

LIVING EARTH & FOOD MAGAZINE

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REFERENCE
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Coffee
- trading on their
future

Joint issue of the Journals of the Soil Association and the Food Commission



The Soil Association exists 'to research, develop and promote sustainable relationships between the soil, plants, animals, people and the biosphere, in order to produce healthy food and other products while protecting and enhancing the environment'.

The Soil Association's Symbol Scheme is run by SAOMCo Ltd and licenses commercial food production to the highest organic standards and acts as a consumer guarantee of organic quality.

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of industry and government and rely on subscriptions, donations and grants for our funding. We aim to provide independently researched information on the food we eat to ensure good quality food for all.

The Food Commission Research Charity aims to relieve ill health and advance public education through research, education and the promotion of better quality food.

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editorial

Tis the season of mists and mellow fruitfulness, and time when Pat and Tony Archer are pulling late carrots for the farm shop display...

The odd mixture of fact and fantasy took a new turn this month with extensive promotions on BBC radio's *The Archers* for the launch of Organic Harvest, supported by the whole organic movement, at London's Waterloo station. Passing commuters greatly enjoyed the spectacle of John Gummer, Secretary of State for the Environment, sharing bowls of organic cornflakes with the fictional Archers couple.

But of course Organic Harvest itself is real enough, with considerable effort, not to say finance, being poured into the promotion of all things organic during the harvest festival season.

If experience gained in the United States is anything to go by, sales of organic products should boom during the promotional period. But to keep them booming is much harder.

So too is to keep an image of organic farming in the public eye. It is all too easy to get public sympathy for what you are against. Nobody wants to see birdlife decimated, butterflies made extinct, trees cut down for bigger, single-crop fields. Organic farming is a positive activity producing real crops, not a romantic, idealised notion of farming in the 1930s.

And it means modern food, too. Organic food needs to be seen among the mainstream of food products. That is the challenge of Organic Harvest. It isn't a one-off publicity stunt. Nor a figment of radio fiction. It is a national campaign to show everybody that organic food and farming is modern, mainstream and here to stay!

Equally here to stay are the fair-traded products beginning to swell supermarket shelves. They are joined this autumn by an instant version of the popular Cafédirect coffee, grown organically in Peru and Central America (see opposite and page 21).

Trading commodities over thousands of miles has its own problems. Transport means fuel, and fuel means burning precious resources and pollution. We take a look at the impact of moving food across the world in our feature on Food Miles (pages 19-20). Again, it is fair-trading and organic production that can best lower the impact on our global environment.

ADVERTISING POLICY

The promotion of commercial products in this magazine is done only by the Soil Association, not the Food Commission. For details on how to advertise, or comments on the advertisements, please contact Tony Muir 0272-290661.

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■ Cover picture Pauline Tiffin, TWIN Trading

Small-fry shake big Mac

The PR machinery surrounding McDonalds 20th UK anniversary in September made little mention of the libel case currently underway at the High Court and due to continue until next spring.

The legal weight of the global giant is being brought to bear on two unemployed defendants, Helen Steel and Dave Morris, who as members of London Greenpeace distributed a leaflet about McDonald's food, packaging and practices which the company alleges was libellous. In pre-trial hearings McDonald's denied the defendants the right to a jury trial and without legal aid they are conducting their own defence against McDonald's team of top libel lawyers.

So far McDonald's has suffered two setbacks. Firstly the company admitted the purchase in the UK of beef imported from Brazil, a rainforest country, something which the com-

pany has always denied. Secondly, during the evidence on nutrition Dr Sidney Arnott, McDonald's expert on cancer, said that the London Greenpeace Factsheet statement: 'A diet high in fat, sugar, animal products and salt and low in fibre, vitamins and minerals is linked with cancer of the breast and bowel and heart disease' was 'a very reasonable thing to say.' In pre-trial hearings this section had been characterised as the central and most 'defamatory' allegation.

The court also heard that in 1987 the Attorneys General of Texas, California and New York concluded that a McDonald's advertising campaign was deceptive on the grounds that it portrayed McDonald's food as nutritious. The trial continues.

◆ McDonald's UK have announced plans to build 500 more restaurants

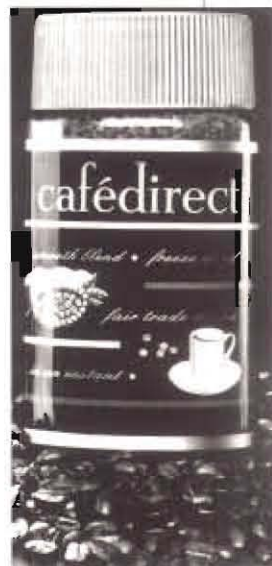
in France, Britain and Germany in the next three years. During 1994, over 50 McDonald's stores will be opened in the UK alone, taking the UK total to nearly 600.

◆ Los Angeles authorities are proposing to restrict local fast food restaurant smoke emissions, which they have found to be adding 33 tons of hydrocarbons and soot pollution daily.

◆ A report by the Japanese government warns of the dietary impact of fast food, which has contributed to a rise in the total fat in the average daily diet from 9% of calories (14g) to 26% (43g) in the last 40 years. Meat consumption has risen from 28g to 85g while rice has dropped from 284g to 199g. According to a *New York Times* report there are over 1000 McDonald's stores in Japan.

Fair trade coffee in an instant

Cafédirect has launched a fair trade premium freeze dried instant coffee, available from Sainsbury's and Waitrose. Cafédirect guarantees to pay farmers in Mexico, Peru and Tanzania a minimum of 10 per cent above the world market price with a commitment that gives long term stability enabling communities to invest in healthcare and education. On page 21 Luzmila Loayza Feliu, a coffee co-op representative describes how fair trade has benefited the livelihoods of peasant farmers in Peru.



Ferry companies may still import live animals

The ban on the export of live animals being voluntarily implemented by three leading ferry companies and which won widespread approval from leading animal rights campaigners, has turned out to be only a partial ban with the admission from the largest company that it has not banned live animal imports into the UK.

The ferry companies, Stena Sealink, Brittany Ferries and P & O, announced in August a ban on the transport of live animals for slaughter, but P & O with 60 per cent of the trade, have now admitted that their ban only applies to exports. RSPCA senior scientific officer Mark Ranson said the society was alarmed and concerned at the news. 'We would like to see a complete switch to carcass trade,' he said.

Stena Sealink said their ban was

both ways, but that their French partners, SNAT, may still bring in livestock to the UK.

Meanwhile the campaigning group Compassion in World Farming presented a giant bouquet to Brittany Ferries at their headquarters in Portsmouth, but called on the company to go a step further and ban the export to France and Holland of live veal calves for fattening in veal crates.

The ferry companies' voluntary ban has led to a fall in farm prices for pigs, sheep and calves, and has prompted MAFF to issue draft regulations proposing maximum journey times of 15 hours for live animals unless detailed paperwork was completed by the hauliers. Animal welfare campaigners say eight hours should be the maximum. The ferry companies said they would not lift

their ban until 'properly enforceable legislation' was enacted to the satisfaction of animal rights groups. The companies had received tens of thousands of letters complaining about live animal transport and were also concerned about bomb threats.

Farm livestock is already banned from the Channel Tunnel. British Airways has announced a ban on live animal transport after passengers were delayed while 80 sheep were loaded onto a flight from Australia to Singapore. Meanwhile farmers are considering setting up a chartered ferry service for animal transport only.

■ A new book from Compassion in World Farming, *A Far Cry From Noah* by their political director Peter Stevenson, published by Greenprint, is available price £5.99 from CWF, 5a Charles Street, Petersfield, Hants GU32 3EH (tel 0730-264208).

MAFF tests expose fish frauds

A MAFF survey found one in thirteen battered fish products for the catering industry was not what it said it was. Most often cod or haddock had been replaced by whiting, hoki or Alaskan pollock. Cafes, pubs, restaurants and take-aways were responsible for most offences.

The MAFF report (*Food Surveillance Paper No 44*) also surveyed samples of breaded scampi products from retailers and wholesalers, and found more than one in seven products contained other shellfish besides scampi, most commonly warm water prawns, a less expensive ingredient.

◆ A survey of canned tuna fish, by Gloucester trading standards officers, found that many contained over 20 per cent added oil, and some nearly 30 per cent.

Government advisers want gene food restrictions

The government-appointed Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes (ACNFP) has recommended that genetically engineered organisms eaten without cooking must not contain antibiotic resistance markers despite their widespread use in the bio-engineering industry.

Antibiotic resistance markers (ARMs) are used to give an organism resistance to a specific antibiotic. They occur naturally in micro-organisms and can be attached to a gene which is being transplanted into, for example, a plant and are used to identify successful gene transfer.

The ACNFP were concerned that an ARM might transfer from a genetically modified food into a micro-

organism in the human gut.

Accordingly it recommends that genetically modified organisms which are not killed before consumption should not contain ARMs.

The use of ARMed genes in bio-engineering has become commonplace in research and one ARMed product – the Flavr Savr tomato with a kanamycin marker gene – is on sale in US stores. But Unilever has indicated that it will limit the use of ARM techniques to the initial development phase of a cross-gene organism. They say they will do the same with HRM (herbicide resistant marker) genes unless the herbicide resistance is the characteristic they are trying to develop. There is some concern that

leaving marker genes attached to new organisms may give unpredictable – and uncontrollable – results if the organisms are further crossbred with others.

Meanwhile, although the food advisers have come down in favour of controlling marker gene techniques, the environmental advisers, the Advisory Committee on Releases into the Environment, has yet to put the issue on its agenda. What happens if resistance to kanamycin, say, were to spread from a genetically engineered plant to wild species of plants?

■ Further details from Genetics Forum, 3rd floor, 5-11 Worship Street, London EC2A 2BH tel 071-638 0606.

Waldegrave faces BST decision

MAFF minister William Waldegrave must decide in the next few weeks whether he will support the licensing of the genetically engineered milk boosting hormone BST. The dilemma has been sharpened by the results of a consultation exercise by the Veterinary Medicines Directorate, which found that licensing was supported by the biotechnology industry and several veterinary bodies while a continued moratorium or an outright ban was supported by farmers, the dairy trade, retailers, animal rights and consumer groups – including the Consumers Association, the Women's Institute, the RSPCA, Safeway and Sainsbury.

In addition, the government-appointed advisory body on animal rights, the Farm Animal Welfare Council, has expressed concern over the effects of BST on cows, and has called for further studies on the effects of BST before a license should be considered.

At the end of 1993 the European Union agreed to continue the moratorium banning BST for a further year. By the end of 1994 it will have to make a further decision whether to allow BST to be licensed for use.

Co-op rejects bio-tomato paste

One of Britain's biggest supermarket chains have said they will not be stocking the products of a gene-altered tomato developed by Zeneca. The tomato has been engineered to be resistant to rotting and is the first of many GE plants which firms hope to exploit commercially in the UK.

A Co-op spokesman, Martin Henderson, said 'Zeneca believe the product tastes better, but we did not. We were not convinced that the genetically modified tomatoes were in any way an improvement on existing products. Where genetics has a contribution to make and is in the consumer's interest, then we will go along with it.' The Co-op was the first (and so far the only) supermarket to label genetically engineered food when it launched a cheese earlier this year bearing a prominent declaration 'Produced using gene technology'.

Freedom Foods under fire

The RSPCA's Freedom Foods labelling scheme, launched in July, has come under fire from animal rights campaigners, who fear that the RSPCA has missed a golden opportunity to introduce an animal welfare labelling scheme that everyone could trust.

'Freedom Foods could have been used to substantially advance the welfare of farm animals,' said Philip Limbery of Compassion in World Farming. 'It is a small step in the right direction, as it does not allow some of the very worst practices but many of the standards are unacceptably low. If consumers want to feel sure that the products they are buying come from animals

that really are living under good conditions they should look for foods labelled as organic.'

The RSPCA states that its standards are based on five basic freedoms that it believes all animals should enjoy:

freedom from fear and distress; pain; injury and disease; hunger and thirst; discomfort; and freedom to express normal behaviour.

But, say critics, it is possible for eggs to bear the RSPCA symbol even when they have been laid by hens that have never experienced fresh air or daylight. De-beaking is allowed as a corrective to cannibalism, even though it is known to cause pain and distress and should be unnecessary



cause pain and distress and should be unnecessary in welfare-orientated system. The standards also allow tail-docking of pigs and the use of farrowing crates for sows.

'We advocate that farm animals should not be subjected to avoidable suffering,' says Cindy Milburn of the World Society for the Protection of Animals. 'Organic standards of animal welfare come much closer to what we would like to see than the "minimum acceptable" allowed by the RSPCA in its Freedom Foods scheme.'

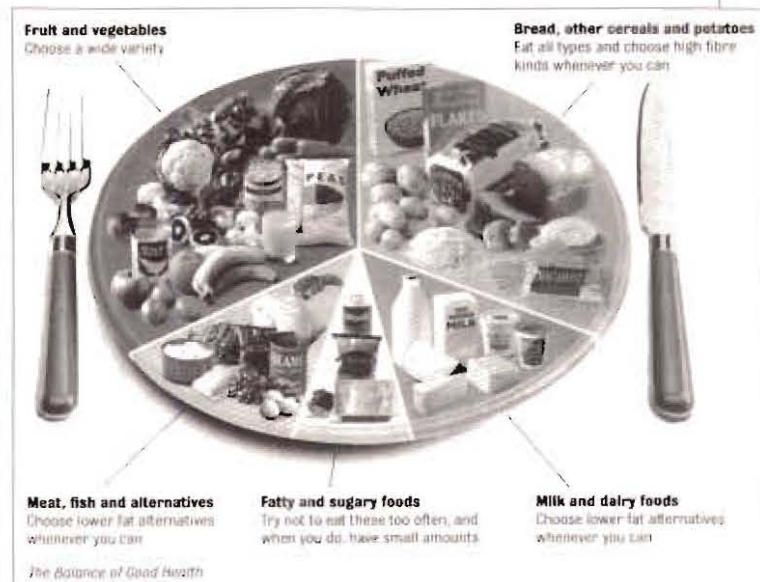
Food industry revolt over government healthy eating guide

Manufacturers of confectionery, sugar, biscuits and fizzy drinks have reacted with hostility towards the government recommendations for a cut in the nation's consumption of fatty and sugary foods. Executives from Cadbury Schweppes, Mars, Tate & Lyle and United Biscuits were reported to have demanded a private meeting with junior Health Minister, Baroness Cumberlege following the publication of the National Food Guide (pictured right) and the leaking of the government's soon to be published COMA report, both of which recommend significant reductions in fatty and sugary food consumption.

