

London's magazine lor ethical eating

Season's eating

In praise of the cobnut

Throw an ethical office party

Sustainable cocktails





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Say hello to the Jellied Eel

y the time you're reading this, October 20th may well have come and gone. and with it the release of the Government's spending review. Hopefully we've all been biting our nails over nothing, and everyone will be wondering what all the fuss was about. Or it might still be unclear what impact the review will have. But at the time of writing (end of September), the review looms like some kind of fiscal doomsday, after which everything we care about in the world of local or sustainable food, will start to crumble because of cutbacks.

Many of the initiatives you read about in these pages face funding cuts. You might wonder what that has to do with you. Our reader survey suggests the decisions Jellied Eel readers take can have a big impact on these businesses and groups – there are thousands of you after all! Businesses featured in the magazine report more people shopping with them, campaigns get more sign ups, and events more attendees...in short, you make a difference. We may want to get more people acting sustainably, but it's just

The Jellied Eel's mostwanted

We want to hear about your worst examples of seasonal food crimes committed by London's restaurants, cafés and shops. Spotted asparagus on a menu in December? Or a so-called sustainable store selling strawberries in the midst of winter? We'll be compiling your responses for an article in our next edition. The best – or worst! – suggestion, will win a hamper from Farm Direct, the online ordering service that connects Londoners with farms and producers.

Contact kelly@sustainweb.org

as important that those of you already buying the odd cup of Fairtrade coffee or free-range eggs keep doing so. Just like a new supermarket in your neighbourhood, a shift in spending of only a few people away from a local business might mean the difference between staying afloat or not.

Enough of the doom and gloom – Christmas is, after all, on the way. This year we thought we'd look beyond turkeys and puddings to another festive favourite – nuts. After failing to find any suppliers of English chestnuts to roast and toast (let us know if you find any!), we turned our attention to the Kentish cobnut – London's local nut (see page 14). We'll also be publishing a more extensive article on ethical nuts on our website.

Returning again to the reader survey – thanks for all your comments, and well done to Ben Tat who wins a food safari in Suffolk (www.foodsafari. co.uk) and Keir Daley who gets a copy of Alastair Sawday's Eat Slow Britain. One thing that emerged from the survey was that our readers want to get more involved in the Jellied Eel – so we're coming up with some ideas of things for you to do! See the box to the left for something to start you off over these colder months.

Ben

Editor



Photo: Pamela Troni

Tuck in

- 4 Bulletin
- 6 Around Town
- 7 Shop Window Cornercopia
- 8 To Market Acton
- 8 What's in season
- 11 Feature School dinners
- 12 Feature Sustainable parties
- 14 Local to London
 Perry Court Farm
- 15 On the Menu Café Spice Namasté
- 16 Taste of London London cocktails
- 19 Capital Growth
- 19 Growing Calendar
- 20 Reader's Kitchen Anna Francis
- 21 London Food Link Sarah Green Organics
- 22 What's on



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Breadwinner

Well done to Phil Joy who won the Lammas

his recipe below). Phil won't have to worry

about raiding the cupboard for his next few

and ancient grain flours, grown and milled

by Campaign member Gilchesters Organics

Empty-the-shelf loaf

500g organic strong white flour

250g organic five seed mix flour

250g organic wholemeal flour

50g chopped green olives

of the campaign website:

www.realbreadcampaign.org

Makes two large loaves or one very large one

280g sourdough starter at 80% hydration*

Mix all of the ingredients together until cleared (ie no dry bits

(reuse comes before recycle) plastic bag to rest for ten minutes.

remain) and leave covered with a damp tea towel or old but clean

Work (knead) the dough until stretchy (you can do this in one go

or three shorter bursts with a ten-minute rest between each), cover

again and leave to prove (rise) at room temperature (around 20°C)

for five to seven hours or overnight in the fridge. Knock back, shape

(in a tin, banneton or as a free-standing loaf) and prove for another

three hours. Bake for 80 minutes in an oven preheated to 200°C.

*80g of water to every 100g of flour. For a starter recipe, see issue

one of True Loaf, which you can download from the members' area

in Northumberland.

610g water

18g sea salt

30g porridge oats

www.gilchesters.com

loaves, as he's won a pack of organic heritage

Real Bread competition we ran last issue (see

Capital Bee

Capital Growth is launching a new project to promote community apiaries (beehives) and responsible beekeeping, and encourage more bee-friendly oehaviour in Lo<u>ndon</u> Contact pam@sustainweb.org

Bulletin

Small shops find takings are up for fruit and veg

The Buywell Retail project was a pilot scheme aimed at increasing the supply and consumption of fresh fruit and vegtables in low income areas of London. It ended in March 2010 and has resulted in an estimated average increase in sales of £7,782 per participating shop per year. There was also a change in customer behaviour, reflected in more people reporting that they ate 'five a day'. Most of the participating shops were located in Tower Hamlets, as well as shops in White City, Larkhall, Hounslow West, Queens Park and Bellingham. The

> the success of the scheme in increasing the supply and consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables in deprived areas of London. The project was funded by Tower Hamlets NHS and the Big Lottery through the London Health Commission and the London Sustainability Exchange. The report can be downloaded from: www.sustainweb.org/ buywell/

A spread of the latest sustainable food news

Small grants for new

community food growing

space can apply online from Monday 27

Groups who are looking to set up a new growing

September until Monday 8 November 2010 for

small grants of up to £1,000. The grants, from

Capital Growth, aim to help turn underused

land into edible oases. Any groups setting up

new spaces, whether or not successful in their

application, will get practical support such as

tools and seeds through Capital Growth.

www.capitalgrowth.org/apply

access to training, expert advice and discounted

Sustainable

City Awards

Sustain: the alliance for better food and

co-ordinate the Sustainable Food category

farming, is helping the City of London

in the Sustainable City Awards again

this year. Winners will be announced at

an awards ceremony at Mansion House,

the Lord Mayor's official residence, on

Thursday 3 February 2011. To apply

www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/sca

for an award visit

final report, out this month, details

buywell shops



start a food co-op at your workplace

I The latest in a I range of guides for starting a food co-op focuses on the workplace, with some useful tips on what to do and examples of others who are doing it already.

www.sustainweb. org/foodcoops/ factsheets

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twitter.com/

thejelliedeel 1

Sipsmith spirits



Based in Hammersmith, Sipsmith produces handmade spirits distilled in small batches (just a few bottles at a time). Its London dry gin and barley vodka have received a lot of praise and have been shortlisted for the BBC Radio 4 Food and Farming Awards 2010. www.sipsmith.com

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Food waste tips

Practice good fridge management - and don't let things lurk at the back - try putting ingredients you need to eat first on the top shelf, so you remember to use them.

