



Making Local Food Work **Newsletter**

Helping people to take ownership of their food and where it comes from



Measuring the impact of community food

National drive launched to measure the real social and economic impact of community food enterprises in the UK

Making Local Food Work has launched a national drive in an attempt to measure the real social and economic impact of community food enterprises in the UK. The research project aims to address the current problem that exists throughout the entire third sector of measuring the true impact of social enterprises.



The impact of social enterprises is notoriously hard to measure, given that their objectives are primarily social rather than profit driven. However, this does not mean that they don't have a real impact on both national and local economies.

Community food enterprises make up a significant portion of the social enterprise sector, with over 1,000 of them in England alone being supported by Making Local Food Work. As part of the new drive to measure the impact in a scientific way, Making Local Food Work is asking community food enterprises to share their experiences with The Guild, a specialist enterprise consultancy based in Norfolk, and Middlesex University, part of the Third Sector Research Centre.

Jennifer Smith, Head of Programme Management for Making Local Food Work, said: "Not only are community food enterprises an important part of the social enterprise sector, they also make a significant contribution to the UK food industry as a whole, with more and more people turning to farmers' markets, community shops and other enterprises as a real alternative to profit-driven supermarkets that currently dominate the food industry.

"Community food enterprises give consumers good, honest food with clear traceable origins, ensuring the highest quality produce at a fair price to the producer. As the community food sector becomes an increasingly popular alternative to the 'Big Four' supermarkets, it's become more important for us to show exactly what impact the sector has both on society and the economy."

If you are a community food enterprise and would like to take part in this research, register your interest via the following link:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/CommunityFoodEnterpriseContacts>

Welcome to the May issue of our newsletter!

As you may have noticed, there has been a slight gap between newsletters this quarter – a testament to how busy the quarter has proved to be!

Our Rooting community food in an enterprising future conference took place in Sheffield this month, with a fantastic turnout – over 180 people joined us to celebrate the sterling work going on across the country, and to add their voices to the lively debate of how we continue to ensure local food and community food enterprises enjoy a sustainable future.

With barely a year left to go on the project, we've seen an increase in activity from all the various projects involved in Making Local Food Work, and we've been researching how best to measure and communicate the impact that community food projects have.

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Join us at Jamie Oliver's Big Festival!

The Making Local Food Work team from the Plunkett Foundation will be exhibiting at the food and music event of the year, The Big Festival, in London at the beginning of July.

Brainchild of Jamie Oliver, The Big Festival brings together one of the most exciting line-ups of the summer with celebrity chefs, restaurants and food producers from across the country. With a focus on family, food and fun, the Big Festival is a must-see for everyone!



We'll be manning a very special stand across the three-day festival, which takes place on Clapham Common in London 1-3 July 2011. For more details about the festival, visit their website at <http://www.jamieoliver.com/thebigfeastival/>

Community Supported Bakery celebrates grand opening of new premises



Award-winning co-operative the Handmade Bakery is preparing to celebrate the official opening of its brand new bakery, café and training school, which takes place on 23 July.

The Handmade Bakery in Slaithwaite, West Yorkshire, uses an innovative variation of the CSA subscription model – Community Supported Baking. All of its breads are handcrafted and produced on the premises using traditional baking techniques. The grand opening will be the culmination of a journey of two and a half years, which began as a home kitchen and progressed via an Italian restaurant and a successful collaboration with community-owned shop Green Valley Grocer.

To find out more about this fantastic initiative, visit their website at <http://www.thehandmadebakery.coop/> or come along to the grand opening! Book your place via Charlotte Muspratt at CMuspratt@soilassociation.org.

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Rooting community food in an enterprising future proves a great success!

Making Local Food Work would like to thank everyone who helped to make Rooting community food in an enterprising future a great success! The conference drew together a wide range of speakers, from high profile experts and academics to those actually involved on the ground in community food enterprise to share their knowledge and experience with delegates from across the food and social enterprise sector. The day was a resounding success with 180 delegates attending for a day of inspiring workshops, debate and, of course, a fantastic lunch of locally-produced food!

Presentations from all the day's speakers can be found on our website at <http://www.makinglocalfoodwork.co.uk/news/conferences.cfm>. A big thank you also goes to the Country Markets Indirect Sales producers who provided delegates with a pot of local, homemade preserve.

