

# the jellied eel

Are you  
getting a  
healthy  
start?

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London Food Link runs a network of organisations and individuals with members as diverse as farmers, food writers, caterers and community food projects. Both London Food Link and its members run projects that help to:

- increase the availability of sustainable food in London
- tackle the barriers preventing access to healthy and sustainable food for all Londoners
- celebrate and protect London's diverse food culture

Editor: Ben Reynolds  
Production Editor: Rachel Beebe  
Design: Gav Dupee  
Illustrations: Ciara Devine  
Printing: RAP Spiderweb

Cover image by Sarah Bowyer

## LONDON FOOD LINK

94 WHITE LION STREET, LONDON, N1 9PF  
TEL: 020 7837 1228  
FAX: 020 7837 1141  
EMAIL: BEN@SUSTAINWEB.ORG  
WEB: WWW.LONDONFOODLINK.ORG

# Editorial

This may be the first time you've picked up a copy of the Jellied Eel. Perhaps you've chanced upon it in a library, café or at an event. Well, for you new comers, I'd like to welcome you to our magazine! JE brings you the latest information and opinions about London's sustainable food network. In these pages you'll read about all the efforts to improve Londoners' access to healthy food, local food, organic food...you get the picture! If you like what you read here, you may be interested in joining (see the back page for the benefits). If you feel intrigued, we're planning another network get-together in January so send us an e-mail to get on the list for more information. Existing network members will get more details when the date and venue are confirmed.

As the last vestiges of summer finally succumb to the rain, and we knock back the last of the English Perry (which I found, to my surprise, in many pubs - including a Wetherspoons!) we start to look forward to what the next few months have in store. This issue looks ahead to the launch of the implementation plan of the Mayor's food strategy (see p.13). This comes at a time when other boroughs are preparing their own food strategies, (e.g. Newham and Islington), or are at looking into doing them (e.g. Camden and Hackney).

Food access is a major part of most of these strategies, and on p.8 we take a closer look at the Healthy Start scheme which is being launched in November. This is particularly relevant to any retailers who need to apply to be able to take these vouchers. Also in November we will be having the next meeting of the London food access forum, which is a joint venture between London Food Link and Sustain's Food Poverty Network. The last few meetings have focused on issues such as food mapping and working with business. The next meeting will focus on evaluation

techniques, which have been highlighted as particularly useful for projects trying to secure much-needed funding.

If you are interested in finding out more about future (and past) meetings of the food access forum it is all featured on our new-look website ([www.sustainweb.org](http://www.sustainweb.org)). The site should be easier to navigate and will contain much more information, for members and non-members alike. One of the new features is our producer/supplier database, which includes details of almost 900 producers in and around London. So if you are looking for local sausages or an organic lassi you should be able to find it here. The need for this database has come about partly through our work with restaurants and hospitals, which will be featured in the next issue, and partly through our work with multicultural food businesses, which is the focus of our forthcoming report A Greener Curry (see p.10). Incidentally, the hospital food project is being renamed Good Food on the Public Plate, to reflect its wider work with schools, hospitals and care homes. So if you're such an institution, based in London or the South East and want to improve your food, contact [Emma@sustainweb.org](mailto:Emma@sustainweb.org) or [Mathew@sustainweb.org](mailto:Mathew@sustainweb.org). ■

We would like to thank the following volunteers for all their help over the past few months:

- Rachel Beebe
- Tamarind Falk
- Naomi Mead
- Hadija Mohammed
- Pierre Morand
- Paul Rosenbloom
- Lucie Wanctin

Disclaimer - Inclusion of information in The Jellied Eel does not imply that the product or service is endorsed by London Food Link or Sustain.

# Around Town



## East Growing Communities celebrates 10 years of local food with a Good Food Swap

Growing Communities, the Hackney-based group that pioneered London's first organic box scheme and the UK's first all-organic farmers' market, is celebrating their 10th birthday with the Good Food Swap on Sunday 8th October from 2 till 5pm at the Old Fire Station in Stoke Newington.

"We want people to bring food they've made, picked or grown themselves. It's a sort of inner-city, money-free version of the village show," said Natalie Silk, who is organising the event. "This is a chance for people to share their cooking skills, their favourite pickle, fruit from their urban

gardens or the prize marrow from their allotments. People without gardens can bring stuff they've made from local ingredients or swap their favourite family recipes. Or just come along and admire the produce!"

Growing Communities believes good food tastes great, is chemical-free, seasonal, locally grown or home-made from fresh ingredients - this is the type of food they are encouraging people to bring. Pledges received so far include: spicy tomato ketchup, damson jam, "hackney salami", home-made egg pasta, garden reared hen's eggs, and lots of

Growing up with the Good Food Swap  
*Credit: Growing Communities*

locally grown or foraged fruit, vegetables and herbs.

The Good Food Swap is a celebration of Growing Communities' achievements over the last 10 years. They want to get local people thinking, talking about and making good food and to inspire people with the culinary and social pleasures of making and exchanging seasonal produce.

**CONTACT: KERRY RANKINE**  
GROWING COMMUNITIES  
0207 502 7588  
[WWW.GROWINGCOMMUNITIES.ORG](http://WWW.GROWINGCOMMUNITIES.ORG)

## South Check out your local BISTRO

What if you could use the same oil to fry chips for your dinner and run your car? It may seem unlikely, but that is exactly what will soon be happening in London thanks to the latest biodiesel initiative. The South-East London Transport Strategy (Seltrans), a partnership between seven southeast London boroughs that aims to improve the efficiency of the local transport system, has got the go-ahead on their pilot scheme: Biodiesel Initiative for Sustainable Transport from Recycled Oil (BISTRO). BISTRO will initially be a five year project to collect used cooking oil from local restaurants and cafes and then refine and convert it into biodiesel.

