmental and social effects of providing about 1.3 million meals to construction workers and 14 million attendees during the games can be either negative or positive, but will be very significant in either case. The longer-term impact of a sustainable approach to food for local communities, created as part of the games' legacy, will be even greater.

This report therefore focuses on three key aspects of food for the Olympic and Paralympic Games: providing food during the games time itself; food for construction workers, and the legacy of the games. The detailed case made in the report is summarised in 12 steps which would improve the food at the games.

To realise this vision, London Food Link is in dialogue with the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games (LOCOG) and will help inform the creation of their food plan for the games period. London Food Link and the other authors of this report are planning to hold a workshop in the New Year to help those responsible for food at the 2012 games to incorporate these steps into their routine work.

10

1 The Food for Life targets of 75% unprocessed, 50% local and 30% organic food should be set as a minimum standard for catering contracts during both the construction phase and during the Games themselves.

2 Food outlets should be encouraged to use 100% UK vegetables and 80% UK seasonal fruit.

3 65% of the food sold should be vegetarian or vegan, with meat used sparingly in meat-based dishes; 100% of meat and dairy products should be organic and from the UK.

4 Only fish from certified Marine Stewardship Council sources should be used.

5 All tea, coffee, chocolate, fruit and juice (where imported) should be Fairtrade certified.

6 There should be minimal food packaging, with all waste reused, recycled or composted; 100% composting of organic waste; 100% reuse or recycling of packaging.

7 Free drinking water fountains should be installed throughout all Olympic sites.

8 All possible avenues that would allow local, small and medium-sized enterprises to participate in catering activities during the construction phase and the games themselves should be vigorously pursued.

9 In legacy mode, all residents in the new communities should have access to fresh, healthy and sustainable food within 500 metres. The new developments should provide space for street markets, farmers' markets, food growing spaces (at ground level and on rooftops) and allotments.

There should be visible and engaging food marketing, that inspires and informs the public on the merits of healthy eating and its role in sports, an understanding of seasonal, local and organic produce available and the benefits of various eating habits for the local and global environment. This should include high-profile athletes promoting healthy and sustainable food.

11 All catering staff should be trained in preparing fresh and healthy dishes, and communicating this to their present and future customers, which will provide a sustainable catering legacy in its own right.

12 There should be 2,012 new food-growing spaces created across London, including community gardens, allotments and roof gardens, building on the Vancouver 2010 commitment to create 2,010 new food-growing sites.

The Mayor's Food Strategy Implementation Plan



This implementation plan sets out how those activities identified as a priority in the Mayor's Food Strategy will be put into practice. It was launched by the Mayor and the London Development Agency in September and a number of projects are already underway, including collecting food waste from businesses, food events (some of which is detailed on p4), and training public sector catering staff (featured in the next issue).

One of the priorities to develop regional links will be addressed by a major project to improve local food infrastructure. This will be launched soon working with wholesale markets, London's transport, food access projects and public sector procurement, alongside the development of a local food brand for London. In launching this plan the Mayor, Ken Livingstone, said 'I want to promote diverse and healthy diets among Londoners, capitalising on the amazing array of cuisines that have become established through London's long history of being open to the world. Greater demand for fantastic, healthy food on the plate can be linked to improvements in the way in which food is produced and distributed.'

WWW.LDA.GOV.UK/LONDONFOOD



Paul Joy with his catch

"There has been a fishery here for over a thousand years," says Stephen Potter, Food Enterprise Development Officer of Hastings Borough Council. "Fishing was happening here while the Battle of Hastings was going on. What could be more sustainable than that?"

Two years ago, the Hastings fisheries received Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification for mackerel, herring and Dover sole caught between Beachy Head and Dungeness. These species can now be sold with the blue MSC 'fish with the tick' logo, guaranteeing that they come from healthy stocks and a sustainable, well-managed fishery.

"The fish stocks are healthy, and the fishermen here have always fished out of small boats and used methods that have very little impact on the marine environment, so they didn't actually have to change what they were doing to get the MSC certification," says Stephen Potter, who was involved in the certification process and co-manages the certification for the fishery and the 'chain of custody' required for onward selling (see opposite). "It's great to have official recognition of the fact that these small-scale fishermen are operating sustainably - and of course with the growing interest in sustainable food, it should add value to their product."

