



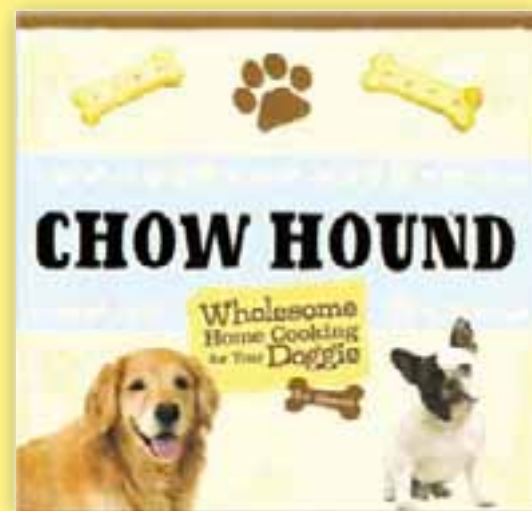
The Guantanamo Bay McDonald's.

Waterboarding? We've got a sub for that!

Fast food chains, including **Subway**, **McDonald's**, and **KFC** have restaurants on the United States naval base Guantanamo Bay. The chains are used by the thousands of military service personnel who live and work on the base – infamous as the location where Americans have flouted international law with their imprisonment, and torture, of detainees suspected of links to terrorism. Military personnel and staff can also get a cup of **Starbucks** coffee or a **Taco Bell** if they are in the mood.

You can check out the fast food and other dining opportunities available to military staff and their families with a visit to the official Joint Task Force Guantanamo website: www.jtfgtmo.southcom.mil The site is headlined: Safe Humane Legal Transparent.

The base – known as Gitmo – or Gtmo – to most Americans – also has a souvenir shop. *The Food Magazine* has been presented, by a lawyer, with a selection of gifts from the shop. We now have t-shirts, and a cap, etched with waving palm trees that promise 'It don't Gtmo better than this' and 'Life is better on an island – Guantanamo Bay'. They pair rather fetchingly with a Guantanamo Bay bag-for-life – just perfect for a trip down to your local farmers' market.



Many people in the UK do not cook even for themselves or their children, but, apparently there are some who have the time to cook for their dogs. Quiche Lassie, Bow-Wow Birthday Cake, brown rice biscotti – if any sound good to you, have a try – the author says that all are safe, and delicious, for humans to eat too.

If you are not a dog lover – the idea of arranging your meals around a dog's tastes might have little appeal – but perhaps home cooking of any kind is a step up from processed food.

Chow hound, beloved hound! -
Eve Adamson - Sterling Innovation
ISBN 978-1-4027-5566-8

Shake to make – money that is!

Our supermarket shelves are groaning with processed food products that proclaim just how convenient they are. Whole categories of foods, and cooking procedures, are consigned to the 'inconvenient' bin – as we are told just how hard it is to peel carrots, chop fruit, or cook simple meals like spaghetti bolognese.

So, the latest in a seemingly never-ending line – 'Shake to make' pancakes – 'traditional style' – or so **Betty Crocker** tells us. This wildly over-packaged tub produces just six pancakes! All of that empty space is there for the only ingredient the 'cook', or should I say, 'shaker', needs to add – water. Gee, practically homemade then. If only shaking was a more widely applicable cooking skill – we await, 'shake to make' versions of other 'traditional style' favourites.

Betty Crocker is not alone in churning out this kind of totally unnecessary product – **Tesco** and **Dr. Oetker** have similar 'traditional' style pancake offerings. Maybe we need to scrap pancake day – if we can't even be bothered to make pancakes.



Every little doesn't help

There is something completely galling about **Tesco's** television adverts. 'Every little helps' – really, what would the fat cats at **Tesco** know about that? Fancy telling us all to appreciate the pennies, while the company is raking in billions. And, the **Sainsbury's** ads are not much better. The simpering mum in the ads is overcome with joy every time she sets a meal down in front of her family. Her internal dialogue is voiced aloud for the privilege of viewers – how her family must think the meal expensive, but in fact it was a bargain, and the pork roast might even make two meals. Really, has it got to the state where we have to slobber in gratitude to major supermarket chains just because we get to eat our dinner? It's only a mass produced pork roast and some potatoes. What low down depravities do the supermarkets imagine they are saving us from with these wild glories they are bestowing? Shop somewhere else for goodness sake. Ignore the ads – you will find better bargains at your local markets.

The Food Magazine

Campaigning for safer, healthier food for all

www.foodmagazine.org.uk

published by TheFoodCommission

Food giants get golden ticket at London 2012

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Rise up with me against the organisation of misery

Fair Society, Healthy Lives – Strategic Review of Health Inequalities in England post-2010 has just been released. Chair of the review, Sir Michael Marmot, quotes the Chilean Poet Pablo Neruda in his introductory note, “Rise up with me against the organisation of misery.”

The review finds that: England is an unequal society – and the lower your social and economic position, the younger you will die, and the worse off your health will be. Health inequalities can be avoided by reasonable means – and are unfair – putting them right is a matter of social justice.

This report is moving, and it is practical. It describes the terrible consequences that we all suffer due to the unequal society in which we live. The worse off you are, the worse the personal consequences, however, all but the richest are negatively affected by the steep social gradient in health in the UK. The consequences are personally tragic, but they also mean that our country does not get the chance to benefit from the richness of contributions that could be made to our culture if all people were enabled to reach their full potential. The costs of dealing with ill health are greater than the costs of prevention say the authors – and this failure to prevent is using up money that could be spent on all kinds of societal enrichment.

The review’s authors offer us a detailed plan, with timelines, of how to reduce such health inequalities. This will require action under six policy objectives: Give every child the best start in life; Enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives; Create fair employment and good work for all; Ensure healthy standard of living for all; Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and cities; and Strengthen the role and impact of ill health prevention. The review also offers case studies of positive approaches already happening in these areas.

One of the challenging ideas to understand in the report is the call for universal action – across the social classes – to tackle inequalities. The intensity of the action must be scaled to the level of disadvantage – what the authors call ‘proportionate universalism’. For example, none of us cycle as much as we might, action to get us to exercise more in this way has resulted in increased rates, but mostly amongst higher social classes. Action needs to increase take up rates across population groups, but more intensive support needs to be provided to the most disadvantaged in our communities.

The report is rigorous in the way it focuses upon the practicalities, and need, for policy making that always considers impacts upon health and inequalities. Green taxes – good for the environment, but, how will the poor be affected, and how does this need to affect the implementation of such taxes? The report is holistic in that it provides evidence of links between broad areas of life and health consequences. Lifelong learning – accessible to all – is one suggestion for action, and how wonderful is that? You can get healthier by doing all kinds of classes, learning, and making friends. The report reminds me that we all stand together – we are a society whether we like it or not, or whether we deny it. How we each live affects how we each live and the world we can make together.

The review is fabulously rich – and is food for thought for years to come. I do urge you to read it – just visit <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/gheg/marmotreview/Documents/finalreport> - and you can download it one section at a time.

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Food Commission websites
The Food Commission: www.foodmagazine.org.uk
Action on Additives: www.actiononadditives.com
Chew on this website: www.chewonthis.org.uk

The Food Commission consists of the charity The Food Commission Research Charity (registration 1000358) and the not-for-profit company The Food Commission UK Ltd, which permits the organisation to undertake trading activities. The idea is that any surplus income from trading, such as income from *The Food Magazine*, is used to support our campaign work. Donations to the charity are used to support our education and health promotion work, including those aspects of campaigns which are of an educational and health promotional nature. The two sister organisations have separate accounts and separate meetings of their trustees/directors. This combination of a trading company and a charity is fairly standard among non-governmental organisations, and is recommended by the Charity Commissioners.

www.charitycommission.gov.uk/publications/cc35d.asp

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Supermarket cheap booze offers fuelling surge in North West alcohol harm, say health campaigners

Super-cheap supermarket alcohol deals are contributing to the big increase in alcohol-related harm in the North West, according to a mystery shopper survey conducted by North West wellbeing and health campaigners, *Our Life*.

According to *Our Life*, who have published a report on their investigations into how alcohol is promoted and sold by supermarkets in the North West, alcohol is now 75% more affordable in relative terms than it was in 1980. The same period has also seen a massive rise in the incidence of alcohol related harm and violence across the North West and the rest of the UK.

The report, *Supermarket Scandal*, revealed just how low the supermarkets would go to get customers through the door with alcohol routinely being sold for as little as 14p per unit. To put this in to context, *Our Life* found that, in many stores, the cheapest 330ml can of Coca-Cola is available for a cost of 32.7p and a 440ml can of 5.3% ABV Strongbow cider could be purchased at almost exactly the same price (33.3p).

Our Life claims that the supermarkets are responsible for the creation of a culture where the expectation of cheap alcohol is the norm rather than the exception. It’s a culture which they claim is driving up consumption and related harm.

“Cheap alcohol is a key component in the retailers’ strategies to win market share,” said *Our Life* chief executive Dr. Alison Giles. “Everyone loves a bargain but the supermarkets’ headlong rush to outdo each other in selling cheap alcohol is having grave consequences for the region’s health,” continued Dr. Giles. “We know that the most harmful drinkers buy their alcohol from the supermarkets and that young drinkers pre-load before hitting the pubs and clubs. These super-cheap deals are making it too easy for people to drink at harmful levels. It is irresponsible behaviour from companies who often say that they have their customers’ interests at heart and it has to stop,” Dr. Giles said.

The Home Office recently announced a mandatory code for alcohol retailers to tackle problems of irresponsible promotions. However, Our Life campaigners say this does not go far enough.

Our Life is currently working with individuals, businesses, politicians and the trade unions across the North West region to campaign for legislation to create a floor beneath which the supermarkets cannot price alcohol and the campaign has shown that there is real and tangible public support for action to reduce alcohol harm.

“It cannot be a coincidence that we see rising alcohol harm in the North West on the one hand and pocket-money drinks prices on the other,” said Dr. Giles.



Our Life chief executive Dr. Alison Giles.

“People in the North West can see the link between price and excessive consumption and they want action now to address the problem,” she said.

“We welcome some of the measures announced in January by the government to introduce a mandatory code for alcohol retailers and believe that they will go some of the way in helping to address public concern about irresponsible alcohol sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder. However, we are disappointed that the government has not brought forward any measures to tackle the role of the



supermarkets who continue to act irresponsibly by selling alcohol at pocket-money prices. We want to see a minimum price of 50p a unit for alcohol to address this as it is widely accepted that such a step would save lives.”

The report, *Supermarket Scandal: Super-cheap Alcohol Sales in the North West*, can be downloaded from the *Our Life* website at www.ourlife.org.uk



Thought of the day

Companies love to use celebrities to endorse and promote their product. But what if the product causes ill health? Should the celebrities just take a bow and leave the stage? Law-makers in China believe not. Last spring they introduced regulations which made the manufacturer of a product *and the celebrities who recommended it* liable for any harm caused to consumers.

For more on China’s new Food Law, visit <http://www.dwt.com/LearningCenter/Advisories?find=67842>

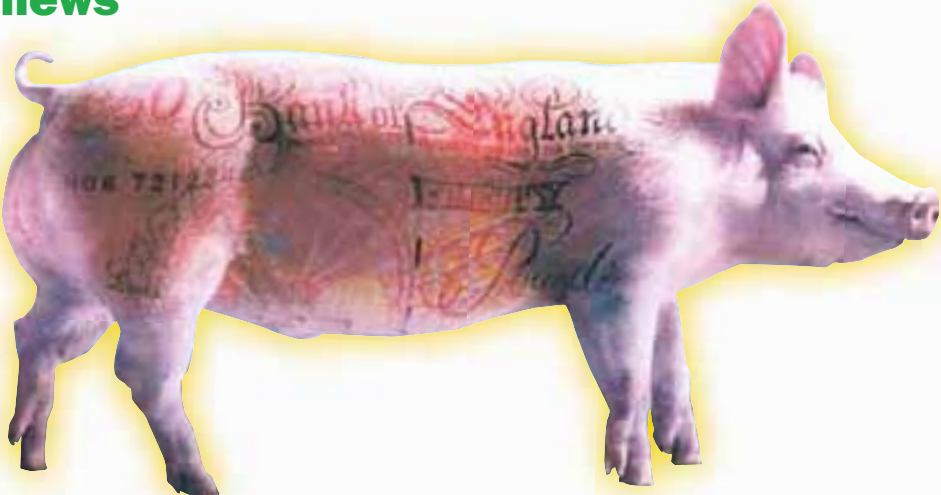
Food for sport

In October 2009, the British Heart Foundation (BHF) published *A fit choice: a campaign report on the provision of children’s food in leisure venues*. The report was written by The Food Commission’s Anna Glayzer and Jessica Mitchell, on behalf of the BHF, following visits to 35 sport and leisure venues across London including bowling alleys, ice rinks, lidos, leisure centres and park cafés. Food in vending machines was assessed, along with children’s menus and meal deals.

The visits revealed that the venues were dominated by vending machines stocked with products, loaded with fats, salts and sugars, that would be banned from being advertised on children’s TV or sold in school vending machines. Fresh fruit was displayed at fewer than half of the venues visited and fried food options including chips, nuggets, sausages and burgers featured heavily in the children’s meal options. Nutritional information was displayed at only two of the venues visited, making it even more difficult for parents and children to make healthy choices.

The report was published as part of the BHF’s Food4Thought campaign. Copies of the report can be downloaded from the BHF website.





Drug to castrate pigs

A vaccine that ‘chemically castrates’ male pigs is now on sale in the UK. ‘Improvac’ is a drug that stops boars from producing a hormone that gives their meat an unpleasant taste – called boar taint.

