

NORTHERN ORGANIC NEWSLETTER

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May 2007

YEAR OF FOOD & FARMING

September 2007—July 2008

Patron: HRH Prince of Wales

Vision: Feeding young minds with a respect & passion for good, healthy food

Key Facts

- The Year will run from September 2007 - July 2008.
- The Year is an industry-led initiative, first proposed by Farming & Countryside Education (FACE) and supported by Defra, the DFeS, Department of Health, the Royal Agricultural Society for England and many other organisations in the food & farming industries.
- His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales has kindly agreed to act as Patron for the initiative.



The Year links to key education agendas including:

- Introduction of the recommendations of the School Meals Review, from September 2006.
- Learning Outside the Classroom Manifesto, launched 28 November 2006.
- Land-based and Environment Diploma, available September 2009.

It will contribute to the Government's Sustainable Farming & Food Strategy and the Healthy Schools Programme.

Target Audience

- Pupils and staff in all primary, special and secondary schools in England.
- The food, farming and countryside sectors.

Outcomes

The Year will help to reconnect young people with their food. It will result in:

- Improved understanding of the food chain and the role played by farming.
- Increased links between schools, farmers and food producers.
- Development of healthier lifestyles and good nutrition.
- An increased interest in careers in the food & farming industries.
- A greater appreciation of the importance of the countryside and environmental issues.

Types of Activity

The Year will encourage a wide range of local initiatives. A website will signpost opportunities and events, offer supporting resources and links to other initiatives. Projects in the Year might include:

- **School visits** to farms, food producers, retailers and the countryside
- **Learning materials for schools** - comprehensive set of new and updated materials
- **High profile urban food & farming events** including Countryside in the Park
- **Alignment of existing activities**, e.g. British Food Fortnight, Farmhouse Breakfast Week and the calendar of local, regional and national agricultural shows.
- **A wide range of exciting new activities** will be commissioned, e.g. a national Children's Food Champions competition culminating in a televised residential Food Camp with celebrity chefs, farmers and food producers
- **Broadcast media involvement** - alignment of existing content & commissioning of new content

National events will include three large 'Countryside in the Park' events, organised by Business in the Community and held in inner-city parks across England, in 2008.

For more information see the website at www.defra.gov.uk/schools/yff.htm

Northwest Organic Centre News

Northwest Organic Centre

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What we do:

The Northwest Organic Centre supports the development of organic food and farming in Cheshire, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Lancashire and Merseyside.

We are there for producers considering organic conversion, retail owners looking for new products and for consumers looking for places to buy organic produce.



Soil Association



WORKING TOGETHER FOR
englandsnorthwest

Carbon Management and Carbon Leadership event

Carbon awareness is becoming increasingly important throughout the agribusiness supply chain. With changing consumer attitudes and growing demand from buyers to make informed choices, the ability for businesses to be able to communicate their green credentials to the customer has never been more important. This event aims to provide an introduction to carbon management, methods for evaluating your carbon footprint as well as guidance on how an understanding of the various business processes and systems can be improved for both an economic, social and environmental gain.

Lancaster Environment Centre, Lancaster University

6th June 2007, 12—16.30, £20+VAT—cost includes organic lunch

For more information and to book please contact Dr Ben Herbert on 01524 510213 or email b.m.j.herbert@lancaster.ac.uk

Food North West



Food NW leads the agri food and drink sector in the region and aims to help businesses maximise their economic potential and increase productivity and output, working with all parts of the sector, including food retail and service, wholesale, distribution, food processing and agriculture.

Food Northwest builds on the previous work carried out by Northwest Food Alliance and combines the expertise of this organisation and also that of Northwest Fantastic

Food Partnership.

Food NW will have overall responsibility for the food and drink sector; coordinating the delivery of the new Northwest Food and Drink Strategy. The strategy has been developed by the food groups across the region and has a core focus which Food NW will now deliver.

There are six priority areas which are:

- productivity and skills
- healthy eating
- the benefits of environmental sustainability
- strategy for sustainable farming and food
- image of the food and drink industry.

- market development

For more information contact the Food Northwest office on 01928 511011

Cumbria Organics social

Friday 25th May, 7.30pm
The Watermill, Little Salkeld

Everyone welcome.
Shared supper. To book please ring Ana Jones and discuss what you might bring 01768 891046.
Discussion: One Planet Agriculture and Post Peak Oil.

One Planet Agriculture: Handbook for Practical Action

The Soil Association are soon to publish 'One Planet Agriculture: Handbook for Practical Action' that will bring together research, and recent results of a conference into a reference tool of practical information. To reserve a copy email sass@soilassociation.org

Auction Sale

16th May 2007 at 11am.
The Bakery, Corner of Southfield St and Netherfield Road, Nelson, Lancashire.
Modern craft bakery for sale by auction.
To receive a catalogue call 01761 414000 or email info@proauction.ltd.uk

Opportunity to run an Organic Market Garden

We are looking for dedicated organic enthusiasts to take on the running of Oakcroft Organic Market Gardens. Set in the stunning south Cheshire countryside, this four acre plot and forty-five year old business is currently available for lease. The gardens have been Organic since February 1962 and they occupy a plot of land comprising of 4 acres, approximately 2.5 acres of which makes the organic market garden. The remainder is made up of woodland, the house and its garden. The whole area holds the Soil Association symbol.