Until recently however, the fishermen were gaining nothing from this added value, as their fish was not being sold on as MSC certified. Deciding to take matters

into their own hands, in May 2007 they set up a community interest company, Hastings Fish CIC, to sell the fish themselves. "All the fishermen are stakeholders in the company," explains Paul Joy, fisherman, chairman of the Hastings Fishermen's Protection Society, and co-director of Hastings Fish CIC. "After we've taken the running costs out, the profits go back to them."

95% of the Hastings catch is now sold as MSC certified, but apart from small quantities going to local restaurants and retailers, the majority is currently sent to Holland and France. Thinking it a shame that none of this lovely fresh, sustainable fish makes its way to London - a mere 60-odd miles away - in September we took a group of London caterers and restaurateurs from the Ethical Eats network (www.ethicaleats.org) to Hastings. We listened to Stephen and Paul explain what makes the fishery sustainable, sampled MSC 'mack-a-rolls' at Judges bakery, and enjoyed an MSC fish lunch at Pissarro's restaurant. Look out for Hastings MSC fish on a menu near you very soon. ■

Charlotte Jarman
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On The Menu

Hastings eco-fishery netting the past to sustain the future

MSC logo on the menu

Pissarro's restaurant, independent wet-fish retailer Rock-a-Nore Fisheries, and Judges bakery are part of a group of Hastings businesses that have gone through the Marine Stewardship Council's 'chain of custody' certification process. This entitles them to sell the Hastings fish as MSC certified, and they can also use the MSC logo on their menus and promotional materials. Sustain is now working with the MSC to help a small group of London restaurants go through the same process. Contact Charlotte on 020 7837 1228 or charlotte@sustainweb.org for more details.

Contact and buy

To learn more about the work of the Marine Stewardship Council see:

- www.msc.org or contact Laura on laura.stewart@msc.org

To buy MSC certified sustainable fish from Hastings, contact:

Leon Joy for fresh mackerel, herring and Dover sole

- Hastings Fish CIC
- 01424 428 222
- hastingsfish@btconnect.com

Sonny Elliot for smoked mackerel and kippers

- Rock-a-Nore Fisheries
- 01424 445 425
- www.rockanore.co.uk (from January)

Credit: Charlotte Jarman



Allotment slot

If Hackney can do it, why not everywhere else? I am addressing the subject of community gardening, the key to enlarging the inner city allotment movement. I have always argued for the removal of fences and locks as far as allotments are concerned, but I have been howled down by an older generation frightened of vandalism and young people, especially if they are wearing hoods. It is always the locked sheds on our West London site that get broken into, while the miscreants leave unlocked sheds unexplored. In general teenagers hate the very thought of gardening and, therefore, do not want to get their must-have trainers dirty.

It was five years ago that things started to change dramatically on the Clapton Park Estate, Hackney, when John Little's Green Roof Company won the maintenance contract. Almost immediately he forged a partnership with the tenant management association, and things only got better, as they said that what their 1,200 tenants wanted were things to be brightened up, and a place to grow their own vegetables. Little spread colourful wild flower and poppy seeds around the metal fences, and dug up areas around the buildings in readiness for vegetable planting. It was mainly an army of Turkish women who set about growing their own food. Their crops were not protected, and it worked. Areas were set aside for ball games. Everything went so well that at the 2007 Chelsea Flower show they won a silver medal.

It is an experience I reflected when locals were asked by Ealing Council's Parks department to voice our views on what should happen to a little used park within 100 yards of our allotment site. Over the years we have pleaded with the council to put a small part of it down to allotments, helping to remove our huge waiting list, and also provide a place for parents and children to have a cup of tea and play. The area is overlooked by a tall tower block, which the police are frequently visiting. It turned out that there is now no residents association here and, according to an ex-member of the disbanded organisation, most of the inmates are 'foreign'. We have suggested community gardens and lit recreational areas for teenagers. Most of those who turned up for the 'consultation' were nearby private home owners, full of woe, and criticism of youth. The Parks Department had not heard of the Hackney experience. They should contact John Little and they will find that of all people 'foreigners' are used to growing their own food! ■

Michael Wale is the author of "View From A Shed: four seasons as an urban farmer," £6.99, Allison and Busby, 2006.