Always carry a food container or any reused plastic box – you never know when there are going to be leftovers – especially at events or when you're eating out.

Get pickling – now is the time to be preserving your home-grown gluts if you're lucky enough to have them - you can try pickling in spiced vinegar instead of salt.

Maresa Bossano

Shopping basket

Organic chestnuts Porter foods has launched a new range of organic whole chestnuts, ready peeled and cooked and supplied from Spain (many others brands buy from China). It has also released a chestnut purée, which is ideal for stuffings and puddings over those winter months.

www.porterfoods.co.uk

Cobnutoil

Hurstwood Farm, Kent, is the first and only commercial producer of cobnut oil in the UK. Similar to hazelnut or walnut oil, but with a more intensely nutty flavour, this oil is 100 per cent cobnut! This unique product beat off hundreds of competitors to become the Great Taste Award champion for 2010. www.cobnutoil.co.uk

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Tomato chilli jam

London-based Kush Cuisine, long-time producer at London farmers' markets, has received plaudits for its tomato chilli jam, winning a star at the Great Taste Awards this year. It recommends serving the 'jam' with fish cakes, sausages or cheese on toast. www.kushcuisine.co.uk

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AROUND TOWN

Get into what's happening in your area

SUNDAY PIE CLUB N10

Marika Gauci has been running an impressive range of cookery classes from her home kitchen since 2009. Her piemaking class was so popular, she now organises a monthly Sunday pie club from a professional bakery in Muswell Hill. No longer do you have to fear the kitchen quandary of pastrymaking! Marika will teach you how to make savoury meat and vegetarian pies as well as sweet tarts in a relaxed and fun environment, with a maximum of 12 people per class. Some classes are themed, like the forthcoming Halloween pumpkin pie club, and Marika only uses the best, local ingredients, buying organic produce wherever possible. Book early to avoid disappointment at London's only pie-making club!

www.marikas-kitchen.com

GOOD FOOD GUIDE TO CAMDEN

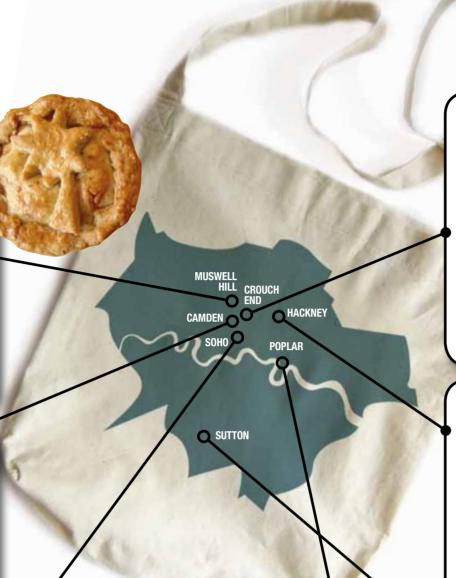
A 'good food' guide for the London Borough of Camden is hot off the press, outlining how and where organisations can obtain healthy and sustainable food in the area. Written in conjunction with Sustain, the guide contains a handy yet large directory of local suppliers, a wall chart explaining what different food logos mean, the Marine Stewardship Council's Good Fish guide, and a calendar to help you identify what foods are in season at different times of the year. To request a hard copy please contact the Better Climate for Camden Team on 020 7974 6756 or better.climate@camden.gov.uk.To download your free copy of the guide, visit the website below.

www.camden.gov.uk/food

FOODLOVERS MARKET W1

Launched in summer 2010, FoodLovers' first market in Soho is preparing for winter. The market specialises in fresh, seasonal, and artisanal food from London, the UK and Europe. This autumn sees a number of special events, including a Halloween-themed market on 30 October, with dressing up (mainly for kids), face painting, apple dunking, and pumpkincarving demos. December markets will include events on chocolate, treats from abroad, and on the 18th a last opportunity for stocking up on Christmas goodies. FoodLovers Market is open every Saturday from 10am to 5pm.

www.foodloversmarkets.com



CAFÉ RELAX E14

Café Relax, the Tower Hamlets community café set up last year (with the help of London Food Link and London Sustainability Exchange) to inspire and enable local people to eat more healthily, is launching a new initiative in conjunction with the Well London health project. The café will be showcasing recipes at Well London's 'cook and eat' courses, and linking with local volunteer group the Well London delivery team, to help with marketing the café. It also plans to use the food co-op set up by Well London for buying ingredients. Café Relax already promotes local, seasonal, healthy eating, and has developed a programme of activity with local growing schemes. And its efforts seem to be working: in a survey last year, 77 per cent of respondents agreed the café had helped them make healthier eating choices.

www.cafe-relax.co.uk

SUBSCRIBE TO THE FARM, NOT JUST THE FOOD N8

Photo: Polly Hancock

Church Farm in Ardeley, 30 miles outside of London, has set up a new box scheme. It aims to do more than deliver groceries, and wants to build a genuine relationship between customers and producers. It is planning inductions to the farm, including farm participation days, and large discounts for customers on farm courses. Boxes can be tailored to suit a household's needs – different quantities of fruit, vegetables, meat and staples can be selected. At the moment the pick-up point is in Crouch End near the clock tower, and with further subscriptions more will be possible (potential sites include Archway, Muswell Hill and Tower Hamlets).

www.churchfarmardeley.co.uk

NEW SHOP AT HACKNEY CITY FARM E2

Hackney City Farm is opening a shop later this month, to take the strain off its inundated farm office, which has been handling the sale of the farm's eggs. It will be open all day from Wednesday to Sunday. Shoppers can expect chicken and duck eggs from the farm, bread from the E5 bakehouse, honey from beehives on the roofs of the farm buildings, and farm manure for gardens. Armed with a bag you can dig veg right out of the ground yourself. Other seasonal veg will be provided by Sarah Green Organics (see page 21).

www.hackneycityfarm.co.uk

LOW CARBON VEG SM6

Initial research conducted by Cranfield University has found that 27 per cent of Sutton's Veg Van customers are now eating more fruit and veg, every £1 spent at the Veg Van generates £2.60 for the local economy (compared to £1.40 if spent at the local supermarket), and the van is saving around 16kg of carbon dioxide a month through reducing customer car trips. The Veg Van is now looking for part-time volunteers in return for free veg, great experience and community benefit. The people behind the Veg Van are also involved in Sutton Community Farm (See the Jellied Eel issue 28) who are running a permaculture weekend course on 30–31October, at £80 for two days (concessions available).

www.vegvan.org.uk www.suttoncommunityfarm.org.uk



This pop-up food store and deli in Brixton Market has proved so popular, it is about to open up a full dining room. **Clare Hill** went to take a look

A boarded up shop buried in a half-vacant market in Brixton isn't an obvious place to establish a food store and lunch spot. But when a project to fill the glazed arcade with small creative pop-up shops and events was launched, nearby resident Anne Fairbrother and her chef partner Ian Riley jumped at the chance to start a local food venture there.