In addition to the market garden component, the lease includes a large self-contained flat, above a house. We estimate the cost for the lease, if it were to include the flat, to be approximately £7200 per year. The suc-

cessful applicant would spend an initial trial period at Oakcroft, rent free. After this period, we can mutually agree whether or not to continue with the lease.

If you are interested in this opportunity, and would like to discuss it further, please tell us:

* Your name, address, and telephone number

* Something about yourself

* How you would like to develop Oakcroft as a productive market garden

You can email us at: info@oacroft.org.uk or write to us at Oakcroft Gardens Cross O' th' Hill Malpas Cheshire SY14 8DH

For more information visit

www.oacroft.org.uk



North West Organic Milk Producers Update

Now that winter has passed and everything is starting to look a little less barren, it's time for us all to do a bit of spring-cleaning, and plan for the summer ahead.

The NWOMP AGM was held on Thursday May 3 at 12pm in the Rural Business Centre at Myerscough College. At the meeting we welcomed Brian Lindsay, Head of Farm Man-

agement at the Milk Development Council, who talked to members about organic dairy production costs, and the importance of benchmarking, an initiative that the MDC are currently undertaking.

We are looking forward to this summer's consumer shows, where we hope to build on the success we enjoyed last year, in association with NWOC and

Cumbria Organics. We will be attending all three Food Lovers Festivals, in Cumbria (June 16 & 17), Lancashire (August 11 & 12) and Cheshire (October 27 & 28). The 2006 shows proved to be an invaluable tool in taking the organic milk message to the public, and this year our stand will be bigger and better – a perfect example of how working together can be of benefit to us all.

For more information about North West Organic Milk Producers, or the consumer shows, please contact Sarah Milne on 07930 433 764, or email sarah@nwomp.com.

It's Showtime

The Northwest Organic Centre has a busy show season planned.

Please come and visit us at the following shows and events and say hello. If you are willing to donate raffle prizes in the form of organic produce or a voucher, please let us know – we would be delighted to hear from you.

- Northwest Food Lovers Festival – Westmorland Show Ground, Kendal – June 16th & 17th
- Northwest Food Lovers Festival – Stonyhurst College, Clitheroe – August 11th and 12th
- Wirral Food and Drink Festival – Claremont Farm, Wirral - August 26th and 27th
- Northwest Food Lovers Festival – Tatton Park, Cheshire – October 27th and 28th

Organic Growing Course

An organic vegetable growing course will run for 8 weeks, starting Monday 14th May at Fir Tree Farm Shop, Kings Moss WA11 8RD from 7 until 8.30pm. The cost is £49.

This will be a practical hands on course covering soil fertility, composting, green manuring, rotations, weeds, pests and diseases, crop care and year round veg. This will be led by Jenny Hall, an experienced gardening tutor at Sow and Grow Organics market garden. Suitable for both beginners and seasoned growers.

Each session will involve classroom training at Fir Tree Seasons Cafe, along with practicals out in the market garden (same location)

Bookings have to be in advance on 07855 392037

Old Holly Farm—conversion story update

We were relieved when the weather warmed up and the fields started to green up. We weren't sure if it was the weather or "cold turkey" from the absence of artificial fertilisers, but things look a lot healthier now especially the red clover reseeds. All cereals are now drilled into rapidly drying seed-beds. A big thank-you to nephew and niece, Jack and Lucy, for helping with the unglamorous job of dock picking. It was a little worrying at how many they picked.

Restoration of the old stone buildings into a farm shop/ cafe and classroom is now in full swing. It is very satisfying to see the buildings looking cared for once again. We have employed Rosemary Surtees to help us with the project. There is so much to sort out when doing a project like this that Rosemary is almost full time already.

We are really excited about the whole project and what benefits it will have for the farm. Having the general public come onto the farm and see how food is produced will be rewarding but I also think that they, rather than the CAP, will be the ones who shape the future direction of our farm. A great opportunity for both parties.

David Pye, Old Holly Farm, Cabus, Lancashire

Growing Your Own Feed Workshops

At Cumbria Organics AGM this year the speaker Richard Jacobs of Organic Farmers and Growers and members discussed their concerns about the shortage of organic feed. A number of people said that they were keen to learn more about growing crops on farms where it had been uneconomic to grow cereals or other feed crops for decades. Jim Hadwin of Mansergh Hall near Kirkby

Lonsdale invited the group to visit on 16th March to see lambs finishing on forage brassicas, before the field is re-seeded, oversown with wholecrop.

Andrew Best from Watson's Seeds and Gillian Butler, independent nutritionist, provided technical input and the 17 farmers who attended shared their experience in growing and feeding brassicas and

wholecrop. Some of these and others in the Cumbria Organics group have offered to host more of these short but participative events on farms in Cumbria and N Lancashire.

Firm dates have not been arranged yet, but if you are keen to know more about what was discussed at Mansergh or to know about the follow-up ones please contact Kate Gascoyne on 01768 891444 or Lucinda at the NWOC office on 01995 642206.

Everyone is welcome and if you have suggestions or are willing to host similar events in neighbouring counties, please get in touch.