The industrial production of pigs is notoriously tough financially, any meat lost to taint is a worry for producers. Hence the ‘heartwarming’ fifty pound note printed all over the body of the pig seen in an ad for the drug. Physical castration is banned in the UK, so boars are generally slaughtered before the animal is mature enough to have boar taint. Improvac would allow the animals to be kept, and grown for longer – but at what price to the animal and to human health?

According to Farmer Tim Waygood, (see Tim’s column on page 10), “If you are producing food for customers then I simply don’t think they would want to eat pork from a pig whose balls shrivelled up in weeks, just weeks before you feed it to your youngsters. How can anyone think this is sane?” Reports on use of the drug suggest that the boar’s testicles shrink in response to the vaccine.

In fact, Assured Food Standards, responsible for managing the Red Tractor mark, used by around 90% of pig farmers, will not allow its producers to use the drug – for now. ASF is awaiting further debate to see how UK consumers might react to its use. However, other industrially produced pork may very well be from vaccinated animals.

It is only by eating organic meat, that consumers can be sure to avoid Improvac, and other drugs that impact on animals’ welfare, and which can transfer to humans to some extent as they eat the meat.

It is not even clear that boars vaccinated with Improvac will be kept longer, as that might not be profitable. Anyway, according to Waygood, “If we want a heavier animal to kill, we will keep the females longer. Quite simply, what is insane is a society that directs its most talented scientists to inventing things which are not needed, and then for markets to be created by advertising - promising profit and creating fear amongst farmers that they need it! It’s simply a marketing myth.”

Eating processed food is depressing

A new study suggests that a diet based on processed foods may be linked to depression. The authors of *Dietary pattern and depressive symptoms in middle age*, published in the *British Journal of Psychiatry*, analysed self-reported dietary data from thousands of middle aged civil servants, who were asked five years later about the state of their mental health.

The authors found that those who had reported eating diets full of processed meat, sweet desserts, fried foods, highly refined cereals and high fat dairy, were more likely to be depressed than those who had reported high consumption of whole foods, such as vegetables, fruits, wholegrains and fish.

The study found that the connection between diet and mood remained, even when smoking, level of physical activity and differing body mass index were considered. Meaning that, for example, inactive, overweight, whole food eating smokers were less likely to be depressed than their overweight, smoking counterparts who ate high quantities of processed foods.

TN Akbaraly et al (2009) *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, 195: 408-413

Packaging chemical under EFSA spotlight

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) is to invite an international panel of experts to a discussion summit about the food packaging chemical bisphenol A (BPA). This spring, invitees will hear about EFSA’s ongoing work on BPA – the food safety watchdog is currently preparing a risk assessment of the chemical. The experts will be asked to submit new ideas, and research, towards a final assessment of the chemical.

The Food Magazine reported about concerns over the chemical in FM86 – its toxicity, combined with its widespread use in food packaging materials including plastic water bottles, plastic food containers, and tin cans – gives rise to a wide range of health concerns.



High sugar Coco Pops – a good afternoon snack?



The Food Commission, and other campaign groups, have regularly voiced their concerns about high sugar and salt breakfast cereals, and the companies that produce them. In edition 83 of *The Food Magazine*, we reported on just how much sugar a person might consume in a day if they ate such cereals, and related cereal products, on all of the many meal/snack occasions for which Kellogg’s suggested they are appropriate.

Kellogg’s latest ad – which suggests **Coco Pops** as an appropriate after school snack, appears all over the place at the moment – on pack, and on giant billboards. The cereal, of course, is high sugar (35grams of sugar per 100g of product) – how could you doubt it? Yet, what is done? Our government – under the agency of its own **Change4Life** programme – is happy to have Kellogg’s as a partner. Major charities, such as the **British Heart Foundation**, and **Diabetes UK** are also happy to be a part of **Change4Life** – effectively legitimising the company’s approach.

Kellogg’s clearly is happy to sell high sugar products as healthy – their use of Chris Hoy as a spokesperson for the high sugar Bran Flakes is a case in point. Chris Hoy now actually suggests on pack that consumption of **Bran Flakes** works for him – so, it might work for us. Sure, nothing like sugar to boost the old athletic prowess. Sales of Bran Flakes were up more than 10% in 2009 (at more than £30 million) – which, according to *The Grocer* magazine, the company puts largely down to Hoy’s backing.

Remember that in the UK, fruit and vegetable consumption, on average, is still languishing below three portions a day while sugar consumption is far too high. What could be better as an after school snack than a banana? Or an apple? Or even a no sugar added fruit smoothie?

Baby Milk Action welcomes ban on product placement of junk foods and baby foods

Baby Milk Action is breathing a sigh of relief at reports that the UK Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) will now not allow product placement of junk foods and baby foods on TV programmes made in the UK and is seeking clarity over precisely which products will be covered. According to *The Guardian*, a letter written by Culture Secretary Ben Bradshaw to the cabinet confirms that he proposes to, “ban product placement in the following areas: alcoholic drinks, HFSS* food, gambling, smoking accessories, over-the-counter medicines and baby food.”

Baby Milk Action is the UK member of the global network, the **International Baby Food Action Network** (IBFAN) and the secretariat of the **UK Baby Feeding Law Group**, a coalition of 23 leading health professional and mother-support organisations. These and many other groups have been calling for the UK - which has one of the lowest breastfeeding rates in Europe - to stand firm in its defence of public health and to strengthen, not weaken legislation covering the marketing of baby milks and foods in line with the recommendations of the World Health Assembly.

In its response to the DCMS consultation, **Patti Rundall**, OBE, Policy Director of Baby Milk Action, highlighted the fact that breastfeeding is the natural and optimum way to feed babies and provides an ideal window of opportunity for obesity prevention. She now says, “We are really pleased that the Government seems to have listened to our concerns. Allowing product placement of breastmilk substitutes, baby foods and feeding equipment would exacerbate the serious problems the UK Government already has in trying to ensure that parents receive unbiased and objective information on infant and young child feeding. UK/EU legislation is already full of loopholes, and allows a high level of misleading advertising of baby milks and foods - many of which are high in sugars or sweeteners and which affect children’s taste palates and appetite control. These products are all cleverly promoted as the healthy option with deceptive health and nutrition claims. Allowing companies to pay to have them integrated into story lines make an already bad situation much much worse.” BMA understands that neither follow-on formulas nor infant milks will be used as product placements, but Rundall is now seeking clarification over whether baby feeding equipment, such as bottles and teats, will also be banned.

Rundall further noted, “Product placement also creates opportunities for manufacturers to mislead the public by linking their names to healthy or worthy activities such as a sport, good causes or education. In this way they can create an undeserved halo effect for the whole product range. Under pressure to reduce direct advertising to children, many companies are representing themselves as ‘nutrition educators’ offering phone line and web-based help, information and education services - all key ways to market products and encourage the use of artificial feeding.”

Studies show that children are particularly susceptible to embedded brand messages which operate at an subconscious level. In its comments to the US Federal Communications Commission Notice of Inquiry on embedded advertising, (Sept 08) the Campaign for Commercial Free Childhood said: “As a result of the constant commercial bombardment, children are now more brand conscious than ever. Toddlers as young as two have been found to have attachments to brands. Children as young as three are capable of recognizing trademarked brand logos. One study found that 81% of three- to six-year-olds after having seen just the logo for Coca-Cola can describe the soft-drink product. On average, teens between thirteen and seventeen have 145 conversations about brands per week, more than twice as many as adults.”

* high fat, saturated fat, salt or sugar foods

Illustration: George Hughes



Food 2030

The Department for Food, Environment and Rural Affairs has published its *Food 2030* report – it lays out what the government wants the food system to look like in 20 years, and how we are going to get there.

The report has not impressed many food and environment campaigners, who, nevertheless acknowledge the significance of **DEFRA** engaging in debate about safe, sustainable, affordable and healthy food. However, the report is light on specifics – and there is as yet no indication that the political will is there to deliver such a food system.

Certainly, the report is typical in its consideration of the diets of people on low incomes. Whilst acknowledging that it is not

acceptable that, on average, such households have poorer diets – **DEFRA** then lists a series of vague commitments to tackle the problem. It absolutely steers clear of promising to implement a UK wide Living Wage standard to replace the minimum wage. Yet, clearly the evidence is there that people living on the minimum wage or benefits are absolutely not able to access diets of a nutritionally acceptable standard. If one takes the report at face value, it will be another 20 years of grubbing around for vouchers and relying on the kindness of low cost fruit and veg schemes run by the odd private grocery store for the millions of UK citizens living on unacceptably low incomes.

For further information about Food 2030 see www.defra.gov.uk/foodfarm/food/strategy/index.htm

For further information about the ‘Living Wage’ visit London Citizens at www.londoncitizens.org.uk

Visit for further information about minimum income standards visit www.minimumincomestandard.org

Pesticides in school

Children all over the UK are being exposed to pesticides at school, according to the results of a survey by the Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL) and the Pesticides Action Network (PAN). Such highly toxic chemicals are used to spray sports fields, and school grounds.

47% of the local school authorities who responded to the survey said they would like schools to go pesticide free. More than half of respondents wanted to know more about pesticide residues in school food, with 36% saying that school food should be regularly tested for such residues.

According to Vicki Hird, of HEAL, “This is a hidden menace – carcinogens may be used where children play and learn, as this survey reveals. But it is an avoidable menace – so here’s the New Year’s resolution for local authorities – pesticide free schools. And the UK government must move quickly to eliminate the possible carcinogens from schools and help local authorities go pesticide free in their buildings grounds and in the food they serve to children.”

The UK government is currently reviewing its national action plans for pesticide use. HEAL and PAN would also like to see a review of school food funding so that organic food can be included in menus much more frequently.

Chemicals in non-stick pans tied to thyroid disease

A study published in the journal, *Environmental Health Perspectives*, has found that two types of perfluorinated chemicals used in non-stick cookware, food packaging, fabrics and carpets are associated with an increased risk of thyroid disease.

The conclusions are based on blood analyses of thousands of adult men and women in the USA, which showed that those with elevated levels of the chemicals were more likely to have thyroid disease.

The authors suggest that more work needs to be done to prove that it is the chemicals which caused the thyroid conditions.

THE GOOD LIFE - 100 Years of Growing Your Own

6th October 2009 - 7th March 2010

An exhibition at The Garden Museum charts the story of the long history behind the UK's various efforts to grow our own food. From the Allotment Act of 1908, through WWII's Dig For Victory campaign and the Self-Sufficiency movement of the 1970s to the present day, paintings, photographs, personal memoirs tell the story of why, how and what we have grown. A collection of post-it notes in the exhibition allows people to add their own thoughts about food growing – including what politicians are doing to help, or hinder, such efforts.

The museum itself is lovely – housed in an old church right smack on a busy road on the south side of the Thames. It is an unexpectedly peaceful, beautiful, and thoughtful place. Its front garden is full of salad and herb crops that are sold, or used in the museum's vegetarian restaurant. If you bring some veg that you have grown yourself, – you can even get free entrance to the exhibit.

The exhibition also questions the reasons for the current interest in allotments, and other 'growing your own' initiatives, and asks whether such interest can be sustained.

Christopher Woodward, Director of the Garden Museum says, "We put on The Good Life to respond to the revival of interest in grow your own. We wanted to explore why it's happened: is it the recession, the environment, health, or community – or all four? And will it last? The history of the 20th-century shows that British people only grow part of what they eat when there's war, mass unemployment, or huge anxiety. But the message from visitors to the exhibition is that this time it's different. Grow your own has become a lifestyle: it's about community, health, ethics, and the environment. The exhibition has been much more popular than we hoped, and it's been good to see so many younger people. We'd like to continue the programme with more exhibitions on this theme, whether it's changing attitudes to food or the need for urban design to change so that more city dwellers can get their hands in the mud. They want to."

Poor diets in UK

Adolescent girls, on average, are eating less healthily than any other group in the UK, according to findings from the Food Standards Agency's *National Diet and Nutrition Survey*.

Girls aged 11-18 do not eat enough, and when they do eat, they consume too much sugar and fat, and too few vital nutrients such as iron, calcium and magnesium. Fewer than one in ten get five portions of fruit and vegetables a day. Such diets are putting their healthy growth at risk, and will lead to increased risk of conditions such as anaemia.

Meanwhile, a major government review on tackling health inequalities over the next ten years - *Fair Society, Healthy Lives* – has been released. The review, led by Sir Michael Marmot, found stark health inequalities in the England, with our richest citizens living seven years longer on average than our poorest citizens. Not only is length of life tied to income, but so is the number of years people spend in good health. On average, the difference in 'disability-free life expectancy' is 17 years between the England's richest and poorest. Among factors that cause poor people to die younger are lack of access to adequate diets, low wages and poor job security.

Marmot's team calls for action in six key areas including: the adoption of a living wage, a more progressive tax system, and better social supports for families and children including enhanced parental leave after birth.

Food Commission News

Lecture and Awards

The annual **Caroline Walker Trust Lecture and Awards** took place at **Kensington Town Hall** in November. It was the first joint event with The Food Commission and the speaker was food writer and historian **Bee Wilson**. Bee gave an entertaining talk entitled **Death in the Pot! Food Adulteration Past and Present**, which focussed on the changing face of food fraud.

Bee Wilson has written the Kitchen Thinker column in the *Sunday Telegraph* magazine since 2003 and was previously the food writer for the *New Statesman* magazine. Bee has twice been named Guild of Food Writers Food Journalist of the year (in 2004 and 2008) and was also awarded the **Radio 4** food writer of the year in 2002. She is the author of two books: *The Hive: the Story of the Honeybee and Us* (2004) and *Swindled: the Dark Story of the Food Cheats* (2009, shortlisted for the Andre Simon prize).