Since December last year, Cornercopia has been selling a range of preserves and sauces from its deli kitchen, and creating 'locally-sauced' sit down lunches (and Thursday suppers). The shop sells homemade cider mustard, jam from Essex raspberries and locally made 'BP' sauce – a reference to HP Sauce and the Brixton Pound, a currency established a year ago to stimulate local shopping. The eponymous sauce sells for two Brixton Pounds or £3.

There's a distinct preserving theme: "I'm working on a 'hedgerow' jelly of locally foraged elderberries, blackberries and crab apples," adds Anne. She and Ian also plan to sell preserving equipment in the new dining room, which opens in October. There'll also be mulled pears, charcuterie and chocolate panforte (nut cake) to look forward to as winter approaches.

Cornercopia also plans to explore the social aspects of food by setting up an online community with collected recipes and information about the producers.

"I want to create a community space that is about celebrating localness in making and eating food," says Anne. "We're part of the local economy and it's also important for us to support it – using ingredients from the market itself is a priority. Produce is just a few feet away, and we can also, for instance, make special requests to the fishmonger. We can buy the likes of monkfish tails or cheeks that would normally go to waste."

Cornercopia and the other dozen or so new shops have transformed the market. While some were temporary, Anne's shop, like many others, and the market itself, intends to stay.

U65 Brixton Village (formerly Granville Arcade) off Atlantic Road SW9 8PS http://brixtoncornercopia.ning.com

TO MARKET

Food markets around London

Acton market

The Mount/King Street W3 9NW 020 8993 9605 www.actonmarket.com Thursdays and Fridays 10am–5pm Saturdays 9am–5pm

t's a Saturday morning in Acton and well-known stallholder Richard Webster is busy serving up fresh fruit and vegetables at the heart of its small but thriving market. He banters with his customers, surrounded by British-grown rhubarb, beetroot and carrots, piled high alongside Fairtrade bananas, all from London wholesale market Western International.

The market, run by charity and development trust Action Acton, won the Development Trust Association's Chris Woodcock Award for excellence in community enterprise last year, and received a £5,000 boost. Its traders, who work all day Thursday, Friday and Saturday, host a mix of food stalls, a weekend farmers' market, plus arts and crafts, fashion and jewellery.

John Blackmore, who heads Action Acton, has watched the market change the face of Acton centre over the past five vears, as the town's tradition of markets has been brought back to life. "The main focus is on giving local people a choice of different types of foods and a chance for the community to interact – bringing together people who might not mix normally because they are from different social and economic backgrounds," he says.

Newcomer Tom Bonasera bakes brutti ma buoni (ugly but tasty) Italian-style biscuits and painstakingly labels his display with the provenance of each ingredient. Another favourite is an offshoot of Borough-based Flour Power City bakery, which uses organic flour to create everything from brownies to



bloomers. A few stalls down, Kent-based Old Hall Farm is a member of the Slow Food movement, and specialises in free range meats including rare breed lamb, rabbit and pigeon. A new Fairtrade stall selling everything from food to t-shirts, and run by Action Acton volunteers, was set to launch at the end of September. At the same time, expect a series of promotional days for select seasonal produce.

- Featured stallholder

Mr Singh's Express Curry

A must-visit is Mr Singh's Express Curry, the brainchild of keen gardener Jasbir Singh, who cooks his famous aloo tikka and samosas with vegetables from his own allotment in nearby Boston Manor. The stall is one of the most well-established in the market, having sold freshly made Indian food on the site for two years. "I do my best to use the vegetables I grow, such as my spinach, which I cook with from the end of July, as well as onions," he explains. "I have huge courgettes and plenty of potatoes, which I use here as much as I can."

Anna Sbuttoni

WHAT'S IN season

OCTOBER

Apples Gear up for Apple Day on the 21st. The temperate British climate produces the world's best fruit. Check the Common Ground website for events. www.commonaround.ora.uk

Walnuts A nutty delight matched with both apples and pears. Walnuts are at their best this month - fresh, milkv and slightly sweet.



Also in season

chestnuts, elderberries, grouse, kale, kohlrabi, mussels, pheasant, pears, quince, squashes, turnips, wild mushrooms.

NOVEMBER

Mussels Cheap, sustainable and delicious. Experiment with different recipes when steaming, such as cider and chorizo, red wine and tomato, or for a classy Nordic touch, Aquavit spirit and dill.

Quince Bake slices of this fragrant fruit. Try brown sugar, lemon zest, and cinnamon. A auince pickle makes an exotic treat ater in the season

Also in season

goose, Jerusalem

artichokes, leeks, parsnips, partridge, walnuts, whiting.

DECEMBER

Parsnips Avoid peeling this root vegetable, as much of the flavour is next to the skin. Try roasted with parmesan a classic Delia recipe.

Also in season Brussels sprouts, celeriac, celery, chicory, leeks, parsnips, red cabbage, swede. turnips, watercress.

Tom Moggach



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www.planetorganic.com

WESTBOURNE GROVE

42 Westbourne Grove, London W2 5SH

BLOOMSBURY

22 Torrington Place, London WCIE 7HJ

MUSWELL HILL

111-117 Muswell Hill Road, London N10 3HS

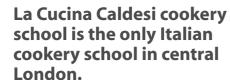
ISLINGTON

64 Essex Road, London NI 8LR



www.caldesi.com





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London has made huge strides in the quality of its school dinners in recent years. Jennifer **Gaskin** finds out why some boroughs have cause to fear the return of turkey twizzlers

saving 2015 school dinners



Small groups expertly taught by Katie Caldesi in her family kitchen and garden in Gerrards Cross. From beginners to keen foodies, chef and cookbook author, Katie will teach you to cook with confidence and knowledge.