The pilot scheme will be following in the footsteps of two schemes already underway - one in Valencia, Spain and the other in Gratz, Austria. Seltrans has paired up with Thames Water, who will be managing the collection of the used cooking oil. As well as using fossil fuel and reducing emissions, the project will reduce the amount of used oil illegally thrown down

London's drains. Used oil seriously gums up the works for Thames Water and it is expensive for them to clean up. Now restaurants and chip shops can have their oil collected and taken to a conversion plant in Bromley, where it will be refined for use in vehicles.

Biodiesel can be used to power any diesel engine and no conversion is necessary. In Spain and Austria it is being used to power busses. More locally, the Royal Mail distribution centre in Yorkshire powers 300 vans with biodiesel, and a delivery company in Norfolk uses it to run over 100 of their vehicles. The plan now is for Seltrans to use the oil in council fleets.

**CONTACT: ALAN LUCKING**

[ALAN.LUCKING@BROMLEY.GOV.UK](mailto:ALAN.LUCKING@BROMLEY.GOV.UK)

[WWW.SELTRANS.ORG.UK](http://WWW.SELTRANS.ORG.UK)

## North Imagine Islington environment fair

Do you know your native apples? That's the question we asked folks visiting London Food Link's stall at the Imagine Islington green festival on 2nd September 2006. Most people correctly remembered Cox's Orange Pippin as a native English apple but knowledge usually deteriorated after that; supermarket staples such as Pink Lady, Gala and Braeburn were the apples most commonly identified incorrectly as natives.



LFL in Islington *Credit: Zeenat Anjari*

Predictably, people who regularly shopped at farmers markets, visited orchards, tended apple trees or knew friends with fruit trees were more savvy about English apples. They reeled off varieties such as Discovery, Spartan, Worcester, Bramley and even Laxton's. Ida Fabrizio conducted this research for Sustain's new Leader + funded Orchards Project. The project aims to maintain traditional orchards as part of the local landscape and economy, enjoyed by local people.

**CONTACT: IDA FABRIZIO**

[IDA@SUSTAINWEB.ORG](mailto:IDA@SUSTAINWEB.ORG)

[WWW.SUSTAINWEB.ORG](http://WWW.SUSTAINWEB.ORG)

## West Borough boosts business with BEST practice

Ealing Council has launched what it is calling Business Environmental Support and Training (BEST) to ensure small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the borough have access to all the information they need to do their bit for sustainability. Working with Government-funded Envirowise and Groundwork West London the Council plans to provide a series of training workshops looking at the general issues that might affect local businesses as well as pointing them in the direction of specialist support should they need it. The officer responsible for the initiative, Alex Beckett, has said the Council had identified a gap in its services and responded to it. "We had active town centre partnerships encouraging economic regeneration but no borough-specific environmental support mechanisms."

**CONTACT: ALEXANDER BECKETT**

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PROJECT OFFICER,  
EALING COUNCIL

[BECKETTA@EALING.GOV.UK](mailto:BECKETTA@EALING.GOV.UK) OR 020 8825 5313



# Members feature

# The Food Chain

## What does The Food Chain do?

The Food Chain exists to ensure that those living with HIV can have access to good nutrition to regain their health and stay well.

We provide an individually tailored hot meal service to those who are housebound and living with HIV. We also provide a grocery box service to those who are very ill or have poor access to food and an emergency hamper for those who have just come out of hospital. Nearly everything is done by volunteers.

Research shows that good nutrition is essential to those living with HIV in terms of living a full healthy lifestyle and managing their drug treatments.

## Who set it up and when?

The Food Chain was set up in 1988 by four friends who cooked Christmas dinner together with another friend who was living with HIV. Since then it has grown to provide a meal service, grocery boxes and nutritional advice and information for people living with HIV all over London.

## Who is involved in your work?

We currently have over 900 volunteers; The Sunday meal delivery service operates from six borrowed kitchens in different areas of London. Volunteer roles include: Lead Cooks, Kitchen Assistants, Drivers, Navigators, supervisors and Rota coordinators. Other volunteers provide administrative support for the main office; and others are involved with fundraising events. We are very much a volunteer led organization, and every meal that comes out of our kitchen is designed, prepared and delivered by volunteers. We also employ several full time paid staff, including the Chief Executive, a Service Manager and a Volunteer Coordinator amongst others.

## What have you been working on recently?

We are producing a cookbook for those living with HIV, and nutrition handbook to provide information for those living with HIV, and for health professionals working with people who have HIV. We also recently won the National Lottery Awards Inspiration Award for our work.

## What are next steps/projects?

Naturally we are looking for ways to expand our work so that those living with HIV across the UK have access to our services. Our new strategic plan outlines the development of our services in 4 areas, feeding, shopping, teaching and informing. We are looking for opportunities to expand our meals service, develop a volunteer led shopping service, start

cookery classes and provide more quality information for individuals and professionals to access.

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### THE FOOD CHAIN

UNIT 4 NEW NORTH HOUSE, 202-208 NEW NORTH ROAD, LONDON N1 7BJ

PHONE: 0207 3540 333 FAX: 0207 359 8169

WEB: [WWW.FOODCHAIN.ORG.UK](http://WWW.FOODCHAIN.ORG.UK)

EMAIL: [INFO@FOODCHAIN.ORG.UK](mailto:INFO@FOODCHAIN.ORG.UK)

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# Bulletin

## Food Growing for Groups - WEN

Women's Environment Network (WEN) has produced a briefing paper called Food Growing for Groups. This briefing, which has come from WEN's local food project, has been developed because of a lack of information about what people can do together as a gardening group throughout the year. As well as including a gardening calendar, it includes examples of what other groups have done, information on support that WEN can give and lists of sources of information and potential funders.

[WWW.WEN.ORG.UK](http://WWW.WEN.ORG.UK)

## Setting the Standard for School Food

The second annual Healthy Eating in School Conference is scheduled for Thursday 12th October, 2006 at Earls Court One in London. This national conference will examine the latest policy on school meals and nutrition and the implications for schools and the food industry. Sharing examples of how to provide healthy school food, delegates will have the opportunity to consider how best to meet the new standards for both meals and non-meal food, such as vending. Fees range from around £200-£400.