Department of Health officials are thought to be furious that the indus-

try has publicly undermined the Guide which was initiated by the Nutrition Task Force that itself includes food industry representation alongside government, professional and voluntary organisations. The Guide had already undergone extensive consultation and food industry lobbying had been successful in achieving a greater 'slice' of the plate for fatty and sugary foods than originally planned.

Whether the latest industry outburst will sway government Ministers remains to be seen. The COMA report has already been delayed, but its leaking at least ensures that if it gets watered down these should be clear to see.



The National Food Guide aims to make choosing a healthy balanced diet easier by illustrating the relative proportions of four main food groups, with an emphasis on eating more fruit and vegetables and starchy carbohydrate foods with smaller amounts of meat, milk and other dairy foods. But it is the recommendation that foods from the fifth group, 'fatty and sugary foods' which include confectionery, sugar, biscuits, cakes, puddings, crisps, ice cream, spreads and oils, should not be eaten too often and only in small amounts that has caused a furore from their manufacturers.

British women top WHO heart attack table

British women have the worst rates of coronary heart disease in the world according to the largest study ever undertaken by the World Health Organization. The study of 21 countries from Europe, USA, Canada, China and Australasia (known as the MONICA study) found that women in Glasgow and Belfast are up to nine times more likely to suffer coronary heart disease than a woman in Catalonia, Spain and up to seven times more likely than a woman in Beijing, China or in Toulouse. While men are four to five times more likely to suffer coronary heart disease than women, only men in Finland have a higher rate of CHD than British men.

■ Further details: The National Forum for Coronary Heart Disease Prevention: 071-383 7638.

Oz resists cadmium

The Food Policy Alliance of Australia – a consumer and trade union group – is opposing moves by the Australian National Food Authority (NFA) to relax the standards for cadmium contamination of food. The NFA have argued that local standards may have to fall under GATT rules.

Virtual reality chickens?

Novel ideas to relieve the stressful lives of battery chickens are being researched at the Agriculture and Food Research Council's Roslin Institute near Edinburgh. Researchers say that regular stroking, a good selection of toys to play with and watching television could help relieve fear and aggression and boost growth and resistance to disease. And lucky battery hens may even be allowed to watch images of green fields, too.

Poverty kills

The myth that heart disease is more likely to kill highpowered businessmen is dispelled by statistics on coronary heart disease published by the British Heart Foundation. They illustrate the marked social, ethnic and regional differences in UK rates among its wealth of statistics including a doubling of the mortality rates for low income groups compared with higher.

■ *Coronary Heart Disease Statistics*, British Heart Foundation, June 1994.

Dioxin damage

The Women's Environmental Network (WEN) stepped up their campaign to reduce levels of the toxic pollutant dioxin in food in September. Findings from the US Environmental Protection Agency say that levels of dioxins in our bodies are already high enough to cause ill-health effects including immune system damage, reduced

sperm count, endometriosis, increased risk of diabetes and cancer and damaged to unborn babies.

Dioxins get into the food supply via pollution from chlorine industries and incinerators. WEN are calling on the Department of Health to accept that no known levels of dioxin are safe and to set targets for the reduction of all dioxins in food and the environment.

Over the top health claims criticised by ASA

The Advertising Standards Authority has criticised some breakfast cereal adverts for making exaggerated claims about maintaining a healthy heart in a survey of nutritional claims in advertising.

Adverts for vitamin supplements were also singled out for sometimes overstating the need for, and effectiveness of, the product.

■ *Nutritional Claims in Advertisements*, Advertising Standards Authority, August 1994.

SA awards first Woodmark label

The Soil Association's Responsible Forestry programme has awarded it's first certificate in England to the Dartington Estate in Devon.

The Woodmark label has been awarded following environmental auditing of the estate's Home Wood, ensuring that the timber comes from a source that is sustainably managed in an environmentally sensitive way.

'Products qualifying for the Soil Association's label will come from forests meeting defined environmental, social and economic criteria,' explained Responsible Forestry pro-

gramme co-ordinator Dr Dorothy Jackson. 'It is very exciting that certified timber is now coming on to the market. It's availability will develop strongly in the months ahead as our certification scheme gathers momentum.'

■ Details from the Soil Association Responsible Forestry Programme, 86 Colston Street, Bristol BS1 5BB (tel 0272-290661).

■ For further information on the Responsible Forestry Programme see *Living Earth and Food Magazine* November 1993.



WOODMARK

THE SOIL ASSOCIATION'S
CERTIFICATE OF
RESPONSIBLE FORESTRY

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- can you be sure that local communities have not been disturbed by the forestry operations?

You can if it's got the **WOODMARK** on it!

For information contact **WOODMARK**
86 Colston Street, Bristol BS1 5BB
Telephone 0117 929 0661

Baby milk companies break code

Feeding bottles with Pepsi and 7-UP logos... baby milk labels showing Peter Rabbit being bottle fed by his mother... companies refusing to provide health warnings in a language understood by local mothers...

These are just a few of the hundreds of violations of the World Health Organisation's code of practice for marketing commercial baby milks reported in *Breaking the Rules* 1994. Among the worst offenders was food giant Nestlé, against whom an international boycott has been operating since 1988. The company was found to have been promoting free supplies of infant formula to hospitals in 22 countries with a government ban on such activities — including Bangladesh, Zimbabwe and China. Such free supplies have been denounced by UNICEF as 'the most

detrimental practice inducing mothers away from breastfeeding.'

■ Copies of the report price £3.50 from Baby Milk Action, 23 St Andrews Street, Cambridge CB2 3AX (tel 0223-464420).



This free leaflet in ASDA supermarkets not only breaks the WHO code but also the industry-agreed UK code of marketing of commercial baby milks.

Prince Charles receives Soil Association

Over 100 prominent politicians, green activists and music stars attended a reception hosted by Prince Charles for the Soil Association at Highgrove House in July.

The Prince spoke of the important role organic farming plays in producing healthy food, an attractive countryside and rural employment, without the problems of pesticides, pollution and set-aside. In response, Policy Director Patrick Holden said the Soil Association was deeply committed to bringing that message to a wider audience.

Little benzene in food, says MAFF

Our piece in the last issue of this magazine calling for information on benzene contamination of foods sold in petrol stations resulted in MAFF admitting it had run a small survey, analysing six packs of butter and lard and finding average levels twice as high as those bought in other shops.

But, argued MAFF, even if all the fat in your diet came from such sources you would only get around 1µg per

day of benzene from this food, compared with about 400 µg per day you inhale from urban air.

Iron surplus may retard growth

Giving iron-rich supplements to children who already have good iron levels leads to retarded growth, according to a survey in *The Lancet* (21.5.94). The value of iron supplements for anaemic children was not in question.

Healthier foods hard to find in Scotland

A survey by the Scottish Consumer Council found that many people, particularly those without easy access to large supermarkets, found it hard to get healthier foods. 'It may be difficult for Scottish consumers to change their diet, whether they want to or not,' commented SCC director Ann Foster.

Harrods fails apple test

Routine surveillance of apple juice for the contaminant patulin found two brands to exceed safety limits: Harrods own label and Duskins.

"Customers are invited to try an organic sausage on the main station concourse" is not the sort of announcement commuters expect to hear as they hurry to work. But this was the breakfast on offer at Waterloo Station on Monday 3rd October. Tony Muir of the Soil Association reports.

An everyday tale of country folk – John Gummer is joined by Pat & Tony Archer at Waterloo station.

Organic Harvest brightens the autumn scene

The Organic Breakfast at Waterloo marked the start of Organic Harvest Month. It featured a host of organic food producers enticing rail travellers with free samples of organic foods ranging from mushrooms to muesli. They were joined by John Gummer, Secretary of State for the Environment, and Pat and Tony Archer of the Radio 4 farming soap opera for a photo call and press conference. These early morning 'goings on' were just the beginning of a month long promotion and celebration of organic food, farming and gardening, which will be in full swing by the time this magazine lands on your doormat.

The primary aim of Organic Harvest is simple: to draw people's attention to organic foods and help to make them more widely available for more people to try. This will go hand in hand with a campaign to inform the public of the environmental, social and health benefits of choosing the organic option. The

timing of Organic Harvest is no coincidence. October is traditionally the time of year when people celebrate the gathering in of the crops at lavish harvest suppers, give thanks for nature's bounty in church festivals and enjoy making the most of a seasonal abundance of ripe fruit and prize vegetables. Up and down the country local organic groups will be holding autumn feasts in the time honoured fashion. Organic farmers will be opening their gates to school parties and members of the public who are eager to learn how organic agriculture can improve our countryside. Organic food manufacturers, wholesalers and retail stores nationwide have collaborated to offer consumers an unprecedented range of special promotions on organic food lines. This will enable people to taste samples of organic foods or buy them at the same price as their conventionally (ie chemically) produced equivalents. People who have never tasted organic food will be getting a chance to try it for the

first time. Those that complain that organic items cost more than what they usually buy will be able to come away with an organic brand at a bargain price.

'Organic food tastes better,' says Sally Clarke, leading restaurateur and creator of the mouth-watering dinner at the Lady Eve Balfour Memorial Lecture (see page 9). 'Thanks to Organic Harvest more people will have the opportunity to try it for themselves and the flavour alone will be enough to convince many of them to change their shopping habits in favour of organic suppliers. I can always taste the difference between organic and non-organic foods.'

This is the first Organic Harvest Month to be held in the UK, but it is an established part of the calendar in the USA where the

Continued on next page



Organic Harvest

idea originated. In 1987, Marnie McPhee from Portland started 'Organically Grown in Oregon Week' to publicise organic produce in her state. The idea soon spread to the neighbouring state of California, where it was promoted by a number of environmental organisations. Over the following years Organic Week gradually evolved into Organic Month, and by 1993 featured three hundred and sixty five separate events and promotions in all fifty states and in Canada. The month was supported by twenty commercial sponsors working in conjunction with the Organic Foods Production Association of North America (OFPA), and the ecological marketing company, Pacific Green. A heavyweight public relations campaign led to wide coverage in the media and a high profile for all things organic. The same successful formula is being followed this year and the public relations campaign is even being conducted in Spanish and French as well as English in order to spread the word across the whole North American continent. Although in its infancy in this country the basic idea – to make as many people as possible aware of organic foods – is borrowed from the American experience. Local organic groups in the UK, like their counterparts in the USA, will be holding talks on organic gardening techniques, organising tastings of organic foods in shopping centres and talking to their local media about what they are doing.

Unlike the overblown 'hype' that we have come to expect from the promotional campaigns of most large commercial organisations, Organic Harvest offers a message of common sense, especially where it relates to the environmental and ethical issues surrounding food production. This message has many elements. Organic farms are much richer in wildlife species, especially birds, than land that has been repeatedly sprayed with toxic chemicals. Organic farmers have to comply with strict environmental standards which do not allow them to grub up hedgerows willy-nilly, or plough up rare, flower rich meadows. Organic agriculture enhances natural soil fertility and soil structure, thus minimising the loss of irreplaceable topsoil, which is being eroded on some conventional farms at a rate of 200 tonnes per hectare per annum. Organic farms do not contribute to the nitrates and pesticides in our water supplies which have to be removed at the expense of water rate payers. Although thoroughly modern and mechanised, organic agriculture is still more labour intensive than conventional methods and could be a factor in helping to maintain population levels in rural areas, where a third of agricultural jobs have been lost since 1985. Wider adoption of organic methods as part of a package to reform the Common Agricultural Policy could also

help to reduce the £1.8 billion paid out in farm subsidies, thus cutting the £17 this costs each tax-payer every week.

The countryside programme of farm visits and open days taking place October will enable more people to see for themselves how organic and conventional farms differ, and how organic agriculture offers a practical alternative to chemical based systems. Through direct contact with the public, organic farmers can communicate their personal experience of the benefits that organic methods bring to their land and livestock. 'There is a world of difference between the quality of life enjoyed by my pigs and the dark, cramped conditions many animals in conventional pig units have to endure,' says organic farmer Helen Browning. 'They respond to an organic diet, spacious housing and access to open land by being healthier, easier to handle, showing fewer signs of stress, and producing higher quality, better tasting meat.'

The finest imaginable quality and taste are the hallmarks of the innovative cuisine at one of Britain's best restaurants – Le Manoir aux Quat' Saisons in Oxfordshire. The renowned proprietor, Raymond Blanc and his head chef, Clive Fretwell insist on the best raw ingredients for all their creations. 'Our food is essentially a celebration of the natural abundance of flavour which can be found in even the humblest of foods,' says General Manager, Simon Rhatigan. 'Raymond Blanc can only achieve the sort of tastes that his dishes are famous for by using real food, food which tastes definitively of itself. So many conventionally produced meats, fruits and vegetables are so bland that they are almost flavourless. For this reason we grow as many ingredients as we can in our own organic gardens and source the rest from organic producers whenever possible.'

Organic Harvest Month is above all a celebration. It is about getting people to share in the enjoyment of good food, produced with the environment in mind. From an organic sausage at Waterloo station to the finest haute cuisine at Les Quat' Saisons, there's something in it for everyone.



Sowing an early crop

Lady Eve Balfour



It is an honour to be asked to give the lecture in memory of a pioneer of the environmental cause, and the founder of the 'organic movement'. It is more than fifty years since Lady Eve Balfour lit the torch and it remains very much alight though inevitably it is carried now through a very different landscape.

You may be under the impression that I have the temerity to address you as a broadcaster, or alternatively perhaps as the President of the CPRE. What you may not know is that I am also here as an embryo organic farmer.

Until very recently farmers have been encouraged by almost every available incentive to maximise production: to expand, to specialise and to intensify. In the process, and it is naive to blame the farmer for this, the traditional, intrinsic relationship between the farmer and nature has been forced out of balance. The loss of ancient woodlands, of hedges, ponds, chalk downland, hay meadows – the glorious visual pattern of a rich and fecund landscape of mixed farms – has been gradual but is now easy to observe. Less easy to detect is the ecological damage that this process, which used to be called progress, has wrought. The erosion of soil, the disappearance and sometimes the extinction of plant species, of insects, birds, butterflies and small mammals is properly a cause for dismay and even alarm.

In the lowlands, where intensive arable farms predominate, chemicals and herbicides are still sprayed in vast quantities onto the land in the name of 'crop protection' while the life of the soil slowly but almost irretrievably dies in a pattern of monoculture which is in effect imposed on arable farmers in their proper pursuit of efficiency and profit. Those who should be the stewards of the

What we do to nature we do to ourselves

Farmers and environmentalists must unite, argues broadcaster and farmer Jonathan Dimbleby in this year's Lady Eve Balfour Memorial Lecture.

countryside and the environment have thus found themselves adopting systems and methods of agriculture which stand in the way of that stewardship which was once their natural inheritance.