Online Shopping

Home delivery shopping is booming as more and more people are connected to the internet and ordering their goods and groceries online, but what effects will more delivery vans, and possibly fewer car trips to the shops, have on our carbon emissions? **Rowan St Clair** finds out.

People often choose home delivery as it is more convenient than travelling to the shops, and common sense suggests that this might also help to reduce transport emissions, as it should mean fewer car trips if shoppers are ordering their deliveries rather than travelling to the shops by car.

However, the dramatic rise in home deliveries has caused concern that transport emissions could be increased too as lots of delivery vans will be deployed from depots to homes, and may not be making the most efficient use of journeys - sometimes dropping off small deliveries at many different houses scattered across a wide area.

Food shopping by car is rising as a percentage of overall food miles, currently estimated at 40 - 48% of the total (according to the Future Foundation). Despite the fact that 93% of people live within 15 minutes by foot or public transport of grocery shops, "just over three quarters of households do their main food shopping by car" (DfT factsheet July 2000). Personal car use is an especially inefficient method of ferrying food because each car trip will only transport a small amount of shopping.

Is home delivery better?

Claims that home delivery services will cut down emissions from transport are based on the hope that delivery vans carrying a number of shopping loads will take the place of individual trips by cars carrying smaller loads.

If delivery methods are efficient in carrying many shopping loads in each trip, transport emissions could be reduced considerably. Organic box scheme Riverford Organics has researched its carbon footprint and concludes that, "despite the fact that a Riverford box may have physically travelled some 200 miles to a customer's doorstep, the associated energy tag is equivalent to the customer living within 1.5 miles of the farm gate were they drive there to buy direct". This might sound counter-intuitive but is due to all the produce being transported to London and then distributed throughout the capital from there, in what is a relatively energy efficient operation.

Research shows that the main factor determining whether or not getting your shopping delivered is better for the environment is whether or not deliveries can be coordinated efficiently into particular 'time windows'. If a food delivery service can deliver to lots of homes in one area, its vans can make fewer trips, replacing numerous individual car trips by customers with one round trip for a delivery van. For this to work, the delivery service has to deliver at a specified time rather than allow its customers to choose times that are convenient for them. This could cause problems for customers who might be out at work and cannot arrange for someone to take their shopping in.

Many delivery services offer different time windows with different delivery prices, so that the more deliveries around the same time to the same area, the lower the delivery cost. Ocado, which delivers Waitrose products, shows a green flag next to times shared by other customers in your area so that you can choose the time window that reduces delivery trips.

Saving here but spending there?

A main concern of researchers into online shopping and transport emissions has been that customers who have ordered home delivery services might use the time saved to make other car journeys instead, so undermining the reduced traffic we might hope to achieve by promoting online shopping. In addition, not all customers using home delivery services would otherwise have shopped by car.

However, some research suggests that the transport savings are real, and not offset in other areas. The Food Ferry, an independent grocery delivery company operating in London, surveyed home delivery customers in 1998. Of 160 customers, 61% of respondents said that they owned a car and 74% of these claimed to be using their cars less since their groceries were delivered. It was also noted that "Two or three customers indicated that



Box schemes

Here are a few box schemes available in London. For more ideas and information go to the take action pages on the London Food Link website.

Aardvark recycling

fruit and veg box scheme)
www.aardvarkrecycling.org.uk/services.php
0845 337 2939
Deliveries: Stockwell, Brixton and Clapham (Lambeth)

Barnet Garden Project

www.barnetgardenproject.co.uk
07707689303
Will start again in April

Capricorn Organics

www.capricornorganics.co.uk
Tel: 020 8306 2786
Deliveries: Covering Southeast London and neighbouring areas Bexley Borough (Bexley, Bromley, Greenwich and Lewisham, Lambeth, Southwark and Croydon)

Everybody Organic

www.everybodyorganic.com
Tel: 0845 345 5054
Deliveries: Greater London

Growing Communities

www.growingcommunities.org
Tel: 020 7502 7588
Deliveries: 5 different pick up points across Hackney

The Peckham Settlement: Green Ventures

www.peckhamsettlement.org.uk/green.htm
Tel: 020 7252 8300
Deliveries in SE5, SE15, SE17, SW2, SE22, SE21, SE24, SE26, SE27 (Southwark)

they have got rid of their vehicle altogether because of the Food Ferry."