CONTACT GEMMA SUTER

020 7324 4363, [GEMMA.SUTER@NEILSTEW-ARTASSOCIATES.CO.UK](mailto:GEMMA.SUTER@NEILSTEW-ARTASSOCIATES.CO.UK)

[WWW.NEILSTEWARTASSOCIATES.COM/KD145](http://WWW.NEILSTEWARTASSOCIATES.COM/KD145)

## Appetite for reading - what's cooking at your local library?

At the beginning of October, and running till the end of the year, London's public libraries are running a reading promotion inspired by food and drink. London Libraries Recommend...An Appetite for Reading is the latest in a series of successful campaigns, funded by the Arts Council, which encourage library members to extend their reading tastes and invite new readers to try something different.

Librarians across London have chosen the selection of fifty titles (with a little help from London Food Link) and all have a culinary influence - fiction and non-fiction are included, with memoirs and accounts of travel but no pure recipe books.

The list of books, with reviews written by the librarians who nominated them, will be available on the London Libraries website [www.londonlibraries.org.uk/read](http://www.londonlibraries.org.uk/read), which also allows you to find the book in your local library at the click of a mouse button. The website also indicates which of the books is available in accessible formats such as large print, talking book or Braille and will have pages devoted to an online quiz and links to other useful information.

Librarians will be running a series of food-related talks and events hosted in libraries and other venues. For example, the local studies centre in Romford will host an exhibition related to the history of its local allotments, and Lewisham Libraries will launch their community

cookbook as part of the promotion.

Details of events can be found on the London Libraries calendar at [www.londonlibraries.org.uk/events](http://www.londonlibraries.org.uk/events)

FIONA O'BRIEN

LONDON LIBRARIES DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

[FIONA.OBRIEN@LLDA.ORG.UK](mailto:FIONA.OBRIEN@LLDA.ORG.UK)

## Friends of the Earth local groups conference 2006

"If we want to engage them, we need to talk to them where they're at" (taken from conference publicity materials)



Over 300 Friends of the Earth (FoE) members representing local groups from all over the country met for three days in Nottingham to discuss how campaigning for solutions and communicating positive messages could help FoE reach a broader spectrum of people.

In support of this theme, London Food Link (LFL) project officer, Zeenat Anjari, was invited by FoE's food team to speak at a workshop on her work to increase the market for sustainable food by appealing to London's multicultural communities. Zeenat's research revealed different methods used to engage certain communities. One of her proposals was for FoE local groups, LFL and ethnic minority groups to work together to share



information on sustainable food - and food! - in culturally appropriate locations such as shops, street markets, community centres and places of worship.

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT FOE'S WORK AT  
[WWW.FOE.CO.UK/CAMPAIGNS/REAL\\_FOOD/](http://WWW.FOE.CO.UK/CAMPAIGNS/REAL_FOOD/)  
CONTACT ZEENAT AT  
[ZEENAT@SUSTAINWEB.ORG](mailto:ZEENAT@SUSTAINWEB.ORG) OR 0207 837 1228.

## Government plans to allow widespread GM contamination

On 20th July Defra published its consultation on proposals for managing the coexistence of GM, conventional and organic crops. The consultation is open to anyone and the closing date for responses is 20th October 2006.

The most startling thing about this consultation is that the Government proposes to "facilitate choice between conventional, organic and GM crops" by aiming "to minimise any unwanted GM presence in non-GM crops so that it is below 0.9%".

In other words, crops cross pollinated with a neighbouring GM crop will still be classed as non-GM or organic even though they may have nearly 1% GM present. To achieve this Defra proposes to set statutory separation distances between GM and other crops of 35 metres for oilseed rape and 80-110 metres for maize crops. Other measures to prevent contamination, such as controlling GM oilseed rape plants which come up in following crops, are to be dealt with by voluntary means.

The consultation specifically excludes gardeners, allotment holders, beekeepers and farmers, who save their home grown seed each year, from protection and, hence, compensation if they suffer contamination. Indeed, Defra fails to come up with a firm proposal as to who should be liable if non-GM crops are contami-



Farmers take action on GM  
Credit: Dr Mae-Wan Ho / Isis

nated with GM.

Anyone who is concerned about the protection of the environment, the integrity of the food chain and who wants to retain the right to choose genuinely non-GM food should take part in the consultation. We are also planning an event in London on 19th October to mark the end of the consultation and will have more details available shortly.

You can find more details, including a guide on how to take part and an email action, at [www.stopgmcontamination.org](http://www.stopgmcontamination.org).

The full text of the consultation is available at [www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/gmnongm-coexist/index.htm](http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/gmnongm-coexist/index.htm)

GM FREEZE  
020 7837 0642

## Local Food at the Cross Roads: Celebration, challenge, opportunity

The 2nd National Food Links UK Conference will take place on 29th November 2006 at the East of England Showground, Peterborough

The conference will be looking at the issue of local food on the threshold of huge expansion, due to high consumer demand and in the light of the urgent need for more sustainable food systems. It will also look at the efforts of food links organisations and others to overcome the practical difficulties of creating sustainable food systems. Speakers include: Lawrence Woodward, Elm Farm Research Centre; Dan Keech, New Economics Foundation; Tully Wakeman, East Anglia Food Link; Sue Clifford, Common Ground; and our very own Matt Castle and Zeenat Anjari.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO A BOOKING FORM, GO TO [WWW.FOODLINKS-UK.ORG](http://WWW.FOODLINKS-UK.ORG) OR CONTACT SARAH DAVIES AT [SARAH@FOODLINKS-UK.ORG](mailto:SARAH@FOODLINKS-UK.ORG) OR 01225 787921.