Part of the way ahead has been identified by the government. The Countryside Stewardship Scheme and the designation of ESAs – Environmentally Sensitive Areas – were an imaginative response to the pressure to protect an environment which was under growing threat. But neither goes far enough. The Stewardship Scheme is chronically underfunded and the ESAs cover only 15 percent of Britain's agricultural land. There is a flaw, albeit a forgivable one in the implicit assumption that only 15 per cent of the countryside is environmentally sensitive. All the countryside in this overcrowded and pressurised island is sensitive; all of it is under threat from a wide variety of sources. For this reason we believe the principles underlying the designation of ESAs should be applied across the whole nation.

The Stewardship Scheme and the ESAs are straws in the breeze. They are financed, of course, though the Agri-Environment Programme which, somewhat timidly, doffs a cap towards the future. It acknowledges the critical importance of sustainability and offers some degree of financial incentive to farm less intensively. I say 'doffs a cap' not because I am naturally churlish but because the amount of support available for the programme – 2 per cent of Britain's total expenditure on farm support last year – does not begin to match the scale of the imperative which the Agri-Environment Programme itself implicitly acknowledges: namely that CAP is in need of fundamental reform.

There is an alternative to the status quo, a reasonable and politic alternative that should carry conviction. This alternative is to transfer resources

from an unpopular and damaging support system to one that might be popular and would certainly be beneficial: in short to replace the principles underlying product support with those at the heart of the agri-environment programme; and to do this within the framework of what is almost universally agreed will be a contracting CAP budget.

There is some radical thinking afoot. The very first report commissioned by Brussels on the post-1996 future of the CAP apparently advocates the abolition of the CAP and the return of the funds to member governments to distribute as they think best. Now that, of course, won't happen. But the proposal contains the seed of a good idea that ought to appeal to farmers, environmentalists and politicians: it might even unite them.

If this modification of CAP could be achieved it would conceivably give the Department of the Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture the chance to work together to tailor the allocation of resources in ways better suited to Britain's unique circumstances. Pie in the sky? Only for defeatists. It is an objective which would surely be endorsed by those who care about the environment and about agriculture. Nor can I believe that it would be inimicable to politicians. However there is a major caveat, and a familiar one. It is impossible to underestimate the capacity of the Treasury to swoop in, to snatch the 'subsidised' booty to finance other public spending or the deficit or tax cuts or some combination of all three. For this reason it would be vital to ring-fence the package, to protect the resources, as they are now protected from the depredations of Kenneth Clarke and his successors.

A switch from farm price support to direct payments for environmental management would support a range of farming regimes and methods,

reflecting the diversity and reality of farming in Britain today. There would be a shift of emphasis from food production to the other products which are of intrinsic benefit – the protection of the landscape and the countryside, the protection of wildlife habitats, the opportunity for people to live in and to visit a rural England that thrives with communal life.

That said, it will hardly surprise you, given my earlier confession, that I have yet to see any better means of achieving these objectives than to farm according to organic principles. Organic farming may not be the only way ahead, but I have to say that I know of no better way to farm in a sustainable and sensitive fashion. If you reduce the intensity of production, reduce the specialisation of production, you must surely create a system that both thrives on and generates that precious diversity, biodiversity, to which the Rio summit rightly paid so much attention.

It is important, as John Gummer himself has recognised that the environment should, I quote, 'be put at the centre of the Common Agricultural Policy'. Even five years ago such optimism would have seemed naive. Today, however, it is different. The two ministries, Environment and Agriculture now sing more lustily from the same song-sheet. There is a sense of common purpose and – which matters greatly – there is a growing body of public opinion urging them in the right direction and ever eager to put them back on course if they should, perchance, take a wrong turning.

The former President of the Soil Association, Fritz Schumacher, was a visionary who placed the concept of organic agriculture within the totality of what is at issue for all those millions of us who care about the environment. He had a phrase which is true of the organic movement and true for all those environmentalists who have a feeling for what is fundamentally at issue. 'We speak,' he wrote, 'of the battle with nature, but we would do well to remember that if we win that battle we will be on the losing side.'

The task for all those who care about the environment and about the inheritance that we pass on to future generations is to battle against those who do not yet understand what Schumacher meant. It is a battle which demands reason, tolerance, clarity and resilience. It requires a political calculation and a political perspective. But above all it needs, I think, a feeling for the spirit of things; a sense that we are part of the natural world, springing from it and returning to it, and a knowledge that, in a fundamental respect, what we do to nature we do to ourselves.

It is this affinity with the natural world which is, I believe, the ultimate inspiration of those who treasure landscape and those who want to farm with nature and not against nature.

This is a shortened version of Jonathan Dimbleby's speech at the launch of Organic Harvest on October 3rd 1994.

Cows: mad or poisoned?

Mark Purdey is an organic farmer who believes organophosphates may be linked to mad cow disease. He also also fears we are all at risk of pesticide poisoning. Bob Woffinden investigates.

Mark Purdey first began to create press headlines in 1984. MAFF had ordered him to administer organophosphorus (OP) insecticides to his organic dairy herd in the interests of a Government war against the bovine parasite known as warble-fly.

Purdey refused to comply. MAFF appeared ready to make an example of him, so he took the Ministry to court. He argued that he should be exempt from the warble-fly order on three grounds: the dangers to the cows themselves; the danger to those administering the treatment; and the dangers to the public, in the form of residues in the milk.

The High Court found in Purdey's favour – albeit on a technicality – but an extraordinary chapter in his life had already begun. For ten years, he has immersed himself in the science and politics of OP pesticides.

Shortly after his court victory over MAFF in 1984, Mark Purdey began receiving letters from across the country, all from people who claimed to be victims of chemical exposure. 'They had nearly all been told by their doctors that they were malingerers, or were imagining their symptoms. But what interested me was that the symptoms they described were frequently identical. They would include fatigue, problems of co-ordination, sweating, eye problems, muscle twitching, cramps, problems of temperature regulation and various forms of mild paralysis.

'Some of the victims, especially those suffering long term or occupational exposure, developed diseases that were close, if not identical to, the common form of motor neurone disease. Could prolonged exposure to these chemicals cause neurological dam-

age?' Purdey asked.

It has hitherto been assumed that the body's natural detoxification systems would safely deal with harmful chemicals. Evidence is now increasing that this is not the case. Moreover there is likely to be a critical point of exposure at which the accumulated chemicals block enzymes trying to clear them, and then cause escalating levels of damage. 'All these micro-doses have a cumulative effect on the body,' claims Purdey. 'I believe we're all being poisoned every day by these chemicals.'

Medical authorities seem to accept both that the incidence of near-degenerative diseases is increasing and that the age of their onset is diminishing. What no one can say is whether this is due merely to more accurate diagnosis, better reporting and increased life-expectancy; or is a result of environmental conditions. However, there is tentative support for Purdey's thesis. According to a paper published in the *Canadian Journal of Neurological Sciences* in 1987, researchers discovered 'that a significant correlation exists between pesticide use and the prevalence of Parkinson's disease.'

Despite the pressure exerted by campaigners such as Mark Purdey, the government line on pesticides still appears remarkably complacent. Outside of the UK, however, official attitudes to pesticides are becoming increasingly circumspect. Last autumn, the *New York Times* reported that 'children, who... eat more fruit and juice than adults, are at much greater risk than previously recognised... the administration is proposing banning the most dangerous pesticides or limiting their use to a few crops.' At almost the same time in Britain, MAFF was announcing, despite growing public disquiet, that a ban or moratorium would be

'inappropriate'.

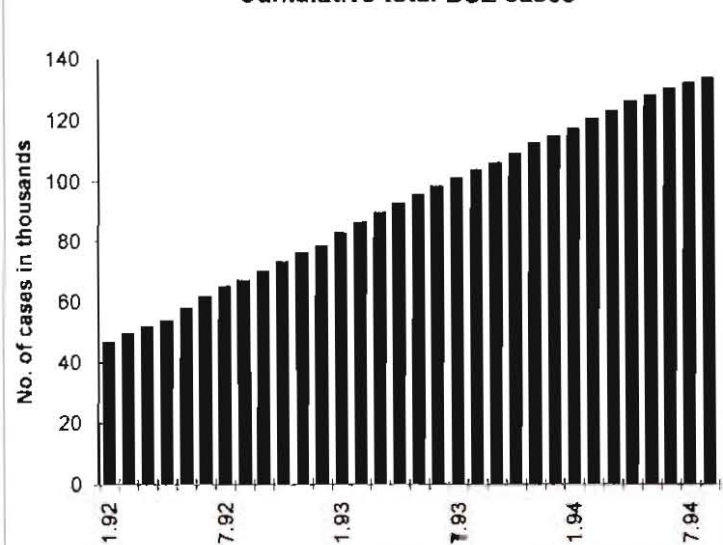
The widespread use of pesticides has accelerated far ahead of any objective scientific evaluation of them. 'There was a World Health Organisation report in 1981 saying we don't know what the long-term, low level effects of pesticides are: we should find out,' explained Dr Andrew Watterson of the De Montfort University, Leicester. 'In 1993, twelve years later, a follow-up report said basically the same thing: we don't know what the long-term effects are; we should find out.'

'To get a definitive answer,' says Dr Jamal of the Institute of Neurological Sciences, Glasgow, 'you'd need to follow two parallel populations over 10 years. But is it morally right to wait that long? My instinct is that these things are dangerous – but in the absence of scientific certainty, it is a question that the public, not the scientific community, has to resolve.'

■ We are grateful to Bob Woffinden and *The Guardian* for permission to reprint this edited version of an article published in *The Guardian* Weekend of August 13.

■ The Green Network organises regular meetings for people concerned with organo-phosphorus poisoning. Contact Vera Chaney, Green Network, 9 Clairmont Road, Lexden, Colchester, Essex, CO3 5BE, tel: 0206-46902, fax: 0206-766005.

Cumulative total BSE cases



BSE won't go away: the government predicted that the number of BSE cases would decline rapidly by the end of 1992. In fact, the total number of confirmed cases has nearly doubled, and the last two and a half years have seen more cases than the previous five years. Source: MAFF

CHECKOUT

In a special report by The Food Commission we look at whether the food industry is doing enough to help us choose lower fat foods.

Eating lower fat foods could help improve our diets. But how easy is it to choose healthier products? The Food Commission investigates.

Low fat foods

We all know the health message — eat less fat, particularly saturated fat.

More lower fat foods could help achieve this target, yet this summer the food industry expressed fury at government health guidelines and suggestions that manufacturers should reduce the amount of fat in their products. Now a Food Commission survey has found that prices of many low fat foods are often significantly higher than regular products making it difficult for consumers, particularly those on low incomes, to make healthier choices.

Food manufacturers claim that there is not enough demand for a wider range of low fat foods. Yet in those cases where low fat alternatives have become widely available with no price disincentives, sales can

rocket. Last year sales of skimmed and semi-skimmed milk overtook sales of full fat milk for the first time and sales of lower fat spreads, estimated to be worth £134m in 1993, continue to increase at the expense of butter and higher fat margarines.

But aside from dairy products and spreads the choice and availability of lower fat versions is much more limited. Yet manufacturers could be missing out — two out of three people in the UK say they regularly eat low fat foods, which is more than any other European country. Far from there being no demand, consumers say they would like to see low fat products for a wider range of foods, particularly for meat products, baked goods and chilled and frozen desserts.

New research also casts doubt on the commonly held belief that low fat foods fail on taste. In one recent trial

full fat and low fat products, eaten in blind tastings, were liked equally. Consumers who believed that low fat products don't taste good couldn't tell the difference when they actually tasted them.

But the extra cost of low fat foods can be a real disincentive to shoppers. A survey of prices of low fat and regular foods showed significant price variations. Low fat products were up to 40 per cent more expensive than their higher fat equivalents.

However other manufacturers were able to charge comparable prices between their regular and reduced fat products. Higher quality ingredients may cost slightly more but higher prices are more likely to be due to some manufacturers charging an unjustified premium on lower fat products. These companies appear to see lower fat foods as upmarket products aimed at higher income

shoppers rather than as regular items that can be afforded by all consumers. And unless a wide range of reasonably priced, reduced fat foods are available, their impact on improving the nation's diet will be negligible.

Sources of fat in our diet

Fats and oils	32%
Meat and meat products	25%
Milk and milk products	11%
Cakes, biscuits and pastries	8%
Cheese	6%
Other foods	18%

Source: MAFF, National Food Survey, 1992, HMSO.

Misleading claims

The big letters on the front of the pack say 'low fat' but should you believe it? Not always according to a survey of 632 nutrition claims by the Coronary Prevention Group in 1991. The CPG concluded that claims such as 'low fat' can often be selective and misleading. 44 per cent of foods making 'low fat' claims failed to meet proposed government criteria and 26 per cent were actually high fat foods.

The problem is the law, or rather lack of it, which currently makes it all too easy for companies to give a healthier impression of a product than it genuinely warrants. Nearly three years ago consumers were promised tough new regulations by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) on these kinds of claims:

Low fat would have to mean less than 5% fat in the product and less than 5 grams of fat in a typical serving. **Reduced fat** would have to mean that the total fat content must be less than three-quarters that of similar products that make no claims. **Fat free** would have to mean less than one sixth of one per cent of the content of fat. The use of the word **very** – as in very low fat yogurt – would not have been permitted.

Another confusing claim is the use of the word **lite**. Manufacturers themselves admit the term has no clear meaning. Some use it to mean reduced fat, calories, salt, sugar, even alcohol or to describe colour. We think it is a meaningless term and should thus be outlawed, unless clearly defined.

But the proposals were disliked by many food manufacturers whose products would no longer qualify for a low-fat claim. And MAFF now appear to have gone cold on the idea. With the European Commission similarly no nearer sorting out the confusion, consumers continue to be confused and misled.

Unless shoppers can trust claims they could reject products, meanwhile missing out on products which could offer a genuine healthier alternative.

Cutting the fat

The UK still has one of the highest rates of coronary heart disease in the world and obesity is increasing at an alarming rate. The government's *Health of the Nation* strategy, published in 1992, recommends a reduction in our average fat intake from the current level of around 40 per cent to 35 per cent and a reduction in saturated fat from the current level of 17 per cent to no more than 11 per cent.

Surveys show that we think we are eating more healthily and reducing the amount of fat we eat. Yet paradoxically, while there have been some positive changes in the different types of fat we eat (more polyunsaturated fats compared to saturates), average total fat intake, as a percentage of total food energy, has remained virtually static for more than 20 years.