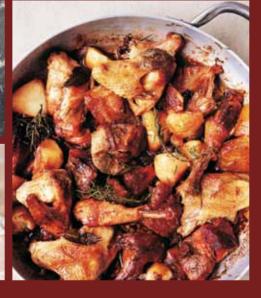
Katie's Kitchen

Cookery Courses









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Exclusively for 'The Jellied Eel', join us with a friend for one of a wide range of Cookery courses. Subjects include everything from baking bread, pasta-making, seasonal sauces, meat and fish preparation to desserts. For beginners or foodies; for yourself, birthdays, parties or business events.

t: 020 7487 0750 Gerrards Cross, Bucks

For details of all courses and dates see: www.caldesi.com

www.caldesi.com

ust five years ago, children were herded into the dining room to chow down on a 'meal' of reconstituted meat and a pile of chips. That was until Jamie Oliver brought the issue of school dinners to the attention of the British public and to the top of the political agenda. Jamie's School Dinners was the catalyst that prompted the then Labour Government to introduce a set of standards for school dinners and also

The initiative worked and official figures show that 41.4 per cent of primary and 35.8 per cent of secondary pupils now choose a hot school meal.

pledge £280 million to the cause.

But despite this success, it seems there are still those who don't see the benefits of the initiative. And worryingly, one of these people is the new health secretary, Andrew Lansley, who recently told an audience of doctors that the healthy school meals programme had failed. Lansley's comments forced the Department for Education to announce that there was no threat to the nutritional value of school dinners. But, in a cost-cutting measure, the new Coalition Government has already scrapped plans to extend free school meals to 500,000 of the very poorest families.

Along with other schools in the borough, Christ the King RC primary school in Islington has been offering its pupils free school meals since April. Teacher, Lydia Pendino, says, "Approximately 90 per cent of pupils have taken up the free school meal offer and those that choose to bring a packed lunch are only allowed to bring in healthy food. We hear that funding for this scheme might be scrapped, but this would be devastating as most of our school community are without the means to be able to

provide their children with a healthy lunch."

Fiona White, London manager of the Food for Life Partnership, a scheme to help schools transform their food culture says: "In addition to offering its pupils free meals, Islington's current caterer, Caterlink, has been awarded the bronze Food for Life catering mark, meaning that all their pupils are eating healthy food that's good for the planet, too. We can only hope that this positive trend will continue even if the Government decides to scrap the free school meals extension". Islington isn't the only borough facing changes – in Croydon, Eden Foodservice has been providing the school dinners under contract and was the first in London to achieve a silver Food for Life catering mark. However, the London Borough of Croydon has now decided that from April next year they won't be reinstating the contract, instead handing responsibility back to each individual school. "With almost a third of schools in the borough enrolled in the Food for Life Partnership this decision came as a surprise" says Fiona. "Breaking up contracts hits the small schools the hardest and means it's harder to improve school food across the board. Cutting costs is going to cut down on quality of school meals."

Help protect the school meal service by signing a petition set up by the Soil Association and the Children's Food Campaign.

http://apps.soilassociation.org/schoolmeals

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Breaking up contracts hits small schools the hardest... and cutting costs is going to cut down on the quality of school meals

Fiona White Food for life Memories of the yearly office knees-up may linger on long after the last guest has stumbled off for the night bus, but, explains **Kelly Parsons**, your party doesn't have to leave a permanent mark on the planet

hether it's gathering around the tinsel-clad photocopier with beakers of warm wine and a deep-fried canapé platter, or a meal out in a raucous sea of coloured paper party hats; the annual office shindig is likely to invoke groans and cheers in equal measure. What these – often hastily planned – festive celebrations inevitably don't tend to equal, however, is eco-friendly eating.

But a growing number of companies are recognising that their Yuletide party is actually a great way to demonstrate their commitment to corporate social responsibility – sending a much clearer message to staff (and clients) about the organisation's principles and ethos than a glossy brochure can.

And with the corporate sector under more scrutiny than ever since the credit crisis, and entertainment budgets at an all-time low, this trend looks set to continue. "We have quite a few ethically-minded companies that come to us for their Christmas dinner specifically because of what we do here," confirms Emma Miles, from the Clerkenwell Kitchen, winner of the 2009 Time Out award for Best Sustainable Restaurant. "But last year in the middle of the credit crunch we also hosted several large banks that couldn't be seen to be too extravagant with the company entertainment budget, for

12 The Jellied Eel www.thejelliedeel.org

SS

Our
Christmas
dinner is
about as
seasonal
and British
as you can
get - it's an
amazing
time of year
for produce
in this
country

Sarah Moore Caterer obvious reasons, and wanted to be perceived as doing the right thing," she adds.

Sarah Moore, a caterer specialising in sustainability, says there's absolutely no excuse not to ensure your meal is local and seasonal. "Our traditional Christmas dinner is about as seasonal and British as you can get – it's an amazing time of year for produce in this country."

Clerkenwell Kitchen's Emma says the flashpoints to look out for when arranging your menu are avoiding red meat like the popular Christmas option: rib of beef – she recommends wild meat as an alternative – and salmon, which is also a favourite for Christmas menus, but tends to be farmed. "We don't do turkey," she explains, "but instead focus on game birds like wild pheasant and partridge, and also rabbit. Freerange, organic turkey is still quite unusual, and so the price tends to be prohibitive." And, she adds, alarm bells should ring if a proposed Christmas menu features even one clearly out-of-season vegetable: "you wouldn't find any tomatoes on our menu, and not a lot of leaf – at that time of year

Improvingyour



Where to shop or eat

The English Wine Centre

www.englishwine.co.uk
Clerkenwell Kitchen
www.theclerkenwellkitchen.co.uk
Sarah Moore Caterers
www.sarahmoore.co.uk
Eco my party
http://ecomyparty.myshopify.com
Edible Plate Company
www.edibleplatecompany.com
Meantime Brewery
www.meantimebrewing.com
The Kernel Brewery
www.thekernelbrewery.com
Organic Spirit
www.organicspirit.co.uk

Ethical office party extras

Many companies now eschew sending corporate Christmas cards in favour of electronic messages and charity donations. If your company is one of the few that still prefers the traditional approach, you could take advantage of the Woodland Trust Christmas card-recycling scheme, which recycles your cards and uses the money generated to plant thousands of trees.

Did you know you could buy Fairtrade balloons? Well you can! Most balloons are a menace to the environment, and either end up in landfill, or float off into the environment where they can do damage to wildlife. Instead, try biodegradable Greentips latex balloons, made from FSC certified and fairly traded rubber, available from www.fairdealtrading.com

Finally, don't ignore the infamous 'secret Santa' gift exchange.
Instead of putting everyone through the potential trauma of receiving a 'hilarious' novelty adult toy or another throwaway stocking-filler book, companies are increasingly turning to ethical gifts and charity donations as a productive way to show they care.

it's all about hearty fare like mushrooms, kale and celeriac."