## ASDA to 'bin' waste

Supermarket group Asda yesterday pledged to stop sending any waste to landfill sites within four years as part of a plan to achieve a new clean and green image. The 307-store chain is also to test a range of energy-saving technologies including sunpipes and biomass boilers. The "zero waste" promise echoes a similar pledge made by Asda's parent group, Wal-Mart, last year and is part of a drive by all the big grocers to reinvent themselves as environmentally friendly businesses.

The company is also reviewing all its

own-label products in an effort to reduce the amount of packaging shoppers have to dispose of at home. It aims to cut packaging by 10% over 18 months.

David Cheesewright, Asda's chief operating officer, said: "It's a massive commitment ... We hope our competitors will follow our lead."

Asda's new campaign to slash waste and build more energy efficient stores comes less than a week after bosses from the big four supermarkets were summoned by environment secretary David Miliband, who told them they must make their businesses more environmentally-friendly.

The meeting was attended by Sir Ken Morrison of Morrison's, Justin King of Sainsbury's, David Cheesewright of Asda and Tesco's company secretary, Lucy Neville-Rolfe. Mr Miliband told them he wanted to see more local supplies to reduce the distances food is hauled around the country.

The environment secretary said the food industry could "significantly affect our fragile environment, but is also in the unique position of being able to make a major positive contribution to reducing our environmental footprint".

In related news, the National Consumer Council just released their report Greening supermarkets, which rates the top eight UK supermarkets on their environmental credentials. Have a look in our In Print Section on p.12 for more info.

(Source: Julia Finch in the Guardian, Wednesday 26 July, 2006)

## And finally....

Asda, part of the massive US Wal-Mart retail chain, was recently selling an interesting DVD from its online store. The DVD, entitled Wal-Mart: the high cost of low price, was described on Asda's site as "an attack on the unscrupulous business practices of the world's biggest retailer Wal-Mart".

Asda went on to explain that the film features "interviews with current and former employees as well as owners of small businesses deeply affected by the expansion of Wal-Mart, this expose of what can only be described as a corporate monster is fascinating and terrifying in equal measure."

Although it was nice to see Asda being so candid about being part and parcel of a 'corporate monster', it is perhaps not surprising that the supermarket has now quietly dropped the DVD from its online store.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE DVD SEE:  
[WWW.WALMARTMOVIE.COM](http://WWW.WALMARTMOVIE.COM)  
(FROM THE FOOD MAGAZINE, AUGUST 2006)



# everyone deserves a healthy start

According to the NHS, babies born into disadvantaged families are more likely to die or be born with low birth-weight than those born into families on higher incomes. A nutritious diet for pregnant mothers and their infants is the best way to combat these issues.

Starting on 27th November, expectant mothers below 18 years old and women on benefits who are pregnant or have young children will become eligible for free cows milk, infant formula, and fresh fruit and vegetables. The program is called Healthy Start and it is being expanded from initial trial schemes in Devon and Cornwall to cover all of Britain.

The programme issues vouchers worth £2.80 each. The number of vouchers women will receive will depend on whether they are pregnant, how many children they have and what ages the children are. The vouchers can be spent in any shop that is taking part in the scheme, including greengrocers, milkmen, market stalls, chemists, corner shops, food co-ops and supermarkets.

Healthy Start is a new version of the Welfare Food Scheme, which was reviewed several years ago. The new programme aims to make it easier for people to take part and to better meet the nutritional needs of pregnant women and children by offering fruit and vegetables as well as

milk and providing greater support for women who choose to breastfeed.

The scheme seems like a good way to tackle food poverty and the health problems that go along with it, but some food and health policy experts are sceptical. Martin Caraher of City University is concerned that the evaluation of the trial schemes has not been systematic enough to anticipate the practical difficulties health care providers will face when the scheme begins around the country.

For individuals taking part in the scheme, the vouchers might not be worth enough to make a real difference in their diet. Pregnant women will receive one voucher per week, which might buy the recommended five a day for one day, but what about the other six? In addition, it may prove difficult getting retailers to join the scheme. Small retailers, in particular, may have a problem trading stock for vouchers and then having to wait for the vouchers to be refunded.

According to the Department of Health (DoH) there are nearly 1,000 registered retailers in the Devon and Cornwall schemes, compared to the 500 who were registered for the old Welfare Food Scheme. The DoH expects a similar increase in the number of registered retailers in London. "Experience from Devon and Cornwall did not identify any

significant problems for people using their Healthy Start vouchers."

Reimbursement for retailers is expected to take about 14 days. Payments will be made through BACS, a more efficient payment scheme than the one used under the Welfare Food Scheme. In addition, vouchers will have a shorter validity period than they previously did, which means they will be claimed more quickly, tightening up the flow of benefits and reimbursements.

For the scheme to be a success, the DoH will need to get as many retailers as possible registered to offer the benefits. According to the Healthy Start website, registration is fairly simple. Retailers can print out an application form from the site or call to have one sent. Once they have been approved, retailers receive a supplier guide and a sticker to put in their window advertising that they are taking part in the scheme.

So, come November, check out the window of your local shop. If they don't have a Healthy Start sticker, why not suggest that they register? It might make it easier for someone to get the nourishment they need to start off on the right foot. ■

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[WWW.HEALTHYSTART.NHS.UK](http://WWW.HEALTHYSTART.NHS.UK)  
 .....



# Farm Gate

**Mat Castle**, Project Officer with Sustain, recently visited Tollesbury Wick - an Essex Wildlife Trust Reserve - to look at how the Trust is attempting to develop a market for the endangered heritage breeds currently used for conservation grazing.

**T**ollesbury Wick is a rare example of a freshwater grazing marsh, most of which has been worked for decades by traditional methods sympathetic to wildlife. The 600 acre reserve is an important home and feeding place for many species of birds, mammals and invertebrates which depend on the mix of grasses, rushes, sedges and flowers, as well as insects, especially butterflies and moths. The Trust's grazing animals consist of 480 Shetland sheep, 75 North Ronaldsay sheep, and 48 Shetland cows.