It's true that many more of us are choosing lower fat spreads and semi-skimmed milk, buying less meat and following healthy eating guidelines by eating more fruit and vegetables and starchy foods. But – and here's the rub – we are also eating more high fat indulgence foods such as creamy desserts, biscuits, fatty snacks and take-away and restaurant meals. It can often be much harder to tell how much fat is in these kinds of processed foods which probably helps explain why overall fat levels have remained so high.

The challenge now is how to achieve the *Health of the Nation* targets on fat. While consumer information and education are important, the *Health of the Nation* also makes clear that the food industry must play its part. Manufacturers are being urged to reformulate standard foods wherever possible to reduce the levels of fat and saturates, to increase the variety and availability of lower fat versions and to develop marketing practices which are more conducive to healthy food choices.

Do low fat foods cost more?

When the Food Commission went shopping for low and reduced fat foods we found that lower fat often meant higher prices. The same brand equivalent reduced fat product often cost more than regular products (see table). For example McVities Light Kraka Wheat biscuits were 33% more expensive than regular Kraka Wheats and Findus Lean Cuisine chicken pasta dish may have half the fat of Findus regular frozen chicken lasagna but it also costs 40% more. Tesco Health Eating beefburgers contain half the fat of their regular ones but cost 32% more and Walls lean recipe sausages were 30% more expensive than their regular pork and beef sausages.

The premium prices charged by manufacturers of many low fat foods act as a barrier to demand and make it difficult for shoppers on low incomes to choose lower fat products.

But not all reduced fat products we looked cost more. For example we found:

- Marks and Spencer's spicy chicken with rice and their lite, low fat chicken with tarragon and rice both cost £2.49 for 340g with the low fat version containing 1.2% fat compared with 22.3% for the regular product.
- Ambrosia low fat rice pudding costs the same as its creamed rice equivalent and contains half the fat, though the difference per serving is only 1.6g of fat.
- M&S lite coleslaw contains half the fat (7.9g/100g) of M&S coleslaw in rich mayonnaise but both cost 59p for 225g.
- Kraft Cheddarie Light is the same price (99p for 180g) as regular Cheddarie and contains 15% fat compared with 21%. But you could be mistaken for thinking

that you are cutting out more fat. The light product says it contains 'half the fat of Cheddarie' but not half the fat of regular Cheddarie.

- Flora (70% fat) and Flora extra light (39% fat) sunflower spreads are both 49p for 250g
- Safeways full cream milk (4% fat) and its virtually fat free milk (0.1% fat) both cost 26p a pint.

And some low fat products were actually cheaper than regular items:

- Marks and Spencer 'lite' French dressing was 21% cheaper than its regular equivalent. But so it should be – water if a cheaper ingredient than oil.
- Tesco's half fat medium mature cheddar (15% fat) was 5% cheaper than their regular medium mature cheddar (34.4% fat).

So if some manufacturers can sell lower fat foods at the same price or even cheaper than their regular products, why are other manufacturers charging a premium price?

Several manufacturers in our survey tried to disguise price differences by appearing to sell lower fat products at the same price – but selling less of it. A packet of McVities Light Kraka Wheat biscuits cost 47p, the same price as a packet of regular Kraka Wheat except that it weighs 50g less.

Similarly four pots of Ski diet yogurt at 96p appear 4p cheaper than Ski's regular fruit yogurt – that is until you notice that the diet yogurt comes in 125g pots rather than the 150g pots of the regular yogurt. And a tub of Walls Too Good To Be True ice cream (£1.89) looks to be 10p cheaper than a tub of Walls Gino Ginelli Triple Chocolate ice cream (£1.99) except that Too Good To Be True weighs in at only 750ml compared with Gino Ginelli's litre tub.

Lower fat can mean higher prices

PRODUCT	TYPE	PRODUCT WEIGHT	FAT/100G	FAT DIFFERENCE	PRICE	PRICE/100G	PRICE DIFFERENCE
Biscuits:							
McVities digestive	regular	250g	21.9		40p	16p	
McVities Light digestive	reduced fat	250g	16.4	- 25%	42p	16.8p	+ 5%
Burgers:							
Tesco beefburgers with onion	regular	227g	25.4		75p	33p	
Tesco healthy eating beefburgers	half the fat	227g	10.5	- 59%	99p	43.6p	+ 32%
Cheese:							
Sainsbury's Milk English Cheddar	regular	454g	34.4		£1.85	40.7p	
Sainsbury's reduced fat mild cheese	reduced fat	454g	23	- 33%	£1.99	43.8p	+ 8%
Cottage cheese:							
Tesco Cottage Cheese	regular	227g	3.9		69p	30.4p	
Tesco healthy eating Cottage Cheese	very low fat	227g	1.9	- 51%	79p	34.8p	+ 14%
Crisps:							
M&S crinkle crisps	regular	40g	35		27p	67.5p	
M&S reduced fat crinkles	reduced fat	40g	24	- 31%	31p	77.5p	+ 15%
Ice Cream:							
Walls Gino Ginelli Triple Chocolate	regular	1litre	6.4		£1.99	19.9p	
Walls Too Good to be True Double Chocolate		750ml	0.49	- 92%	£1.89	25.2p	+ 27%
Ready meals:							
Findus frozen Chicken lasagna	regular	330g	4.7		£1.45	44p	
Findus frozen Lean Cuisine	low in fat	275g	2.4	- 49%	£1.69	61.4p	+ 40%
Chicken & Ham lasagne verdi							
Sausages:							
Walls pork & beef	regular	454g	20.5		£1.39	30.6p	
Walls Lean recipe	50% less fat	400g	9.3	- 55%	£1.59	39.7p	+ 30%
Savoury Biscuits:							
McVities Kraka Wheat	regular	200g	25.5		47p	23.5p	
McVities Light Kraka Wheat	reduced fat	150g	17.8	- 30%	47p	31.3p	+ 33%
Yogurt:							
Ski fruit yogurt	low fat	4 x 150g	1.1		99p	16.5p	
Ski diet yogurt	virtually fat free	4 x 125g	0.1	- 91%	95p	19p	+ 15%

Making the changes

Consumers say that eating low fat foods is a useful way of reducing fat. In a small scale survey of consumer attitudes in south London, eating low fat foods was reported as the most popular means of reducing the amount of fat they ate (97%). This was preferable to making what were considered to be more radical changes to their diets. Cutting back on red meat was least popular (39%), but eating more fruit and vegetables was acceptable to three-quarters (77%) of the respondents.

A matter of taste

Many shoppers believe that low fat foods don't live up to taste expectations and so are less likely to purchase them. But in blind tastings of three different full fat and lower fat foods – digestive biscuits, meat paté and cheddar cheese – a consumer panel found little difference in preferences between the two. The full fat and low fat products were preferred almost equally.

■ Researched by Peta Cottee and Diane Brocklebank. Written by Sue Dibb.

Conclusion

A wider range of low fat products would benefit consumers, but only if they are accurately labelled and affordably priced. Government and the EU must assist consumer confidence by urgently introducing regulations controlling nutrition claims. But more than reduced fat alternatives, the Food Commission wants to see companies reducing fat levels, particularly saturated fat, in their reg-

ular products. Carrying out such a 'fat audit' is one of the recommendations of the government's *Health of the Nation* strategy and one which the Food Commission wants to see the industry wholeheartedly support.

■ The full results of the surveys quoted in this article, together with additional consumer surveys are available in the Food Commission's report, *Low Fat Foods: Is the Market Saturated?*, price £75.00 (inc p&g) from the Publications Dept, Food Commission, 3rd floor, 5-11 Worship Street, London EC2A 2BH. Tel: 071-628 7774.

Selling food to

Selling food to children has become big business. But with a new survey showing children's diets are as unhealthy as ever, isn't it time for food companies to act more responsibly?

Today's children are more sophisticated, demanding, independent and wealthy and the number of under-15s will grow by 10 per cent in the 1990s. That is the conclusion of a recent report on the children's food market by flavourings manufacturer, Borthwick's. The company has estimated that children's spending power will reach £9 billion by 1998 so the message to companies is go out and sell to this growing market.

The confectionery manufacturer, Cadbury's, is one company that has needed little encouragement. In June the company announced a new portfolio of five brands aimed specifically at children in a bid to capture younger consumers. The chocolate makers says they are bringing back a 70s favourite, Freddo Frog, relaunching Chomp, Curly Wurly and Fudge as

well as launching a new brand, Taz, based on Warner Bros cartoon character Tazmanian Devil – all designed to catch the pocket money market with lower prices than existing Cadbury children's brands.

But many parents are now saying they are fed up with food promotions and advertising to children which encourage an unhealthy diet. A MORI opinion survey published by the National Food Alliance in July found that three-quarters of parents (74%) think that food advertisements do not encourage their children to eat a healthy balanced diet but do encourage them to spend pocket money on foods the parents disapprove of.

Character branding that uses popular characters from cartoons, children's books and movies, has become big business with companies knowing that kids' 'pester power' will help sell products. Against these

commercial pressures many parents find it hard to constantly say no. Half the parents of 5-11 year old children in the MORI survey admitted that their kids were successful at persuading them to purchase foods they wouldn't otherwise buy.

In response to the MORI findings the National Food Alliance is calling for a thorough review of advertising practices and for advertising and promotions to present a more positive nutrition message to children. In July the NFA published detailed submissions to the advertising regulatory bodies calling for advertising to give a more balanced nutrition message; for adverts not to give a misleading impression with meaningless claims such as 'full of goodness' and 'wholesome'; and a restriction on the use of images of sport and fitness that may give a misleading impression of the nutritional quality of a product. The NFA's proposals are supported by over 50 national organisations including the British Dental Association, the British Dietetic Association and the British Heart Foundation.

Gateway off to a Fresh Start



As the most recent survey of children's diet (see right) clearly shows — fruit and vegetables are virtually absent from most children's diets. But now one supermarket chain is hoping to reverse the trend. The Somerfield supermarket chain which includes Gateway stores has launched a campaign to encourage children of all ages to eat more fruit and vegetables.

Its Fresh Start campaign launched in July offers children the chance to join a Discovery Club and receive specially designed packs, with eye-catching artwork, to help them learn where products come from, how they get to this country and what's good about them. The super-

market chain has also launched 'fruit routes' through stores and plans to remove sweets and soft drinks from check-outs and replace them with fruit. And it's good for business too — the company expects to see a 50 per cent increase in fruit and vegetables sales during the next year. As supermarkets are keen to advertise how parent-and-child-friendly they are, this is one initiative they all could follow.

■ For more information contact the Food Advertising Project, National Food Alliance, 3rd floor, 5-11 Worship Street, London EC2A 2BH. Tel: 071-628 2442.

Big Mac ads go online

Kids who spend more time interacting with their computers than watching TV will not escape the marketing hard sell. McDonald's have announced the company is experimenting with advertising on computer networks. The adverts, complete with electronic golden arches, are being trialed on America Online, a US commercial computer network with about 900,000 subscribers.

kids

A diet of junk food ads part 3



And now a message from our sponsors....

There's more to food promotion than TV ads and sponsorship is fast becoming a popular way for food manufacturers to get their message across to youngsters.

Take That fans attending their latest concert dates are being given free packets of Kellogg's Corn Pops. The cereal giant is sponsoring Britain's leading pop group, Take That, to the tune of £1 million. Take That members said they would not accept sponsorship from tobacco or alcohol companies but are apparently unconcerned that Corn Pops is nearly 40% sugar. Kellogg's were quoted as choosing Take That because 'they are popular with 8-16 year olds who are the biggest consumers of Corn Pops'.

And Kellogg's Frosties' sponsorship (featuring Tony the Tiger) of ITV's highly popular Saturday Gladiators programme has caused controversy with anti-sugar campaigners unhappy that such a highly sweetened cereal (40% sugar) is being associated with sport and fitness.

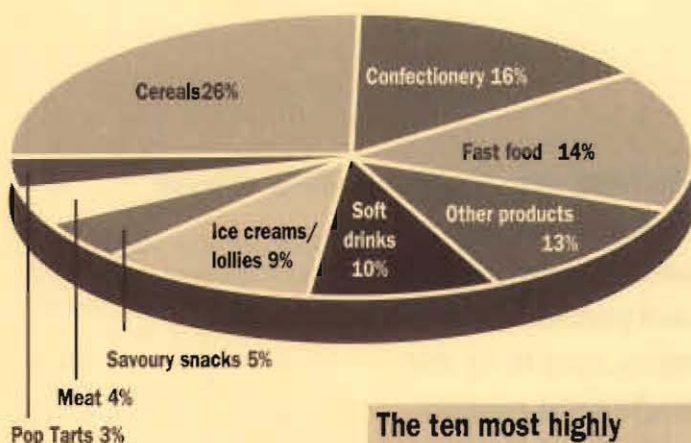
A new survey of TV food advertising to children carried out by the Food Commission in June confirms the high level of food advertising targeted towards children. During 22 hours of weekday and Saturday morning children's TV programmes, food and soft drinks adverts accounted for over half of all products advertised, far higher than any other product group. Ad breaks were dominated by ads for cereals (mainly pre-sweetened), confectionery, fast food, soft drinks, ice-cream and lollies and savoury snacks (see chart).

While adverts for individual products will change from week to week this survey illustrates the high level of advertising for foods high in fats and/or sugars. During the 219 ads, only one was for fruit – Granny Smith's apples.

These results are consistent with surveys carried out by the Food Commission in 1990 and 1992 and indicate that despite public concern

about high levels of 'junk' food advertising to children there have been no improvements.

Children's viewing: breakdown of food adverts



The ten most highly advertised brands in the week's survey were:

- ◆ Burger King
- ◆ Coco Pops
- ◆ Five Alive
- ◆ Fruit Pastilles
- ◆ McDonalds
- ◆ Pizza Hut
- ◆ Pop Tarts
- ◆ Rice Crispies
- ◆ Smarties
- ◆ Weetos

The full results of this survey, which compared advertising during children's and adult's programming will be published by the National Food Alliance later this year.

Children's diet of chocolate and chips

A recent survey of children's diets published in *She* magazine monitored everything 400 children aged 7-11 from 21 schools ate over a three day period. The children came from a variety of backgrounds and geographical locations but their diets showed many similarities.

Most children eat a packet of crisps a day and nearly all of the children consume sweets and fizzy drinks daily. Chips were children's favourite foods with fruit and vegetables virtually absent from their food diaries.

Eight year old Christopher's daily diet was fairly typical; toast, crisps, lemonade, sausage roll, doughnut, cola, two white rolls, chips and juice.

◆ Almost 40% of the children's

energy came from fat (the recommended percentage is no more than 35%). Popular foods such as ice cream, crisps, chips, sausages and beefburgers are all high in fat.

◆ Nearly 24% of energy came from sugar about twice the recommended amount, mainly from eating sweets, fizzy drinks and foods with added sugars.