After Bee's lecture, awards were presented.



Bee Wilson, conducting, an experiment with food adulteration, watched by Tim Lang, of The Food Commission.

Caroline Walker Trust Award 2009

A joint lifetime achievement award given by The Caroline Walker Trust and the Food Commission was presented to Dr Mike Rayner in recognition of his work in public health nutrition over many years.

Mike currently heads the Health Promotion Research Group at Oxford University and has been instrumental in much of the expert evidence and advice which has been used in the development of public health nutrition policy.

Mike has worked on a number of projects including the development of nutrient profiling, mapping and modelling obesity and heart disease patterns and predictions, modelling the impact of food taxes and reviewing healthy sustainable diets.



Dr Mike Rayner, winner of the lifetime achievement award, and Jane Landon, Chair of The Food Commission.

The Food Commission presented a Local Food Hero Award to Duncan Campbell

Public Analysts are a small group of scientists working to protect our food. Their work is largely invisible but essential to detect fraud and contaminants such as Sudan I and melamine. With diet and health high on the agenda, work monitoring the nutritional quality of institutional catering and other meals has become more important. Dr Duncan Campbell, after a short spell researching in soil chemistry, has worked in this area for over 20 years and he is currently President of the Association of Public Analysts.

Based in Leeds, his laboratory has been at the forefront of method development in the analysis of illegal dyes and his other areas of special interest include institutional nutrition, milk and whiskey. He has been of considerable support and help to The Food Commission, particularly with regard to stories for *The Food Magazine*. He gives his time generously, and his knowledge of his field is second to none.

After receiving the **Local Hero Award 2009** of the Food Commission and Caroline Walker Trust at a ceremony in London, Dr. Duncan Campbell, President of the Association of Public Analysts, has called for the introduction of a nationally-coordinated and resourced food law enforcement service.

Speaking after the presentation, Dr. Campbell said:

"Public Analysts have been protecting our food for nearly 150 years and I am delighted to have received this award on behalf of my profession.

At a time when food is very much in the news, however - with concerns over food fraud, diet and health, colours and hyperactivity and global food scares such as melamine in milk powder - it is ironic that Local Authority food sampling for monitoring is falling.

Given that most criminal breaches of food law are only detectable by specialist analysis, it is even more ironic that rather than setting sampling targets nationally, the Government's watchdog, the Food Standards Agency, is actually proposing to dilute the Public Analyst qualification.

Ensuring the safety and security of our food demands the introduction of national co-ordination and resourcing of a targeted inspection and sampling enforcement service. Most of the money currently provided to Local Authorities for this work never reaches its target.

For every £1,000 we spend on food, our Local Authorities spend, on average, less than 5p on enforcement analysis; but if you're unfortunate enough to live in Croydon, it is just 1p. This postcode lottery should end."

The award was received by Dr. Campbell in his capacity as President of the Association of Public Analysts and was made in recognition of all that public analysts do to ensure the safety of our food supply, and to inform open, honest debate about what is in that food supply.

Dr. Duncan Campbell receives the Local Hero Award 2009.



Donations and friend subscriptions

Many thanks to those who responded so generously to our recent call for donations. Your contributions are so much appreciated. For all of those who would like to respond to donation calls, but cannot, we thank you for your subscription. Tell a friend about us if you can. We have included a special 'Neighbours' leaflet in this edition – we hope you will pop it through the door of someone on your street, or in your office to encourage them to subscribe.

Food, Society, and Public Health

This summer, the **British Sociological Association's** Food Study Group is hosting its 2nd International Conference on *Food, Society and Public Health*.

The conference, which aims to bring together academics, practitioners, policy makers and other research users, is to be held on **July 5th & 6th** at the **British Library Conference Centre** in central London.

Building upon the success of the last event, the conference will examine the complex questions surrounding food systems, consumption, health and policy. **Claude Fischler** (CNRS, Paris) and **Harriet Friedmann** (Professor of Sociology, University of Toronto) will bring their expertise as the conference plenary speakers.

For further information and details on how to register for the event, please go to:

www.britisoc.co.uk/events/food.htm

There is also a blog which is regularly updated with news and plans for the conference: britsocfood2010.wordpress.com

Quickbite



Romania leads fight on junk

Despite having a lower prevalence of obesity than much of Western Europe, it is to Romania we can look for inspiration to tackle junk food consumption. The country is introducing a tax on junk food, expected to come into effect this spring, to be paid by anyone who produces, imports or processes foods with a high content of salt, fats, sugar or additives, specifically: fast food products, cakes, confectionery, savoury snacks and soft drinks. The proceeds of the tax will go on health programmes, said Health Minister Attila Czeke. A Romanian food industry spokesperson said the tax would 'cause producers to move their business to other countries'. And the problem with that is...?

The battle for good food at the 2012 Olympics

London Assembly Member Jenny Jones, of the Green Party, worries that the Olympics will be a festival of sport, and junk food...

The London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games will without doubt be one of the most significant premier sporting and cultural events to take place in the capital and will be remembered for decades. Whether you are a supporter or a detractor, it will have a profound effect on the city. The scale and planning necessary to transport and feed the thousands of visitors, the athletes, and workers pouring through London to get to the Olympic venues over this period, will all have an unprecedented impact.

The Games will bring urgently needed regeneration to parts of East London and bring great opportunities for promoting many positive things such as inspiring children and young Londoners to take up sport and other physical activity. However, healthy physical activity can only be achieved if it is fuelled by healthy nutritious food. Here lies the appalling mismatch between the top 2012 sponsors **McDonald's** and **Coca-Cola** and other fast food and drink companies who have successfully secured exclusive marketing rights with the Games and at other major sporting events, or secured sponsorship deals with top athletes, which then continues to perpetuate the perverse link between fast food and drink and sporting achievement.

While I know that London organisers were bound by the International Olympic Committee's deal with sponsors, I really feel that having **McDonald's** and **Coca-Cola** as official sponsors is a total let down and the IOC really has to reassess the financing of the Games. This should be a showcase for healthy living and an opportunity for inspiring a new generation to lead healthier lives. Not a showcase for ads for fast food and sugary drinks.



London Assembly Member Jenny Jones.

I was determined in my former role as the chair of 'London Food', the advisory body to the previous Mayor Ken Livingstone, to do what I could to minimise the damage and set up an Olympics food working group with the aim of ensuring that the ambitions of healthy and sustainable food in London's Food Strategy would be incorporated into the procurement policies for food served at the Games.

I have continued to lobby Tessa Jowell, the Olympics Minister, Boris Johnson, the Mayor of London, as well as Sebastian Coe, the chair of the London 2012 Organising Committee (LOCOG), with a 20 point sustainable food and drink plan, to help to ensure that food served at the Olympics will be mostly unprocessed, locally sourced, seasonal, organic, vegetarian, climate friendly, affordable to all income groups, and, if imported, to be fair trade.

LOCOG has tried to reassure me that the presence of **McDonald's** will not prevent smaller, local suppliers being involved in the Games. They say that sponsor branded restaurants will sit alongside a full-range of other local food providers and that their Games Food Strategy will ensure

that all 'client groups' can enjoy a diverse, high quality and affordable range of food and beverage options from unbranded food outlets such as vegetarian, vegan, organic or other 'client group'.

However, it's obvious that if these are small businesses, their impact could be negligible to the overall catering of the games and on also on visitors, athletes and workers.

London has the worst rate of obesity in the UK with over a third of London's children aged 10-11 classed as overweight or obese. The highest rates are in the Olympic host boroughs, either from leading inactive lives and/or depending on a highly processed, high fat, sugar, additive filled fast food and drink diet. This obesity time bomb is a personal and public tragedy and an increasing burden on the health system and tax payer. That is why my top criteria for catering at the Games was for procurement contracts to specify targets of 75% unprocessed, 50% local and 30% organic based on the Soil Association 'targets for life'.

However LOCOG has argued that it is not a good yardstick and could cause potential distorting effects on local supply chains. I don't agree with this assumption, as I believe that the private sector should be working towards procurement policies that reflect similar criteria in their catering contracts. This type of procurement is already happening in some schools and other parts of the public sector, although I think there is still much more that can be done, given London schools and hospitals serve 110 million meals a year.

I have argued for a high proportion of the food to be from vegetarian sources with meat used sparingly and LOCOG has agreed to increase their proportion of menu items that are without meat/fish contents. This reflects research that shows that almost a fifth of global greenhouse gas emissions are associated with livestock production and this is set to double by 2050.



Around 14 million meals are expected to be served at the 2012 Olympic Games – with at least 20% of those expected to come from McDonald's – which is the only branded food outlet to be allowed at the Games.

I am delighted that through my lobbying LOCOG has agreed to provide free drinking water at all venues. The commitment to fairtrade items is also very welcome

programmes of the current *London Food Strategy* work. And, it is an ambition that I totally support.

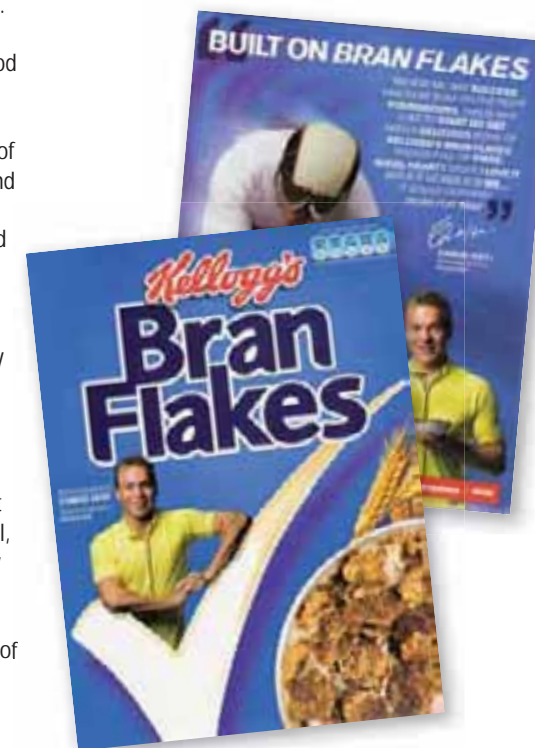
I have argued that, before and during the Games, there should be visible and engaging food marketing that inspires and informs the young people and Londoners of the merits of healthy eating and its role in sports. The understanding of seasonal, local and organic produce available and the benefits of various eating habits for the local and global environment should also be advanced - and this could include high profile athletes promoting healthy and sustainable food. LOCOG has agreed to look at this idea and I hope it will prevent world class athletes from accepting very lucrative sponsorship contracts that continue to link sporting achievement with fast food or energy drinks.

I have also argued that, alongside the Games, there should be a huge food festival that showcases the best of British cuisines, seasonal, local and diverse produce reflecting the diversity of London's multi-cultural population. It should include regional beverages, such as wine and beer, although it may have to take place outside of the Games' venues.

To date, LOCOG has made some positive commitments: agreeing to a complete exclusion of fish species and stocks identified by the Marine Conservation Society as fish 'to avoid', with all fish served to be from demonstrably sustainable stocks. All tea, coffee, sugar and bananas will be fair-trade, with chocolate being either fairtrade certified or ethically sourced. Local, small medium enterprises and black and minority

ethnic groups have been specifically targeted as suppliers that can bid for business; and a there is a commitment to provide high quality food at affordable prices so that low income groups are not excluded.

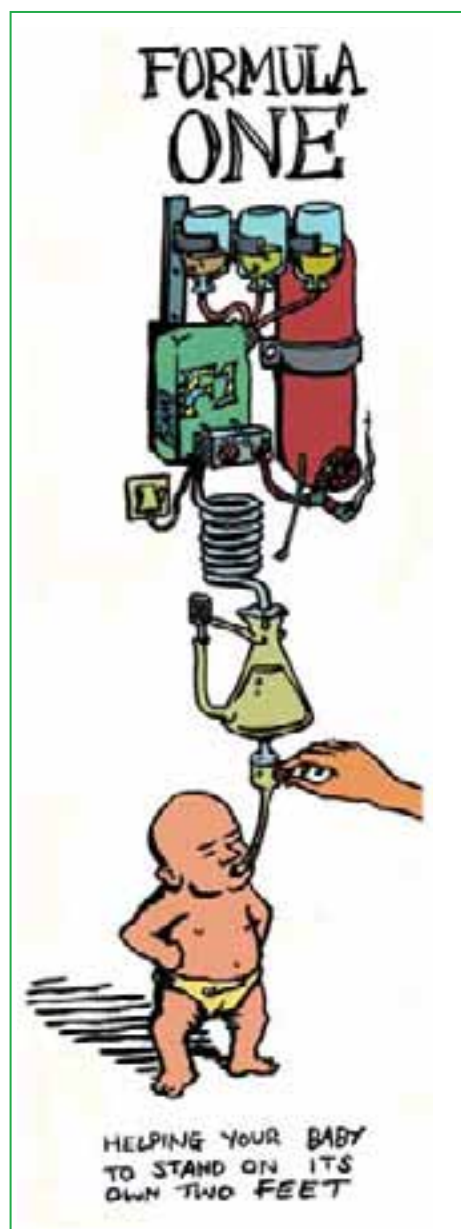
I understand there has not been a food strategy at previous Olympics Games and the London Olympics will be the first. Much has been achieved but much has still to be fought for so that the incredible diversity of food variety, rich cuisines and food cultures that exist are no longer overshadowed in the lives of so many Londoners whose experience of food is limited to fried, highly processed, high fat, salt and sugar foods from the fast food and drink industry.