The UCL report *Transport for Quality of Life* summarises much of the past research on the subject, taking delivery time windows and customer uptake of home delivery into account. The models they examined gave the researchers reasonable confidence to suggest that, even when different factors had been taken into account, home delivery shopping should significantly reduce traffic and environmental impact: "If delivery vehicles directly substitute for car trips, the kilometres saved per shopping load are likely to be substantial - *with reductions in the order of 70% or more*. Even with very stringent operating constraints or very low levels of customer demand, reductions of 50% or more are predicted."

Other costs and benefits?

Another issue affecting transport emissions from online shopping is whether companies deliver from local stores or from centralised fulfilment centres (the place where orders are put together - usually a central warehouse). Most supermarkets offering home delivery services pack the orders in store and deliver locally. However, Tesco has already built one fulfilment centre in Croydon because the increase in

home delivery orders meant more crowding in stores as workers were collecting items from shelves alongside customers.

The Greater London Authority (GLA) is already taking the possible market for more fulfilment centres into account when considering future uses for brownfield land. Delivery from fulfilment centres could increase transport emissions as goods would travel further and often customers are allowed to collect their orders from these centres. If online shopping continues to rise this could have a dramatic affect on urban infrastructure.

There might be other benefits from online shopping, such as less food waste due to fewer impulsive buys as people plan their shop to buy what they need. On the other hand, if people don't have to carry goods home, they may purchase more. Indeed, as internet shopping grows, supermarkets may well put additional effort into doing special promotions to encourage larger purchases online. This is an avenue that requires more research.

From the evidence so far, if handled properly, online shopping and home delivery could be a win for the consumer and the environment. Some supermarkets are also experimenting with biofuels and electric vehicles, which again - if handled properly - could reduce carbon emissions.

The bigger picture

However, there is a final note of caution. The research covered here hasn't taken into account how the food has been produced and how it has reached the shop or depot in the first

Local Food Online

There's been a spate of new food websites recently. You've probably already read about our local food finder, which is the most comprehensive list of London's local producers to date. Although there isn't an easy way for consumers to buy directly from many of these producers, if you're willing to look a little further a field a few of these websites may have what you are looking for.

While sites like the littlelocalfoodshop.com list producers you can buy from directly (albeit very few that are very close to London), others allow you to pay for all your produce in one place, rather than trawling around each producer's website. While sites like Natoora are including food from a little further a field, the newly established localfoodshop.com lets you choose which local producers you buy from and guarantees that 93% of the purchase price goes to that producer.

Although these websites might not seem more convenient for consumers than a box scheme, they might be useful for the retail and hospitality industry as a way of ordering local goods. From a producer's point of view this is obviously good news too, as long as you've got access to the internet!

- www.natoora.co.uk
- www.localfoodshop.com
- www.littlelocalfood.com



A fruit and veg box from Aardvark

place, which of course have their own traffic and environmental burdens. Box schemes can range drastically from standard supermarket produce brought to you in a lorry, through to vegetables produced a couple of miles down the road. Such truly local box schemes often cut out vehicles altogether - for example, Growing Communities in Hackney has surveyed its organic box scheme members (several hundred in total) and found that 90% pick up their fruit and vegetables by foot, bicycle or public transport - a pretty impressive total that must knock the socks off other delivery schemes in terms of traffic control and reducing environmental damage!

While box schemes would appear a preferable alternative to those whose only choice is between which supermarket they drive to, some Londoners are still lucky enough to be able to walk to their local shops or markets, and it's hard to compete with that. ■

FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE:

- www.bettertransport.org.uk
- www.fcm.org.uk



London's Local Food Finder launched

already holds product details of around 900 farmers and other food producers.