◆ More than a third (36%) of the children were not getting the recommended 550mg of calcium per day.

◆ 62% of the girls and 54% of boys surveyed did not meet the recommended 8.7mg of iron per day.

◆ Virtually all (91%) the children were not meeting EC recommenda-

tions of 10mg vitamin E per day, half (51%) were not getting enough vitamin A and a quarter (24%) did not meet recommended levels for vitamin C.

The survey supports findings of the governments' *Diets of British School Children* and the National Forum for Coronary Heart Disease Prevention's report, *Food for Children*, both of which concluded that children's diets are putting their health at risk.

■ The survey was conducted by The Flora Project for Heart Disease Prevention in collaboration with *She* magazine, October 1994. For further information: Moira Howie at the Flora Project on 071-242 0936.

Loopy labels

We bring you another fine selection of provocative products and peculiar packages, sent in by our eagle-eyed readers

Baby Ribena

Perhaps desperate to regain some initiative after paying out compensation to mothers who fed Ribena to their tiny tots only to see their beloved baby's first teeth turn black and crumble, SmithKline Beecham have packaged a new product targeted specifically at babies 'from weaning upwards'.

The product is virtually pure water, with a drop of flavouring and

benefits) from their local baby clinic, what are they getting from Ribena? At 35p for a carton that is half the size of regular Ribena, it works out expensive for a drink of water. In fact that's £2.80 a litre, more than you pay for Perrier in a wine bar, and more than freshly squeezed orange juice in a supermarket.

And if you have read our feature on Food Miles (pages 19 and 20) you may be amused to know that these tetrapacks of Baby Ribena are packed in Canada. Perhaps that explains the price.



laced with enough vitamin C for the average baby for the day. This is the selling point: 'Sugar free' and 'Rich in vitamin C'.

As all mothers can get vitamin C at low cost (or free if they are on

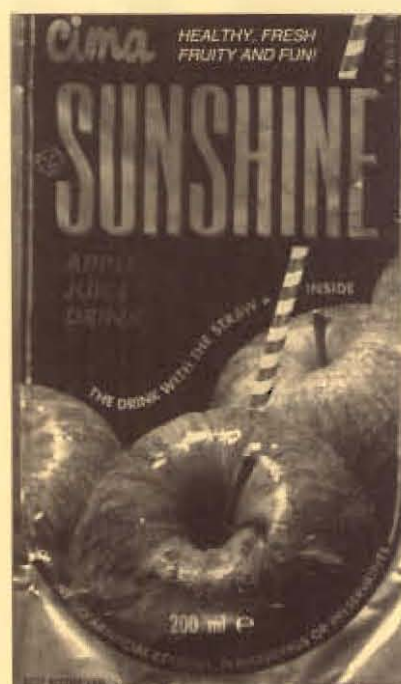
Sunshine apple juice drink

We couldn't resist the sales pitch on this pack of juice: 'Healthy, Fresh, Fruity and Fun!'

The trouble is, despite the pictures of apples on the front, this isn't actually a juice, it's a juice drink.

Readers of the last issue may recall our feature on fruit drinks with little juice in them. Sunshine has 10 per cent apple juice, with more added sugar than juice, and the main ingredient (over 75 per cent) is added water. With all this sugar, how can they call it healthy? And with a 'best before' date six months ahead, how can they call it fresh? At 10% apple juice how can they call it fruity?

The answer is amusing: It is healthy because, they say, 'it contains no artificial colours, additives or preservatives'. Try telling that to the Ministry of Agriculture, whose job is to ensure that all additives are tested for safety.



It's fruity because 'it contains real fruit juice' and, for that matter, an added fruit flavouring agent as well.

And they declare it is fresh because it is packed in a foil pouch. What nonsense will we get next?

Sunpride orange juice

Sorry to keep banging on about juices this issue, but the latest trick being tried by Gerber Foods under their Sunpride label is to pack out their shelves with boxes that look like a re-designed one-litre orange juice box, but is in fact a re-designed one-litre orange juice box that is only three-quarters the size it should be.

To be precise, they have made the box taller but so much thinner



that it only contains 750ml. And whereas the regular litre box cost us 79p, the new-size box cost us 89p, in the same shop too!

OK, the small pack does say it is 'the ultimate pure juice with the full taste of oranges' but both are made from concentrated orange juice.

Child development text books tell us that young children believe a taller glass of milk has more in it than a shorter one, no matter how wide or narrow the two glasses are. But children are supposed to grow out of this by the age of eight!

Perhaps Gerber should stick to baby foods.

Iceland cheesecake

As a general rule, when you buy packaged food you can expect to be told how much of that food you are getting.

Manufacturers may try to make you think you are getting more, with their clever packaging (see the taller, smaller orange juice packs on this

page). But somewhere on the label you can expect to find the truth, with the quantity of a liquid

given as a volume and the quantity of a solid as a weight.

Well, actually you can't. There are several exceptions to the general rule. There are products like ice cream which, despite being solid and despite being pumped full of added air to make them bigger, are allowed to be sold by their volume. And then there are small objects like sweets, where no weight needs to be given at all.

And then there is cheesecake. This frozen one from Iceland turned out to weigh nearly 500 grams, but there is nothing on the pack to say this. Our curiosity aroused, we asked Iceland what they were doing.

According to their technical manager there was no weight marked because cooked products change their weight during cooking, and you get the same with gateaux and sausage rolls for that matter.

We think that's a load of old cheese. Packaged bread has no problem declaring its weight.

Nor do sausage rolls and cheesecake in several other supermarkets.



Now, more than ever, you are being selective about what you eat and drink.

So when you're feeling thirsty, why not try



Caffeine Free **diet Coke**
REGISTERED TRADE MARK

Now you really can enjoy the great taste of "diet Coke" without caffeine. It's good to know that there's a truly refreshing alternative to your regular choice of drink and it's sugar free! During pregnancy, you'll also find it's important to keep up your fluid intake. As you drink Caffeine Free diet Coke you know that you are helping to do this, and you'll still be getting the very best taste from your choice.

Diet, caffeine-free Coke

Can't resist another story about drinks. This time it is the world's number one brand, Coca Cola, only a version with neither sugar nor caffeine in it, which makes you wonder what's left that's worth drinking. A load of chemicals of course.

Hence the outrage when health workers find that expectant mothers are being offered vouchers for this drink. Who is giving them these vouchers? Health workers themselves, albeit rather unwittingly. The drink is being promoted in one of those Bounty and Treasure Trove-style carrier bags given out by antenatal clinics and baby clinics for reasons that have got rather lost in the mists of time.

What is thought particularly irksome is the voucher shows pictures of a sensible, fruit-eating diet, but promotes a synthetic soft drink such as this. Plus their unctuous phrases in the leaflet saying how 'it's important to keep up your fluid intake'.

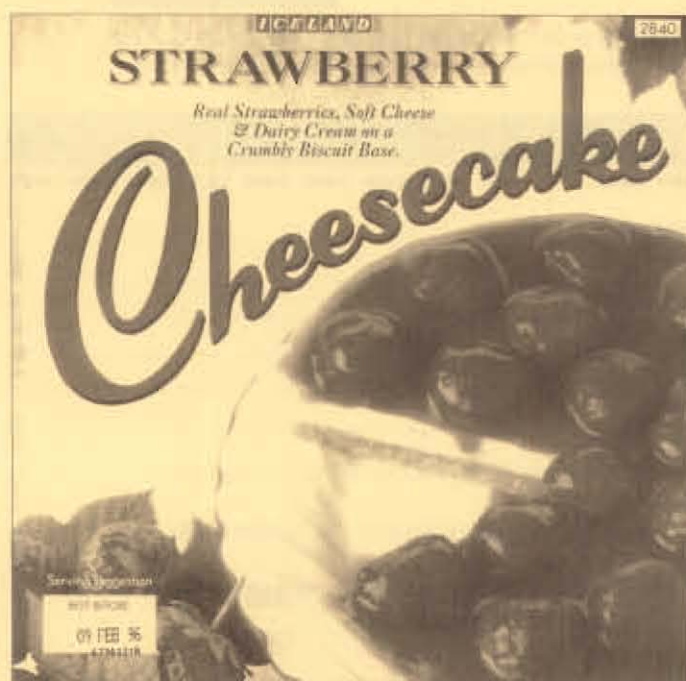
Soya milk banned!

Well, not quite. But the name is to be banned because, say members of the European Union's Milk Management Committee, it breaks the Dairy Designation Regulations.

In other words it isn't what the Eurocrats think of as proper milk

(mammary secretions etc). The soya trade are furious, especially as coconut milk is allowed to keep its name as a 'traditional' exception, along with peanut butter, butter puffs, custard creams, cream crackers, cream soda, peppermint creams and cream of tomato soup. 'It's Euro lunacy,' said Plamil's director Arthur Ling, threatening an increase in price if he has to re-label soya milk as 'soya drink'.

Thanks for labels to Sally Bunday, Lizzie Vann and Jeanette Longfield.



PROVAMEL

Soya Milk

No added sugar or salt



Provamel Soya Milk is a non-dairy blend of filtered water & the finest hulled organic soya beans.

The Nursery Food Book

A lively and practical book exploring all issues relating to food, nutrition, hygiene and multicultural needs, with tips, recipes and sample menus along with cooking, gardening and educational activities involving food. Excellent handbook for nursery nurses and anyone caring for young children. £9.99 including p&p.

Food Adulteration

A penetrating expose of the shocking state of food quality in Britain, revealing the facts on additives, pesticides, food poisoning and irradiation. £5.95 inc p&p.

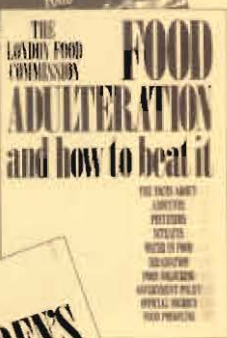
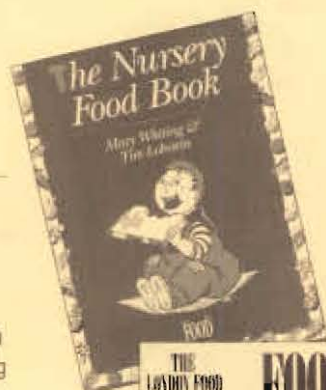
Children's Food

Teething rusks sweeter than a doughnut? Fish fingers less than half fish? Beef burgers made with pork? A book packed with trade secrets and sound advice. £4.75 inc p&p.

Fast Food Facts

Full of useful tables of nutrients and additives, along with a unique look into the secretive world of fast foods. £5.95 inc p&p.

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Still the best reference book with comprehensive tables and summaries of the evidence on the safety of each additive. Special price only £3.50 inc p&p.

Food Irradiation

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Food for Health or Wealth

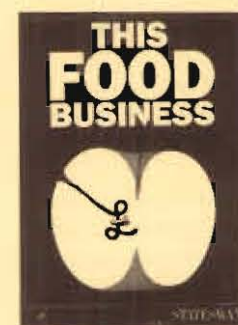
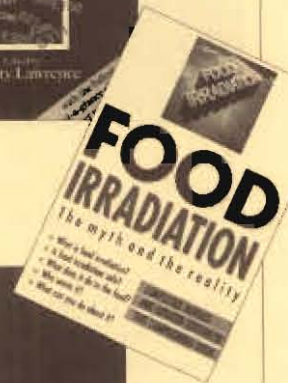
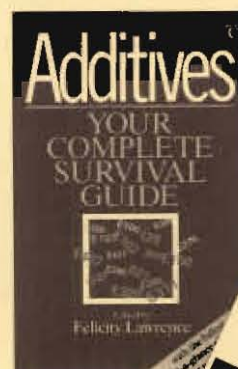
The acclaimed report from the Socialist Health Association. £4.50 inc p&p.

Additives chart

published by Channel 4 £2 inc p&p.

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Measuring food by the mile

An analysis of the materials needed to produce our food can be startling. Ten litres of orange juice needs a litre of diesel fuel for processing and transport, and 220 litres of water for irrigation and washing the fruit. The water may be a renewable resource, but the fuel is not only irreplaceable but is a pollutant, too.

The problem is that fossil fuels, such as petrol and diesel, are remarkably cheap. The price of the fuel itself does not reflect the cost of providing the roads on which the vehicles travel, nor does it reflect the cost of the environmental damage that burning fossil fuel creates, nor the cost of developing alternatives when the oil wells run dry. All these costs will have to be paid for sooner or later, but they are not added to the price of the food. If they were we might think very differently about whether we wanted to pay the true price for fresh lettuces from California, strawberries from Israel, and flowers from Kenya.

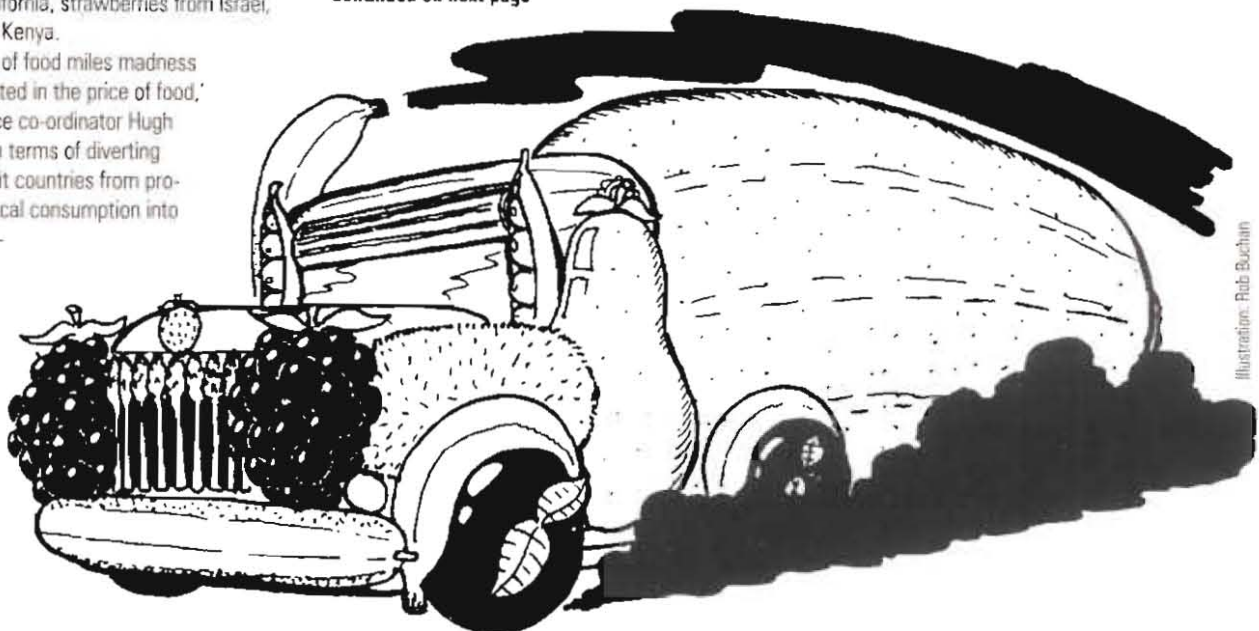
'The real cost of food miles madness are seldom reflected in the price of food,' says SAFE Alliance co-ordinator Hugh Raven. 'It costs in terms of diverting land in food-deficit countries from producing food for local consumption into crops for export – as with soya production in Brazil. It costs in terms of air pollution and carbon dioxide emissions from air and road transport. It's madness to fly food half-

way around the world when UK growers are going out of business – like the American raspberries on sale in the UK at the height of the raspberry season.'