Caterer Sarah agrees that anyone offering themselves as an 'ethical' caterer should automatically be buying local and organic wherever possible, and seasonal should be a given. The key, confirms Sarah, is to engage with whoever you are booking your party with, to make sure they understand your priorities in terms of the produce they will be using for the event. "Whoever you are speaking to should be able to fully account for where everything comes from, and what's more, they should be really pleased and proud to tell you about it."

Drinks are just as easy to buy sustainably too. There are plenty of good English wines to make your party sparkle, says Julia Trustram Eve, marketing director of the English Wine Producers association. "There's a strong trend toward restaurants, and in particular wholesalers, approaching us for homegrown wines, because of the interest in local ingredients, sustainability and tracing produce," she says. Beer-drinkers needn't be left out – luckily the capital is host to a range of small, local, independent breweries, so there's no excuse not to support them when you are buying in your booze. Try the likes of Greenwich-based Meantime, or The Kernel in Bermondsev.

Or if cocktails are more your thing, Organic Spirit, which launched six months ago, describes itself as the UK's first organic and Fairtrade cocktail and canapé caterers. Mixologist David Hamilton Boyd Smith specialises in festive cocktails based on seasonal, local, organic and Fairtrade spirits, fruit, and spices. "We make all our own syrups, stocks and sauces, to be sure that all of the ingredients are responsibly sourced," he says, "and compost any leftover waste and use it in our garden, where we grow lots of herbs that make their way into many of the cocktails we make." Turn to page 16 for some inspiration on how to shake-up some of your own sustainable creations.

Cutting down on post-party waste is also another way to lessen the impact. Plastic and polystyrene cups and plates usually end up in landfill, and incineration releases all kinds of nasty toxic gases which pollute the air. Obviously using your own crockery is the best solution, but if that's not practical, then at the very least you can make sure your company orders in some biodegradable products. There are so many people specialising in this these days. Helen Pope founded the company Eco My Party when she was planning her environmentally friendly wedding. It specialises in disposable plates, bowls, cups, cutlery and napkins, all of which are biodegradable, ethical and sustainably produced. Or you could try The Edible Plate Company, which has a range of natural starch cutlery made from corn and potato, so if you are still hungry after the nibbles run out you can always eat the plate!

Photos: Pamela Troni



here we go gathering...

nuts in Kent

Michael Wale finds out how this often overlooked member of the hazelnut family is being rediscovered as the true taste of autumn

could not resist them, piled high, all fresh and alluring, at my local West Ealing farmers' market. They were, of course, Kentish cobnuts.

But such bounty is only a recent development according to Heidi Fermor, who, with her husband, runs 700-acre Perry Court Farm, situated between Ashford and Canterbury in Kent.

This autumn they plan to bring 20 to 30 tonnes into London's farmers markets as a result of planting an extra 15 acres of cobnuts, filberts and hazelnuts five years ago. The new trees are fashionably dwarfed, planted eight feet apart, and will be 12 feet tall, compared with the original trees which are 20 feet tall, and need a ladder to harvest them. And unlike some crops this year, Kentish cobnuts have had a really good growing season, because they liked all that sun and no rain in mid-summer, as dampness can cause disease.

On the subject of harvesting, Heidi explains: "We're lucky to have at least eight local women who have been with us for many years" - so unlike many other farmers who hire staff to harvest

they're wonderful with cheese - or you can eat them with fruit

Heidi Fermor Perry Court Farm

their crops, they don't need an army from central Europe. Perry Court does now have two women from Poland, but they are permanently employed. There is a great skill in picking the cobnuts, says Heidi, because the picker has to know which nuts are ripe and be prepared to leave the others to ripen.

Perry Court sells through its own farm shop and farmers' markets: a practical statement against supermarkets. "Often at the markets people ask us what the cobnuts are, and what they taste like," says Heidi. "In fact, we give some nuts away to customers so they can discover what cobnuts are all about, and they always come back and buy some next time."

But what does Heidi herself fresh. We do keep some of the crop, six weeks. They have this wonderful taste and I love them with cheese, or you can eat them with fruit."

in London, certainly those I visit, and they don't only grow and sell nuts. Heidi tells me that they grow no less than 130 varieties of apples and pears, and 20 varieties of plums, which also last into the autumn period. They also bring into the markets at this time of year those wonderful but quite rare fruits for jam-making; damsons and greengages.

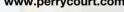
Though Heidi attends many off on Mondays. But I found her on that day in the farm shop, and she admitted that really she worked a infectious. I reckon that's the effect

www.perrycourt.com

particularly like about cobnuts? "I like them when they are picked green and which then take on a darker colour so we can sell them right up to Christmas, but the season for picking only lasts for

You will find Perry Court Farm represented at most farmers' markets

markets, I was assured she had a day seven-day week. Her enthusiasm was Kentish cobnuts can have on you.



An Indian restaurant in London's East End might seem an unlikely contender for ethical eating. Kelly Parsons went to find out more from one chef who is bucking the trend



walk down Brick Lane any night of the week after pub closing time is enough to confirm why the stereotypes

persist of booze-fuelled bargain bowls of indistinguishable lumps of meat, spiced up with exotic ingredients. At Café Spice Namasté, chef Cyrus Todiwala laments the status of his native country's cuisine in the UK. "The British public has come to expect cheap and cheerful Indian food, so restaurant owners are forced to buy the lowest cost ingredients they can get their hands on."

It's a similar story with misunderstandings about spicing, he says. "People have been brainwashed. Few realise that Vindaloo isn't a barometric term for heat but a specific pork dish, and the name is actually Portuguese not Indian!" He cites the recent example of a couple who asked for their beef curry to be extra hot. "I had to say, 'no sorry, I'll give you some fresh green chillies on the side instead'."

The same goes for meat. "Meat isn't just a vehicle for sauce – if I can't taste the meat I've spent so much time on, what's the point of cooking it?," he says. with clear exasperation. "People have preconceived notions, and because of that Indian food's reputation has been ruined."

Cyrus, whose restaurant was highly commended for sustainable food at the City of London Sustainable Cities Awards, has been working hard to try and dispel those myths and stereotypes, and refers to himself as "probably the busiest demo chef in the country". He's been prioritising buying British and seasonal ever since setting up here in 1991, but at the time didn't realise it was being sustainable. "I've always been passionate about the land, and if I wasn't a chef, I'd have been a farmer," he says, adding that he owes an allegiance to this country because it's where he "earns his bread and butter" – a sentiment he regularly drums into staff and suppliers to ensure they buy and supply British where possible.

