



PRESS RELEASE

Royal Brompton Hospital serves up local organic “Brompton Breakfast”

The Royal Brompton Hospital is holding a “Brompton Breakfast” morning on Wednesday 26th January to highlight its work in the catering department to increase the proportion of local and organic food served to staff, patients and visitors.

The hospital is participating in a two year project with London Food Link, in partnership with the Soil Association. The project aims to increase the proportion of local and/or organic food served in four London NHS hospitals to 10% of their routine catering provision. This will help to promote health by providing fresher food for patients, staff and visitors, and will also support farm and food businesses in the South East and London.

Each year the government spends around £2billion on providing food to the public sector, though British farmers receive very little benefit, and nutritional standards are not always high¹.

In contrast, the Brompton Breakfast morning is designed to encourage staff, visitors and patients to start the day the healthy way with a balanced and nutritious breakfast, with local and organic produce top of the menu.

Research shows that a nutritious and healthy breakfast helps our body and mind make the best start to the day, aiding concentration and memory, and reducing snacking².

The breakfast menu includes organic porridge from family-run London based supplier Essex Flour and Grain. Managing Director, Michael Spinks said: “Wholegrain cereals make an important contribution to a heart-friendly diet. I am delighted to be working with Royal Brompton to supply more local and organic cereals.”

Fresh fruit salad and Kentish grown apples will be on offer through London based fruit and supplier Prescott Thomas, from New Covent Garden. Also available will be freshly brewed Fairtrade tea and Guatemalan organic coffee, organic milk, free-range egg omelettes, low salt baked beans and grilled organic bacon and sausages from the award winning ‘Helen Browning’s totally organic’ range.

¹ http://www.sustainweb.org/publications/pubinfo/pubinfo_maua1.asp

² www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/06/58/34/04065834.pdf

Mike Duckett, Catering Manager, Royal Brompton & Harefield NHS Trust, commented: "We want to serve food that is not only healthier for our patients but that is also purchased in a more responsible way, such as Fairtrade coffee and free-range eggs. Also, by increasing our use of local suppliers we can help to promote health by providing fresher, seasonal foods for our patients."

The recent government white paper on health outlines opportunities to make institutions more sustainable and healthier, and this practical project helps to lead the way³.

For further information, contact Emma Hockridge, Hospital Food Project officer at London Food Link.

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Editors Notes:

1. The London Hospital Food Project in partnership with the Soil Association aims to increase the amount of local and/or organic food served in four London NHS hospitals (the Royal Brompton, Bethlem Royal, Ealing General, and St George's, Tooting) to 10% of their routine catering provision, and through this help to promote health by providing fresher food for patients, staff and visitors, and support farm and food businesses in the South East and London.
2. London Food Link is a project by Sustain: The alliance for better food and farming. Sustain advocates food and agriculture policies and practices that enhance the health and welfare of people and animals, improve the working and living environment, enrich society and culture and promote equity. We represent around 100 national public interest organisations working at international, national, regional and local level. www.sustainweb.org
3. As part of this, London Food Link aims to help producers, consumers and retailers make a positive choice for sustainable, local food. This means better access to affordable, high quality and seasonal food, shorter supply chains and campaigning for policies which promote a thriving local food economy and culture. www.londonfoodlink.org
4. The Royal Brompton & Harefield NHS Trust is the largest cardiothoracic centre in the UK and probably the largest in Europe. Both hospitals are at the leading edge nationally and internationally in the investigation, treatment and care of people with heart and lung disease.

5. The British Heart Foundation suggests that cardiovascular disease accounted for 25% of premature deaths in the UK in 2001, and cancers 38%. Better nutrition could have prevented many of these. Food in the public sector, including food in hospital canteens and wards is likely to affect the nutritional health of hospital staff as well as the people to whom they offer care.

6. Each year the NHS purchases over 300 million meals across the UK⁴ spending £500 million on food including 61 million litres of milk, 1.3 million chicken legs and 13.5 million kg of potatoes.

8. Helen Browning's organic brand satisfies consumers' growing desire for naturally reared, healthy, unprocessed food, free from preservatives and artificial additives. Helen Browning runs the Wiltshire-based Eastbrook Farms Organic Meat business, sourcing livestock from its own Eastbrook Farm and organic supplier farms.

9. This project is supported under the England Rural Development Programme by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund.

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BETTER HEALTH,
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⁴ Department of Health. *The NHS Plan: A plan for investment, a plan for reform*. London HMSO, 2000.