Flying commodities by air, which uses nearly 40 times the amount of fuel that sea transport uses, is now a regular feature of world trade. But cheap fuel can also be used to undercut local suppliers by bringing in commodities from further afield. Take apples. Britain now consumes more French apples than British ones. We have grubbed up over half of our orchards since the 1950s and now bring in apples from Europe, New Zealand, South Africa, Chile and the USA. We could produce many more apples in the UK, benefiting rural communities and saving energy on packaging and transport, but we don't because the big supermarket buyers can get a better deal from the French and the fuel costs are low. For a few pence per pound, the rural economy in Britain

Continued on next page

How much of your dinner tonight will have been grown locally? And how much will have travelled several hundred miles – even several thousand miles – to reach your table? Measuring food miles is a complex task but, reports Tim Lobstein, the results make disturbing reading.



Food Miles

Continued from previous page

is depleted — and the subsequent social and environmental costs of this depletion will then have to be paid for (but of course not by the supermarkets).

Now researchers in Britain and Germany have started to investigate the composite distances travelled by food, taking into account their ingredients and the materials for their packaging. To produce a small glass jar of strawberry yogurt for sale in Stuttgart, strawberries were being transported from Poland to west Germany and then processed into jam to be sent to southern Germany. Yogurt cultures came from north Germany, corn and wheat flour from the Netherlands, sugar beet from east Germany, and the labels and aluminium covers for the jars were being made over 300 km away. Only the glass jar and the milk were produced locally.

In counting the yogurt's environmental costs, the lorry emerged as the main culprit, contributing to noise, danger and pollution. The study found that to bring one lorry-load of yogurt pots to the south German distribution centre a 'theoretical' lorry must be moved a total of 1005 km, using some 400 litres of diesel fuel.

But there are a whole range of further hidden miles that these calculations ignore. To grow the strawberries for the jam for the yogurt, the farmer uses fossil fuels to plant, spray and harvest the fruit, and the sprays he uses have themselves been manufactured and distributed at some environmental cost. The aluminium for the yogurt jar lids has come from mines many thousands of miles from the packaging plant. Then there is the machinery used for packaging the yogurt, which had to be brought in from Switzerland, perhaps, or Britain, to say nothing of the transport of the workers in the yogurt processing plant going to and from their homes every day. And the transport of shoppers from their homes to the shops, in order to buy the yogurt... So the circle widens, at every point adding to the real costs of the yogurt, but which do not get added to the price and instead must be paid for in other ways at other times.

And then there is the question of the true cost of meat, and the vast tracts of land devoted to the growing of feedstuffs for rearing animals. This land is referred to in the British study of food miles (published by the SAFE Alliance) as 'ghost acres'.

These include some 44 million ghost acres in Thailand alone (ie an area about the size of Ireland) devoted to supplying manioc for European cattle. Export commodities such as these distort a developing country's agricultural economy, encouraging small farmers to participate in growing cash crops for export rather than food crops for local needs. Brazil has become a major supplier of soya beans for European animal feed, but to do this it has cut down a quarter of its Cerrado plateau forest, some 12 million acres, causing immeasurable ecological damage.

These are typical of the ghost acres, the distant, blighted areas of the world being exploited to satisfy European demands for meat and meat products. In the UK we exploit two of these ghost acres abroad for every one acre we farm at home. We can do this only because the true costs of exploiting Brazil and Thailand, and the true costs of shipping the animal feed to Europe, are not reflected in the price of the food consumers buy.

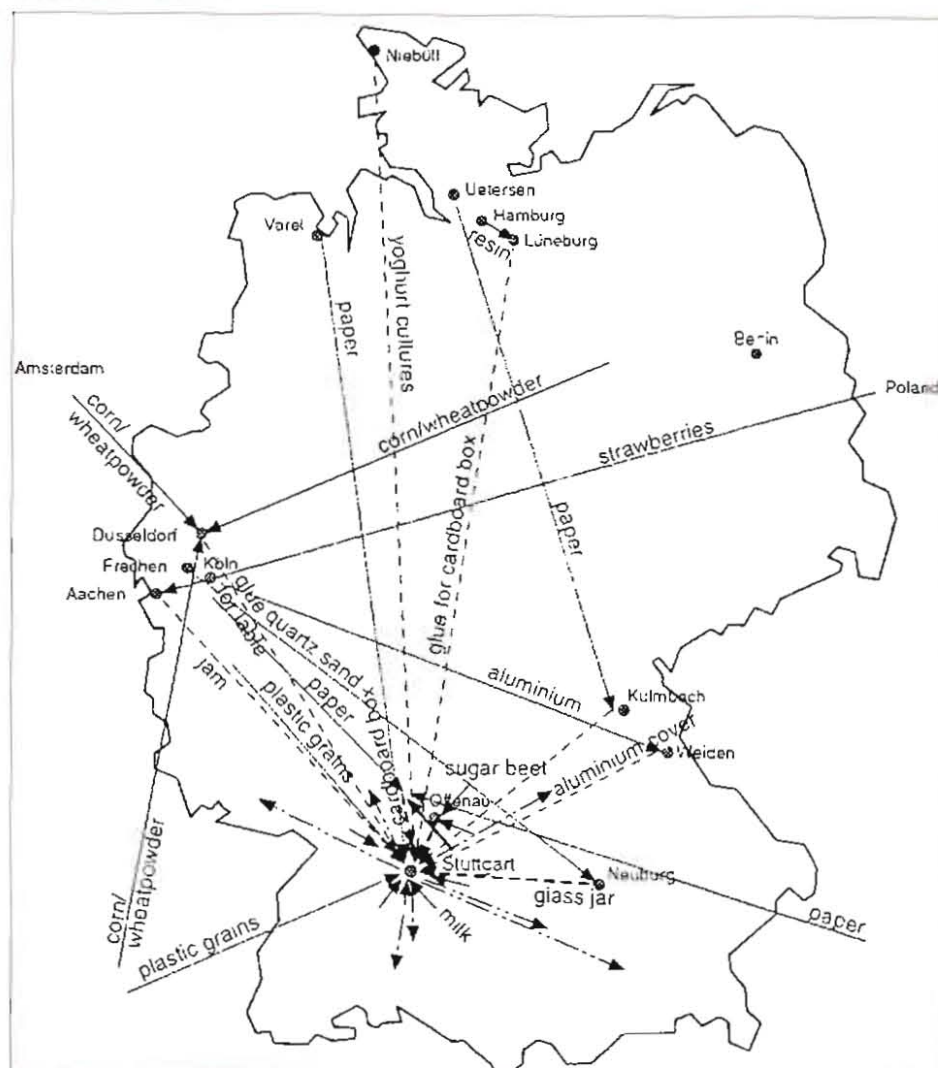
Both the SAFE report and the one from Wuppertal, Germany, call for more realistic fuel pricing policies through the introduction of a targeted fuel tax. They also urge manufacturers and retailers to review their purchasing policies in order to give greater priority to local producers.

■ *Road Transport of Goods and the Effects on the Spatial Environment*, by Stefanie Boge, Wuppertal, Germany, July 1993. A photocopy of the English summary (24 pages) can be obtained by post from the Food Commission, price £2.50 to cover costs.

Food miles are big in the food aisles.

In early September, home-grown seasonal fruit and vegetables like apples, onions, carrots and green beans were available throughout the country. But so too, in three central London supermarkets, were apples 4,700 miles from the USA, onions over 12,000 miles from Australia and New Zealand, carrots from South Africa (51,000 miles) and green beans from Kenya (3,600 miles).

■ *The Food Miles Report: the dangers of long-distance food transport*, published by the SAFE Alliance, 38 Ebury Street, London SW1W 0LU, October 1994, price £25 or £10 concessions. A six-page Food Miles Information Pack is also available from the SAFE Alliance.



The complex transport web of ingredients and materials for a pot of strawberry yogurt bought by southern German shoppers.

Coffee: organic and fair

The coffee producer's life is not an easy one. The instability of international market prices does not allow them to get a guaranteed price for their product, or a regular profit margin that allows them to live in comfortable conditions. Yet coffee growing is enormously important for rural Peruvians, providing work for thousands of farmers and their families. The whole family is involved and the younger members do not usually wish to emigrate to the cities.

Among the great number of producers are 4,300 small farmers who belong to Central de Cooperativas Agrarias Cafetaleras - Nor Oriente (CECOOAC NOR) an umbrella group for nine regional cooperatives. None of the farmers have more than 3-4 hectares of land and it would be virtually impossible for them to export their coffee beans on their own. CECOOAC NOR runs a processing plant in the city of Chiclayo serving the co-op members in the north east mountains of Peru. Between them, the farmers produce some 200,000 quintals of coffee, over 900,000 kilograms.

All the coffee produced by CECOOAC NOR's farmers is grown organically. They do not use artificial fertilisers but guano from the Isla and humus produced by earthworms. Currently five of the cooperatives have received certification by three organic inspection bodies: OCIA (USA), NATURLAND (Germany) and the Soil Association (UK). Two more of the cooperatives hope to be certified this year.

CECOOAC NOR's board of directors and its management bodies are made up of producers themselves, so that they control their coffee from tree to export. But one of the main problems for small-scale producers is that they have no access to credit or financial help, either from the state (the Agrarian Bank has gone bankrupt) or from private banks. If they try to finance themselves they risk being unable to sell their coffee at a sufficient price to have any income to live on. So middle men - private companies, rich merchants - are able to take advantage of this by buying in cash a great deal of the output, but paying unfair prices and passing on none of the profits.

Exporting to the conventional market means get-

Luzmila Loayza Feliu reports on the Peruvian co-ops that now have over 4000 small farmers growing coffee beans organically.



ting a price which may vary constantly. Often these prices do not give enough profit for producers to continue operating. For example, by 1992 the earnings from a sack of coffee was barely sufficient to purchase a sack of rice. In 1990 CECOOAC NOR had the opportunity to sell its coffee to the alternative 'solidarity' market, a market which was prepared to pay a price above the normal market price in exchange for high quality. CECOOAC NOR thus began to sell its coffee through the Max Havelaar/Transfair initiative, in the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany and Switzerland.

In 1991 there was another opportunity for CECOOAC NOR, this time selling to the UK market through Cafédirect.

By expanding sales through these markets, the farmers and their families benefit directly through better prices and a better standard of living, and they can afford to establish services such as health, education, technical training, tools supply and improved horticulture techniques.

These initiatives are a true alternative, and represent steady markets where fair prices are a recognition of the work and sacrifice needed to produce a high quality coffee - a coffee that will be appreciated by demanding but supportive consumers!

■ Luzmila Loayza Feliu is Export Manager at CECOOAC NOR. A freeze-dried instant coffee version of Cafédirect is now being distributed to supermarkets in the UK.

Available from October
**THIS YEAR'S
 NEW CHRISTMAS CARDS**

Animals All



Three Jolly Geese



Our new cards are amongst the many and varied items included in the Soil Association book catalogue, obtainable from the Soil Association Bookshop by mail order, or by walk-in customer service.

See our book reviews page for some new additions to the already very good selection of books and other catalogue items.

More than Rice and Peas

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240 pages. ISBN 1 869904 30 3

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Competition open to all ages

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Competition Rules

THE competition is open to any Soil Association member or their children under 18 years of age

ALL entries to be on A4 size paper/card.

ALTHOUGH the winning designs will be used for 1995's Christmas cards, the remaining designs may be used by the Soil Association for any other purpose. The original artist will be acknowledged.

ENTRIES will become the property of the Soil Association for copyright and all rights of the artist will be relinquished.

WINNERS list will be published in Living Earth as soon as it is available

NO responsibility can be taken of entries delayed, damaged, mislaid or wrongly delivered.

ENTRIES cannot be returned.

JUDGES may not enter the competition

CORRESPONDENCE cannot be entered into

THERE are no alternative prizes to those stated.

WINNERS will be notified by post

PROOF of posting will not be taken as proof of delivery

ONLY one entry per person

THE judges decision will be final

ENTRY of the competition implies acceptance of these rules

ENTRIES must be in by 31st January 1995

PLEASE DETACH THIS ENTRY FORM AND STICK IT
 SECURELY TO THE BACK OF YOUR DESIGN

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Tel: _____ Membership No. _____

By entering into this competition I relinquish all rights of ownership
 that could be attached to this design to the Soil Association.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Send to: Carol Dale, Soil Association, 86 Colston St.
 Bristol BS1 5BB

Food and low income

This autumn's publication by the NFA is a practical guide for advisers and supporters working with families and young people on low incomes. It sets tough questions to anyone thinking of setting up a food project, but details dozens of initiatives which have successfully tackled the problems.

In early 1994 the NFA received a modest grant from the Department of Health – as part of the Health of the Nation initiative – to develop materials to help people struggling to eat healthily on tight budgets. Initially it had been suggested that the booklet or pack (the format wasn't yet decided) would be targeted at people on low incomes, but it soon became clear that this was not a feasible option for such a small scale project.

The working party set up to guide the project included people whose work brought them directly into contact with low income groups; health visitors, community nutritionists, and people working in citizens advice bureaux, children's homes and family centres. Their advice was to produce a guide for professionals like themselves, which they could use in their day to day work with their clients.

The advantage of this indirect approach is that, by going through intermediaries, general information can be translated into practical help with food problems, and tailored precisely to the circumstances of the particular low income group. After all, advised the working party, low income consumers are no more homogeneous than the rest of us.

And so it proved to be. There were well over a hundred responses to a mailing asking for information about projects tackling the problems of eating healthily on a low income. Whilst some respondents simply wanted to register their keen interest in the outcome of the NFA initiative (because they wanted to set up a food project in future), over seventy

were active projects. Food co-ops, community cafes, cook-and-taste sessions, recipe books, mobile shops, lunch clubs ... the variety was almost infinite.