The restaurant gets through 250 kilos

of onions a week, which are "always British, not the traditional Spanish", he says, and all meat is from this country too. Rare-breed pork comes from Hazeldene farm in the Chiltern Hills, and organic Buffalo meat from Laverstoke Farm in Hampshire. And its seafood supplier is under strict instructions not to let any of the chefs have endangered fish, even if they mistakenly ask for it.

Cyrus admits that not all items on the menu can be local. "We get through ten kilos of fresh chillies a week, so unfortunately it's not commercially viable to get them from smaller UK producers," he says. Exotic spices are also, unsurprisingly, difficult to buy locally. "Our cuisine relies on spices and condiments from the tropical world, although we can get coriander and cumin from Eastern Europe." (Until recently, Fairtrade spices have been hard to get, but increased availability in London means restaurants and their diners can use their purchasing power to give growers a better deal. Ask your favourite curry

Café Spice Namasté

16 Prescot Street London E1 8AZ www.cafespice.co.uk

house about the origin of its spices – Ed) The restaurant staff are trained to advise people on not ordering too much a common mistake when dining on Indian. "It's a constant battle to balance portion sizes in terms of value and waste," says Cyrus. "Over-ordering rice is responsible for a lot of waste," he adds, "Few people know that the soil in the world's rice regions has been seriously depleted." Any food waste goes to an anaerobic digester, with paper, glass and cardboard recycled, and suppliers requested to reuse boxes. It's not cheap, he remarks, and ironic when he considers how this compares to life at home. "If I was back in India I'd be making millions selling my waste, instead of paying other people to take it away!"





A TASTE OF LONDON

To get you in a celebratory mood for the festive season, Gaby De Sena updates some historic London cocktails for the conscious consumer

n 13 May 1806, American magazine *The Balance* first defined a cocktail as a "stimulating liquor which renders the heart stout and bold, at the same time that it fuddles the head." Since then these experimental drinks have had a rich and dynamic history, journeying through fashion trends, prohibition and a recent revival. Today, sustainable cocktails are fast becoming the talk of the ethical town, as more

Shaking organic spirits become available. Shaking the cocktail

Perfect Lady

In 1934, London's leading wine merchants, the Victoria Wine Company, issued a book called Here's How, introducing the Perfect Lady cocktail. It is a subtle and refreshing variation of the French version of the White Lady.

2 measures of gin 1 measure of peach liqueur 1 measure of lemon juice 1 tsp of egg white

Place all of the ingredients in a cocktail shaker with plenty of ice. Shake well (pizzazz and performance optional) and strain into a martini glass.

John Collins, a barman at Limmer's Hotel in Mayfair, invented this drink in the early 1800s. It was originally made with a pungent Holland gin called Genever, but a later variation using the sweeter Old Tom gin gave way to the famous Tom Collins, which became more popular in the United States.

2 measures of gin 1 measure of lemon juice 1 tsp of sugar Soda water

Place the gin, lemon juice and sugar in a cocktail shaker and shake over ice. Strain into a tall, ice-filled glass and top up with soda water.

Depth Bomb

It's thought that the Depth Bomb was invented at some point in the 1920s and, along with the Depth Charge (made up of gin, Lillet and pastis or absinthe), was a favourite wartime cocktail. Harry Craddock, one of the most famous cocktail barmen of his time, explains in The Savoy Cocktail Book that these drinks were inspired by the submarine chasers of the First World War.

3/4 measure of cognac 3/4 measure of calvados ¼ measure of lemon juice Dash of pomegranate syrup

Place all of the ingredients in a cocktail shaker with plenty of ice. Shake well and strain into a cocktail glass.

Stair Moiito

If you don't want to neglect the designated drivers or you're just not one for alcohol, try this tangy and refreshing non-alcoholic cocktail. Shake Chegworth Valley Apple and Pear juice with fresh mint, a squeeze of lime and a dash of sugar. Serve over ice in a hi-ball glass.

Recipes adapted from The Ultimate Cocktail Book by Ned Halley (Wordsworth Reference Series), except the Stair Mojito which is kindly submitted by The Lonsdale in Notting Hill www.thelonsdale.co.uk

Try our 'Harvest Chase' cocktail made specially for Sustain's recent restaurant ramble, on the Jellied Eel website

WHERE TO SHOP

Every issue, Taste of London shows vou how to update historical London recipes with sustainable ingredients. You may think that creating sustainable cocktails would be tricky, but with our shopping suggestions, you can impress your guests with drinks that are both tasty and ethical.

Juniper Green Organic Gin is distilled at the Thames Distillery near Clapham. where they have been making gin since the 18th century. It is available through Abel and Cole and Vintage Roots. Or visit Highgate's very own microdistillery, Sacred Spirits, where gin and vodka are distilled by hand.

www.abelandcole.co.uk www.iunipergreen.org www.sacredspiritscompany.com

Calvados, cognac and peach liqueur Vintage Roots specialises in organic and biodynamic wines, but also supply a wide range of speciality products such as liqueurs. For your organic Depth Bomb, they supply Michel Beucher Calvados and Guy Pinard Cognac. www.vintageroots.co.uk

Pomegranate syrup

You could substitute this for any syrup to suit your taste, otherwise try Equitable Gourmet's Pomegranate Molasses from Planet Organic. Find your nearest store at www.planetorganic.com

Chegworth Valley juice

These delicious juices are available at a number of farmers' markets across London, or you could visit the recently opened Chegworth Valley Farm Shop at Notting Hill Gate: 221 Kensington Church Street, W8 7LX. www.chegworthvalley.com

Mint, sugar, eggs, lemon

Organic and/or local products are available from your local farmers' market. If you need your ingredients before the next market day, go to the local healthfood shop. Visit The London Organic Directory to find your nearest store.

www.lfm.org.uk www.infolondon.ukf.net/organic •••••

www.drinkaware.co.uk









Grow your own this Autumn.

eat delicious home

Creating your own edible paradise is now easily achievable in the city, too. A patio area, roof terrace or even just a window sill are all you need to grow some of your own delicious food.

It's not just a Spring thing, either. You can also keep growing through the Autumn and into Winter. Oriental salads, warming peppers and Winter greens are ideal in small spaces but really anything can be grown and it doesn't have to be difficult or time-consuming. Rocket Gardens do the tricky bit of growing plants from seed and when the baby plants are at the ideal size for planting, they carefully package them up in a box, wrapped in golden straw, and deliver them direct to your door. Just unpack, then plant and voila you've got your own growing vegetable garden!

Their range of products can be grown by anyone, no matter what size of garden you have. They take out all the risk and hard work that comes with growing your own organic plants from seed. It saves you time and effort as well as eliminating the disappointment when seeds fail to germinate. Based in Cornwall, all their plants are grown naturally, without chemical pesticides, fertilizers or artificial heat.