Chris Hoy is one of the high profile, Olympic gold medal winning athletes who is happy to back a high sugar product in ads which show him cycling. Kellogg's Bran Flakes performed very well in 2009, with sales up 10.5% to £32 million. Kellogg's attributes much of this success to Sir Chris Hoy becoming the face of the brand.

Food companies:

“We will beat world hunger with fortified foods!”



While the World Food Summit last autumn reaffirmed the right of all people to health-giving foods, the food companies are working out how to make a profit from feeding 9 billion people. Their vision? A technical fix. **Tim Lobstein** reports.

When the world's biggest food companies assembled to demonstrate their products to the International Congress on Nutrition in Bangkok last year, they all brought with them a similar message. The world, they said, would soon be facing a crisis in food production. Hunger would stalk the masses. Poorer nations faced famine and millions would die from malnutrition – but fear not for the solution was at hand!

As if with once voice, the solution being touted by the multinational companies is food fortification. Cheap products, with long shelf-lives, processed, packaged, sterile, flavoured and, above all, fortified to ensure our optimum health.

This is not science fiction, though it sounds like it. **Nestlé**, the world leader, promises “Nutrition Security for all,” with the puzzling claim that the company will create, “shared value,” by providing “affordable food fortification.”

PepsiCo, the thrusting snacks and soft drinks company, is trying desperately to improve its junk food image and promises to combat hunger and, “deliver against the Millennium Development Goal to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger by 2010.” How? “We are working towards developing nutritious fortified products to reduce hunger in select developing countries, particularly India, South Africa and Nigeria...”

PepsiCo now claims to be, “an active participant in the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN), whose mission is to reduce malnutrition through the use of food fortification.” GAIN is a foundation part-funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and dedicated to providing fortified processed food as a solution to malnutrition – not just in famine areas where

by Tim Lobstein, former Director of The Food Commission & Editor of The Food Magazine.

emergency relief is needed, but as a solution to chronic hunger.

PepsiCo has presumably moved in to occupy the space recently vacated by **Danone**, who sat on the board of GAIN for several years. **Danone's** vision: “Bringing health through food to as many people as possible.” Their view on dealing with poverty and hunger? Try this:

“We believe that all are entitled to health through food. Low income must not preclude nutrition. We work daily to make our products affordable to more and more people across the planet. In Indonesia we are working with the World Food Programme to market our probiotic product **Activia** at between 20 and 28 cents per portion...”

The food ingredient companies are also working up a similar storm. **Danisco**, the major ingredient supplier in Denmark, is seeking, “to find cost-effective ways of making processed and packaged foods that still meet consumer sensory expectations... to help deliver safe and nutritious food for people who would otherwise not be able to buy products.” A company spokeswoman has described their target products as, “one step up from survival foods,” provided by NGOs and aid programmes. Costs can be cut, she said, by optimising recipes, “For instance, it may be possible to supply emulsifiers and enzymes that can allow for higher yielding or lower quality wheat to be used in baked goods.”

Companies are emphasising food safety as their selling point. Their sterile, processed foods will not decay and become unhygienic. **Danisco** sees their target market to be the new urban poor, for whom perishable foods may not be available or safe to consume. **Danisco** products, said the spokeswoman, “are aimed at people who may have rotten food otherwise.”

This would all be laughable if it were not so deadly serious and backed by so many billions of investment dollars. A rational approach to

Nestlé publicity photo, and information, for Nido Essentia.



Nestlé publicity information for Nido Essentia

“Nearly 70% of sub-Saharan Africa's 700 million people live on less than **USD \$4 per day**, and millions of African parents struggle to provide their children with nutritionally balanced foods. While many families produce carbohydrate-rich staple crops, such as maize and rice, they often lack affordable access to milk, meat, and fish. These products provide children with the essential proteins and fats that they need for healthy growth and development.

To help West African parents offer their children with a more balanced diet, **Nestlé** has created a whole milk product, **NIDO Essentia®**, that is sold in affordably packaged units. Unlike milk products that use a mixture of reconstituted skim milk powder and vegetable oils, **NIDO Essentia** is made with full cream and includes a complete complement of milk-based proteins.

In Benin, Gambia, and Guinea, **Nestlé** partners with small entrepreneurs who sell **NIDO Essentia** door to door or through small retail shops based in low-income communities. This grassroots approach to marketing and distribution increases income-earning opportunities for large numbers of women entrepreneurs, and it has helped **NIDO Essentia** achieve 80% penetration across rural and urban markets since its introduction.”



food security would focus on: ensuring a high proportion of local production (to reflect cultural acceptability and to avoid exposure to long supply chains), small scale (to avoid over-exposure to mono-culture hazards, and to avoid exposure to monopolistic suppliers), bio-diverse (to ensure continued availability of species suitable for cropping, to provide some crops when others fail, and to provide a range of nutrients, some not recognised yet) and fairly-traded (to ensure investment in sustainable production and labour reproduction, and to counter poverty – a primary cause of under-nutrition).

Globalised food companies, as they presently operate, have developed longer and longer supply chains, larger-scale enterprises, and reduced biodiversity for the main staple food crops. Furthermore, the companies have a poor reputation regarding fair-trade practices and wage levels for their workers. For fifty years or more, the industry has sought to increase total production quantities of commodity crops, not to ensure widespread security of access and certainly not to ensure good nutrition for all.

The food insecurity they have created will now be solved, it appears, by more of the same, only with nutrient fortification.

**Powdered food for the poor...
...served with a smile.**

Nestlé's stand at the International Congress on Nutrition in Bangkok, 2009.

The small print (above right) adds: 19 billion iodine enriched Maggi bouillon cubes are sold in Central and West Africa each year.

A farmer's diary - opening salvo - Farming v.2.0

Our new farming columnist Tim Waygood with a talk on the wildside...

My parents met at the local young farmers club, their parents farmed two villages apart. I thought everyone was a farmer, until I went to school. Every relation was farming in some way, cousins, uncles and siblings in law.

I was going to be a farmer forever, I got a degree in agriculture but the farm was not a viable option. I diversified at 22, starting and growing an events business called MotivAction, by the time I had got to 42 none of us in the family were farming. A familiar farming story, over 200,000 (50%) farms have vanished in my lifetime. Now the average age of farmers that are left is over 60 and there are more people in prison than working the land.

The story of my life has been holding onto – albeit as tenant – this small farm over the years of set-aside and then starting to farm again, but totally differently – the objective being to create an ecological alternative to corporate supermarket consumerism. And, at least to have a go at making a future so my children will be able to say I tried. So Emma, my gorgeous agrarian partner, my brother, and I, with the bemusement and support of former farmers, set about farming again.

Reducing the number of farms is deliberate policy, enacted first by UK governments and latterly by the European Union. The big farmers are kept drunk on subsidies whilst the small, medium and family farms have been squeezed out. Farms have been commoditised in order to create and feed a food industry. This is a globally driven policy. Currently there are 1,500,000 small farms in Poland, some of the most biologically sustainable food production enterprises in Europe, being deliberately taken out of business, to make way for global agri-business.

Back in the UK, one supermarket now makes more profit than the whole of UK agriculture. We are reliant on oil and gas to make nitrates and



David, our grower, with the pumpkin and squash harvest.

pesticides – these accounting for around 40% of the fossil fuel inputs into agriculture. A few corporations dominate agri-business. Meanwhile the food industry has created an obesity epidemic, costing the UK billions, as well as a population totally disconnected from the land and food.

My father built a pig herd, when this became unviable in 1987, the pigs went, and the land was 'set-aside' sown to grass and left fallow – ironically I was studying a degree in agriculture at the time. As happened across Hertfordshire, the animals disappeared from view.

Shortage of cash led to a new business being spawned via a local advert entitled 'Everyone remembers their first bang' and inviting people to come to the farm clay shooting. Bizarrely, from this small start, quite a sizeable events business grew over the next 20 years that enabled the farm to be retained. We had fun creating games like 'Human Table Football', and 'Blind Landrover Driving'. But, I knew I didn't want to do that for the rest of my life.

One thing that commentators all agree on is that food and farming must change. We must feed people in the future without using nitrate

fertilisers. The only route that is being seriously considered and actively pursued by the powers that be (corporations and government have revolving doors and set the policy) is more of the same, more agri-business, larger farms, plus the promise of GMO's being able to fix nitrogen - technical fixes, and the same chemical, and linear industrial model.

Could there be an alternative? Would it involve envisaging farms as a place to produce food, and the farm as a service provider - a polycultural, complex, vertically integrated, systems and ecological approach based on biological efficiency? Would it involve farms that connect directly with customers and so are not slaves to a single or handful of buyers? If we can combine food and farming systems that are environmentally sound and productive, with business models that work, then maybe we can forge an alternative and a renaissance of real food and farming.

Convinced by background reading and given a kick up the butt after falling ill for months and facing my mortality in 2007, my family and I moved from passive observer of the farming scene for 20 years to bringing the family farm

back into production. Fire: Aim: Ready has been the approach to establishing a farm to feed people.

Church Farm spans 175 acres in Ardeley, a small village in north Hertfordshire. Now two years into what I call Farming v.2.0, we have managed to open a farm store, farm café, veg box scheme, local mechanic service, green gym, offer green meetings, events, courses, wood cabin hire, summer camps, have started a mobile farm shop as well as set up a 'rural care' providing places for people with learning difficulties to help on the farm. Next month there will be a farm vet service. In the summer we held a camping and music festival. Every type of animal, vegetable and local fruit, even walnut orchards have been established. All these efforts are concentrated on offering an alternative to corporate supermarket consumerism, putting provenance and human scale enterprise first. This is a farm that grows food and provides services for customers.

All of this depends upon customers. I use the word deliberately rather than consumers. Here we have conscious customers who can see the provenance of their food and get as involved as they like. Some visit nearly every day, to some we deliver. The produce we bring into the store is either from local, organic or fair trade sources.

The happy co-incidence of a farm to feed people is that I tend to say, "come on my land," and customers never ask me to abuse the animals, chemically castrate the pigs, destroy the hedges or pump carcinogens onto their vegetables. I don't do this as I eat the produce and live here. The farm does not rely on any one product or customer, true diversity is, I believe, essential for long term resilience in any sphere.

Coming soon at Church Farm will be a Farm Vet service and then the culmination of the plan will be proving the viability of a Farm Membership. Something that could, depending on the future, be of far greater value than joining a golf club or gym. The farm is designed to be able to feed a wide diet to at least 200 people, joining the farm will enable 200 members to have a stake in the farm's success – and when profits are made, 30% will be distributed amongst the members.

Membership is for a 10 year period and although members are not obligated to spend



Tim Waygood, with his sweetheart, and farming partner, Emma.

Farming v.2.0 at Church Farm

- Vegetable garden of 8 acres growing over 200 varieties of vegetables and herbs grown in Beards Oak Kitchen Gardens.
- New orchard of 8 acres, 130 varieties of fruit: apples, gages, plums, cherries, quince, medlar, damsons and more...
- Vicarage Field 2 acre soft fruit enclosure
- 60 Black Welsh Mountain sheep
- 60 Lleyn sheep & ram
- 30 Red Poll cattle & bull plus followers
- 6 British Lop & 6 Berkshire breeding sows plus boars
- 600 Light Sussex, Cuckoo Maran, Black Rock, Rhode Island Red and White Leghorn hens
- 300 Sasso outdoor reared poultry
- 200 Norfolk Black turkeys
- 100 Embden geese
- 100 Aylesbury ducks
- 3 Bee hives
- 20 acres of new woods in-filled with wild cherry and hazel
- 2 acre walnut orchard
- 4 acres of wild bird seeds and pollen/nectar mix
- 30 acres of woods: 3 of ancient hornbeam coppice, 7 acres of established 60 years old woodland and 20 acres of mixed, mainly hardwoods, planted over the past 10 years
- 2 acres of rough nesting ground amongst a line of old clay pits
- 2 ponds established in 1996, two more flood ponds and a new pond in the vegetable gardens.

See video at:

www.churchfarmardeley.co.uk
www.peoplelandfood.co.uk

any money with the farm, the win: win also means that, in the event of food security issues, farm members will have 10 years food security. Currently even the wealthy enjoy only about 3-5 days food security through the 'just in time' supermarket supply chain. Pioneer Memberships will be released at a cost of £2,000.00 for 10 years to people within a 10 mile radius of the farm. Groups from further afield, including London, will be able to join the farm by combining together in groups. We will then provide weekly deliveries to pick up points.

That's a bit of an introduction and update. We certainly do not have all the answers, but we are giving it a go.

Next step is getting together with other like minded farmers to form a national network, an agrarian renaissance if you like... there are 5,000 farmers who deal direct with the public, it's from this base we could pull off creating a nationwide, alternative umbrella brand. So that's next week's job.



Church Farm has a rural care facility whereby they work with local organisations to support people with learning difficulties to work on the farm.



You can visit Church Farm - see how it works, and buy food.

The new farm owners

Sue Branford, of GRAIN*, investigates how corporate investors are leading the rush for control of overseas farmland

Scarcely a week goes by without news of another big land deal between a rich nation and a poor, developing country. In January 2010, Saudi Arabia announced one of the biggest farming investments ever made in East Africa – a 750 million riyal (£123million (m)) project in Sudan. It is linked to a much larger Saudi initiative, called the 7x7 project, by which the Saudis are planning to cultivate 700,000 hectares (1.7million acres) of land in various African countries to produce seven million tonnes of rice in seven years. At the same time India is encouraging its companies to outsource food production overseas and, since 2008, Indian firms have acquired more than 800,000 hectares (2m acres) of farmland in African countries, including Ethiopia. A group of South African businessmen is negotiating an 8m-hectare (5m acres) deal in the Democratic Republic of Congo with the support of the South African government. And so it goes on and on...