Farmer fact sheets empower industry to deal with climate change

New fact sheets aimed at empowering farmers to manage the challenges and opportunities of climate change have been launched by a partnership between Forum for the Future, the NFU, CLA and Applied Research Forum. For more information visit www.farmingfutures.org.uk

Best local food farmer – Farmers Weekly Awards

Farmers Weekly magazine is looking for entrants for the Best Local Food Farmer category of its annual awards. The title will be awarded to the farmer or farm manager who the judges feel best epitomises the virtues of locally produced food to customers or markets within a 50mile radius. The winning farmer must demonstrate his, or her, achievements in identifying and exploiting the local opportunity as well as the impact it has made to their business. The closing date for entries is 21st May 2007. Entry forms can be downloaded from www.farmersweeklyawards.co.uk

Transition Farming Webpages

Transition Farming web pages are up and running with information and case studies on reducing energy use, water use and waste and producing energy on farm.

www.soilassociation.org/transitionfarming

Food For Life Project Update

Spotlight on Sharron Rourke: *The Food for Life Partnership's Northern Manager*

The Food for Life Partnership is pleased to welcome Sharron Rourke as our Northern Manager. Over the past eight years Sharron has been involved in developing food projects in communities, schools and hospitals in many parts of the UK and will be a fantastic asset to the Soil Association team. She also has experience creating sustainable links to local farmers and helping to establish improved communication networks for all involved.

Sharron has a health background and is a leading figure in successful food access projects across the UK working at both grass roots and government level to develop and implement food, health education and agricultural initiatives linking urban and rural communities. Epitomising the 'can do' approach to all situations, Sharron takes particular pride in 'helping communities to help themselves'. This attitude earned her the prestigious Caroline Walker Trust Award, a national award which recognises best practice in promoting public health by improving diets in needy communities.

Sharron's work on Food for Life will centre around Flagship Schools & Communities as she will be working closely with the regional coordinators for the North East and Yorkshire & Humber, while also coordinating efforts in her home region of the North West.

If you'd like to get in touch with Sharron, you can email her at srourke@soilassociation.org or for general info about Food for Life, contact Neko Griffin on 0117 314 5180 or email ngriffin@soilassociation.org.

Food Northwest Awards 2007—*Enterprise in the Northwest*

The region has a dynamic Food and Drink Industry and this year's awards will focus on 'Enterprise in the Northwest' and highlight the achievements and innovations of companies excelling in the region.

Categories are grouped under 'Enterprise and Innovation', 'Environments for Sustainability' and 'Dynamic Northwest'. Businesses are welcome to enter more than one category.

For more information visit the Food Northwest website www.foodnw.co.uk

Closing date 21st May 2007. The awards will be presented at the Gala Awards dinner in June.

Organic Fortnight, nationwide, 1-16 September

Organic Fortnight is the pinnacle in every organic businesses' diary as it is the time of the year for everyone to celebrate all things organic, across the food, beauty and textile market. This year the main theme is 'Wake up to an Organic Breakfast'. If you are not producing organic breakfast items don't despair, the aim of this theme is to make people think about how and why they should start buying or increasing their organic shopping habits.

Please let us know about your Organic Fortnight events as early as possible so that we can promote them to the consumers on our mailing list and via the Organic North magazine.

For more information on how to get involved please visit www.soilassociation.org/organicfortnight

NATIONAL ORGANIC BEEF CONFERENCE

On the 20th March 2007 the Soil Association held a British Organic Beef Conference with the emphasis on: success and stability in a changing world.

Taken from notes prepared by Helen Whyte, Northern Manager:

The conference focused on the RMIF UK Organic Beef Report published this year, presented by Bob Bansbeck, Director, Red Meat Industry Forum. The purpose of the report was to stimulate debate, through identifying opportunities, exposing constraints and encouraging action. An outline of the findings were:

The UK consumes some 13,000 tonnes of Organic Beef, 2.5 times more than 2 years ago. In 2006 59% of this was home produced (UK) with the remaining 45% being imported. The forecast for future production required based on estimated growth in the market, per head of stock, is most likely to be around 15,000 to 20,000. Although if the UK were to supply 100% of total consumption required in 2010, 36,000 head of cattle is the maximum potential required.

The UK Organic Beef report also looked at what motivates people to buy organic food - an important issue to understand in the developing organic beef market. Using results from TNS lifestyle questionnaires, the figures represent the proportion of consumers answering 'yes' to specific questions:

Common reasons for eating organic were:

- 42% believe organic foods are better for the environment
- 36% believe organic is healthier
- 20% believe organic food tastes better.

When looking into the details of the cuts of beef sold within the multiples, those that perform well are the mincing and stewing, and enjoy the largest premiums when compared with standard and premium equivalents. The organic steak and roasting cuts don't perform as well and are often discounted against the premium products. There are additional issues for consideration around more expensive cuts, where good eating quality becomes an issue/expectation for a 'more wealthy' shopper. There is scope therefore for emphasising the key messages more, addressing the variation in demand for cuts and the price premium variability.

Production issues that were discussed over the day were:

- The shortage of UK supply, with imports already accounting for over 40% of the market and growing.
- The fragmented nature of the supply chain surrounding the organic sector
- The need for a more co-ordinated approach to trading stores and finished cattle.
- The need to develop more understanding of the costs of production and the potential savings that could be made
- The majority of organic cattle being finished for beef are from the suckler herd, and the great deal of leakages from the organic dairy herds.

Comments from the floor:

- The grading for carcasses does not reflect eating quality. Carcass grading on the EUROPE scale does not reflect the tenderness or what the animal was fed in the last 90 days etc.
- Eblex and Southern Counties' Somerset have been working on ways of measuring and predicting eating quality and hope in the next 6 months to be able to predict and measure the eating quality of stock they handle.
- Research from Edinburgh University on meat eating quality indicated that pre-slaughter stress on stock can effect the meat eating quality. This needs addressing with regard to the long distances that organic stock travel to approved processors for the supermarket trade.