There are 10 different gardens to choose from, including Salad, Container and Window Box Gardens, as well as the traditional Vegetable Gardens. There's even a River Cottage Veg' Patch Garden, designed especially by the gardening team at River Cottage.

"My passionate wish is that everyone should grow a little of their own food. Instant Gardens are the perfect way to get started on a veg patch if you're new to growing or if, like me, you've got a bit behind with the digging and missed the start of the season!" Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall

Even better, you can purchase a garden throughout the year with Rocket Gardens' unique voucher system. The vouchers also make the perfect gift, enabling anyone to get growing in an instant.

Window Box Garden

This garden is perfect for the city-dweller with limited space. You'll be amazed at how much food you can harvest from it!

For £24.99, including P&P*, you'll get:

Winter purslane x10 Winter lettuce x10 Giant red mustard x5 Spring onions x15 Endive ×10

Green frills mustard x10 Chinese leaf, Tatsoi x5 Red frills mustard x10 Land cress x10



Texel greens x5









NOVEMBER

CASE STUDY

OCTOBER

Put your feet up, and browse the seed catalogues. Get orders in early, but resist the temptation to buy more than you need! Feed the birds. Provide a squirrel-proof feeder and shallow bowl of drinking water.

The Cranbrook Estate, Tower Hamlets (Rosie Boycott pictured

behaviour, when a group of residents who had heard about Capital

awarded £750, to which Tower Hamlets council added £5000, and a

local builders merchant, Trads, donated scaffolding planks for the 10

raised beds which are now full of vegetables. The beds are communal

If you fancy some fruit, start shopping. Specialist nurseries start

sending out their 'bare root' fruit trees and bushes in November.

Green manures such as grazing rye are best for larger plots.

Make leaf mould: put fallen leaves in a bin liner stabbed with

small holes, add some water if dry, and leave for a year or so.

Plant broad beans, garlic and round-seeded peas, so that

they're well-established before sustained colder weather.

prune in dry weather, to reduce risk of fungal disease.

layers of newspaper or cardboard overnight.

Protect outdoor crops from frost with fleece, cloches or even

Gear up for winter pruning of any fruit on your plot. Always

Protect patches of exposed soil from the extreme weather to come.

so everyone takes responsibility for their upkeep, with food being

shared among the gardeners and any surplus given to visitors.

GROWING CALENDAR

above with estate residents). The playground on the Cranbrook

Growth won a grant to turn the space into a garden. They were

Estate was dangerous, disused and a magnet for disorderly

To build your stocks, take hardwood cuttings of soft fruit such as currants and gooseberries. Clumps of established rhubarb are also ready for dividing.

Tom Moggach



Growing pride

in London's housing estates

London is home to an estimated 750,000 housing association properties, each hiding potential growing spaces. **Gaby De Sena** reports on how residents are transforming disused areas into flourishing allotments



mid the concrete and the noise it can be easy to forget about our

CAPITALgro city's potential for growing healthy and sustainable food, which is why the Capital Growth campaign wants to reconnect us urban folk with our food and environment.

As our regular readers will know, the campaign – run in partnership by London Food Link, the Mayor of London and the Big Lottery's Local Food Fund – aims to create 2,012 new growing plots in London by 2012. At the end of June, it launched the 'Edible Estates' competition to find the best community food-growing projects on London's housing estates, with prizes such as a £250 B&O gift card, a tool set from Bulldog Tools, a worm café from Wiggly Wigglers and places on the Capital Growth training programme.

"We know from people in estates who are already growing that it can reap huge benefits," Rosie Boycott, chair of London Food, said of the competition. An example is the Metropolitan Housing Association, one of the first organisations to sign up to the Capital Growth campaign with a pledge to identify 20 plots for its residents. Impressively, it already has five spaces up and running.

And it's not just about food. Alongside the lettuces and tomatoes grows a sense of community and satisfaction, as well as pride. Many areas which were once troubled by anti-social behaviour and neglect have experienced a positive change thanks to their gardens.

With some London boroughs facing 40-year waiting lists for allotments, there is no better time to take matters into our own green-fingered hands. So the next time you pass an abandoned space, don't ignore it - you could transform it into an abundant growing plot in no time.

The Capital Growth team will be highlighting the many benefits of food growing in housing estates, such as health, inclusion and sustainable development, at the Edible Estates conference, taking place on 19 October. www.capitalgrowth.org/edibleestates/conference

Tom Moggach teaches with City Leaf, who offer food-growing training, plus site assessments and project consultancy. www.cityleaf.co.uk



Visit us online at www.rocketgardens.co.uk or call 01326 222169 for more information.

READER'S KITCHEN

Michael Dees visits Deptford Creek, to take a look at what's cooking in Anna Francis' houseboat



Photos: Michael Dees

here isn't time to buy veg from the One Planet Food project's veg van. It pulls into Hackbridge station just as our train leaves for Queens Road, Peckham, so instead Anna pops into a couple of the independentlyowned shops on Deptford high street, as we pass through on the way to her houseboat.

"I buy most of my veg from the food co-op," she says, referring to Fare Shares (www.fareshares.org.uk), where she's been volunteering every Thursday for the past six years. "Everything there is run by volunteers and it's the cheapest place to get organic food. They even refill washing up liquid bottles and fix bicycles. I spend about £20 a week on food. though I have to confess I do eat out quite a bit after work."

We climb aboard her floating home and she stops to plant some watercress in the floating garden, before going below deck into her kitchen where she proudly shows me her shelves she built from reclaimed wood, and the knobs which she turned herself.

Anna uses jars to minimise packaging by buying pulses in bulk, and the kitchen lighting is powered by solar panels on the deck. Occasionally she uses her woodburning stove to cook, but most of the time, she says with disappointment, she cooks with fossil fuels in the form of gas.

Food is a very important aspect of Anna's life. After an A-level French project required her to research vegetarianism she stopped eating meat. "If I wanted to be consistent and take a stance I had to become vegan," she tells me. "I read that 60 people can be fed from the vegetables grown on the area of a football pitch, but that only two people can be fed on the same area used to raise cattle."

Anna even tried freeganism for a while when she discovered her local greengrocer

and healthfood stores throwing out good produce: "I used to get things like pots of organic hummus that had passed their sell-by date but were perfectly good."