The current land grab, which shows no signs of abating, was indirectly spawned by the international financial crisis. In 2007, many financial players – the investment houses that manage workers' pensions, private equity funds, hedge funds, big grain traders and so on – saw that the sub-prime mortgage bubble was about to burst and moved money into the safer commodities market. Although there was no real shortage of food at the time, this rush into commodities led to a dramatic increase in the price of food – especially of cereals, but also of dairy and meat. The impact was exacerbated by the control over the world food market exercised by a few large corporations, such as **Cargill** and **ADM**, who seized the chance to make windfall profits.

Countries dependent on food imports were badly hit, with a big increase in the domestic price of some food staples, particularly rice. Not surprisingly, the poor in many countries were angered. By early 2008, riots had broken out in nearly 40 countries. Panic-stricken governments rushed to increase their food imports, leading

several food-producing nations to restrict exports, fearful that they too could be hit by domestic shortages.

Food prices did come down from their peaks, but by then the faith of many governments in global markets to provide for people's food needs was already irrevocably damaged. Cash-rich but food-insecure nations, such as Japan and the Gulf states, are now trying to outsource food production to foreign countries so that they never again feel so vulnerable. Adnan A. al-Naeem, Secretary General of the Asharqia Chamber of Commerce and Industry in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia, put his government's position clearly: "The Kingdom is not a rice-producing country. We are always under the control of exporters who dictate the price. The best option we have is to become rice producers ourselves by investing in agriculture in countries that still have vast land for rice production."

The current land grab is comparable with the scramble for Africa in the late 19th century, in that large areas of the world are being taken over by

foreign powers. Now, however, the governments are not using military force but are waving cheque books, which in today's world can be a more powerful weapon. Although land is being grabbed in many different parts of the world, Africa is under particularly heavy assault. Many impoverished governments in sub-Saharan Africa are sorely tempted by the offer of money up-front.

Some of the world's poorest countries are letting go of land. Take Sudan again. The government is reported to have leased a total of at least 1.5 million hectares of farmland to foreign investors, but Sudan is also the world's largest recipient of foreign aid, with 5.6 million of its citizens dependent on food packages from abroad. There is real concern that, with the country sending food abroad, the plight of these vulnerable people may become even worse. International institutions and governments have moved to allay such fears. Jacques Diouf,

La Via Campesina farmers, Aichatou Sani (Niger) and Dolores Hortense Kinkodila-Tombo (Congo-Brazza) protesting against land grabbing.



Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, said that the deals had the potential to transform developing countries by providing jobs in agriculture and other sectors. During the G8 Summit in Italy, in July 2009, Tokyo proposed a set of principles, "to harmonise and maximise the interests of both host countries and investors." But will this flurry of initiatives really turn the land grab into a win-win situation for all concerned?

One of the problems is that, while governments are facilitating the deals, private companies are the ones getting control of the land. And their interests are simply not the same as those of governments. Take one example, in August 2009, the government of Mauritius, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, got a long-term lease for 20,000 ha (50,000 acres) of prime farm land in Mozambique to produce rice for the Mauritian market. This is out-sourced food production, no question. But it is not the government of Mauritius, on behalf of the Mauritian people, that is going to farm that land and ship the rice back home. Instead, the Mauritian Minister of Agro-Industry has sub-leased the land to two corporations, one from Singapore (which is anxious to develop the market for its proprietary hybrid rice seeds in Africa) and one from Swaziland (which specialises in cattle production, but is also involved in biofuels in southern Africa).

This is typical. And the fact is that private investors are not turning to agriculture to solve world hunger or eliminate rural poverty. They want profit, pure and simple. With extreme weather affecting harvests in many different parts of the world, most analysts expect a long-term upward trend in food prices, even if there are short-term highs and lows. So it is now possible for investors to make money -- big money -- from investments in the resource base required for food production. And that resource base, particularly land and water, is under stress as never before. In the aftermath of the financial crisis, so-called alternative investments, such as those in infrastructure or farm land, are all the rage.



Quickbite



Talking food in the North West

Over the next few months, North West wellbeing and health campaign *Our Life* will be launching a public campaign around food. The 'Talking Food' campaign will be an exercise in community engagement. In conjunction with local community based partners in the North West, it will create a discussion around what kind of food system people want to see.

Our Life's head of campaigns and advocacy **Calum Irving** told *The Food Magazine*: "By linking the problems people have with food and diet to the wider food supply system, our campaign will help identify solutions to the North West's food issues, from obesity to access to healthy food, to sustainability. The food system is complicated and its influencers vast. By taking the deliberative route with local people, *Our Life* will help locate and give voice to their major concerns and the potential solutions. Unlike many other deliberative processes, we will also work with local people to develop and implement campaign actions which will effect change."

Our Life's planning for this campaign is well underway. Earlier this month, a stakeholder group, comprising Heart of Mersey, the Food Standards Agency and regional and sub-regional public sector food leads met to consider the campaign approach.

Over the coming weeks, *Our Life* will identify local partners who will manage the deliberative events which will be delivered from late spring through to November.

For further information on the 'Talking Food' campaign contact *Our Life's* head of campaigns and advocacy, **Calum Irving**, at calum.irving@ourlife.org.uk

Yet, ironically, the very actions that the outside investors are taking will increase the likelihood of a global food shortage in the future. The lands they are grabbing have their own precious ecosystems and is almost always used in various ways by local people. Although governments say that they are making available only 'empty' or 'marginal' land, such a concept simply does not exist for many of the traditional peasant and indigenous communities in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The world destroys this biodiversity at its peril, for it is hugely important to have diverse plant populations and species-rich natural and agricultural ecosystems, particularly at times of environmental stress. This biodiversity, enhanced by generations of farmers, provides a foundation for adapting agriculture to our rapidly changing world.

The outside investors are destroying existing ecosystems and creating huge areas of monoculture crops dependent on chemical fertilizers and pesticides. And with the destruction of the ecosystems and the take-over of farm

lands comes the dispersal of the peasantry and other traditional communities of farmers and herders, who have a profound knowledge of local biodiversity and who are best able to look after the food needs of their communities. They must be at the centre of any solution to the problems of climate change and the food crisis. Yet the current breakneck land grab is helping to destroy the very basis of their livelihoods. And it is all of us, throughout the world, who will pay the price.

***GRAIN** is a small, international, non-profit organisation that works to support small farmers and social movements in their struggles for community-controlled and biodiversity-based food systems. For more information, go to: www.grain.org

Is it right to keep our shelves stocked by grabbing up land in other countries?

Community supported agriculture (CSA): A model for our times?

by Liz Charles

As you browse the aisles of the supermarket, choosing from the vast array of produce on offer from all parts of the globe, maybe wondering what environmental impact each product has, and whether the producer is being fairly rewarded, do you ever wish that you could have a little more influence and control over the food that ends up on your table? If the answer is yes, then you might be interested in a partnership model for growing and distributing local food that has been gradually spreading around the globe for the past 40 years. In the UK, we call it Community Supported Agriculture, or 'CSA' (a term borrowed from the US) but it is part of a growing movement operating in many places, including the US, Japan, Europe, and Australia, under various names.

CSA is a grassroots movement and consequently it can take many different forms, from large 'subscription farms' supplying food to hundreds of subscribers, to small community projects. The essential feature that binds these together is a partnership between those who grow the food and those who purchase it, so that some of the risk of production is taken on by the consumer. The consumer becomes a member (sometimes termed 'subscriber') and pledges to buy a 'share of the harvest' for the season. This requires entering into a relationship of trust with the producer and commitment to the enterprise: there is no guarantee about the exact nature of the share as this can be affected, for example, by the season's growing conditions or animal health. The share price can be paid up front either annually, quarterly or monthly. The advantage to the farmer or grower is that they have a guaranteed market for the produce and will receive some finance in advance to purchase inputs for that season.

The most common types of produce from a CSA are vegetables and fruit, but others supply meat or dairy products, or a whole basket of goods, sometimes sourced from a number of farms working co-operatively.

The first examples of CSAs appeared in the 1960s in Japan, Switzerland and Germany. They were motivated by concerns about food safety and the urbanisation of agricultural land, and also the growing tendency for agriculture to become industrialised. In Japan, some women responsible for feeding their families began to band together and approach local organic farmers with a request to supply them directly. This cooperative approach became known as Teikei or "face-to-face" and was firmly rooted in the principle of building trusting relationships and mutual support.

CSAs can be started either by farmers or citizen groups. They appeared in the US and the UK in the 1980s. They quickly spread in the US, but growth in the UK has been much slower with Box Schemes, Farmers' Markets and Farm Shops being the main forms of direct selling. Because the movement is rooted in concerns about industrial scale food production, CSAs nearly always adopt organic production methods and often include a strong element of community building. Many people who join a CSA do so primarily to obtain a supply of fresh, local food from a supplier they know. Others get involved for more political and philosophical reasons because they have concerns about the way in which food is produced, packaged and distributed in the globalised industrial agriculture system that has developed over the past 50 years.

Members can get involved in their CSAs in lots different ways. Many CSAs offer 'work shares' at a reduced cost in

return for a set number of hours helping on the land. For those who would prefer a less energetic role, there may be an organising committee that deals with distribution, communications, and planning. Linked to the community and relationship building theme, the CSA may hold social and educational events such as walks, talks, dances, picnics or barbeques. Some CSAs also include social objectives and offer opportunities for people with particular needs, such as mental health or learning difficulties, to join in the experience of growing food.

CSAs perform well in terms of price when compared with the cost of organic produce in supermarkets, but for those who may still find it too expensive there is often the option of a reduced price work share or in some CSAs (e.g. Stroud Community Agriculture) a bursary scheme.

Although CSA has been relatively slow to spread in the UK so far, with the current growth in awareness of the potential environmental and health benefits of local food, interest seems to be rising. The Soil Association is supporting and

promoting the model by providing information and training to existing and aspiring groups and individuals. Their website¹ provides a register of existing and emerging initiatives where it is possible to search to see if there is a CSA near you.

Many CSAs also have their own websites with information about what they produce, how to join, and what other activities take place. There are some well established enterprises such as Earthshare near Forres, Morayshire and Stroud Community Agriculture (both providing vegetables and fruit), Dragon Orchard Cropsharers (apples, pears, cider, apple juice and preserves), and Tablehurst and Plaw Hatch Community Farm (Meat, dairy and vegetables). These have all been running for between 8 and 15 years. They are now being joined by more recently established schemes, some of which are appearing in

northern counties where the model has been slower to develop. Examples are the Scarbrough Shearling Partnership in Yorkshire which offers unique access to local shearling lamb, Swillington CSA near Leeds, and Weardale CSA in County Durham, a community initiated venture who have leased some land and are growing what they can whilst seeking some start up funding.

Joining a CSA involves more than just changing your supplier from a supermarket to a local farmer or grower. It requires a real commitment to the enterprise and a willingness to work with the seasons and with variations in the amount of produce received in your 'share'. If it is a poor season for a particular crop then there may be very little or none of it in your share that year. Vegetables will arrive unwashed and you may be expected to collect them from the farm or a collection point, and maybe weigh out your

share. If you are used to growing vegetables in your garden or allotment none of this should be a problem. If, on the other hand, you have always bought from a supermarket there is a lot to get used to.

For some people the change is just too much, but for many others it represents the beginnings of a re-connection with the food on their plate, a growing sense of ownership ('my farm') and access to the land, and an opportunity to learn and experience food production first hand. There may be some hard work involved but the joy of eating a meal that you have had a hand in producing is one of the simple pleasures of human existence that has been lost to many in the western world.

¹www.soilassociation.org/Takeaction/GetinvolvedlocallyCommunitysupportedagriculture/LocalCSAs/tabid/207/Default.aspx

The use of these old plastic water bottles is a good example of recycling on Weardale CSA in County Durham. After cutting off the bases, they make excellent cloches, protecting the plants from the weather, and rabbits.



Weardale CSA

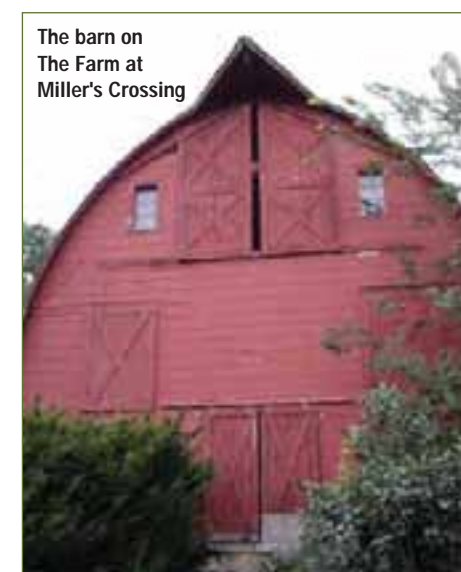


CSA USA

Jessica Mitchell, a Brooklyn native, visits a New York CSA project set up to benefit those on low incomes...

Community Supported Agriculture farms are working in partnership with 'hunger action' groups in the USA, in projects that help low income Americans to access low cost fruit and veg, whilst also supporting small, organic growers. Almost one in eight Americans are 'food poor'; according to a new report *Hunger in America 2010*, and around 37 million people, including 14 million children, regularly rely on free, emergency food handouts from charitable groups.

People living on low incomes find it very difficult to obtain enough high quality, fruit and vegetables for a healthy diet – even if they are in receipt of government assistance in the form of food stamps. Organic vegetables and fruit – of unusual varieties – is certainly often beyond the means of such consumers. Many small farms also suffer from erratic incomes. Now, campaign



The barn on The Farm at Miller's Crossing

groups have come up with projects that help meet the needs of both groups.