The Local Food Finder can be searched by criteria such as product, location or delivery area. Although anyone can use the directory to find out what is available, the full contact details of the producers - email, website, telephone and fax numbers - are viewable only by London Food Link members. For details of how to join, call Vanessa Domenzain on 020 7837 1228 or email vanessa@sustainweb.org

The directory aims to be as comprehensive as possible, so there is no charge

for producers and suppliers to be listed in the local food finder. If you are a food producer or supplier, and want to be on the site go to the home page to check out the criteria for inclusion.

We hope that the London Food Finder will make life easier for London restaurants and food distributors, and help to put more local, sustainably-produced and healthier food on the plates of the capital's citizens.

Rhona McAdam
www.localfoodfinder.org

After many months of planning and effort, the Local Food Finder directory was launched on 10th October. Developed to allow London businesses to make direct contact with food producers and suppliers in and near London, this online service

Wedge: the loyalty card for local shops

The Wedge card is a new brand of loyalty card just for local, independent shops and businesses, aiming to inject some soul into local communities while supporting charities. The scheme is the brain-child of Diana Bird and her famously feisty father John Bird who is responsible for setting up The Big Issue and is 'totally opposed to the 'supermarketisation' of the land'. John notes that 'our local shops are disappearing in front of us, the high streets have turned into monstrous clones, and it's destroying our communities'. Indeed, small businesses have been failing at a furious rate. Between 1997 and 2002, on average 50 specialised independent shops closed every week, and Tesco now takes one in every three pounds spent on groceries in the UK.

Dire straits

If local businesses are at the heart of the community, then many communities are in dire straits as large national and multinational business dominates almost every retail sector, leaving high streets looking identical and monotonous. Along with the common complaints levelled against superstores such as exploitation of producers, bad aesthetics and poor ethical records, the Wedge card inventors accuse the present superstore culture of promoting feelings of alienation and anti-social behaviour as a result of dilapidated local shops and disintegrated communities.

With such public and media dissatisfaction in the bag, it could be expected that the Wedge card initiative will be heartily welcomed. And so it has been since its launch on Lambs Conduit Street Market in

Bloomsbury, in December 2006. Enthusiasm for the scheme has been overwhelming and has allowed its expansion into cities such as Bristol, Bath and Leicester.

Rising in the East

To celebrate its anniversary this December, Wedge Card is launching its 'shop local London' campaign, starting in East London. The campaign will raise awareness of the vital role that local, independent shops play in communities across the UK and shoppers will be encouraged to take on a Shop Local Challenge - to use only independent shops for at least a week. The campaign will spread across the rest of the city leading up to Shop Local London Day in June 2008.

Wedge card founder Diana Bird said, "With small shops struggling to survive against the onslaught of the big supermarkets, and particularly in the light of the disappointing findings of the government's Competition Commission on supermarkets, Wedge is a vital force to promote the diversity and quality that local high street shops offer. With the Shop Local London campaign we're hoping to double the number of businesses we have on board by Shop Local London day next summer"

Working the Wedge

The Wedge card costs £5 to buy from a local Wedge card business or £10 from the Wedge card website and this money goes towards a participating charity. The consumer can quickly make their money back at a wide network of shops that are already participating in London, from



gourmet chocolate shops to 'greasy spoons', electricians to eco-holidays to online businesses. Discounts on offer typically include 10 per cent off the price of a restaurant meal, or other goods and services, such as a haircut or a bespoke piece of jewellery. This all goes on without any pilfering of your personal details and recording your shopping habits, as is routine with 'normal' cards such as Tesco Clubcard or Nectarcard.

The future for the Wedge card lies in extending the network of business and users involved and, once 250,000 cards have been sold, a special pre-paid Wedge card will be launched, much like an Oyster card, which avoids the need to carry cash when visiting your local shop.

The Wedge Card Directory of local participating businesses is available online for you to find your nearest supplier. When you buy a card it is worth registering for the e-newsletter and free magazine to keep track of the offers and shops available. The Wedge team would be glad to hear from you if you are a local business wanting to join the scheme, a charity seeking to benefit from the scheme or would like to purchase a card. Information and contact details are provided on their website.

By Jenny Passmore
www.wedgecard.co.uk

Much has been said about biofuels - both for and against - in recent months. **Alec Hicock** picks his way through the controversy.