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NATIONAL ORGANIC BEEF CONFERENCE

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- The UK governments 'Gold Plating' of EU Standards has put a stop to local abattoirs. The priority should be to slaughter locally and transport the carcass.
- ABS+Genus+Tesco launched a breeding development plan in the Autumn of 2006 to support the development of breeds for specific markets.

The rest of the conference focused in on marketing, routes to profitability and how we can make better use of resources – such as dairy bred calves and store cattle.

Huw Bowles from OMSCo discussed the options for beef from the dairy herd. Beef cross calf, black and white calf and cull cows, all currently represent leakage out of the organic supply chain and reduce the potential return to the organic dairy producer.

Many of OMSCo's members feel that it is uneconomical even to rear a dairy cross calf. Suggested costs for rearing a 12 week old calf ranged from £250 -£400 per animal .

Also TB restrictions in some areas present further complications to the options of rearing and selling organic calves.

Costings and Grading: - From the processor's perspective the grading system makes the price critical- the grading is the margin for the processors. From the retailer's perspective good quality consistent meat is what is critical, the grade is not an issue.

Consideration needs to be given to the organic standards for finishing Friesian cross animals as they require more concentrate to finish quickly at a lighter weight.

Rose veal opportunity

There is an urgent need to address what is happening to the male dairy calves in organic systems. We need to encourage people to be more ethical about their calves. Killing the calf at birth or not caring about where the calf is going, or whether it will end up in the export market is an appalling situation for the organic sector to be involved in.

There are only 4 or 5 businesses in the UK producing organic rose veal, e.g. Helen Browning Organics, Eastbrook Farm and Daylesford. The rose veal market is very small (250 animals per year), although there is room to increase. Carcass imbalance can be an issue, but clever marketing could overcome this. Organic 'veal' is based on 6 month old calves suckling and fed on forage based diets.

Comments from the floor:

In order to keep dairy cross and pure bred calves we need to see economically viable and sustainable solutions - why produce and lose money?

We need to develop linkages with rearing units- don't think that you have to do everything yourself if the economics don't stake up on your farm.



Converting to Arable Production Event

Held at Rushbrooke Farms, Bury St Edmunds – the event was for those that were looking at organic arable conversion.

Mr John Pawsey, Lavenham Lodge Farm, provided a presentation with his on farm costings, based on his experience of his own conventional and organic enterprises. The farm consists of 2430 acres (with 742 acres under farm management contracts). The farm started conversion to organic production in phases - the first 350 acres went into conversion in 1999, followed by a further 500 acres and 200 acres of the FMC in Autumn 2006. The remainder of the land is to be converted in the Autumn of this year.

He has two full time and one part time members of staff and the land is Hanslop series chalky boulder clay.

Mr John Pawsey provided a detailed gross margin looking at the variance between conventional and organic crop production, at a high and low market price for the crops, based on the conversion of 1000 acres.

<u>First winter wheat</u>			<u>Clover (Spring)</u>					
		£/ac			£/ac			
Discordon	1	18.11	Plough	1	21.41			
Spray(Dessicate)	1	1.9	Roll	1	2.3			
Cultidrill	1	12.87	Cultivate	1	6.05			
Roll	1	2.3	Cultidrill	1	10.24			
Spray (Aut)	2	1.9	Roll	1	2.3			
Spread (Spr)	3	4.39						
Spray (Spr)	4	1.9						
Combine/Cart	1	29.08						
		<u>72.45</u>						
			<u>Vetches (Autumn)</u>					
<u>Oilseed Rape</u>			Plough	1	21.41			
Discordon	1	18.11	Roll	1	2.3			
Cultipress	1	10.23	Cultipress	1	10.23			
Roll	1	2.3	Cultidrill	1	10.24			
Spray (Dessicate)	1	1.9	Roll	1	2.3			
Cultidrill	1	10.24						
Roll	1	2.3						
Spray (Aut)	1	1.9	<u>Winter Cereal</u>					
Spread (Aut)	1	4.39	Plough	1	21.41			
Spread (Spr)	3	4.39	Roll	1	2.3			
Spray (Spr)	4	1.9	Cultipress	1	10.23			
Combine/Cart	1	29.08	Cultidrill	1	10.24			
		<u>86.74</u>	Roll	1	2.3			
			Combine	1	29.08			
					<u>75.56</u>			
<u>Second Winter Wheat</u>			<u>Spring Cereal</u>					
Plough	1	21.41	Plough	1	21.41			
Cultipress	1	10.23	Cultivate	1	6.05			
Cultidrill	1	10.24	Harrow	1	3.18			
Roll	1	2.3	Cultidrill	1	10.24			
Spray (Aut)	1	1.9	Roll	1	2.3			
Spread (Spr)	3	4.39	Cobine/Cat	1	29.08			
Spray (Spr)	4	1.9						
Cobine/Cart	1	29.08						
		<u>81.45</u>						
			<u>Winter Beans</u>					
<u>Spring Barley</u>			Plough	1	21.41			
Plough	1	21.41	Cultipress	1	10.23			
Cultivate	1	6.05	Cultidrill	1	10.24			
Spray (Dessicate)	1	1.9	Combine/C	1	29.08			
Cultidrill	1	10.24						
Roll	1	2.3						
Spray (Spr)	3	1.9						
Spread (Spr)	2	4.39						
Combine/Cart	1	29.08						
		<u>77.27</u>						