## **The 75 "Ronnies"**

The seaweed eating Ronaldsay, or Ronnies as they are affectionately known, originate from a semi-feral flock from the Orkneys. The original flock began to be dispersed away from North Ronaldsay in case some disaster like Foot and Mouth Disease or massive oil pollution should wipe out the breed and the unique gene bank. Due to its strange diet in its native Orkneys it is the winter when the North Ronaldsay sheep eat best, and the carcasses are at their prime in December. Their grazing habits also have had to change with the

diet. Instead of grazing during the day and ruminating at night as other sheep generally do, the North Ronaldsays graze with the tides (twice in 24 hours) and ruminate between low water periods. In Essex, however, they have quickly adjusted to a more normal regime. It is also one of the few breeds that will eat creeping thistle, therefore acting as a handy "biological thistle control" for the site. They are even smaller than the Shetlands and, being a primitive breed, are equally hardy.

## **Endangered Cows**

It is a sad fact that many people are not even aware that there is such an animal as the Shetland cow. This is because, like many traditional breeds, it has suffered greatly from the switch to intensive livestock farming - hence it's currently classified as endangered by the Rare Breeds Survival Trust. They have an ancient lineage, thought to date back to the cattle the Vikings brought to the Shetlands Islands in the period 700-1100 AD. By the 1950s there were fewer than 40 pure bred animals remaining. Their adaptation to

extensive systems of management, along with their hardiness and thrifty nature, makes them perfect for conservation grazing.

Although not certified organic, the animals are reared sustainably, with the highest considerations given to animal welfare. Meat from the stock, which has a distinct flavour noticeably stronger than its conventional counterpart, is currently distributed to Essex Wildlife Trust (EWT) members, staff and friends. However, Mike Sanderson, volunteer livestock manager and trustee of EWT has been investigating new routes to market it as a premium conservation grade meat with local identity. He has also been looking into the possibility of supplying mutton to public sector institutions such as hospitals, schools and care homes.

Essex Wildlife Trust must be applauded for cleverly combining the conservation of these charming breeds with the preservation of this rare and beautiful environment. ■

[WWW.ESSEXWT.ORG.UK](http://WWW.ESSEXWT.ORG.UK)





# RECIPE FOR A G

The last time you ate chicken curry did you wonder whether the chicken in it was organic? Or whether the spices were fairly traded? If you did, you are part of a growing group of consumers who want to eat food that is sustainable - no matter what type of cuisine it is. **Rachel Beebe** explains.

Consumer demand for organic, local, and fairly traded food has been on the rise for years as more people not only enjoy the benefits of fresh seasonal fare, but also realize how their decisions affect the world around them. In 2005 the overall organic market increased by thirty per cent; annual sales now exceed £1 billion.

It seems, however, that this growth has not been enjoyed by all sectors. In particular, London's black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) food business owners are lagging behind the trend. Despite massive growth - forty-four per cent between 1998 and 2002 alone - producers of traditional minority ethnic foods have neglected to reap the benefits

of sustainable food. A forthcoming report by London Food Link's Zeenat Anjari asks why.

After a year of research, *A Greener Curry* collates the experience and opinions of dozens of BAME owners of food businesses in the capital. It questions why ethnic food businesses may not be concerned about sustainability and suggests how this situation might be changed. Crucially, the report is part of a project to make suitability a priority for London's BAME food business owners.

#### **Is green good for business?**

Opportunity is ripe for this burgeoning sector to integrate sustainable practice from the start, but opinions were mixed

among the business owners surveyed for the report. Tanoj Shah at Gazebo Fine Foods, for instance, sees organic as a potential market opportunity, but remains skeptical that organic food will sell well enough to ensure a profit. "We have heavily invested in our new product design facility to provide service to existing and potential customers," said Shah, but sustainability is not something he believes his customers will pay for.

There is evidence to the contrary, however. Some BAME food business owners have already begun responding to the expanding market for sustainable food and they have found that it is paying off nicely. Sir Gulam Noon of Noon Products, Inc is one of these. His company makes every attempt to ensure that their environmental impact is kept to a "practicable minimum". The company's Environmental Policy - which is published on their website - emphasises efficient use of energy, fuel and water, as well as waste minimisation. Sir Gulam came to Britain in the 1960s and launched a ready-made curry company in 1989. Today, Noon Products is the biggest supplier of cooked and frozen Indian



# REENER CURRY

food to British supermarkets.

For Sir Gulam, sustainability is simply part of the innovation necessary for small and medium-sized enterprises to gain an edge on their big business competitors. Alan Johnson MP, then the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, agreed: "It is smaller companies, unconstrained by huge structures, who are nimbler; able to zip in and out of new markets, developing opportunities and ideas to outperform their rivals." To maintain growth in the market for ethnic food, entrepreneurs need to develop new products that meet the needs of ethical consumers.

## Good green government

And it is not just consumers who are interested in seeing more sustainable food on the shelves. The government is also putting pressure on food businesses to become greener. The most recent initiative is the Food Industry Sustainability Strategy, which challenges the food and drink industry to meet a wide range of sustainability indicators, including significant reductions in carbon emissions and waste, and the promotion of ethical trading. More locally, the Mayor's London

Food Strategy calls on the public, voluntary and private sectors to work together to improve the sustainability of London's food and farming system.

With all this government attention on London's sustainability, it may not be unrealistic to expect that soon, sustainable practice may become the key to winning public sector catering contracts in the capital. Opportunity for BAME food business owners in the public sector is already growing. Take for instance, Johnson Samuels at Caterers International, which produces a range of south Indian ready meals for sale to offices and special events. He is interested to supplying culturally appropriate meals to elderly people in care homes or through the local meals-on-wheels service as a second tier supplier to a public sector contractor. For the public sector, a contract with a local supplier has the added benefit of reinvesting money back into the local economy.