Biofuels the road to hell?

Many farmers are looking for more lucrative alternatives to the volatile incomes they get from growing food. Encouraged by government policies to tackle climate change, biofuels have, to many, seemed like a win-win situation, helping the environment and helping farmers.

On the face of it, biofuels seem like a good idea. Crops grown for fuel remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere as they grow, and can be made into fuel that pollutes less than fossil fuels do. Not only that, but unlike fossil fuels, biofuels are renewable as long as those feedstock crops can be grown. Under the new Renewable Transport Fuels Obligation (RTFO) 5% of fuel sold will need to come from renewable sources in 2010, so demand for biofuels - currently not much above zero - is expected to rise significantly. The two main types of biofuels currently in use are ethanol and biodiesel. Ethanol is derived from sources such as sugar beets, sugar cane and wheat, with biodiesel produced from soybeans, rapeseed, or palm oil as well as from used vegetable oil or animal fats.

More cost than benefit?

Critics of ethanol claim that more energy is required to produce ethanol than is created by the ethanol itself. In addition, intensive farming of crops for fuel - as for food - can lead to soil damage, lowering of water tables, and possible deforestation in other countries. As the demand for ethanol and biodiesel goes up, this may even displace food production, and lead to higher food prices. Rising biofuel demand may also mean the UK will have to start importing biofuels as well as food.

Biodiesel production in particular has been linked to increased rainforest destruction across South America, Indonesia and other South East Asian countries, from soya and palm plantations, which is used to produce vegetable oil. Clear cutting forests to make way for soya or palm farms can destroy not only the forest and its ecosystem, but also the livelihoods of local people and the capacity of the forest to absorb carbon dioxide - a triple whammy.

A "golden" fuel

However, not all biofuel is bad. Currently, the most sustainable biofuel is biodiesel from waste vegetable oil. This recycles waste that would otherwise be

thrown away, helps avoid contamination of the water and sewerage system, and gets two uses out of a product that's already been grown, rather than just one. It's not clear how much biofuel could be produced from this method if all used waste vegetable oil was recycled. But it is clear that recycled vegetable oil - and all the other sources of biofuels put together - will never be able to replace our current oil consumption in the UK and EU. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, for example, published research which showed that more than 70% of Europe's farmland would be required for biofuel crops to account for only 10% of fuel used for road transport; and this is just for Europe.

Another route

There are alternatives to biofuels for powering the nation's

transport network. Companies looking to improve their vehicles have some new electric and hybrid options available to them, although these are currently more expensive than conventional vehicles. On the horizon some vehicle producers may soon start producing new diesel-hybrid vans with good fuel efficiency.

But even when these technologies are developed, is our current amount of travel strictly necessary? Initiatives that strive to cut down mileage are as important as alternative fuels, if not more so.

To find out more about biofuels go to www.biofuelwatch.org.uk.

For biofuels recycled from waste cooking oil, or for the collection of commercial waste cooking oil, some of the companies offering this service are as follows:

■ Proper Oils

FreeCollections@properOils.co.uk
0845 470 80 91

London area waste cooking oil collector. Free service for anyone within M25 and M3/M4. The oil is taken to a local biodiesel refinery.

■ Green Miles Fuels Ltd.

www.greenmilesfuels.co.uk
London area waste cooking oil collector. Free service with oil taken to local biodiesel refinery Pure Fuels (see below).

■ Pure Fuels

www.purefuels.co.uk
London area biodiesel producer. Uses waste vegetable oil and offers a free oil disposal service.

Tom Lasica comparing oils
Credit: Pure Oils



Local to London



Hazeldene Farm



Sophie's Chocolates



Pathfinder Ostrich Farm

Having recently moved to Chesham, in the picturesque Chiltern Hills, **Tom Beeston** is on a journey to buy local food on London's doorstep. Chesham is a small market town situated 28 miles from central London and the last station on the spur off the Metropolitan Line of the London Underground. If you live in London here's a great day out with some of the best tasting food available in the country and truly amazing countryside.