Two MLFW supported projects shortlisted for Co-operative Excellence Awards

The finalists for this year's Co-operative Excellence Awards, sponsored by KPMG, have been announced and include two projects to have received support from Making Local Food Work.



Hudswell Community Pub Ltd. has been nominated for the Member Engagement Award, and The People's Supermarket has been named as a finalist for Best New Co-operative Enterprise.

Now in its third year, the Co-operative Excellence Awards recognize excellence, innovation and ethics of businesses and individuals across the diverse Co-operative Movement, helping to showcase the sector and give inspiration to others.

Hudswell Community Pub Ltd. – which opened the first Co-operative Pub in Yorkshire and the third in the country – received support from the Look for Local Food strand of Making Local Food Work when they opened their community-owned shop. The shop – possibly the smallest community-owned shop in the country – is attached to the community's pub, which was the first co-operative pub in Yorkshire.

The People's Supermarket – a London community food enterprise – was supported by the Specialist Enterprise Support strand, with specialist business advisers providing advice on business planning. It has also recently won the Observer's Local Retailer of the Year award – find out all about them in this great video: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/video/2011/jun/09/winner-local-retailer-2011>.

The winners will be announced at the Awards Dinner on Saturday 25 June at Co-operative Congress 2011 - the national networking event for everyone interested in co-operatives and co-operation - which takes place from 24-26 June at the Hilton Birmingham Metropole.

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Groundbreaking project maps local food's contribution to economy and communities

The Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) has published six location reports showing the scale and impact of local food webs in towns and cities across England. These reports, published as part of Making Local Food Work, are the first part of extensive research into how local food shapes and benefits local communities, economies and the countryside.

The results show that local food webs can deliver a wide range of important social, economic and environmental benefits. The six reports from pilot locations published today are: Birstall, Hastings, Kenilworth, Knutsford, Sheffield and Totnes.



Graeme Willis, Senior Local Food Campaigner at CPRE, says: "The new Field to Fork reports are the first findings from research into food webs across England. Before now these intricate networks have been below the radar of most decision makers. As a result there has been very little policy locally or nationally that supports local food.

"The research shows that food webs can deliver a wide range of benefits for communities and their livelihoods, the places where they live and nearby countryside. These include better access to fresh food, supporting local businesses, and adding diversity and character to towns and rural areas. Local food webs play a valuable role by connecting people, through shops and markets, to their wider community and to the surrounding countryside."

Country Markets welcomes new Business Support Advisers

Country Markets' Indirect Sales team has welcomed new Business Support Advisers to expand its team to 17. The new larger team will help to expand the support available to producers who are interested in selling their delicious food products in retail outlets into new areas of the country. They will be taking in samples, supporting existing outlets supplied, and promoting Country Markets to local communities and retail outlets.

The new team was trained earlier this month, with the help of some of the existing team, and is already very active out in the field. Find out more about the work of the Country Markets Indirect Sales team by visiting <http://www.cooksofcountrymarkets.co.uk>.

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Case Study: Hampers and gift wrapping

Local Food Adviser Charlotte Foster reports back from a unique hamper and gift wrapping workshop in Yorkshire

On Monday 21st March a group of local shop keepers in North Yorkshire met up in the beautiful village of Linton in Craven to take part in a special retail training workshop at Grange Farm.



Luckily the weather was fine and the venue couldn't have been more ideal – Linton Laithe Barn not only offers luxury bed and breakfast but it also has a useful meeting room and is situated on a working Dales farm. So, as well as enjoying a lunch of local food, we took in the wonderful rustic surroundings and gazed upon fields full of new born lambs.

This training event was supported by Making Local Food Work and is part of the Look for Local scheme which aims to help community-run and traditional independent shops to stock and sell more locally produced food.

The workshop was facilitated by Arona Khan www.aronakhan.com who is an international gift wrapping expert and the cost of the training was subsidised by www.thewbc.co.uk – each participant received a goody bag with a DVD, and they also brought enough local produce with them to make up three individual hampers.

The main aim of the workshop was to show the retailers quick and easy ways to wrap presents, make beautiful bows and create gift baskets & hampers. As well as handy and practical tips, Arona also explained how to create the 'wow factor' with produce and gifts which really helps to drive sales all year round.