## Next steps

As demand for sustainability grows, environmental policies and ethical supply chains will become expected practice. Like

preventative measures to ensure compliance with health and safety codes, sustainable practice will have to be written in to business plans and sooner or later it will have a domino effect, filtering back through the supply chain. For now, LFL is focusing in on those businesses identified by the project who want to learn how to become greener. These include By Chaat House, who are looking into the organic market, and Oasis Catering, who are interested in local produce.

But this is just the beginning. As consumers become more aware of the importance of sustainability and business owners become more informed about it, the standards for food in London will be raised and everyone will benefit from the investment. ■

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TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE REPORT OR LONDON FOOD LINK'S WORK WITH MULTICULTURAL FOOD BUSINESSES CONTACT ZEENAT ANJARI AT [ZEENAT@SUSTAINWEB.ORG](mailto:ZEENAT@SUSTAINWEB.ORG)

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# INPRINT

## Shopping for Food

A study published recently by City University's Centre for Food Policy, considers healthy food shopping experiences in Hackney. The study focused on shopping patterns in areas where there were clusters of food shops. Researchers interviewed Hackney residents while community volunteers collected data on availability and price and mapped local food shops.

Food shops within the surveyed areas were mainly run by small independent retailers rather than major supermarket chains. These small retailers represented an important part of the local community, not only in terms of economy and regeneration - contributing to local money flows and employment - but also in adding value in terms of cultural foods and friendly and accommodating service, such as home deliveries.

With a variety of healthy and ethnically diverse food on offer, the survey revealed food access to not generally be a problem. But, the survey warned, the closure of one or two shops would be seriously detrimental to the current, healthy situation.



Credit: Sarah Bowyer

This report is the first step toward developing a food policy for Hackney that tackles the barriers to healthy and culturally diverse food. Research for the report was done in partnership with Hackney Primary Care Trust, Hackney Council and East London Food Access. The partnership plans to work with local shops to promote their value and with community food projects to consult on health education and advice.

A FULL COPY OF SHOPPING FOR FOOD: ACCESSING HEALTHY AND AFFORDABLE FOOD IN THREE AREAS OF HACKNEY, IS AVAILABLE FROM M.SAME-ESSAKA@CITY.AC.UK OR SARAH.BOWYER.1@CITY.AC.UK

## Greening Supermarkets

Leading supermarkets need to green up their act and do more to help shoppers make greener choices. This is the finding of the first consumer-focused environmental rating, Greening supermarkets, from the National Consumer Council (NCC).

The NCC put the top eight supermar-

kets to the test on four key green indicators - from seasonal food and organics to sustainable sourcing and cutting waste. It found that, while there are real improvements in some areas, not one of the supermarkets is doing well on all fronts.



kets to the test on four key green indicators - from seasonal food and organics to sustainable sourcing and cutting waste. It found that, while there are real improvements in some areas, not one of the supermarkets is doing well on all fronts.

Waitrose came top overall and, of the four largest retailers - Tesco, Asda, Sainsbury's and Morrisons - Sainsbury's achieved the best rating. Tesco and Asda,

the two biggest, were disappointing performers, while Morrisons was last of the four.

NCC Chairman, Lord Whitty, said, 'We all need to understand that food is the typical household's number one contributor to climate change. By throwing away ten billion carrier bags each year and transporting carrots from Egypt and strawberries from New Zealand, we hit the environment hard. But shoppers are increasingly keen to do their bit. Now, we make it clear how supermarkets could make greener choices easier for everybody.'

Greening supermarkets shows that where we shop for our food has a major effect on the environment - how food is produced, processed, packaged and transported - accounts for nearly a third of our climate impact. NCC calls on the worst supermarket performers to catch up with the best, and the best to do better.

The NCC is calling for simple changes by the big four supermarkets which would bring significant benefits. We want to see more recycled materials used in packaging and paper products like kitchen towels and toilet rolls. Sourcing and promoting more UK seasonal fruit and vegetables to cut carbon emission from lorries and airfreight, encouraging shoppers to cut their use of plastic carrier bags and making sure people can buy fish from sustainable sources, would all make a difference.

The NCC Greening supermarkets indicators spot checked practices that can help supermarket customers become greener shoppers. Ratings from A (excellent) to E (poor) were given, with the system inspired by energy efficiency ratings used for fridges and washing machines.

GREENING SUPERMARKETS BY SUE DIBB, CAN BE FOUND AT: [WWW.NCC.ORG.UK/RESPONSIBLECONSUMPTION/GREENING-SUPERMARKETS.PDF](http://WWW.NCC.ORG.UK/RESPONSIBLECONSUMPTION/GREENING-SUPERMARKETS.PDF)

# Mayoral rumblings

## Down the market

Markets have been a part of English culture for hundreds of years, but are they still a significant part of our social landscape? Two reports published in September by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation explore this question.

**Markets as sites for social interaction: Spaces of diversity** by Sophie Watson and David Studdert is the first comprehensive account of English markets as social spaces. It investigates markets around the country, sets out what practices sustain markets as a part of our social fabric and recommends action for rejuvenation. The report concludes that, "all markets operate as social spaces, even if simply as a public space for marginalised members of the community to shop or pass the time of day. As such, they play a crucial, and mostly neglected, role in local communities."

PUBLISHED BY THE POLICY PRESS AT £12.95

**Public spaces, social relations and well-being in East London** by Nicholas Dines and Vicky Cattell with Wil Gesler and Sarah Curtis is a general report on public spaces in East London, but has a section focusing on the value of Queen's Market in Upton Park. According to the report the market is a vibrant social arena and a source of many patrons' attachment to the area. People's sense of comfort and wellbeing in the market is tied to their appreciation of it as an unstructured multi-ethnic and multilingual social space. The report also focuses on the proposed redevelopment of Queens Market (See JE 14) and how it has raised people's public space consciousness in Newham as the site has become a major focus of public debate.