From this inspiring array of local talent and initiative, some common threads have been drawn together. Suzi Leather and Tim Lobstein, researchers to the project, have developed a checklist for people thinking of setting up their own food project with low income groups. The checklist encourages people to examine viability, funding and staffing and – since it recommends firmly that such ventures should not be attempted alone – lists a wide range of statutory and voluntary sources of help.

As well as the checklist, the pack describes a handful of food projects in detail, lists the remainder in summary form, presents the official advice about food health and safety and – perhaps uniquely – brings together in one place details of all the food-related welfare benefits to which people on a low income may be entitled. On Income Support alone the Department of Social Security estimates that in 1991 the amount unclaimed was between £460 million and £1,550 million. Even if the pack helps only to reduce that figure it will have been worth it.

The NFA hopes, of course, that it will do much more. The problem of eating healthily on a low income is significant and, arguably, increasing. Indeed, the issue has been recognised by Government which has set up a Project Team within the Nutrition Task Force specifically to examine the

problem. This Team and the NFA working party have overlapping membership to ensure co-ordination, and the NFA's practical guide should fit into the broader strategy being developed by the NTF.

In the meanwhile, anyone interested in ordering a copy of the pack *Food and Low Income* should send an s.a.e. to the usual NFA address

New members

The Hyperactive Children's Support Group was set up in 1977 and now has 2,000 members. It offers support and advice to families with hyperactive children and particularly encourages diets free of artificial additives and chemicals.

A new observer organisation is the **Royal Society for the Promotion of Health** which was established in 1876 and represents some 6,000 UK professionals, and a further 3,000 overseas members with an interest in public health.

National Food Alliance
3rd Floor,
5-11 Worship Street
London EC2A 2BH
Tel: 071 628 7261

Officers:

Professor Philip James (President)
Geoffrey Cannon (Chairman)
Jack Winkler (Treasurer)
Jeanette Longfield (Secretary & Co-ordinator)
Samantha Montal (Assistant Co-ordinator)

Alms and membership of the NFA

The National Food Alliance is an association of voluntary, professional, health, consumer and other public interest organisations. Its purpose is to develop food and agriculture policy in order to improve the health of the general public, increase knowledge and appreciation of the way in which food is produced and distributed and the effect this can have on human health and the environment.

This page has been contributed by the National Food Alliance

Members of the NFA:

Action and Information on Sugars
Association of School Health Education Co-ordinators
Baby Milk Action
British Dental Association
British Heart Foundation
British Organic Farmers
Campaign for Real Ale
Caroline Walker Trust
Children's Society
Christian Aid
Common Ground
Community Nutrition Group
Coronary Prevention Group
Council for the Protection of Rural England
Diet Breakers
Elm Farm Research Centre
Food Additives Campaign Team
Food Commission
Friends of the Earth
Genetics Forum
GMB (Britain's General Union)
Green Network
Henry Doubleday Research Association
Hyperactive Children's Support Group
Institute for European Environmental Policy, London
McCarrison Society
Maternity Alliance
National Association of Teachers of Home Economics and Technology
National Confederation of Parent-Teacher Associations
National Farmers' Union
National Federation of City Farms
National Federation of Consumer Groups
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Royal Society of Medicine Food and Health Forum
Royal Society for the Promotion of Health
SAFE Alliance
Scottish Consumer Council
Trades Union Congress
Vega Research
Welsh Consumer Council

letters

Milk matters

Your readers do not have to be concerned about the health and welfare of the British dairy cow (August 1994).

The high-yielding dairy cow is the most pampered food producing animal on British farms and enjoys a far higher material standard of living than many of your stress-afflicted urban readers.

With regular meals-on-wheels made up of high-fibre, largely unprocessed carbohydrates all she has to do is clock in for milking twice a day. In return she has regular exercise, comfortable shelter with regular changes of bedding and, in summer,

long hours with nothing else to do but loil about in the sunshine and fresh air chewing her cud.

A visitor from Mars would be convinced it is the cows, not the men, who are in charge.

Of the 90 high-yielding cows with which I am associated daily, mastitis is almost unknown when they are out to grass, and in winter will be an average of 1.6%, and never more than 3.2%, usually in the first six weeks after calving. And an average of two lame cows out of 90 is probably better than the human population that has the benefit of shoes.

Stuart Pattison
Dairy farming and milking
contractor, Calstock, Cornwall

Superstore culture

Thanks for your article analysing the modern plague of supermarkets that have eroded our local shopping culture. Now with Sunday trading formally legal, they will presumably take over the role of other traditional local features: the pub, the church, the visit to McDonalds...

Lawrence Hayward
Finsbury Park, London

Wanted – passionate people

Food File is back for another series to be transmitted on Channel 4 starting March 1995. They are looking for passionate, opinionated reports on all aspects of food and the food business for their 'mouth-piece' slot. If you feel strongly about something please write to them at Stephens Kerr Ltd, 8-12 Camden High Street, London NW1 0JH.

We welcome letters from readers

Please send your comments or thoughts to:

The editors
Living Earth/
Food Magazine
3rd floor
5-11 Worship St
London
EC2A 2BH

or you can fax us
on 071 628 0817



books

People, Plants and Patents:

The impact of intellectual property on trade, plant biodiversity, and rural society.

by The Crucible Group.
Published by the International Development Research Centre, PO Box 8500, Ottawa, ON, Canada K1G 3H9, price not known, ISBN 0-88936-725-6, 1994.

The ownership of genetic material will surely become the hottest legal potato of the international law courts of the next decades. The authors of this book who call themselves the Crucible Group are a wide selection of agriculturists, economists and socio-political analysts who have met intermittently following a seminal conference in the late 1980s.

Their arguments, and they do not agree amongst each other, focus on the Trade-Related Intellectual Property Section of the GATT agreement, which requires all nations signing GATT to set up systems for registering intellectual property rights over micro-organisms, microbiological processes and plant varieties. The challenge for the south is how they can set up systems which protect, strengthen and reward their traditional, community-based breeding of food crops and medicinal plants. The challenge to the north is to balance the drive to commercialise genetic material with the giving of just rewards and respect to the southern sources. The need for all of us is to take global action against the shrinking gene pool.

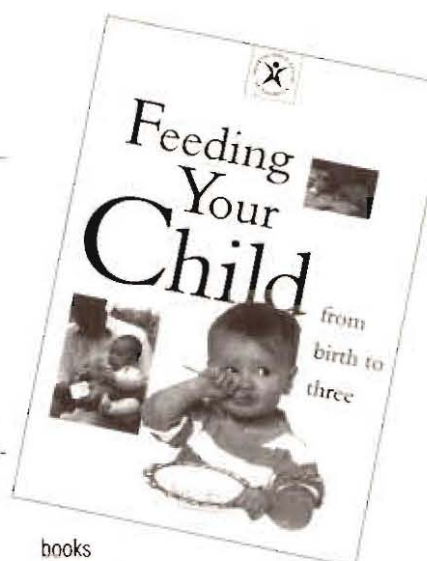
The book opens up these questions and challenges international policy-makers to produce a coherent response.

Steve Emmott

Feeding your child from birth to three

by Heather Weiford
published by the Health Education Authority, Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, London WC1H 9TX, 1994, £5.99, ISBN 1-85448-908-9.

We don't usually review baby feeding



books or recipe books, but two reasons this book is worthy of special note.

Firstly it is published by the Health Education Authority, which should mean it reflects current scientific opinion rather than the whims of an individual author (and indeed the author acknowledges HEA and Dept of Health staff who have checked the manuscript). The book happily dismisses the value of follow-on milks for babies and warns against over-sweet and poor nutritional quality commercial baby foods. It also warns against the implicit messages on commercial products suggesting babies need commercial foods in order to be well fed and the book goes on to encourage parents to make home-made meals.

Which brings us to the second reason for reviewing the book: an excellent recipe section written by Food Commission staff member and cookery lecturer Mary Whiting. Try the Beetroot Soup, or the Creamy Courgette Pasta these recipes are too good just for babies and canny Mary Whiting gives amounts for adult portions!

Tim Lobstein

Tales of the Old Woodlanders

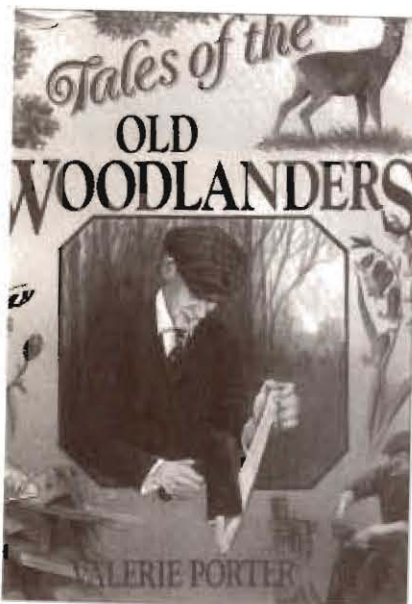
by Valerie Porter
Published by David & Charles, 1994, 192pp. Price £16.99 ISBN 0 71530139X

'Copse-work...', being an occupation which the secondary intelligence of the hands and arms could carry on without the sovereign attention of

the head, allowed the minds of its professors to wander considerably from the objects before them; hence the tales, chronicles and ramifications of family history which were recounted here were of a very exhaustive kind' (Thomas Hardy, *The Woodlanders*).

It seems that little has changed since Thomas Hardy's novel was published in 1887. This book shows that there was a thriving culture of woodland management well into this century, and that the traditions of story telling continued to be part of that culture.

The stories in this book are told



largely in the woodlanders' own words so that reading is like listening to them as they chat in the wood, they talk about everyday things – their work, their surroundings, giving their own history of the changes in British woodland management during this century: increasing mechanisation and the changing demands for the different woodland products which led to a decline in the number of woodland workers of this type.

This book is not a detailed discourse on the changes in British forest management or the recent upsurge in interest in coppicing – it simply allows those involved to speak for themselves, and in so doing they prove to be its most eloquent and persuasive proponents.

Ian Rowland

A Doctor in the Wilderness

by Walter Yellowlees
Janus Publishing Company £7.95.
ISBN 1 85756 013 2

The early chapters of this book are written in the form of an autobiography and describe the experiences of a young doctor in practice in the Highlands of Scotland.

In the 1960's Dr Yellowlees met and was deeply influenced by Surgeon Captain T L Cleave who was a pioneer in recognising the link between diet and disease. Sir Robert McCarrison, Dr Weston Price and others contributed to Yellowlees' conviction that a wholefood diet is essential for good health.

Cleave himself was a man who knew the loneliness of the wilderness when his explanations for today's degenerative diseases were at first ridiculed by his medical colleagues and even now are not fully understood or acknowledged, yet he was given one of the highest medical awards.

The author is totally convinced that the diseases that are so common today such as duodenal ulcers, diabetes and coronary heart disease are brought about by the large scale refining of food especially the over consumption of sugar and white flour products. He blows apart the cholesterol myth and the idea that margarine could be better than a natural food such as butter that has been eaten since time immemorial.

The latter chapters hit hard at the corruption surrounding dietary trials and the scandalous waste of public money. In one instance the Medical Research Council produced a report which the same Council then advised people to disbelieve because the results did not prove what it expected. Yellowlees reveals the flagrant dishonesty in the sugar industry and the bogus reports from panels of 'experts'.

This book, full of revealing facts does much to explain a way through the wilderness in which many of us find ourselves when searching for advice on how to maintain vigour and good health.

Elizabeth Gay

1994 Organic Farm Management Handbook

Edited by Nic Lampkin and Mark Measures. Published by Department of Agricultural Sciences, University of Wales and Organic Advisory Service. £10 (incl. postage) from the Soil Association. ISSN 13543768/ISBN 1872964175

Farmers and advisors know and revere John Nix's Farm Management Pocketbook which is published every year and is brimful of financial data, costings and information about farm enterprises and other aspects of farming. Well, now the organic movement has one all of its own! And what an excellent volume it is too.

As organic farming has grown, a significant gap has emerged in the management and financial information available to prospective and existing organic farmers, which has compounded the mystery purported to surround organic farming. This has not only made it difficult for farmers or their advisors to plan or evaluate organic farming enterprises, but has also meant that antagonists can spout prejudice and misinformation about organic farming under a cloak of supposedly scientific credibility. This is yet another nail in the coffin of such misrepresentation.

There are very good introductory sections on what is organic farming, on conversion, the grants available (including the new Organic Aid Scheme), and on certification and marketing. Then the main body of the book comprises detailed financial data on a whole range of arable, horticultural, forage and livestock enterprises.

However, things are never quite so easy and straight forward in organic farming, which is of course a whole farm 'system'. There is a clear explanation of the dangers of looking at costings of individual enterprises out of context of the whole farm. It is important to take into account the benefits that are transferred between enterprises and the fact that any farm will inevitably be a mixture of enterprises, integrated into a balanced whole.

This is intended to be an annual publication (I don't envy the editors the considerable work this will entail) and, right at the beginning, they have a feedback form for readers to use for their comments on the facts, figures and contents for the benefit of future editors. Jolly good, I can tell them my own book has now been fully revised twice and is now entitled *Organic Farming and Growing*.

I say without hesitation that no person seriously engaged in organic agriculture should be without it.

Francis Blake

A Handbook of Organic Food Processing and Production

Edited by Simon Wright of Whole Earth Foods, published by Chapman Hall (tel. 0264-342923). ISBN 0751400459, price £49.00 incl. post & packing.

This is a comprehensive guide on how to process organic food on an industrial scale; international organic legislation and the major players involved in organic food processing. It also addresses a number of issues including the importance of organic food and competition faced by organic producers as a result of EU subsidies hiding the true cost of non-organic foods.

Books by post

Several of these books, and many others, can be ordered from the Soil Association Bookshop.

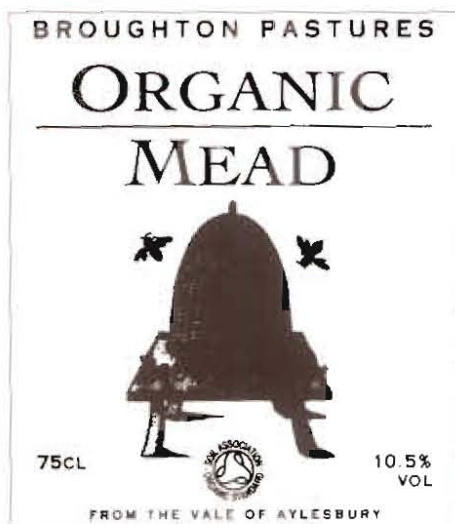
Send for a free catalogue.

See also page 18 in this issue for books from the Food Commission.