<u>Organic Rotational Averages</u>	
Output	316,682.61
Variable Costs	63,887.69
GROSS MARGIN	252,794.91
Operation Costs	55,354.17
Net Margin	197,440.75
Net Margin/Ac	197.44
<u>Conventional Rotational Average</u>	
Output	371,358.54
Variable Costs	99,750.43
GROSS MARGIN	271,608.11
Operation Costs	79,824.60
Net Margin	191,783.51
Net Margin/Ac	191.78

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Converting to Arable Production Event

Continued from previous page

At High Prices

Conventional	
Wheat @	£100/t
Rape @	£180/t
Industrial @	£175/t
Malt.Barley @	£100/t

Organic/In conversion	
Wheat @	£200/t
Beans @	£200/t
Fully Organic	
Wheat @	£240/t
Beans @	£220/t

Conventional Rotational Averages

Output	410,436.17
Variable costs	99,750.43
GROSS MARGIN	310,685.74
Operation Costs	79,824.60
NET MARGIN	230,861.14
Net Margin/Ac	230.86

Organic Rotational Averages

Output	387,867.42
Variable Costs	63,887.69
GROSS MARGIN	323,979.73
Operation Costs	55,354.17
NET MARGIN	268,625.56
Net Margin/Ac	268.63

At Low Prices

Conventional	
Wheat @	£65/t
Rape @	£150/t
Industrial @	£145/t
Malt.Barley @	£75/t

Organic/In conversion	
Wheat @	£135/t
Beans @	£135/t
Fully Organic	
Wheat @	£145/t
Beans @	£145/t

Conventional Rotational Averages

Output	313,496.11
Variable costs	99,750.43
GROSS MARGIN	213,745.68
Operation Costs	79,824.60
NET MARGIN	133,921.08
Net Margin/Ac	133.92

Organic Rotational Averages

Output	288,992.33
Variable Costs	63,887.69
GROSS MARGIN	225,104.63
Operation Costs	55,354.17
NET MARGIN	169,750.47
Net Margin/Ac	169.75

In Summary: Know your market, Build/conserve soil fertility, Maintain good soil structure, Build organic matter at every opportunity, Nip potential weed problems in the bud, Talk to as many people as possible, Try to add value. For a full copy of the presentation contact NEOP office on 0845 122 7645.

Hurrells

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Beverley Road, Cranswick, Driffield

COASTAL GRAINS LTD

Coastal Grains Ltd have handled organic produce from members for a number of years now, and this year we shall have at least 16 members producing organic and in conversion grain and pulses. These members are farming from County Durham to the Borders and are finding that marketing as a group is beneficial in finding their best markets.

Coastal Grains Ltd is a farmers' cooperative which was formed in 1982. It is run by farmers, for the benefit of farmers and has established itself as the biggest grain cooperative in Northumberland. It has done this by listening to its members and adapting to their needs in an ever changing economic climate. Last year we bought the store next door to us in order to

cater for the increasing numbers of members who were converting to organic combinable crop production. This is now our dedicated Organic Store which is accredited by The Organic Farmers and Growers.

Last harvest we took in and marketed 2000 tonnes of organic and in conversion produce. In 2007 we expect to be marketing 3000 tonnes and in the following years in excess of 5000 tonnes produced by the present members. In order to market this properly we speak to processors and users of all types of products so that we can send them the product that they want. We also have laboratory facilities for testing of the grains, so that we know the quality before it is sent out to them.

In this way the grain is segregated into quality batches and the grower is credited with the quality that they produce. At the new store we have enough storage to separate all the grain that we have from our organic growers, in that the store is capable of storing 12,000 tonnes in batches from 50 tonnes to 2000 tonnes. We have therefore complete flexibility and infrastructure of driers and dressers to cope with all our members' requirements.

To become a member of Coastal Grains Ltd please either telephone Terence Pardoe on 01668 213568 or write to Coastal Grains Ltd., Station Road, Belford, Northumberland NE70 7DT.

Dairy Plant Closure

Dairy Farmers of Britain announce intention to cease manufacturing at Whitby Dairy News Release – Monday April 23, 2007

Dairy Farmers of Britain (DFB) has today announced its intention to cease manufacturing at its Whitby Dairy in Yorkshire.

The dairy was bought by DFB as part of the acquisition of Associated Cooperative Creameries (ACC) from the Co-operative Group in August 2004. Despite considerable activity to improve performance at the site, including the rationalisation of yoghurt production in 2005, the dairy continues to be loss making and DFB has made this difficult decision in the best interests of the wider DFB business and its farmer members. The site is anticipated to close later in the summer, with the loss of around 95 jobs. DFB will be working closely with local employment agencies to offer other employment opportunities both within DFB and the local community.

Andrew Cooksey, Chief Executive said: "This regrettable move follows a full review of the site's business performance and it has become clear that it is not feasible to continue dairy production at Whitby. We have taken this difficult decision after having carefully assessed all other possible options and this decision is in no way a reflection on our colleagues at Whitby. DFB is committed to managing the closure process professionally and we will be making every effort to minimise disruption to any customers or suppliers directly or indirectly affected by the closure."

Production of UHT milk and Cottage Cheese will cease and production of liquid milk and cream will transfer to other DFB sites.