PUBLISHED BY THE POLICY PRESS AT £12.95

It has been almost five months since the Mayor's food strategy Healthy and Sustainable Food for London, was launched. After all the fanfare, you may have wondered what has happened since then. A couple of internal reshuffles later, London Food are planning to release an implementation plan at the end of October. Is this just more talk rather than real action? It would be tempting to say so, but in reality this is a logical next step, as there was a clear call from those who took part in the consultation to reinforce the broad policies listed in the strategy with specific projects, with timescales and targets. So London Food is set to announce new projects that will:

- increase public sector procurement of sustainable food
- create a business plan for a sustainable food 'hub'
- provide training for caterers, particularly school dinner staff
- promote London's food culture through tourism.

It is unclear exactly who will be able to tender for this first wave of projects, but their launch will be phased in after the implementation plan has been released in October. As well as commissioning their own projects London Food is keen to collect data on major projects being run by other people which help to implement the strategy. No doubt you will be hearing from them soon.

[WWW.LONDON.GOV.UK/MAYOR/HEALTH/FOOD](http://WWW.LONDON.GOV.UK/MAYOR/HEALTH/FOOD)

## Greenwich

London Food Link has taken the initiative and 'translated' the London food strategy for use at a borough level. To help realise this, LFL has been running a pilot with Greenwich borough to see how they are meeting the Mayor's food strategy. This has meant pulling out the actions from the Mayor's strategy which are applicable at a borough level. This is a fairly large chunk of what the strategy is proposing, which makes it all the more important that it's made relevant to the likes of PCT staff and environmental health officers. Commenting on this Ben Reynolds said, 'It's vital that this strategy doesn't just gather dust on a shelf. This document should provide a really user-friendly way for a borough to assess how they are doing on all issues to do with food and where their priorities for action are.' When this pilot 'health check' is done, LFL will be looking for other boroughs who are interested in this assessment. Watch this space.

[BEN@SUSTAINWEB.ORG](mailto:BEN@SUSTAINWEB.ORG)

## Lewisham

In July of this year, Lewisham launched their first food strategy. This is the result of a partnership between the Council, the Primary Care Trust (PCT), University Hospital Lewisham and a wide range of businesses and community organisations. The document, which refers to the Mayoral London food strategy, aims to 'provide direction and guidance in order that Lewisham can increase the health and welfare of its people through improved access to nutritious and safe food from a more sustainable food chain.' The strategy has five main themes: food access, food in schools, food, nutrition and health, food sustainability and food safety. Each of these key themes includes a number of specific aims which are detailed in the document available at <http://www.healthfirst.org.uk/documents/foodstatsum.pdf>.

[CHRISTINE.NOLAN@LEWISHAMPCT.NHS.UK](mailto:CHRISTINE.NOLAN@LEWISHAMPCT.NHS.UK)

# Funding round up

## Due South money heads north

Due South is a Brighton restaurant committed to supporting local producers and suppliers. And so are their customers. As Helen Smith from Due South points out, "People come here for our values."

For the last year Due South has been inviting everyone who eats at the restaurant to add an extra pound per head to their bill to support charities that are involved with sustainable food production and distribution. So far, Due South's customers have donated £20,000 to a variety of causes, including Fareshare and Compassion in World Farming.

Sustain's practical and successful work towards a sustainable food system caught also Helen's attention. For two months beginning early July, Due South invited customers to donate £1 to Sustain, raising just over £6,000. Helen wants to spread the word, "We'd like others to know what we did and how easy it is for other restaurants to do this."

So it may well be worth you taking that working lunch today at your local restaurant and asking them if they'd be interested in doing something similar for you.

[WWW.DUESOUTH.CO.UK](http://WWW.DUESOUTH.CO.UK)

## London Catalyst grants programme

Organisations that work to improve the lives of people limited by ill health, poverty and disability may be eligible to apply for funding through the London Catalyst grants programme. London Catalyst is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee that makes grants in excess of £300,000 per year through three funding programmes. Special Interest Grants support innovative projects that tackle health inequalities and the limiting effects of ill health, disability and poverty. Samaritan Grants are available to social work teams, hospital teams, voluntary and community organisations, church and diocesan agencies working directly with and able to distribute one-off grants to people in need. Catalytic Grants help set up or develop health and social welfare projects in areas of high need and encourage greater co-operation between GP/community health centres, churches and voluntary and community organisations. Trustees meet every three months to review grant applications.

[WWW.LONDONCATALYST.ORG.UK/GRANTS.HTM](http://WWW.LONDONCATALYST.ORG.UK/GRANTS.HTM)

## Groundswell re-launches grant award scheme

Groundswell's grant award scheme, which gives money to homeless people engaged in self-help solutions, has just re-launched. Applications are welcomed from anyone with experience of homelessness, i.e. rough sleepers, Travellers, squatters, refugees, asylum seekers and residents of hostels and B&Bs. Applications can be made at any time and grants of up to £700 are available for any kind of self help project, including setting up a service user group, an arts group, a business or a charity. Previous grant recipients have included a group of hostel residents in London with a range of language skills who have joined together to form Multilingual Interpreters UK. They are offering translation and interpretation services in a wide range of languages. Their £500 was used to pay for a website and a phone line to work on marketing their services.

[WWW.GROUNDSWELL.ORG.UK](http://WWW.GROUNDSWELL.ORG.UK)

## New community fund

Telephone company O2 has launched a new community fund to enable people to make improvements to their neighbourhood. Awards of up to £1,000 will be available to support local environmental, urban renewal and conservation projects. The funding is available for both community groups and individuals who can show that their project will benefit the local environment. Examples of projects that could receive funding include turning derelict land into a wildlife area, planting flowers in the High Street, or renovating neglected river and canal footpaths. The funding could be used to hire tools and equipment, or to purchase plants, paint, signs and materials. Projects will be judged on their potential impact, practicality, sustainability, and originality.