Shop Organic

Broughton Pastures Organic Mead

Mead, probably the oldest alcoholic drink, is the most recent to receive the Soil Association Symbol. The Ancient Greeks, Celts and Anglo-Saxons were great mead drinkers and 'honeymoon' comes from the Celtic tradition of the newly-wed couple drinking mead for a month. Mead is produced by fermentation of honey and water, which is then matured for a year and drunk chilled. Broughton Pastures buy all their honey from bee farmers in the virgin forests of Tanzania and Zambia and no artificial additives are used in the fermentation process. For further details contact: Brian Reid at Broughton Pastures Organic Mead, 6 Como Road, Broughton Pastures, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire HP21 1NR.



Christmas list

Following the success of last year's Christmas List we are once again offering a free revised and updated list on receipt of a stamped addressed envelope to: The Organic Food and Farming Centre, 86 Colston Street, Bristol BS1 5BB. The list gives details of Soil Association registered farmers and growers selling such seasonal fare as organic turkeys, geese, game, Christmas pudding, mince pies and wine!



Chocolate without guilt

Plamil, specialists in vegan foods, have sourced organic ingredients from around the world to produce a 100% organic vegan chocolate and mint chocolate bar, containing 60% organic cocoa solids, organic raw sugar, organic vanilla and peppermint oil. The cocoa, from Bolivia is brought through the Eco Trade Programme that guarantees a premium to the organic farmers helping them to be self-sufficient.

Plamil maintain that the ethics of selling are as important as the growing and have a policy of supporting the health food trade and independent retailers. The company does not sell to supermarkets as they consider them to be responsible for the closure of small shops to the detriment of local communities.

The bars costing £1.76 and £1.79 respectively are available from health and wholefood shops. Plamil Foods Ltd, Bowles Well Gardens, Dover road, Folkestone, Kent CT19 6PQ. Tel: 0303 850588.

Regional guide to buying organic product

We are pleased to be able to offer the Go Organic Regional Guides which we believe are the most comprehensive and up-to-date guides to buying organic produce currently available. They cover farm shops, box schemes, delivery, mail order and retailers including local wholefood shops. The five guides cover Scotland; Wales; the West Country; South and East and the Midlands and North and cost £2.50 + 50p postage each.

Local activities

Soil Association members will notice that we have not included the usual local groups activities listings, but we have enclosed a programme for October's Organic Harvest. To be listed in the next issue please be sure to send details before the end of November.

Promotional material: all groups can now be supplied with the following free of charge:

- Colourful and informative membership leaflets with matching 'Quality Organic Food' A3 posters
- The ever-popular 'What is...' organic leaflets
- Plain A3 posters for publicising local events and meetings
- Printed colour balloons
- Regularly updated book catalogues
- Display panel sets: only three sets left, just £25 per set.

The Soil Association's new bookshop manager – Carol Dale – says it is vitally important that groups give her at least one month's notice when ordering books as the items may not be in stock. Leaflets can be supplied at fairly short notice.

Box schemes reach the city

'Before you finish eating your breakfast this morning you've depended on half the world,' said Martin Luther King.

These words underlie the recent success of 'box schemes' with which local producers supply local markets keeping the chain between grower and consumer as short as possible. Many Symbol growers have adopted the box scheme and are supplying from farm to doorstep.

However, growers are rarely in a geographical position or have the supply to meet the demands of city markets. Intermediaries are needed to source, pack and transport the produce, whether cooperatives or the more traditional wholesalers, many of whom have pioneered the sale of organic produce in the cities. Consequently the original Growers' box schemes have spawned 'Wholesalers' and 'Cooperatives' box schemes, and given the consumer joining a box scheme greater choice.

Growers' boxes are the most direct way of supporting the producer and the only box scheme that can truly be called 'direct marketing'. The consumer benefits from obtaining produce that is very fresh, often harvested that morning.

Growing with Nature was founded by Soil Association growers who were becoming disillusioned by falling sales to local shops and customer feedback that vegetables, which had remained in the shop too long because of low turnover, were no longer fresh.

The Organic Marketing Company (OMC) was born out of the need of two growers' cooperatives, Greengrowers and Organic Growers West Wales to market their produce. The OMC is entirely grower-owned, any profits being reinvested in the company or returned to the growers. The member growers prioritise the best vegetables for OMC which buys direct from the growers, the coops distribute for the OMC and the consumers agree to pick up their bags locally.

A third route has been taken by Progress and Nature, a wholesaler that started life twelve years ago as an organic shop in the days before the current organic wholesaling network was established. They diversified into wholesaling from the need to source their own produce. They offer standard, full choice boxes 52 weeks of the year and no-choice boxes by value (eg £10), both supplied by Progress and Nature acting as a wholesaler. As a third option, they deliver genuine growers' boxes (no choice).

The increased competition that box schemes have introduced between producers, wholesalers and retailers may benefit the organic consumer. They certainly offer a viable alternative to the supermarket culture of products sourced from around the world and in a small way, box schemes bring some of the benefits of countryside living to the city dweller.

City Box Schemes

Organic Direct, Liverpool (051-734 1919). Fruit and vegetables, cereal products, dried fruits and seeds.
Organic Roundabout/Small Green Company, Birmingham, West Midlands (031-551 1679). Fruit and vegetables. Use recyclable bags.

Limited Resources, Manchester (061-226 4777). Fruit and vegetables, wholefoods, bread, wine and beer, Traidcraft tea and coffee. Recycling service and delivery by bicycle.

Growing with Nature, Preston, Blackburn, Chorley, Lancaster

(0253 790046). Three box sizes. Fruit and vegetables.

Progress and Nature, Shropshire, Lancashire, Greater Manchester, Merseyside, Wirral and North Wales (051-523 6221). Fruit and vegetables, bread, wholefoods and organic eggs. 'Choice' boxes available.

New schemes planned:

Baaries, Sheffield (0742-681662); Organic Wholesale Produce, London (071-351 6742)

For information on other schemes refer to our Go Organic Regional Guides available from the Soil Association.

classified

GARLIC: Professional grower offers named varieties of certificated, disease-free, planting garlic. For cultivation notes and information contact Jennifer Birch, Garfield Villa, Belle Vue Road, Stroud, Glos. 0453 750371.

CHRISTIAN AID is promoting organic farming for this year's Harvest Festivals. A study of a tea plantation's successful conversion to a mixed organic holding is being circulated to churches. Copies of free literature from: Christian Aid, PO BOX 100 London SE1 7RT

FOREST OF DEAN Sturdy Two-Bed Detached Bungalow in one third of an acre. Gardens organically tended for 17yrs. Five minutes walk from forest edge. £65,000. Telephone 0594 822210

ORGANIC BAKERY FRANCHISE

Unique location, adjacent to commercially working Lincolnshire windmill producing organic stoneground flours. A wonderful opportunity to produce 'Real Bread and Cakes' by traditional methods. Contact Pat and Jane White at Mount Pleasant Windmill for further details. Telephone 0625 640177

FOR SALE in rural Herefordshire Family sized accommodation in established community with co-operatively

run 40 acre organic mixed farm. From £75,000. Telephone 0531 670729

FRANCE. Jardinier expérimenté parlant français, pour prendre en charge et assumer le développement de potagers et des jardins biologiques et d'avant garde au Centre Ecologique Européen 'Terre Vivante' situé aux pieds des Alpes. C'est une opportunité exceptionnelle pour une personne motivée et capable. Envoyez une 's.a.e.' pour informations à Gérard Morgan-Grenville, Milton, Dorset DT6 3SN.

ORGANIC FARM in East Anglia requires help with very small Jersey herd - milking/development of dairy products. Modest salary initially/single accom. suit female. Please write to Jane Capon, Village Farm, Market Weston, Diss, Norfolk IP22 2NX for details.

ORGANIC PRODUCE from Suffolk farm. Jersey milk/cream, excellent flour, quality meat from traditional breeds. Please telephone for brochure: 0359 221 240.

AROMASENSE quality essential oil merchants. Retail and wholesale mail order suppliers of Aromatherapy products, including organic essences. Midnight blue bottles. 1-1000ml quantities. Rian House, 17 Victoria Street, Earby, Lincs BB8 6PY. Tel/fax 0282-841106.

events

Apple Day is October 21st. This is the fifth annual celebration of the diversity of apples and other fruit trees: details from Common Ground tel 071-379 3109.

Bio-Ethics in Farming, a symposium organised by The Farm and Food Society, 10.30am - 4.00pm, 27 October, Friends House, Euston Road. Non-members £12 including lunch etc. Details tel: 081-455 0634.

The Soil Association will be hosting the **Organic Food Awards** at the UK's biggest food event, the BBC Good Food Show at the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham, with the results to be announced on November 24. Be sure to see the SA stand. It's going to be great!

Land Use or Abuse? The effect of agricultural production and trade policies on land and rural communities, 26 and 27 November at the National Agricultural Centre, organised by Farmers World Network (tel: 0203-696969 ext. 338).

Food Health and the Environment - The Vital Connection

*British Organic Growers & Organic Growers Association
9th National Conference*

Royal Agricultural College,
Cirencester, January 6th-8th.
Details from tel 0272-299666.
Fax 0272-252504

Get boiled!

Much merriment at the launch of Get Cooking! You may remember Get Cooking! as a project run by the National Food Alliance to encourage children to learn more about cooking? This launch was different. It was Get Cooking with Eggs, a completely independent initiative launched by the British Egg Information Council in September that mischievously stole the clothes of the NFA.



When our spies emerged from stuffing their faces with omelettes and croissants at the press launch, they reported on an interesting feature of Get Cooking with Eggs, notably a complete disregard for Department of Health guidelines on cooking eggs. Runny soufflés and soft boiled eggs were being promoted as recipes for children to play with – a grand idea were it not that the egg industry still lives under the shadow of salmonella, and yolks are still to be cooked hard.

Nasty organics!

It's not just shampoo that uses the word organic (see right) to help conceal its true nature. In Canada a company called Ayerst Organics is making money from the suffering of approximately 75,000 pregnant mares in stalls measuring eight feet by five feet and sells off most of their foals soon after birth to be fattened up for slaughter. We shall spare you the horrendous accounts of buildings full of pregnant mares whose only exercise is weaving back and forth, day in and day out and of thousands of young, frightened foals crammed into cattle trucks and pens.

What is the purpose of all this, I hear you ask? Ayerst Organics are the world's only producer of pregnant mare urine from which an oestrogen substitute, premarin is extracted. The urine from these equine farms, situated in Manitoba, is sold at up to £10 a gallon to Ayerst Organics. Premarin is given to women as hormone replacement therapy, even though 100 per cent plant-derived synthetic oestrogen replacement is available, costs the same and is just as effective.

Fat bites

The government's widely leaked COMA nutritional targets (see page 7) are supposed to be targets for the population as a whole, not for individuals.

Average figures for the population can disguise the real pattern of eating, of course. We could all be eating very unhealthy diets, some too much of a nutrient and some too little and yet, as a group, still meet the government's targets.

Put another way

Jack Sprat would eat no fat
His wife would eat no lean
And so between the two of them
They meet the government mean

More to the point, though, is who leaked the COMA recommendations to the food industry, allowing them to rubbish the report in public and urge that it be substantially weakened in private meetings with the Minister?

COMA does not have official food industry representation but many of the medical specialists sitting on COMA are also closer than they might be to the food industry. We aren't suggesting any of them leaked the report, but we are concerned that according to COMA's latest annual report three of the six members of the COMA sub-committee on heart disease have personal or departmental interests in food and medical companies, and seven out of the nine academic advisors on the main COMA committee also admit to such links.

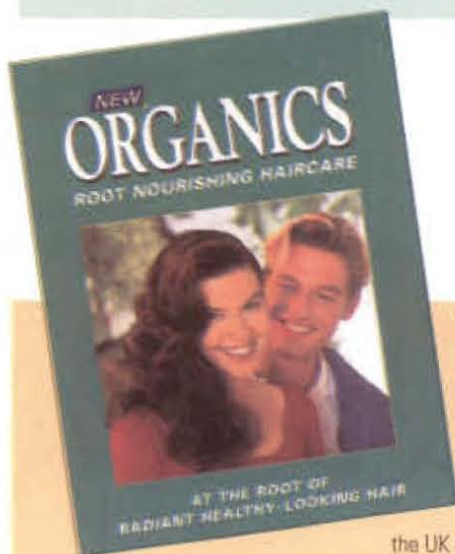
And it gets worse...

While on the subject, we note that the report of the COMA Working Group on the Weaning Diet is due out this autumn. We would be keen to see that report, were it not for the possible bias of the 'medical advisors'. It is the only COMA committee with industry representation (Mr Hendey from the industry Infant and Dietetic Foods Association, IDAF). The full membership of the Weaning committee is:

- Professor Cockburn, University of Glasgow (training grants from Milupa)
- Dr Hann, Great Ormond St (research grants from Vestar, Roche and Rhone-Poulenc)
- Mr Hendey, IDAF (Nestlé corporate affairs executive)
- Dr Holt, Eastman Dental Hospital (no relevant interests declared)
- Dr James, Montpelier Health Centre, Bristol (research grants from Reckitt & Coleman — Robinsons and from the Sugar Bureau)
- Dr Lawson, Institute of Child Health (research grant from the International Nutrition Co)
- Dr McKinley, Community paediatrician, Manchester (no relevant interests declared)
- Ms Margiotta, Bolton College of Nursing (no relevant interests declared)
- Dr Prentice, MRC Dunn, Cambridge (advisor to Boots and research grants from the Sugar Bureau, Bristol-Myers and Mars Ltd)
- Professor Wharton, individual (private consultancies with food companies)

This committee links to the COMA Panel on Child Nutrition which has eight members including one with a research grant from Milupa, another is a consultant for Cow & Gate, a third gets research money from Farley's, and a fourth gets research funding from Cow & Gate, Nestlé, Bristol Myers and Wyeth!

Talk of agency capture! And now, over at MAFF, Waldegrave has appointed his favourite adviser, Mr David Rutley, 33, previously a Development Director for Pepsico International.



Taking organic in vain

Magazines, TV screens and high street billboards have recently featured a £15 million advertising and promotional campaign for 'Organics' shampoo, manufactured by Elida Gibbs, part of the chemical giant Unilever. Their aim is to corner 10 per cent of the UK shampoo and conditioner market by the end of this year.

It is hard to imagine anything less organic than this shampoo, which is made up almost exclusively of man-made chemicals. But it seems that the manufacturers can get away with it because only food stuffs have to be truly organic to comply with European trading standards. You might think that it is cynical and manipulative to lead consumers into believing that they are buying an organic product when there is nothing even remotely organic about it. You might very well say that. This magazine couldn't possibly comment!