Metropolitan morsels



About three minutes walk from the station; near Chesham town centre is **Sophie's Chocolates** one of England's best chocolatiers, in my opinion. Established in 1988, not only can you buy some of the best handmade chocolate but you can see, smell and hear the chocolates being created in this compact but highly productive establishment. If you cannot make it into Chesham they will make you something to order and have it delivered. Having bought some of the most acclaimed chocolates over the last 10 years this is a real find, truly artisan, local and exquisite.

A little further out of the town, about two or three miles from the tube station is another delight, Scott Dyason's, **Pathfinder Ostrich Farm**. Established in 1992 in Chesham, his ostriches are reared free range throughout the year to produce great tasting ostrich meat and eggs. Although not certified organic, dozens of birds, of different ages and sizes are split into small colonies, and provided feed produced by an organic mill. They start incubating eggs in March and finish in July giving the 200 or so chicks the best chance to acclimatise to the UK weather conditions, when it is relatively warm.

It's an amazing sight to see the fully grown 10 feet tall male birds roaming a beautiful Chiltern Valley, on this productive 20 acre plot. The meat tastes fantastic, is lower in fat, calories and cholesterol than skinless chicken, and the eggs aren't bad for size either, being equivalent to about 24 hen eggs.

Scott's at maximum output presently, supplying local farmers markets and trade customers, but is hoping to expand his packing facilities during 2008. As he's a busy man, if you want to buy from the farm you will need to call him first to make sure he's there.

This time just over a mile from the tube station is yet another great find, **Hazeldene Farm**, which just a couple of years ago Liz and Steve started to convert to organic and should be completed in 2008. This idyllic farm is spread over about 70 acres, and has a small farm shop.

Their mission seems to be near perfect, as not only is the farm going to be organic, it's also rearing and breeding rare breed stock, in an amazing setting. The beef is from traditional Herefords, of which there are only a few hundred left in the country (the Herefords that are available everywhere are not the traditional ones). The lamb is from Oxford Down's, of which there are only about 700 ewes left in UK, the pork from British Lop Piglets - with about 150 sows left in the UK - and Marsh Daisy Chickens, with only around 240 hens left in the UK, provide some of the eggs.

They have plans to start a cafe in 2008, and hope to grow fruit and vegetables which will be sold together with meat from the farm shop. The shop is still small, selling their meat, eggs, and apple juice alongside local and organic vegetables from the South East of England. They are happy to show people around the farm but it is best to call first to make sure there's someone to show you around and confirm what's available.

These three producers are really fabulous, and luckily for me I have many more to visit in the area yet. I'm looking forward to visiting **Manor Farm Game** and **Rowan Tree Goat Farm** very soon, as I've enjoyed products from both at farmers markets in London. ■

Tom Beeston
info@tombeeston.com

Find a farmer....

Sophie's Chocolates

Sophie Webb, 3/4 The Gatehouse, Elgiva Lane, Chesham, Buckinghamshire. HP5 2JD. 01494 782999
www.sophies-chocolates.com
Shop opening times; Monday-Friday 10am - 5pm and Saturday 9.30am -5pm

Pathfinder Ostrich Farm

(call before visiting)
Scott Dyason, Ramscote Lane, The Vale, Chesham, Buckinghamshire. HP5 2XP. 01494 791589
sales@ostrich-products.co.uk
www.ostrich-products.co.uk

Hazeldene Farm

Liz, Asheridge Road, Chesham, Bucks. HP5 2X. 01494-783501
liz@hazeldenefarm.com
www.hazeldenefarm.com

Rowan Tree Goat Farm

www.rowantreegoats.co.uk

Manor Farm Game

www.manorfarmgame.co.uk

All the businesses listed above and hundreds more can be found on London Food Link's local food finder at www.londonfoodlink.org

Tom Beeston heads a project working to increase South East produce sold into the capital, funded by Covent Garden Market Authority and the South East Food Group Partnership. Previously he ran an organic food shop in West London selling mainly local produce. T 07957 357 201

Hazeldene Farm

Diary

December

- **17th** LFL's small grants scheme for sustainable food events launched.
- **20th-23rd** Slow Food Event Christmas Market. 11am to 8pm daily. Located at the Royal Festival Hall in front of Canteen. Contact: skamoore33@yahoo.co.uk, www.slowfoodlondon.com. (p3)