And her ethical food efforts don't stop when she disembarks either. Anna discovered, while calculating the ecological footprints of Hackbridge residents, how passionate they were about food. So she spent 18 months seeking funding for the One Planet Food project which, in addition to a mobile veg van, runs a seven-acre community farm, a halfacre community allotment, training courses, and a local food network which aims to get local food into schools and hospitals. "It's nice to grow food locally," she says of the community farm. "It's a very sociable thing and good exercise. We now have a community of volunteers that sit down and

have lunch together. It's very satisfying to see food go from plot to plate."

••••••

Anna gets a free goody bag from the splendid ladies at Happy Kitchen as a thank you for letting us through her door.

If you would like us to consider putting your kitchen under our microscope, please contact ben@sustainweb.org

Scorecard

High scores for eating a lowimpact diet, growing her own and running a low-carbon kitchen.

Deductions for buying bottled water occasionally.

"I couldn't live without...gas. I use my wood-burning stove whenever I can but often have to fall back on the gas."

Grade



Featured London Food Link member

Sarah Green **Organics**



•••••••••••

LONDON FOOD LINK

arah, a third-generation farmer, runs an organic farm with her parents in Essex. She attended agricultural college, and a placement growing iceberg lettuce for a supermarket was a catalyst to starting the organic farm. Sarah says the unnecessary adherence to cosmetic standards rather than taste, and problematic relationships with growers, convinced her to try an alternative approach. What's more, her mum was a greengrocer, and customers had started to request organic produce.

The farm gained its organic status in 2003. Today, 25 organic varieties are grown, including beetroot, borlotti beans and purple sprouting broccoli – all Sarah's favourites. Aubergines, peppers, tomatoes and cucumbers are grown in unheated poly-tunnels.

The farm runs a box scheme, complete with recipes, because "customers didn't know what to make of the bright pink pods of borlotti beans". Sarah adds that the environmental benefits of organic farming include protecting ladybirds, song birds, birds of prey and small mammals. Some areas are deliberately kept unfarmed to encourage biodiversity.

In the future, Sarah's plan is to supply even more specialist food shops and caterers in London, along with regular happy customers The Duke of Cambridge, Growing Communities box scheme and Stoke Newington farmers' market. www.sarahgreensorganics.co.uk

London Food Link goin us!

Love the Jellied Eel?

Join London Food Link and have a copy delivered to your door every quarter, and become part of London's growing local and sustainable food movement. The Jellied Eel is a free magazine published by London Food Link to raise awareness of ethical food issues in London and promote people and projects that are working to improve sustainability in the capital's food sector. London Food Link is a charity that runs a membership network for individuals and organisations that share this vision.

Member benefits

A free copy of the Jellied Eel delivered to your door every quarter.

Membership of the London Food Link e-forum which gives regular information on local food news, funding information, jobs, events and more.

An invitation to our twice-yearly Network Do's to celebrate the work of London Food Link and its members. A discounted rate and special offers on entrance to selected

food events happening in London.

To join, fill in the membership form and send it to: London Food Link, c/o Sustain, 94 White Lion Street London N1 9PF or call 020 7837 1228.

Membership form London Food Link

membership form hondon rood hink	
Name	
Address	
Postcode	Borough
Tel	
Email	
Please write a brie	f summary of who you are/your interest in local food
	1 11 6 6000 (111)

Individual membership fee of £20 (tick box)

Rate If the fee is not, for whatever reason, a fair reflection of your ability to pay membership, then please get in touch. Please make cheques payable to Sustain. If you are a community project, food business or local authority, contact georgie@sustainweb.org for more information on how you can be involved with London Food Link.

WHAT'S ON

JELLIED EEL star STOCKIST

Apple Day celebrations

Saturday 16 October Middlesex

Pick up some local produce grown in and around the Colne Valley from the Colne Valley Food market stall. www.colnevalleypark.org.uk

Edible Estates conference

Tuesday 19 October Islington

Capital Growth is organising this conference to showcase the achievements of the many community groups in housing estates currently growing food. Experts will be giving practical support on how to make a food-growing project successful in a housing estate. www.capitalgrowth.org

FARM: shop opening

Thursday 21 October Dalston

Working in partnership with Hackney City Council, the project has taken over a disused shop in Dalston and transformed it into an urban farm. The shop will have mushrooms growing in the basement and salad on the roof. www.somethingandson.com

Community gardening event

Saturday 30 October Walthamstow

Organiclea is organising an event to give essential practical, legal, financial and organisational advice and inspiration to people involved in community garden projects. www.organiclea.org.uk

Unpackaged third birthday

Wednesday 3 November Islington

Everyone is invited to the store to join in the celebrations and stock up on some 'unpackaged' dried goods. Bring your own food containers! http://beunpackaged.com

The Vine Trail course

Friday 26 November Chingford

A one-day course held at Hawkwood Plant Nursery looking at how to grow and look after grapevines. www.organiclea.org.uk

Food smoking course

Saturday 27 November Hackney City Farm

Book this one-day course for an introduction to the craft of food smoking. There will be tasty smoked food to sample. www.lowimpact.org

Good Food on the Public Plate Awards

Tuesday 30 November City Hall

Rosie Boycott, chair of the London Food Board, will be handing out awards to celebrate public sector caterers using sustainable produce.

www.sustainweb.org/goodfoodpublicplate

Freedom Pass holders' lunch discount

Until 22 December Euston

To celebrate being awarded the Soil Association's 'Food for Life' Catering Mark, Friend's House is offering 20 per cent off before 12.30pm, to encourage healthy eating out. Just show your Freedom Pass at the till. www.friendshouse.co.uk

Oliver's Wholefood Store



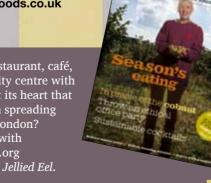
ight across from the train station at Kew Gardens is this month's star stockist, Oliver's Wholefood Store, which has been based there for over 20 years. It aims to offer food with integrity: 90 per cent of products are organic and it has a strong emphasis on Fairtrade and local produce, selling Richmond Park and Isleworth honey, for example. The store serves the local community, but even has loyal customers travelling from Brighton and Oxford to make the most of its wide selection of goods. The staff work to inform and educate their customers about how to eat well and on how their food is produced, and the store is running a series of food tastings and health lectures over the next few months. To find out when they are happening ask in-store or visit their website.

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The Jellied Eel would like to thank Oliver's Wholefood Store and its staff for their continued support. www.oliverswholefoods.co.uk

Are you a shop, restaurant, café, trader or community centre with sustainable food at its heart that wants to help us in spreading the word around London? Then get in touch with polly@sustainweb.org about stocking the Jellied Eel.





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Wonderful mix of organic and free range produce. A range of meat, fish, dairy and veggies that you

just don't get through most high street shops.

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