On reading through the evaluation forms, the positive comments confirm that everyone had a very enjoyable day; we all felt inspired and learned a great deal – it's a question of putting that into practice now!



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Resources

Revised guide for community food enterprises: Business Planning Unwrapped

A revised guide for community food enterprises is now available in the social enterprise toolkit on the Making Local Food Work website.

The guide, Business Planning Unwrapped, has been updated as part of the Specialist Enterprise Support strand and makes up a comprehensive toolkit aimed at equipping community food enterprises with the skills they need to become successful and viable businesses. The toolkit can be found at <https://www.makinglocalfoodwork.co.uk/about/toolbox/Toolbox.cfm>.



Sustainability and UK food policy: new report

The Sustainable Development Commission has published a report into the growth of the UK food policy between 2000 and 2011.

Looking back, looking forward: sustainability and UK food policy 2000 – 2011 spans the lifetime of the Sustainable Development Commission and assesses the current state of thinking in relation to the challenges ahead. The report can be downloaded from http://www.sd-commission.org.uk/publications/downloads/FoodPolicy10_Report_final_w.pdf.



Find local food online

A new website has been launched that helps consumers find local food outlets, from farmers' markets and shops to which supermarkets stock local food.

The site, <http://www.wanttobuybritish.co.uk/home>, is part of the larger Love British Food website, which celebrates British food and provides ideas and inspiration for celebrating British Food Fortnight, which will take place 17 September – 2 October 2011. Find out more about celebrating the fortnight at <http://www.lovebritishfood.co.uk/>.



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Training and Events

Food Co-ops networking and training event

Thursday 16 June, 9:30 – 16:00, Southampton

This event is ideal for food projects at various stages – whether you are just starting, or have been going for a while. Useful for CSAs and community growing projects, community shops as well as food co-ops! Be inspired by what other projects are doing, and learn tips from experts. Workshop sessions will cover a range of topics, from the basics of what food co-ops are and how to get started to governance and legal structures and marketing your project.

This is a free event but spaces are limited so booking is essential – find out more at

<https://www.makinglocalfoodwork.co.uk/about/publicevent.cfm/publiceventid/42>.

Community food and social housing - event from the Fresh Ideas Network

Wednesday 22 June, 9:30 – 15:00, Brighton

Fresh Ideas Network is hosting an event aimed at showcasing and sharing ideas from organisations and projects currently involved in integrating sustainable food projects into social housing environments.

Thriving Communities: Building Communities and Sustainable Food Projects will take place on Wednesday 22 June at the Lighthouse Conference and Media Centre in Brighton, East Sussex (<http://www.lighthouse.org.uk>), from 9:30am to 3pm. Organisations and companies: £60, Community Food Projects and Volunteers: Free. To register for a delegate place, visit:

<http://www.eventbrite.com/event/1117204589>.

Good Food, Good Governance Simply Legal training workshop

Wednesday 22 June, 10:00 – 16:00, Birmingham / Wednesday 13 July, 10:00 – 16:00, Sheffield

The training workshops are suitable for the following: those advising, working with or participating in any community enterprise or co-operative organisation. It particularly focuses on the choice of legal and organisational structure. Find out more at

<https://www.makinglocalfoodwork.co.uk/about/publicevent.cfm/publiceventid/44>.

Community Enterprise Now! An East of England Regional Conference

Thursday 30 June, Bury St Edmonds

Community Enterprise Now! is a one-day regional conference for all those with an interest in community enterprises. Find out about real community enterprises including community shops and pubs, village hall services and food initiatives, community transport and housing. Visit the market place of stands with a range of support agencies, initiatives and information. Guest speakers include Plunkett Foundation Chief Executive, Peter Couchman. Find out more about this event at <http://www.plunkett.co.uk/newsandmedia/news-item.cfm/newsid/515>.

Wider Sector News

Food and Farming Academy launched

Sparsholt College has launched the Central Southern Food and Farming Academy to boost continued learning in agriculture and the development of new skills.



Collectively, with leading employers from this sector, the College is looking to provide career opportunities for 15 and 16 year olds - who are interested in the agricultural food industry - with the focus of continuous professional development during a four-year programme.

The new initiative includes knowledge development followed by a period of apprenticeship to acquire further skills and qualifications.