I visited Flatbush Farm Share – a CSA project in the multi-ethnic, low income neighbourhood where I grew up. Co-ordinated jointly by Just Food, the Hunger Action Network of New York State, and the New York City Coalition Against Hunger (NYCCHAH), the project offers low cost 'shares' of vegetables produced on a farm in upstate New York, a place called The Farm at Miller's Crossing. I also visited that 200 acre

organic farm in the Hudson Valley, just over 100 miles outside of the city, to find out what farmer Chris Cashen thinks of the Farm Share scheme.

"You like to see people's faces light up, and compliment you – oh it looks so great, and tastes so good. We cannot guarantee we will have everything all the time, but, what we do have is really nice, and affordable," says Cashen. The farm is designed to produce, "a little of a lot of things," for the approximate 22 week a year season (the ferocious upstate New York weather will allow no longer), so that, "We can give people a healthy, diverse, delicious diet, at least for part of the year."

Dozens of crops are produced on the farm – for example more than ten types of potatoes, nearly as many type of tomatoes, and salad greens – with the majority going to CSA customers, to farmers markets, or being sold on farm. Cashen says that such diverse production takes real skill – both in agriculture, and communication with customers, but that it is more secure than dealing with the perfidies of supermarket supply chains, "Complexity comes from the diversity, but in the diversity comes our security."

The CSA scheme provides vegetables, but also enables people in the city to get to know about agriculture. During my visit, Cashen told me about how tomato blight had destroyed most of his crop, with floods also putting paid



Joel Berg, executive director of NYCCAH, says that last year, New York had 64 billionaires, and 1.7 million people living in food poverty. The earnings of the 64 billionaires were approximately equal to the income of the 1.7 million.



to many varieties of lettuce. "It is such a shame, people really love the tomatoes, they get excited about them and so do we. But, they will get something else of equal value, and we have explained the situation to them in our weekly newsletters, so they are really good about it," says Cashen. This sort of understanding is possible because of the inter-dependency, and shared ethos – between farm and customers.

And, as Cashen points out, crucially, "I get paid anyway in a CSA scheme, the customer doesn't lose out on value, so, it works for all of us, even if certain crops fail for some reason. That is not true for my wholesale clients – if I don't have tomatoes, I can't sell them tomatoes."

The Farm Share CSA project does sell full price shares, but, it also has funding to offer supported shares. Some shares are offered at lower cost, and, consumers can use their food stamps to buy the shares. Generally, it is not just lack of income that can exclude consumers from participation in CSA schemes, but also the fact that food stamps are distributed on a monthly basis, when to work, CSA schemes need to guarantee a farmer a certain number of shares for an entire season – so the farmer knows what amount to produce, and also has a guaranteed income. It is this inability to purchase a full season's share up front that excludes those in receipt of food stamps. Farm Share has the funding to buy seasonal shares up front on behalf of food stamp customers, and to wait for monthly reimbursement from the participants' food stamp allocation.

In Flatbush, the neat tables, full of colourful, organic produce, are put up in

the back of a church yard, just off a busy Brooklyn thoroughfare. One afternoon a week, volunteers gather here to arrange things so local people can come and collect their share of food. The community shares recipes for more unusual varieties, and, on the day I visited, they were planning a trip to see The Farm at Miller's Crossing. "I have a baby and I love that I can give him organic instead of normal food, it's wonderful," says one participant, Nicole. "It helps tremendously, you get a good amount for the amount you are paying, I find so."

Joel Berg, executive director of NYCCAH, joined me at the distribution, and pointed out that calculations show that the economics costs of food insecurity, in the form of ill health and disability, cost around \$90 billion a year, whereas, it would take just around \$24 million a year to ensure all Americans could access a decent diet – an amount he would like to see distributed through a living wage, and safety net programmes. According to Berg, it is clear that, "A cornerstone of making this economy work for everyone is good nutrition. Even if you don't give a squat about the moral issues of poverty in America, which obviously I think you should, you should support programmes like this because it's an important part of our economic growth." For Berg, food poverty in America is clearly a problem of access and not supply – with politicians simply failing to ensure that all people have the income, and support, to get hold of enough nutritious food.

Of course, funding for the programme is perilous and uncertain, even though millions of Americans continue to go hungry. Much as in the UK – no political party is willing to make wealthier citizens pay more taxes so that the money raised can be used to ensure that millions of our neighbours do not have to suffer the pain and indignities that a lack of money brings. Dealing with problems before they become a problem is not a strong suit of either the USA or Britain.

Too bad, as Berg says, for goodness sake, "Emulate our jazz, our basketball, America has some wonderful things, but don't emulate this. Programmes like these are not a success – having millions of Americans dependent upon charities to be able to feed their families is not a social success, it's a major social failure. Low income people want to be able to get food the same way as everyone else does – by buying it with money they earned. That's just not happening in our society today."

Below: Chris Cashen runs a 200 acre organic farm in the Hudson Valley, just over 100 miles outside of New York city.



Have you considered leaving a charitable gift in your will?

Nobody likes to think of their own mortality, but many of our readers have expressed an interest in leaving a legacy to *The Food Commission Research Charity*. We have been campaigning for healthier, safer food for all for more than twenty years and believe now more than ever that good food is integral to building a better future.

Modern diets are taking a heavier toll than ever on the environment, and on our health. In the UK, 70,000 deaths a year could be prevented if diets matched nutritional guidelines. Yet whilst consumers are urged with increasing vigour to 'choose health,' social inequality and an ever more monopolised and industrialised food system have ensured that in reality the ability to choose is as difficult as ever.

Our campaigns have tackled issues from food irradiation and artificial additives in food; to food misinformation aimed at children and parents; and nutritional information provision in shops and restaurants. Through the production of thorough, rigorous reports for policy makers, by raising awareness of issues among consumers, building award winning websites or producing educational materials for schools: we've always communicated our message with passion and expertise.

Through our publication, *The Food Magazine*, our investigative reporters and researchers challenge the heavy handed marketing of the food industry and ask tough questions about the effectiveness of government food policies. We write about and work alongside dedicated community food workers across the UK. Our reputation for accurate and responsible reporting means that our voice is listened to and that our campaigns capture the imagination of consumers from all walks of life. This type of independent journalism takes time to produce.

We have never accepted donations from corporate sponsors and do not receive any government funding. This enables us to maintain genuine independence in an increasingly commercialised world, but also means that we are reliant on small charitable grants, research commissions and the generous support of our subscribers. Any pledge you make will help us to continue our work now and in the long term.

Why should I make a will?

- A Will is a legal document that says who you want your money & possessions to go to when you die.
- An up to date Will is the only way to be sure your loved ones, and causes you care about, will get the gifts you intend for them.



- Many people think that they do not have enough money to make a Will worthwhile. However it is surprising how the value of your home, possessions and savings add up.
- A Will is a legally binding document. Always consult a solicitor or a member of the Institute of Professional Will Writers.

Find a solicitor by

- looking in your local telephone directory
- calling the **Law Society** on 020 7242 1222
- www.waterlowlegal.com/indexsolicitors.htm

Types of gifts

Three ways to make a big difference

1. **'Residual' legacy** - Give a percentage of your estate after all other gifts to friends and loved ones are satisfied.
2. **'Pecuniary' legacy** - Give a specific amount in £'s. This can be designated for general use or for a special purpose of your choice such as 'food in schools'/'children's food'
3. **'Specific' legacy** - Give an item such as a personal possession (an antique, jewellery) land, buildings or investments such as shares.

A legacy to The Food Commission Research Charity may reduce your liability for inheritance tax and will also help to ensure that future generations can benefit from our work.

Your Legacy

Make a **difference** to the diets of the **future**

How to make or change your will

1. **Make a list of all you Own** – house, furniture, jewellery, car, savings (Assets) and their value.
2. **Make a list of what you Owe** – mortgage, loans, other debts (Liabilities).
3. **Make a list of Who you want to give something to.**
4. Decide **what type of gifts you want to leave to each.** (See 'Types of gifts').
5. Choose your executors & **meet a solicitor**
6. **Keep your Will in a safe place.**

In addition to fulfilling an important role in providing for your family and friends, your Will can be a way to make a wonderful gift to The Food Commission Research Charity.

It can be gratifying to know a portion of your property will be put to good/wider use after you no longer need it, and towards something you have enjoyed supporting during your life-time.

At the Food Commission we receive no Government or commercial funding, so if you choose to remember us in your will, you'll be helping to safeguard the continuation of our groundbreaking research, writing, campaigning and community work.

This can be simple to arrange. All that is needed is the next time you update your Will or trust put in a provision for *The Food Commission Research Charity*, making sure that our full name and address – **94 White Lion Street, London, N1 9PF** and **Registered Charity Number 1000358** – is included. You can change this any time you choose.

Where will your money go?

The Food Commission is staffed by a small but very hard working and dedicated team. Your money will not be used to cover the higher administrative costs associated with larger organisations but will directly fund our project work. Gifts to us are used to support our community work and campaigns; to help us reach new audiences and to produce ground-breaking investigative reports, which will also appear as articles in our publication, *The Food Magazine*. You can be assured that your gift will make a genuine difference to our work.

We do not have to know, but it helps to ensure that your intended gift is passed on if you or your solicitor lets us know that you have pledged to us.

All gifts are of value. Any sum, from as little as £10 will make a genuine difference to our ability to campaign for safer, healthier food for all.

In search of a greener apple

by Anna Glayzer

Back in October, *The Food Magazine* office received a basket of apples wrapped with Union Jack bunting. The accompanying PR blurb explained that these were *Rubens* apples; the, “perfect apple,” with, “a classic tang and a delicious crunch.” It continued, “It’s sweet but not overly so, and is a traditional English reddy-green colour.” Indeed, the apples were attractive. The common reaction among those in the office that tried them was surprise at how very sweet they were, some thought unpalatably so. Besides taste, strong emphasis was placed on the environmental benefits of Rubens: “A good start, but how environmentally friendly is it?” asked the PR blurb. “For starters, it’s grown in Kent, so the carbon footprint is tiny.” It went on to list, somewhat vaguely, “minimum usage of pesticides,” and, “best possible environmental practices,” among the Rubens’ environmental credentials.

The notion of marketing a particular type of food product on the grounds of it constituting a more environmentally friendly choice than its competitors is not new. Nor is the idea of promoting home grown produce over that from abroad as more sustainable. In fact, as 70% of the British apple and pear crop is grown in Kent, the PR emphasis placed on the Rubens’ county of origin is clearly intended to set it apart from imported apples. The UK produces less than half of the apples it consumes. The UK market for ‘eating’ apples is 495,000 tonnes per year, and UK production harvested in autumn 2009 was 127,000 tonnes. Even during UK apple season, supermarkets’ shelves are full of apples from France, Italy, and even from as far as New Zealand and South Africa.

UK origins aside, the Rubens seems to be being marketed as a particularly environmentally friendly variety. As marketing companies buy up the exclusive right to licence growers to produce particular varieties of apple this kind of ‘branding’ will almost certainly be something we will see more of. As consumer concerns over climate change continue to grow, so too will marketing on the grounds of perceived environmental impact. The question is whether measuring carbon footprints is a sufficient way of measuring this impact. Will consumers distinguishing between one variety of apple over another on the grounds of carbon output really take us any closer to a more sustainable food system?

An Italian bred cross between an Elstar and a Gala, the Rubens was launched in the UK in 2008. The rights to market the Rubens in the UK are owned by Norman Collett Ltd, the Kent based fruit marketing group who supply the multiples on behalf of Mid Kent Growers Ltd and several independent growers. Sarah Calcutt, business development manager at Norman Collett, said that the Rubens apple was a benchmark for the future of UK apple production. “Consumer tastes are changing. People want apples that are crisp, crunchy and sweet. Rubens looks and tastes incredibly appealing. They are high yielding and more resistant to pests so require less fertiliser. Also, Rubens are picked in the third week of September, can be stored for months and released after the competitive October marketing window. In chilled storage they can last through to April or May.”



Rubens growers Sarah and William Neaves of Little Sharsted Farm, Doddington in Kent with Nigel Jenner, technical director at Norman Collett.

Rubens is not the only new variety to be introduced to the UK in recent years. “Rubens is one of a number of new varieties being planted in the UK,” said Adrian Barlow, chief executive of English Apples and Pears. “Kanzi, Cameo and Jazz are all very modern varieties with a growing market share.” It is hoped that the new varieties will follow in the footsteps of Gala, now the biggest selling variety in the UK. “15 or 20 years ago,” says Barlow, “Gala and Braeburn didn’t really exist in the UK, now they represent 42% of the market.”

The smaller ‘carbon footprint’ of more modern varieties has been recently asserted by William Wolmer, managing director of Blackmoor Orchards in Hampshire. Funded by the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA), as part of a project to measure the potential impact of fruit growing on global warming, Wolmer has collected data at his orchard to measure carbon production levels. According to Wolmer, the higher yielding the production, the lower per kg carbon emissions generated. This means that the newer, higher yielding varieties like Gala have a smaller carbon print per kg than older lower yielding varieties like Cox. Adrian Barlow agrees, “What is critical, in

terms of carbon footprint, is size of crop and the amount of the crop that reaches class one standard. With the modern varieties the percentage of class one crop is very high and yields are heavy. This is in marked contrast to the Cox, which has not much more than 50% of the yield of modern varieties, and a lower grade output.”

Does this mean the end of the Cox and other older varieties? According to Barlow, the Cox is already in decline: “15 or 20 years ago the market for Cox in the UK was twice the size it is now.” Barlow also cites changing consumer tastes as part of the explanation for Cox’s dwindling prevalence: “Demand has reduced because young people want firm, crunchy, juicy, brightly coloured apples. Cox have muted colours, are not naturally very firm, and have less juice.”