January

- **16th** Food and Climate Change: Food production, distribution and consumption and climate change, Cecil Sharpe House, 2 Regents Park Road, Camden, London NW1 7AY. Contact: Peter Lang peterlang@resurgence.org or 020 8809 2391, www.resurgence.org.
- **Late Jan Date TBC** English wine tasting at Konstam at the Prince Albert (www.konstam.co.uk) - contact Charlotte for further details on 020 7837 1228 or charlotte@sustainweb.org.
- **Late Jan** First in a series of three workshops to support London's catering and hospitality businesses to serve healthy and sustainable food to the capital's visitors and residents. Contact: charlie@sustainweb.org (p4)

February

- **6th** New Covent Garden Market Open Day. Tours and Meet-the-Supplier and Share-to-Supply Conference 7am- 4pm. Contact: Events@SouthEastFoodAndDrink.co.uk or 023 9245 2288.
- **13th** London Food Link Network Big Winter Network Do. 4.30 - 7pm Location: Duke of Cambridge Organic Pub, 30 St Peters Street, Islington, London N1 8JT. Contact: vanessa@sustainweb.org (p4)
- **14-16th** Food from Britain supports regional food - Taste of the West. Location: Borough Market, London. www.foodfrombritain.com
- **Late Feb** Second in a series of three workshops to support London's catering and hospitality businesses to serve healthy and sustainable food to the capital's visitors and residents. Contact: 020 7837 1228 or charlie@sustainweb.org (p4)

March

- **Early March** Third in a series of three workshops to support London's catering and hospitality businesses to serve healthy and sustainable food to the capital's visitors and residents. Contact: 020 7837 1228 or charlie@sustainweb.org (p4)
- **3rd** Deadline for LFL small grants applications (p4)
- **6-8th** Food from Britain supports regional food - Heart of England Fine Foods. Location: Borough Market, London.
- **13-15th** Food from Britain supports regional food - Southeast Food Partnership. Location: Borough Market, London.
- **14th** Announcement of first round of small grants for food events (p4)

For more events, see Sustain's food calendar at www.sustainweb.org/foodcalendar/

Join London Food Link Now!

The benefits of membership of London Food Link include:

- One day's free advice on using sustainable food/suppliers (normally £350 a day), and a discounted rate thereafter if more advice is needed.
- Contact with and support from other members, with a wide range of expertise, through our twice yearly network meetings.
- Influence on London's policy making processes, through LFL's extensive contacts and policy development experience.
- Membership of LFL sub-groups e.g. the London Food Access Forum, to discuss and devise solutions to food access problems.
- 50% off hard copies of London Food Link publications, and a free copy of the Bread Street report (normally £10).
- Discounted rates on London Food Link events.

To join London Food Link download a membership form from the website or contact vanessa@sustainweb.org

London Food Link members and supporters include:

Primary Care Trusts, London boroughs, business associations, retailers, farmers, environment and community groups, food access partnerships, allotment groups and food writers. Our work is guided by a working party of key London-wide agencies and groups representing food issues from farm to fork.



London Food Link runs a network of organisations and individuals who care about sustainable food. Our members are as diverse as farmers and food writers, caterers and community food projects. Both London Food Link and its members work towards:

- increasing the availability of sustainable food in London
- tackling the barriers preventing access to healthy and sustainable food for all Londoners
- protecting and celebrating London's diverse food culture

London Food Link welcomes to its network all that share these aims.

Zeenat Anjari

Multicultural businesses and communities
zeenat@sustainweb.org

Rosie Blackburn

Good Food on the Public Plate
rosie@sustainweb.org

Pamela Brunton

Good food training for London
pamela@sustainweb.org

Vanessa Domenzain

London Food Link network & membership
vanessa@sustainweb.org

Charlotte Jarman

Sustainable restaurants and retail
charlotte@sustainweb.org

Ben Reynolds

London Food Link network, policy and restaurants
ben@sustainweb.org

Charlie Willmore

London food events coordinator
charlie@sustainweb.org

London Food Link is part of Sustain: The alliance for better food and farming

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