Following on from this press release, we spoke to Philip Gibson, Head of Corporate Affairs at DFB, who explained that the organic milk that was processed at their Whitby plant, will now be processed at Nene Valley Foods, Fengate, Peterborough. This is due to the plant having an existing organic processing licence.

He explained that this change would not affect current Dairy Farmers of Britain members, and contracts, collection, and processing would continue as normal.

**Alex Haywood
NE Organic Programme**

EVENTS

Northumbria Organic Producer Group AGM

Monday 14th May 2007. Starts 6.45pm for members, 7.15pm for non-members

Tynedale Function Suite, Hexham Auction Mart, Tyne Green, Hexham, Northumberland NE46 3SG

The speakers for the evening are John Hamilton, Chairman of SOPA, Tim Finney Managing Director of Helen Browning Organics, Eastbrook Farm and Scott Donaldson of Hexham and Northern Marts. This event is an excellent opportunity for those within the producer group to catch up, but also for who that are thinking about conversion, to meet others within the organic sector. With some excellent speakers and a delicious supper, why not come along. Please contact NEOP 0845 122 7645.

Entry Level Stewardship Farm Walk

Wednesday 16th May 10:30am -12:45pm

Entry Level Stewardship - Managing your options. Liddell Hall Farm, Hexham Tel: 01954 268301, www.adas.co.uk

Beef Expo 2007

Thursday 17th May 2007 Skipton Auction Mart

Courtesy of the Craven Cattle Marts Group. This annual event, organised by the National Beef Association and held at a different venue each year, is now firmly established as the major technical event for the UK beef industry and attracts thousands of beef producers from all over the country and overseas. For more information visit www.beefexpo.co.uk

Design Permaculture Course at Middle Wood

Lancaster May 18-20, July 20-22, Aug 24-26, Sept 21-23

Learn tools and strategies to move towards sustainability. Prepare for your own Carbon Descent in a future without being supported by oil. Contact Nicola on 015242 21880 or Email contact@middlewood.org.uk See www.middlewood.org.uk for other courses. Course Leaders Dr Rod Everett and Jane Lang, £280+ food share

Biodynamic Developments from Italy

A series of introductory workshops will be held throughout May. £25 donation

Workshops run from 9:30 am to around 5:00 pm. Please book ahead.

Oaklands Park, Gloucestershire, Monday May 21st. Contact Mark Moodie – (01594) 516344 or mark@considera.org
The Engine Shed, Edinburgh, Wednesday May 23rd. Contact Mark Moodie – (01594) 516344 or mark@considera.org
Botton Village, Yorkshire, Friday May 25th. Contact Ben Davis – (01287) 661212 or bottonfarm@yahoo.co.uk
For more information visit www.biodynamic.org.uk

Improving the Eating Quality of Pork

Wednesday 23 & Thursday 24 May 2007

School of Veterinary Science, Langford, Nr Bristol

Langford Food Industry Conference, in collaboration with The British Society of Animal Science. This year the theme of the conference is pork eating quality. Well known speakers will update us on the current topics in pork quality, from the genetics of tenderisation and boar taint to how integration in production and processing delivers higher eating quality for the consumer. For more information see www.bpex.org

Growing Profit through Smart Resource Management - Food and Drink

Wednesday 23rd May 2007

Jesmond Dene House, Newcastle upon Tyne

This event is aimed at highlighting the range of free and practical advice and support available to the food and drinks sector from Envirowise. For bookings or to register interest please contact Pia Curry on 0800 032 9843 or pia@environmental-academy.co.uk www.environmental-academy.co.uk

Organic Poultry Production - doing the job properly?

Wednesday 23rd May Abbey Home Farm, Cirencester 10.30am - 4.00pm

A one day conference organised by Organic Inform and The Organic Research Centre, Elm Farm. Highlights of the day will include policy discussions, poultry producer case studies, retailer and certifier perspectives and a discussion on the future of organic poultry production. A one day conference organised by Organic Inform and the Organic Research Centre, Elm Farm Cost £25 plus VAT. To lodge an interest in attending email oas@efrc.com quoting reference Poultry Event May 07

EVENTS

Cumbria Organics Social

Friday 25th May, 7.30pm The Watermill, Little Salkeld

Everyone welcome. Shared supper. To book please ring Ana Jones and discuss what you might bring 01768 891046. Discussion: One Planet Agriculture and Post Peak Oil.

A Practical Course on Composting Toilets

28th May – 3rd June 2007 at Low Luckens Organic Resource Centre, Carlisle

A six day residential course on composting your waste, looking at the history and theory of the process and providing practical "hands-on" experience. Nigel Lowthrop of Hill Holt Wood will carry out this training. Contact Jill Jones on 016977 48186 or for more details visit www.lowluckensfarm.co.uk £150 per person including accommodation and food

Northumberland County Show

Bank Holiday Monday 28th May 2007

Tynedale Park, Corbridge - For more information view www.northcountyshow.co.uk

Myerscough College Open Day

Sunday 3rd June 10am - 6pm — A fun family day out.

National Sheep Association Event

Wednesday 6 June 2007

North Hanging Wells, Eastgate in Weardale, Bishop Auckland, Co Durham DL13 2AB.