The start of the decline of the Cox market predates widespread consciousness surrounding climate change. This would suggest that the rise of modern varieties like Rubens has more to do with economic efficiency than with concerns over global warming. And the decline of the Cox, with its lower percentage of supermarket grade crop, less to do with consumer tastes than the

fact that supermarkets set the standards – and standards that are concerned more with outward appearance, and marketing opportunities, than taste. According to UK fruit historian Joan Morgan: “Apple growing now is very stressful. It is only really profitable if over 80% of your crop is Grade A standard. If you want to grow apples you have to do it very large scale.”

The Rubens being touted as a greener apple on the basis of its carbon footprint is also indicative of the dominance of carbon counting within environmental discourse. William Wolmer says, of the difference between apple varieties in terms of carbon output: “It is not particularly significant. It might be in marketing terms, but in the scheme of things, any perennial tree crop will have a lower carbon yield than livestock rearing and other forms of agriculture. Even long term storage of apples after harvest has a fairly low impact.”

According to Wolmer, the agricultural industry is responsible for 7-8% of the UK’s greenhouse gas emissions (GHE), and carbon dioxide from farming accounts for 1% of the UK’s GHEs. “The real danger from agriculture comes from methane produced by livestock and nitrous oxide



A Rubens tree, after harvest.

from ploughing the soil.” Nitrous oxide from farming accounts for 4% of UK GHEs and methane 3%.

For Sue Clifford, director of charity Common Ground, focussing on carbon output of particular varieties is not helpful: “Distinction should really be made between how the apples are grown. With high yield, high density monoculture all you are doing is growing things and not worrying about supporting other life or what you are putting into the soil. If we focus on new varieties at the expense of older varieties we are losing biodiversity and genetic potential.” Common Ground campaigns for local distinctiveness in food production and organises Apple Day, now in its 21st year. For Clifford, the climate change debate has too narrow a focus: “Climate change in one sense is only a symptom of our relationship with nature across the board. Where people are making arguments in favour of soil and birds and insects, those arguments are harder to make and not so quantifiable.”

The dominance of carbon emissions as a means to assess ‘sustainability’ looks set to continue. The DEFRA strategy report released January 2010, “*Food 2030: How we get there*,” lists as one of its headline visions for the UK in 2030, “a low carbon food system which is efficient in using resources.” This may mean that carbon reduction targets, in the wrong hands, could become a tool for increasing intensification of production, as well as for promoting home grown produce.

William Wolmer suggests that the increased use of modern orchard systems (for instance, greater use of picking trains or ‘solid set’ orchard pesticide spray systems) with high early yields has not had the potential to boost production, and if this increases, output could substitute imported fruit, and a carbon reduction of up to 40% could be possible. Wolmer told *The Fruit Grower* in September 2009, “What could be more local, bio-secure and of known provenance than UK fruit? Being a net carbon sink, they remain a problem solver, not a problem creator- a marketing trump card.”

As part of its 5 year Carbon Budget Proposals, the Government seeks

In modern apple orchards trees are packed together tightly and kept to a height of 6 - 8 feet for ease of picking. The apples are thinned as they grow to increase cropping.

to reduce carbon emissions by 34% by 2020. The trend for marketing food based on its carbon seems likely to continue – with a multitude of methods for making such product-related carbon calculations. On the surface of it, the logic of decreasing reliance on imported fruit and of growing naturally higher yielding varieties that require less spraying seems sound. It is hard not to agree with Sue Clifford, however, that measuring success in terms of carbon emissions is problematic, when it takes precedence over preserving diversity. Clifford said, “Science is very good at taking things apart and looking at them, but it is not very good at putting them back together. I’m all for new varieties, but not for losing what we know. I would like to see more orchards but not a future of high yielding, high density monoculture. I want natural and cultural complexity.”

For Joan Morgan: “All this diminution of diversity is part of the international fruit growing market and the supermarket scene.” Certainly the notion of a consumer standing in a supermarket aisle weighing up the difference between a plastic bag filled with uniform looking intensively produced Rubens or a plastic bag filled with uniform, intensively produced Cox on the grounds of carbon footprint seems about as far from natural and cultural complexity as it is possible to get, and does not constitute much in the way of an actual ‘choice,’ by logical standards. This is still not to say that carbon footprinting as a measurement is not valid or even logical but, it seems to be more a matter of how it is applied, by who, and to what parts of the food system. As Wolmer points out, storing, grading and distribution of orchard fruit involves much higher energy use and therefore produces much larger footprints, than anything done prior to harvest. And, intensively produced fruit is responsible for more emissions than fruit that is produced organically.

Perhaps reform of the food system post harvest, which would mean challenging the ‘supermarket scene,’ could result in greater carbon reductions whilst easing the threat to natural complexity by reducing the pressure on growers to resort to more and more intensive systems and wasting of ‘low grade’ produce. Is the idea of herbicides and nitrogen fertilisers (both carbon intensive items) being abandoned, or a public accepting non manicured, organically produced fruit at realistic prices really so ridiculous? Certainly the prospects for a convincingly greener apple seem to lie in this direction. As opposed to just convincingly produced marketing blurb.



Hospital food: a painful groundhog day

Alex Jackson, co-ordinator of the Good Food for Our Money campaign

As an organisation, Sustain: the alliance for better food and farming, has worked hard to improve hospital food in the last ten years. During this time we have worked with a number of fantastic hospitals, inspiring catering staff and many British, sustainable producers desperate to sell their food to local hospitals. While we have seen some amazing individual successes, there has not been a wider improvement in hospital food in this period. In the eloquent words of Professor Kevin Morgan at Cardiff University, hospitals serving good food remain, "islands of best practise in a sea of mediocrity." Strange, especially when you consider that the government has very publicly launched a number of impressive sounding initiatives intended to revolutionise hospital food during this period.

To mark the end of the noughties the *Good Food for Our Money* campaign decided to investigate further what government has done in the last ten years to improve hospital food, how much success they have had and how much this has cost the UK taxpayer.

In the resulting publication, *A Decade of Hospital Food Failure*, we found that the government spent more than £50 million of taxpayers' money on at least 17 separate initiatives to improve hospital food. This included the 'Better Hospital Food Initiative', which was launched in 2001 and commissioned celebrity chef Loyd Grossman to introduce 300 new restaurant style recipes for hospitals. In 2006, the £40 million scheme was scrapped when the Hospital Caterers Association discovered that 25% of NHS Trusts had failed to introduce a single dish from the menus.

In response to the publication of the *A Decade of Hospital Food Failure* report, Loyd Grossman said: "I remain totally convinced that improving hospital catering would bring great benefits to many millions of patients. My colleagues and I were frustrated and disappointed that there was neither the political will nor sufficient resources to improve hospital food. During the five years I worked voluntarily and without pay for the NHS, I reported to five different ministers: such high ministerial turnover means that you are constantly reselling ideas to the top team. It is a scandal that improving hospital catering remains far from the top of the NHS agenda."

In another failed attempt to improve the health and sustainability of hospital food, the government launched the 'Public Sector Food Procurement Initiative' in 2003 to increase the amount of local, sustainable food bought by public sector organisations, including hospitals. The initiative, which cost £2.5 million, limped on until 2009, until auditors concluded it had been the victim of a, "lack of leadership," and, "low take-up."

The government's own evaluation of these initiatives found that, in each case, they had failed because they were 'voluntary'.

Hospitals had no incentive or support to adopt new practises and, when they were launched, had every reason to ignore them on the basis that they would be a flash in the pan. When you consider that 17 different initiatives were launched in less than 10 years can you really blame them?

The *Good Food for Our Money* campaign is now calling on government to introduce mandatory health and sustainability standards for hospital food. Our research shows that this would not only implement a minimum standard for the food being served, but would also achieve a number of social and economic benefits. For example, buying more local, seasonal produce would invest in rural suppliers and communities, while buying better food would help reduce diet-related ill health – which is responsible for 70,000 premature deaths, and costs the NHS alone more than £8 million every year.

To find out more about Sustain's *Good Food for Our Money* campaign, or to read 'A Decade of Food Failure', please go to <http://www.sustainweb.org/goodfoodforourmoney/> or you can follow us on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/publicfood>



Quickbite

Fast food chains profit during recession

While workers are laid off and dole queues lengthen, the fast food companies see new opportunities. McDonald's took on around 6,000 extra staff in 2009 and plans a further 5,000 extra in 2010, while their sales are rising 11% year on year. A look at Burger King's 'New Breakfast Menu' shows what the food on offer will be like: at just 99p, their *Sausage, Egg & Cheese Butty* packs a belly-busting 453 calories, a heart-stopping 24 grams of fat, and a brain-boggling 2.3 grams of salt.

In further news about the advancement of fast food chains, a recent report says that, out of 170 NHS Trust hospitals, 40 rent space to chains including Burger King, Starbucks, Subway and Upper Crust.



In 2001, celebrity chef Loyd Grossman launched and commissioned the Better Hospital Food Initiative. The £40 million scheme was scrapped in 2006, when the Hospital Caterers Association discovered that 25% of NHS Trusts had failed to introduce a single dish from the menus.



Legal, decent, honest and true?

Misleading food and drink advertisements should be regulated by the Advertising Standards Authority. We report on recent adjudications.



Actimel drinking yoghurt – confounding consumers with science

Claims by Danone, in a recent TV ad, that their pro-biotic yoghurt drink, Actimel, is, "scientifically proven to help support your kids' defences," have fallen foul of the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA). When asked to support their claims, Danone pointed to a number of studies, arguing that the evidence should be considered in its totality, and not judged as a group of individual papers. But the totality of evidence is at least the sum of its parts. And it seems that the people at Danone have been rather free in their interpretation of evidence from the studies they've cited.

Looked at more closely, it seems that Danone base their claim on studies of hospitalised children, of children with allergies, and of babies – none of whom are representative of the Actimel target audience of healthy school-age children. In two of the clinical studies cited, the actual doses given were larger, as much as twice the recommended serving size of one 100g pot of yoghurt per day.

The ASA judged the ad breached the CAP (Broadcast) TV Advertising Standards Code rules 5.1 (Misleading advertising), 5.2.1 (Evidence) and 8.3.1 (a) Accuracy in food advertising.

'Humorous' ads for sugary Vitaminwater fail to amuse the ASA

When does a nutrition or health claim become so far-fetched that it is no longer a claim, just a bit of fun? This is the interesting but unsuccessful defence adopted by Coca-Cola against complaints about ads for their Vitaminwater range of soft drinks.

Posters and leaflets for Vitaminwater claiming, "more muscles than brussels," and, "vitamins b + zinc are great for giving you super-hero like powers..." were among a series that attracted complaints that the ads misleadingly implied that the vitamins in the range of drinks could confer health benefits that made them equivalent, or preferable, to vegetables, or could confer health benefits such as raised energy or resistance to illness.

Coca-Cola insisted that, "muscles from brussels," had nothing to do with vegetables, but instead referred to the famously beefy Belgian actor Jean-Claude Van Damme, sometimes known as the 'Muscles from Brussels'. Coca-Cola's decision to confusingly drop the critical capital 'B' in, "Brussels", was just a question of brand style, they say. They believed that the claim about super powers to be so far removed from reality that consumers were unlikely to think it was true.

It is just as well that the ASA were not as willing to laugh it off as Coca-Cola. These so-called healthy drinks are not just pumped full of vitamins, they also pack 23g of sugar in each 500ml serving. And that's seriously sugary for a drink described as 'water'.

The ads breached CAP code clauses 3.1 (Substantiation), 7.1 (Truthfulness), 50.1 (Health and beauty products) and must not appear again in their current form.



Beware the weight loss ad claims

An internet display advertisement teasing viewers to click to read the story of a woman whose before and after pictures showed she had lost a significant amount of weight, and who claimed to have, "cut down 4lbs of stomach fat per week by obeying 1 rule," is clearly as implausible and irresponsible as it sounds. When challenged by the ASA, jennysweightlosssuccess.com could not even be bothered to defend the advert, which straight away puts the advertiser in breach of the advertising code.

The advert was also in breach of rules which specify that weight loss of more than 2lbs per week is incompatible with good medical and nutritional practice, and rules which forbid reference to weight loss from a particular part of the body. Despite throwing the whole rule book at this advertiser, there are no penalties for such thoroughly irresponsible advertising beyond a requirement that the ad does not appear in this form again.

The ad was found in breach of CAP Code clauses 2.6 (Non-response), 3.1 (Substantiation), 7.1 (Truthfulness), 2.2 (Principles), 51.10 & 51.9 (Weight control).

Reviews

Jessica Mitchell shares memories of food stories that span the generations

Children’s food stories that span the generations

My children have always enjoyed books that have some food in them. Even dull stories are made somewhat bearable if they include a cookout, a forage, or a slap up meal.

I have done my best to encourage them in their prejudices. The books warmest in my own childhood memories are those in which food was not necessarily the main character – but, at least, a strong second. Even interminably dull books – like the stories of Enid Blyton - could be got through if you were sure to skim read the pages in between cook-outs and picnics. I am still aggrieved at Mark Twain - how much better would *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* be if he could just have squeezed in a bit more about food? It would have fit so well! Roald Dahl – bah, hardly any food to be found in his books.

Our own family favourites are generally from what I think of as the ‘make do and manage’ and ‘homely cooking’ schools of food. Excess – only somewhat interesting – but, how to manage under trying circumstances, endlessly fascinating (at least in print). I am not entirely sure there is a sensible reason for my own joy in such stories – I also feel the same completely positive prejudice about any book, or film, which has snow in it. But, maybe it is the spirit of food in them – the desire we all have to eat with people, the passion to not be hungry, the determination and ingenuity that goes into engineering dinner is on the table in all sorts of situations.