APPLICATION FORMS CAN BE FOUND AT  
[WWW.O2.COM/CR/COMMUNITY\\_FUND.ASP](http://WWW.O2.COM/CR/COMMUNITY_FUND.ASP)

to



# Local London

## SPOTLIGHT ON THE CAPITAL'S FARE

### England Preserves



**Who:** Owners Sky Cracknell and Kai Knutsen started the company in 2001, after growing tired of their previous jobs. Originally based in a kitchen in Wood Green, they have now moved to New Cross Gate via Hackney. They wanted to do something that was British based and reclaim the brand of England, which has been synonymous with bad food. After dismissing going into catering as being too expensive, they arrived at the idea of making jam. Their first pitch was at Islington farmers market in Christmas 2001 and the business grew from there.

**What:** The company sells a range of locally produced preserves with 60% fruit content (so they're very low sugar). This includes Gooseberry & Elderflower Jam, Darling Damson with stones, Kentish Bramble, Raspberry Deluxe and London Marmalade.

**Where:** You can buy this direct from them (see below for contact details), or from the following places:

Markets: Borough Market and London farmers markets [www.lfm.org.uk](http://www.lfm.org.uk)

Shops: All branches of Konditor and Cook - Waterloo, Borough Market, Grays Inn Rd, Neal's Yard Dairy, La Fromagerie, Clerks in Kensington Church St., Hand Made Food and other neighbourhood delis

Online: [www.merchant-gourmet.com](http://www.merchant-gourmet.com)

**Sustainability:** The fruit is grown in Essex and Kent (apart from oranges from Spain). They also grow some of their own fruit, including quinces and damsons.

**Future:** They don't want to go near supplying the supermarkets, so they're looking for growth elsewhere. They're also thinking about buying more land to grow more of their own fruit.

CONTACT: [kai@englandpreserves.co.uk](mailto:kai@englandpreserves.co.uk)  
020 8692 0806  
[www.EnglandPreserves.co.uk](http://www.EnglandPreserves.co.uk)

# Diary

## October

- Look out for two new food markets in London:  
Spitalfield's Fine Food Market every Thursday, Friday and Sunday from 10am - 5pm  
The expanded food market at Exmouth Market Fridays 11am - 6pm and Saturdays 9am-4pm
- October 14, 11am-4pm Apple Day at Vestry House Museum, Vestry Road, Walthamstow.  
Tel: 020 8509 1917 or e-mail: vestry.house@walthamforest.gov.uk www.lbwf.gov.uk
- October 16 World Food Day www.fao.org/wfd
- October 19 GM Freeze action event in central London www.stopgmcontamination.org (see Bulletin on page 7)
- October 21 Apple Day! See www.commonground.org.uk for nationwide events
- October 21 Apple Day at Stoke Newington Farmers Market
- October 21 Apple Day at Spitalfields City Farm, 11am-4pm. Contact: 0207 375 0441
- October 21, 9am-4pm Join the 250th Birthday Celebrations at Borough Market, Southwark. The days events will be many and various. www.boroughmarket.org.uk
- October 26-29 London Wine Show Business Design Centre, Islington Tel: 020 8948 1666 www.wineshow.co.uk
- October 30 - November 5 British Sausage Week www.meatmatters.com

## November

- November 5, 1-4pm Chiswick House Kitchen Garden open day  
www.kitchengarden.org.uk/visiting
- November 7, 7.45pm. East London Organic Gardeners Pumpkin Evening Welcome Centre, Church End, Walthamstow Village, E17 (beside St. Mary's Church).  
http://elog.org.uk/events.htm
- November 10-12 BBC London Good Food Show, Olympia www.londonbbcgoodfood-show.com
- November 29 National Food Links UK Conference, Peterborough http://www.foodlinks-uk.org/ (See Bulletin on page 6)
- November 29-30 World Food Market, Excel www.worldfoodmarket.co.uk

## December

- December 20-31 Watch out for extended trading times at Borough Market for Christmas  
www.boroughmarket.org.uk

# Join London Food Link Now!

## The benefits of membership of London Food Link include:

- The Jellied Eel, our quarterly members' magazine.
- A chance to influence policy-making on food issues including contributing to food and nutrition strategies, government and GLA consultations on food, farming, planning and the economy.
- Membership of an interactive e-mail group with news, events, jobs and developments around food issues in London.
- Discounts off London Food Link events, conferences, seminars and publications.
- Access to an online members' area with membership directory.
- A free copy of Growing Food in Cities to new members and 50% off all London Food Link publications.

## To join London Food Link or for further details contact:

### Ben Reynolds, LFL Co-ordinator

c/o Sustain, 94 White Lion Street, London N1 9PF.  
Tel: 020 7837 1228. Fax: 020 7837 1141.  
ben@sustainweb.org www.londonfoodlink.org

## London Food Link members and supporters include:

Primary Care Trusts, London boroughs, business associations, retailers, farmers, environment and community groups, food access partnerships, allotment groups and food writers. Our work is guided by a working party of key London-wide agencies and groups representing food issues from farm to fork.



### OUR WORK

To represent over 100 national public interest organisations working at international, national, regional and local level.

### OUR AIM

To advocate food and agriculture policies and practices that enhance the health and welfare of people and animals, improve the working and living environment, promote equity and enrich society and culture.

*The Jellied Eel* is the magazine of London Food Link coordinated by Sustain: The alliance for better food and farming. It aims to keep readers abreast of developments in the food and agriculture policy arena that have an impact on London. Sustain takes every effort to summarise and reproduce accurately the information in *The Jellied Eel*. Inclusion of any material does not imply that it forms part of the policy of Sustain.

### Zeenat Anjari

Multicultural businesses and communities  
zeenat@sustainweb.org

### Mathew Castle

Good Food on the Public Plate  
mathew@sustainweb.org

### Emma Hockridge

Good Food on the Public Plate  
emma@sustainweb.org

### Ben Reynolds

London Food Link Network, Policy and Restaurants  
ben@sustainweb.org

### SUSTAIN: The alliance for better food and farming

94 White Lion Street, London N1 9PF  
Telephone (+44) 020 7837 1228  
Fax (+44) 020 7837 1141  
Web: www.sustainweb.org  
Email: sustain@sustainweb.org

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