The event is the northern sheep industry's one day premier business to business exhibition attracting more than 180 exhibitors from across the sheep sector. Includes opportunities to look at the latest technical developments, learn about marketing and economic trends and explore genetic progress. For more information contact Julie Sedgewick on 01388 664496 juliesedgewick@btinternet.com

Entry Level Stewardship Farm Walk

Wednesday 6th June 10:30am-12:45pm

Entry Level Stewardship - Managing your options. Sherburn Tower Farm, Rowlands Gill, Tyne & Wear Tel: 01954 268301, www.adas.co.uk

Carbon Management and Carbon Leadership for Agribusiness

Wednesday 6th June at Lancaster Environment Centre, Lancaster University

This event will look at evaluating environmental options, practical efficiency improvements and responding to climate change. For more information please contact Lucinda at the NWOC on 01995 642206.

Soil and Fertility Management

Tuesday 12th June Hardwick Estate, Oxfordshire

Run in conjunction with Iain Tolhurst, this event is opportunity to learn about sustainable and effective methods of soil management. Further details will be announced shortly. To register your interest please contact the Soil Association Food and Farming department on 0017 914 2400 or email ff@soilassociation.org

Entry Level Stewardship Farm Walk

Tuesday 12th June. 10:30-12:45

Entry Level Stewardship - An Introduction to Management Options. Craigs House Farm, Alnwick, Northumberland Tel: 01954 268301, www.adas.co.uk

Soil Association Scotland Conference:

What's for Lunch? Putting food at the heart of the curriculum

Thursday 14th June 2007 Celtic Park, Glasgow

This conference will underline the importance of putting food from sustainable sources on the school dinner plate to deliver benefits of public health, social justice, sustainable development and thriving local economies. Aimed at those working in food and farming, public health, education, public procurement, catering and policy. Delegates will have the opportunity to talk to all those involved in these Food for Life pilots, including cooks, teachers and children. *Cost: £130 or £95 for Soil Association members. A limited number of subsidised places for producers are available at £50. Booking deadline: 30 May 2007. For further information call 0131 666 2474, or visit www.soilassociationscotland.org*

EVENTS

Northwest Food Lovers Festival

Saturday 16th and Sunday 17th June

Westmorland Showground Crooklands, Kendal

For more information visit www.foodloversfestival.co.uk

The Organic Research Centre – Elm Farm will be holding two arable events in June.

20th June at Wakelyns Agroforestry, Suffolk. 10am – 4pm

27th June at Sheepdrove Organic Farm, Berkshire. 10 am – 4pm

With speakers covering organic markets, research, local food chains and suppliers, these wide-ranging open days will be a chance to hear and talk about current hot topics. A delicious local/organic lunch will be served, followed by the chance to tour the innovative organic research trials on these farms. Places are priced at £25 +VAT for producers with a holding number and you can book a place by speaking to Pam Tibbatts on 01488 658298. Spaces are limited, so early booking is advised.

Farm Open Day

Sunday 24th June 2007

The Croft, Carlisle, 12 noon to 8pm. Entry free.

Farm guided walks at 2pm and 5pm. Refreshments and organic produce on sale. In conjunction with Carlisle Cathedral's Eco Training Day. For more information call Susan Aglionby on 01228 549628, or email susan.aglionby@btinternet.com.

Entry Level Stewardship Farm Walk

Tuesday 26th June 10:30-12:45 East Todholes Farm, Elsdon, Northumberland

Entry Level Stewardship - Managing your options. Tel: 01954 268301, www.adas.co.uk

Organic Entry Level Scheme Farm Walk

Wednesday 27th June High House, Egremont, Cumbria

Including the chance to see the feed crops grown on farm and discuss opportunities for growing your own feed. For more information email pauline.johnson@adas.co.uk www.adas.co.uk

Farm and Centre Open Day and BBQ

Wednesday 4th July 2007 11.00am to 3pm

Low Luckens Organic Resource Centre, Carlisle. No entry fee - booking in advance essential.

The annual get together and BBQ for all farm customers and friends of the centre. Hosts are Whiteholme Farm, Eva's Organics and Low Luckens Organic Resource Centre. Organic produce and local crafts will be on sale during the day. For more information call Jill Jones on 016977 48186 or visit www.lowluckensfarm.co.uk.

Land, Spirit and Community: What sustains us in times of challenge?

Saturday 7th July 2007 10.00am—4.30pm at the Eden Project, St. Austell, Cornwall

A workshop with Alastair McIntosh and V er ene Nicolas that will explore how we can gain understanding and help form new relationships between humankind, nature and the divine. The aim is to explore what it is that guides and inspires this relationship and how it can help us build community and provide inner sustenance for our lives and work. Workshop Fee: £35 (£25 Conc.) For full details visit: www.biodynamic.org.uk

Great Yorkshire Show

Tuesday 10th to Thursday 12th July

The Showground, Harrogate For more information visit www.greatyorkshireshow.com

Nafferton Farm Open Day

Friday 13th July. Tour starts 2pm.

Everyone welcome. Please let us know if you would like to attend - 01661 830222. Nafferton Farm, Stocksfield, Northumberland NE43 7XD (signposted off A69, 14 miles west of Newcastle)

Driffield Show

Wednesday 18th July

The Showground, Driffield, East Yorkshire For more information visit www.driffieldshow.co.uk

MARKET REPORT

Lambing time is almost over for another year and many report it has been an easier one than last year. For those lambing in April the weather certainly helped. Everything seems so much better when the sun shines!

Prices for hoggets haven't increased as much as expected. £3.10 - £3.20 was the price quoted for 16/4/07. There's still a good supply available but imports are coming in from New Zealand. An abattoir quoted aonemonth's waiting list last week. We are often told that the abattoirs require an all year round supply but this is the second year running that producers will struggle to get their hoggets away before the new season lamb starts. Beef seems to be moving well and the price remaining stable at around £3.