For those of a similar bent – or, who are at least willing to try another’s prejudices on for size, here is a selection of books to try.

Miss Twiggley’s Tree

The perfect book for children aged from about 4-7 and my own childhood top favourite. Miss Twiggley lives in a tree, with bears, and a dog who does her food shopping for her as she is too shy to mingle with the local townsfolk. The dog visits the shops with a lovely wicker basket, and seems to negotiate over the counter with the grocer. I always wondered – how much shopping could he carry, how did she have the money to give him if she didn’t work, would he have had to shop frequently, and, when the town dogs chase him, and he drops some fruit, how would Miss Twiggley manage without it? Food is a sideline to the main storyline of the book – which is about how Miss Twiggley overcomes her shyness when she heroically comes to the rescue of the villagers by allowing them to come and stay with her in her tree when the town floods. But, she does make sure to note that she will cook them a stew, with buttered bread – although just how much stew one would have to cook for a whole town was never clear to me. My mother’s own pots barely fed the six of us. But, obviously, all is well – as the last scene in the book pictures a sitting room, full of happy people, some still snacking – with popcorn, tea and toasting marshmallows also on view. What could be nicer or more comforting? And, hey, flooding is a lot more common now - make friends with your tree house living neighbours.

Microcosmos, Galatee Films (72 minutes)

72 minutes of insects going about their business was too long a haul for me. I potted out of this video half way through – not much the wiser about the contribution of bees, spiders, slugs, beetles to our environment, nor more in love with them for their individual quirkiness. Some of the images are wonderful – dozens of caterpillars out for a walk in a nose to tail line up, a spider catching and dispatching a grasshopper, and a beetle struggling to manage a dung ball that dwarfs him in size. But, it is all thrown together in what seems a random hotch potch of scenes, and with no voice over, it is sometimes hard to be clear just what is going on on screen. I am not sure who would really want to see this – it is U rated, but, my kids would kill me if I tried to make them sit through it. Which is a shame, as a lot of love has obviously gone into the film, and insects are an under-appreciated part of our natural world, and essential to our food chain. Give me David Attenborough on insects over Microcosmos any time.

Little House books

I read these as a child, but my children are not as keen - the children are too just too good for their taste. Every book is full of stories about how this pioneer family, in the late 1800s, make do and manage, and eat. *Little House in the Big Woods* is tops – with tales of bear eating, building smoke houses in trees, harvesting wild honey, roasting pig tails, making parched corn... Impossible, even for an American child, to know what that was like, or what many of the foods even were, but you could share that sense of wonder that the family did manage to store all of their own food for winter, and that it could taste good. And, they had such parties to celebrate eating and making food – coming together to work and cook at community barn raisings, and maple syrup making events.

All the books have great Christmas dinner scenes - one year they eat at a friend’s and have a fine soup with oyster crackers, another year they debate whether pa will shoot a jack rabbit or a bird for dinner. And they always have johnny cake with the meal – it wasn’t until recently I found out that meant corn bread. The Christmas stocking always comes with just 1 piece of store bought candy – and goodness, what unbelievable

raptures those pioneer children have over that. Ma is always praised for her cooking, and household management. In *The Long Winter*, she keeps the family going for months on just wheat, ground up, and generally made into a loaf.

The books are sad too – the family keeps moving West because land gets less fertile, lakes run out of fish, wild game disappears – as more and more settlers encroach upon wild nature. Books to make you feel hungry – because the people in them relish and appreciate food. Totally incompetent – can you build a smokehouse out of a tree? or fight a bear for honey? And, somewhat awed – at just how much we have destroyed in the past 150 years.

The Girl Who Ran Away

I read this book, about an English girl who runs away and lives on her own for a bit, at about age 11. I read it in Brooklyn, years and years before I had any real idea that an England existed beyond the Queen, and Big Ben. So, how great was it to be treated to an in detail story about how Charlie manages to live in a chicken coop in a farmer’s field in a small English village – with just some pocket money for food. Village stores provide lardy



cake – impossible for a Brooklyn kid to even begin to guess what that might be, but it sounded filling! Orange squash – in my imaginings that involved tureens of squelching and squashed fruit – just how you drank it, who could know? The story turns grim when Charlie runs out of money and steals some milk from a shop – which turns out to be sour. Oh dear, could I have managed, what would I take if I ran away, what would I do if desperately hungry? Resourceful Charlie does her best by scrimping – and it all turns out ok in the end.

Miss Suzy & The Blueberry Pie Elf

It is impossible not to like both of these tiny characters – the little elf for whom only blueberry pie will do, and the grey squirrel Suzy, a fiercely proud homemaker who loves her acorn cakes, acorn pudding, and acorn cups. The little elf is driven mad by the family he lives with, who do not know he exists, and therefore who cannot realise that pumpkin, apple and cherry pie will just not do. He sets out to attract their attention, and is rewarded with a whole blueberry pie for himself. Miss Suzy is also driven – but, out of her home by marauding red squirrels who do not appreciate how much she loves her cosy set up. She gets her home back with the help of some toy soldiers, and dons her apron once again, at home, and at peace, in her kitchen.

The Little Princess

Another top favourite - a story of a rich girl, orphaned, cruelly starved by the headmistress of the boarding school she once attended, and where she is now a

servant. But, her goodness of heart never dims – and even when she finds a coin, and manages to buy 6 buns, she gives all but one away to another homeless child. Freezing, and starving, she makes her way back home – only to find that a feast has somehow magically appeared in her garret room. Desperately sentimental in some ways – but hey, fantastically atmospheric food scenes (dinner trays are transported by a ‘Lascar’ who leaps from attic window to attic window, there are midnight feasts before open fires), and a chance to wonder with your kids if you would give away your last bun to someone hungrier than you if you were starving. Probably not.

The Lighthouse Keeper’s Lunch

Who would not want a wife like Mrs Grinling – her husband heads off to work in the lighthouse, and she gets down to preparing him feasts which are then transported over the sea, in a wicker

basket attached to a clothesline that runs right from the kitchen to the lighthouse. But, the seagulls like her food just as much as Mr Grinling does. How will she see them off? Ogle at the massive lunches she produces – and the amount of time both she and her husband put into food!

The Hunger Games, The Enemy, Life As We Knew It

I don’t think the family is much liking these post apocalyptic books for teens. Viruses, natural disasters, and environmental degradation lead to cannibalism, starvation, and murder. Children are left to fend for themselves in the most terrible of circumstances – and often they do, by: scavenging for tinned food in abandoned supermarkets, desperately attempting to grow food, and learning how to hunt and trap. But, where is the hope, and joy? Are my children living in a doomed world in which the skills of survivalists cults are the most necessary? I do hope not.

Others to try

Pickle Chiffon Pie & The Duchess Bakes a Cake

More pies and cake – more strange characters for whom cooking leads to love, anarchy, and full stomachs.

- Miss Twiggley’s Tree - Dorothea Warren Fox - Purple House Press (Originally published 1966)
- Little House books - Laura Ingalls Wilder - Harper Collins (Books first published in the early 1900s)
- The Girl Who Ran Away - Joan G. Robinson - Scholastic (Out of print, 1969)
- Miss Suzy - Miriam Young - Purple House Press - (Originally published 1964)
- The Blueberry Pie Elf - Jane Thayer - Purple House Press (Originally published 1959)
- The Little Princess - Frances Hodgson Burnett - HarperCollins (First published 1905)
- The Lighthouse Keeper’s Lunch - Ronda Armitage - Scholastic Hippo (Originally published 1977)
- The Hunger Games - Suzanne Collins - Scholastic (Published 2009)
- The Enemy - Charlie Higson - Puffin (Published 2009)
- Life as we knew it - Susan Pfeffer - Marion Lloyd Books (Published 2007)
- Pickle Chiffon Pie – Jolly Roger Bradfield - Purple House Press (First published 1967)
- The Duchess Bakes a Cake - Virginia Kahl - Purple House Press (Originally published 1955)

your letters

We welcome letters from our readers but we do sometimes have to edit them so that we can include as many as possible (our apologies to the authors).

Write to: The Editor, *The Food Magazine*, 94 White Lion Street, London N1 9PF or email to letters@foodmagazine.org.uk



McDonald's

Why is it that if I go to McDonald's with my children, they have to make them choose between carrot battons, a fruit bag, or chips, as a side dish with the so-called Happy Meal? Of course, my children do not want to choose fruit or carrots over chips with their burgers or nuggets or fish fingers. But, they would definitely eat the fruit or carrots if they came along with the meal. How much would it cost one of the world's biggest food companies to really take a positive step towards health – and just offer either carrots or fruit with the main course and chips? I think they would make money, as I might be happier to eat there if I felt it was easier for my children to get their fruit and veg as part of the meals.

J. Fine, London

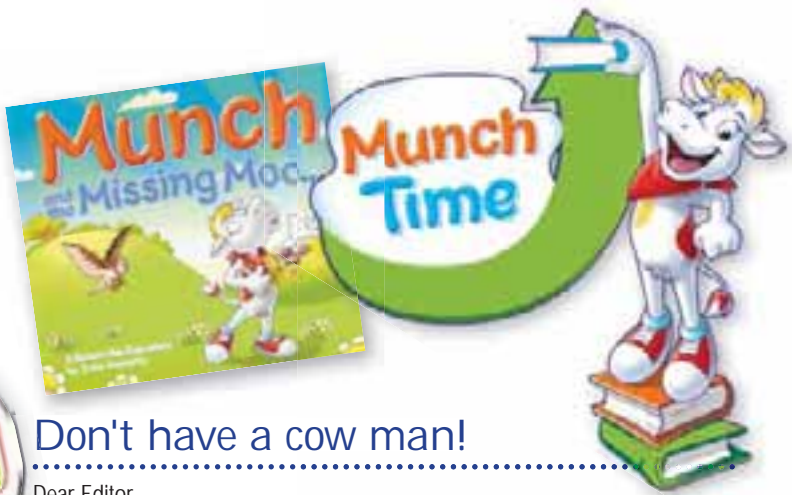
Sugary Oat Porridge

Hello,

I was dropped off early to work in the snow last week and hadn't had breakfast and decided to get some oats for porridge. In the local (quite large) grocer, there were only two choices: Quaker oats microwavable flavoured sachets in a box, for about £2.50; and Heinz Breakfast 'creamy oat porridge for babies' in a smaller box, 125g for about £2.75. I presumed this would be a bit like Ready Brek and decided to get it.

The cereal was unbelievably sweet, and I have a very sweet tooth. On reading the back of the pack ingredients list, I noticed the product in fact contains only 40% oats, and has added sugar. I am astounded when I think of the front of pack which shows this as a healthy product, and which says it is for babies aged 4-6 months. The front of pack says: no artificial colours, no preservatives, vitamins and minerals – and shows some nice oat grains. This is outrageous, why is a well trusted company like Heinz even making such a product? Rather than call it 'creamy oat porridge', they should call it 'sugary oat porridge'. If the product had one of the FSA's traffic lights, it would be red for high in sugar. I think that surely there should be a ban on the production of any high added sugar products for babies.

R Southern



Don't have a cow man!

Dear Editor,

This Munch Bunch story booklet was included as an insert in my daughter's *CBeebies Magazine*. The promotion is for a Munch Bunch story writing competition. The competition guidelines require that the story has to include the Munch Bunch cow.

I take issue with this marketing to under 5's, as firstly, I question whether it is ethical to advertise to this age group at all. My second issue is that I decide what foods to give my 3 year old – and I prefer organic yoghurt products, and ones with no added sugar!

That's my informed choice as a parent and I would prefer not to have Nestlé influencing my daughter's preferences which are not based on nutritional knowledge! I do not think the BBC should be supporting such promotions.

Rant over!

A. Seeley

Product placement

Dear Editor,

I am so happy that the government seems to be backing off allowing product placement for junk food on TV shows. Well done to campaigners for shouting so loudly about this.

But, I just don't understand what the government's overall approach is to controlling the way companies market high fat, saturated fat, salt and sugar foods. There are still loads of ads on television for fast food chains, and what I call junk food products – even during shows my children watch. So, the Ofcom rules are obviously not strict enough. High sugar products in supermarkets claim boldly to be high fibre or wholegrain – and only the small print gives the sugar information. The checkout tills are full of sweets and crisps and booze. Even my children now know that the government has companies like Pepsico as their fast food partners – so, when our *Change4Life* materials come through the door – they are completely cynical about them.

I am not impressed – gives the impression that all they really care about is not making things too tough for food companies.

P. Jones, Swansea

Quickbite

The Kitchen Front

Seventy years ago the wartime government announced the introduction of food rationing - a control that was to remain in force for the next fourteen years. To mark this event **Imperial War Museum London** is opening *The Ministry of Food*, a major new exhibition to show how the British public adapted to a world of food shortages by 'Lending a Hand on the Land', 'Digging for Victory', taking up the 'War on Waste', and being both frugal and inventive on the 'Kitchen Front'. Visitors will discover that growing your own food, eating seasonal fruit and vegetables, reducing imports, recycling and healthy nutrition were just as topical in 1940 as they are today.

The exhibition will run from this month through January 2011.



HELLO!

Hopefully you received a copy of our Neighbours leaflet (see right) with this issue of *The Food Magazine*. We still need more support, so if you'd like to help, we would be grateful if you could post the leaflet through your neighbour's door. If everyone did this and every neighbour took up the offer, we could double our membership!

If this is not your own copy of *The Food Magazine*, please consider joining us to help us carry on this important work. It's only £28.00 per year, which is around 50p a week. Included with your subscription to this quarterly magazine is unlimited members only access to our website, where you can download 5 years back issues of the magazine for FREE.

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