The companies involved in the academy will provide apprenticeships on a 'shared-basis', enabling students to move between businesses to diversify their portfolio of skills and experience. Each of the businesses have also committed to providing ongoing employment and career development through training and other forms of CPD (Continuous Personal Development) in return for enthusiasm, commitment and effort from the selected apprentices within the academy.

The college is taking applications for places within the academy either from those who are in year 11 at school or for those who already hold qualifications or experience to start the specialist apprenticeship programme aged 18 or above. For further information go to www.sparsholt.ac.uk or telephone 01962 776 441.

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Campaigners urge public to back British food for Olympics

A campaign targeting pubs, cafes and restaurants has been launched to encourage them to use more British food during the Olympics.



The Must Be British campaign is urging the catering industry to back Britain during the 2012 Olympics by increasing the amount of British food they serve up to the additional 300,000 visitors that will pour into the country for the games. The campaign is part of hiSbe – How it Should Be – Community Interest Company, which aims to make the current food system a more transparent place so consumers can make informed decisions about how their food is produced and where it comes from.

To find out more about how you could help the campaign to back British food during the 2012 Olympics, visit <http://www.hisbe.co.uk/must-be-british>.



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Co-operatives unite in bid to bridge gap between rich and poor

An alliance of co-operative businesses and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) has launched a new petition - the first of its kind - which calls for co-operative action to narrow the gap between rich and the poor in the UK.

With the gap at its highest since records began, the petition aims to get 100,000 people calling for national debate on narrowing the gap through action to share ownership and wealth in a co-operative way.

The Plunkett Foundation joins over 25 prominent organisations in supporting the petition, including Friends of the Earth, National Union of Students, Mother's Union, Groundwork, National Council for Voluntary Organisations, the National Childbirth Trust and the Equality Trust.

The petition was launched outside the Bank of England by leading figures from the co-operative sector including Len Wardle, Chair of the Co-operative Group, Ed Mayo, Secretary General of Co-operatives UK (pictured) and representatives, young and old, from the co-operative sector and from NGOs.

The petition is being launched in the run up to Co-operatives Fortnight (25 June to 9 July 2011), the co-operative sector's national campaign. With its theme of Yours to Share. The Fortnight is supported by co-operatives across the UK – businesses that give everyday employees, customers and residents an equal say in decisions and a share in the profits.

The petition can be signed and shared at www.uk.coop/yourstoshare/petition

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The Red Tape Challenge – your chance to change regulations

The Cabinet Office's Red Tape Challenge is an opportunity for the general public to inform the government which regulations are working and which need simplifying or scrapping.

Currently under consultation is the Hospitality, Food and Drink sector, which includes regulations on food labelling and safety requirements. Both of these are particularly relevant to those in the community-owned shop and community food enterprise sectors. If there are regulations you feel need simplifying or scrapping, or ones you feel work particularly well, you can respond to the consultation directly at

<http://www.redtapechallenge.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/home/index/>.



Mary Portas to conduct independent review into state of the high street

Mary Portas has been appointed to lead an independent review into the future of the High Street, The Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister have announced.

The purpose of the review will be to identify what government, local authorities and businesses can do to promote the development of more prosperous and diverse high streets.

It will also form part of the Government's wider Growth Review which is examining how we can remove the barriers to achieve strong, sustainable and balanced growth that is more evenly shared across the country and between industries.

Prime Minister David Cameron said: "The High Street should be at the very heart of every community, bringing people together, providing essential services and creating jobs and investment; so it is vital that we do all that we can to ensure they thrive.

"That is why I am delighted that Mary Portas has agreed to take on this review and I am confident that her straight talking, no nonsense approach will help us to create vibrant and diverse town centres and bring back the bustle to our high streets."

Mary Portas said: "With town centre vacancy rates doubling over the last two years the need to take action to save our high streets has never been starker.

"I am calling on businesses, local authorities and shoppers to contribute their ideas on how we can halt this decline in its tracks and create town centres that we can all be proud of."



Open Farm Sunday a resounding success

Open Farm Sunday has been dubbed a "resounding success", with an estimated 400-plus farms opening their gates to the public on 12 June.

The LEAF-organised event saw members of the general public across the country get an insight into agriculture - many braving the rain in the process.

The final visitor count is still being done, but the hope is that last year's total of 184,000 will be topped. Farmers Weekly is holding a photograph competition on its website (<http://www.fwi.co.uk/Home/>) for those who took part in the day.