Many milk producers are reporting the increased feed costs are really cutting into their margins. Quotes received week commencing 16/4 for delivery into Cumbria was £238pt for wheat and £243pt for barley so the recent milk price increases have not been considered enough by many.

Sue Woof
015396 21343

MARKET PRICES

ARABLE

(Ex-farm prices)

Barley (feed)	£195/t
Barley (malting)	£250/t
Wheat (feed)	£210/t
Oats (feed)	£230+/t
Beans	£220/t
Soya expeller	£335 - 340/t

Prices kindly supplied by Organic Grain Link 30/4/07
(www.organicgrainlink.co.uk)

LIVESTOCK

Lamb £3.10 - 3.20/kg
Finished cattle £3 - 3.20/kg dw

Store cattle selling at auction over £2/kg lw. Demand outstrips supply.

Prices kindly supplied by Hexham & Northern Marts

Pork £218 - 225/kg dw

Poultry meat
(direct) 572p/kg dw
(contract) 146p/bird

HORTICULTURE

Cabbage (red)	85 - 90p/head
Cabbage (white)	80 - 90p/head
Carrots	70 - 80p/kg
Cauliflower	90 - 105p/head
Beetroot	70 - 75p/kg
Broccoli	256p/kg
Parsnips	90 - 120p/kg
Leeks	180 - 190p/kg
Onions	150p/kg
Pears	142 - 150p/kg
Potatoes	43 - 45p/kg
Purple Sprouting	240 - 336p/kg
Spring Onions	96p/bunch
Swede	85p/kg

FOR SALE & WANTED

FOR SALE – LIVESTOCK

- 6 – 12 month old Limousin X Stores. Contact PJ Middleton & Son, Ripon, 01765 689320
- 6 fat pork pigs. Will consider part exchange for beef – Jo Cartwright, Leeds, 07974 826 876
- 9 Fresian heifers in calf to Angus, due to calf 20/07/07 – mid-October. Contact David Sanderson, nr Preston, 01772 690387
- Store Pigs. Large black – 60 pigs – mix of ages – could split – own transport required – Fully Organic UK5 – Contact Dominic Elsworth, Berwick upon Tweed, 01289 388777, delsworth@heip.co.uk
- Pedigree Organic South Devon bulling heifers for sale – Contact Robert Lee, Alnwick, 01665 574227, lee@lumbylaw.co.uk

WANTED - LIVESTOCK

- 10 – 20 Store cattle approx 15 months old, any breed Contact Birkett Gate, Nr Workington, 078799833457
- 50 sheep with lambs, not horned, preferably young. Contact Birkett Gate, Nr Workington, 07799 833457
- Organic weaners always wanted – Contact Michelle and Colin Anderson, Bellingham, 01434 220435, info@kielderorganicmeats.co.uk
- Native Breed cattle – young stock always wanted – Contact Lee Gray, Alnwick, 01665 660044, info@gandsorganics.com
- Organic Store Cattle – Wanted – Contact William Dodd, Belsay, Northumberland, 01661 881318, G.W.Dodd@farming.co.uk

FOR SALE - FEED & FORAGE

- 50 round red clover bales silage, half tonne each – Contact S Peirson, Nr Northallerton, 01609 748977 / 0797 4405565
- 100 mini hestons silage @ £13 each – Contact Andrew Falkinham, Nr Goole, 07767 251661
- Available 60 Bales Wrapped Grass Silage. 1st year conversion UK2 – Contact William Dodd, Belsay, Northumberland, 01661 881318, G.W.Dodd@farming.co.uk
- Organic Silage, Wrapped Square Bales UK5 – Contact Chris Hodgson, Piercebridge, County Durham, 01325 374251
- Clover rich hay or haylage bales available May onwards. Contact Ken Stowley, Standish, Cheshire on 07740 722 701.

FARMING PARTNERSHIP IN YORKSHIRE

200 acres (includes 130 acres already in organic conversion) available for partnership. Excellently renovated farmhouse and traditional buildings. Successful applicant is likely to be a family person who is passionate about stock and grassland, able to work to the highest standards and be sensitive to the countryside and environment. Email details to alanshackell@aol.com

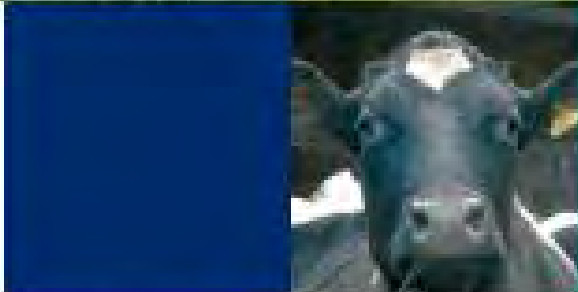
organic marketplace online

A free website for buying or selling organic livestock, grazing and forage

search online today at www.soilassociation.org/organicmarketplace



Don't explain
what you do.
Just tell us what
you need.



"From the word go, we were impressed by Triodos Bank's understanding of the challenges we faced, which was a whole new experience for us."

Peter Kindersley, Sheepdrove Organic Farm

Triodos Bank was set up solely to support people who are committed to respecting the world we share. And because we only work with inspiring organisations, you'll find we have the expertise and practical connections to help you succeed.

To find out more about working with us
call free on 0800 008 720 or visit
www.triodos.co.uk

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