

Welcome to the latest issue of the Making Local Food Work newsletter

Community Facilitator sought for Local Food Systems project!

Since January 2011, Making Local Food Work has worked with a range of groups who are interested in clustering together to share their strengths and solve common problems. We've been excited with how well this work has progressed, and we are interested in this collaboration as a possible avenue to strengthening local food systems in communities across the country.



We are now at the second stage of this work, which will see us actively working with more groups. We want to share our learning so far, using this as a platform to build a stronger approach to encouraging collaboration across enterprises and groups in specific geographic areas across England.

As part of this second stage we are looking to appoint a Community Facilitator. We are seeking a highly motivated individual to act as an adviser/ facilitator to a range of communities in the Midlands areas. You will be working with groups who are interested in clustering together to share their strengths and solve common problems. This

role will be part of a team reviewing how collaboration can strengthen local food systems in communities across the country.

The post holder will be responsible for directly supporting a number of communities in the Midlands area, building a strong knowledge base, and working within a project team, including two other regionally based community facilitators. The ideal post holder will have excellent communication skills, be a self-starter, and have the ability to liaise effectively with a diverse group of stakeholders. You should also have a passion for local food and a belief in the value of community-based solutions.

Community Facilitator: Local Food Systems

Fixed term Contract: 1 Sept 2012 to 31 Aug 2013, 0.6 FTE post

Location: Home-Based, role to cover the Midlands area

If you are interested in applying, please submit a covering letter, explaining why you are interested in the role, and a CV to Kathryn Morrison no later than Friday, 20th July 2012. Interviews will be held at the end of July. For more information on this exciting role, please visit <http://www.plunkett.co.uk/aboutus/opportunities.cfm>. Any queries, please contact Kathryn Morrison on kathryn.morrison@plunkett.co.uk or 01993 810 730.



From field to fork: The value of local food webs Major new research from CPRE

Making Local Food Work partner CPRE has launched its major new research, the From Field to Fork reports, which explore the local food webs of locations across England. The research finds that despite being critical to the health of our high streets, local economies and much loved landscapes, local food networks are under-recognised and poorly supported.



Local food offers a great opportunity to support vibrant town centres and countryside, but is challenged by the growth of superstores dominating our food shopping and undermining and damaging our local food networks into the future.

In mapping local food webs, CPRE hoped to measure the fantastic contributions these networks make. And they achieved just that, finding great examples of local food webs helping to buck national trends of high street decline. Read more about the inspirational examples further down the newsletter, and download the reports from <http://www.cpre.org.uk/what-we-do/farming-and-food/local-foods/update/item/2896-local-food-is-recipe-for-economic-success>.

New guide to help community food enterprises trade for success

A new guide to help community enterprises make the most of trading opportunities has been published by Making Local Food Work. **Trading for Success**, produced by a team of financial and marketing experts and commissioned by Plunkett Foundation, has been designed specifically for community enterprises help them succeed in an increasingly tough market.

Trading for Success helps community enterprises identify:

- What is distinctive about the product or service they offer;
- How their product or service matches the customer's needs;
- Whether the enterprise can be financially viable;
- How to find and keep customers, and deliver products or services efficiently;
- How to keep adapting and innovating to meet new challenges.

Plunkett Foundation's Richard Snow, who commissioned the report, says: "Where a business is intimately connected with its local community and grows in response to their real interests and needs, its chances of success are much higher. A new spirit of collaboration between producers, enterprises and their customers is opening up fertile ground for those who can cultivate it. Trading for Success has been created as a direct response to the needs of the community enterprises we've worked with over the past five years to help them be as successful as they possibly can be."

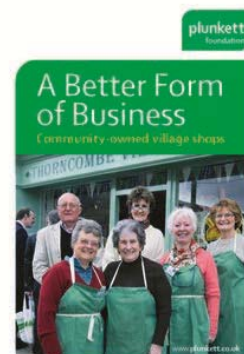
Read Trading for Success at <https://www.makinglocalfoodwork.co.uk/news/news.cfm/newsid/219>.



Community shops thriving while large retailers' growth stalls

Plunkett Foundation has launched Better Business, an in-depth analysis of the performance of community shops in 2011. The report clearly shows that community-owned shops are going from strength to strength. Average gross sales are up by 18.4% and like for like sales from 2011 show an increase of 9.4%, in an environment that has seen the stalling of growth for large retailers in the UK.

Peter Couchman, Chief Executive of Plunkett Foundation, said: "In a climate that has seen commercial village shops close at a rate of around 400 per year, and the stalling growth for the major retailers, community-owned shops are reporting not only an increase in sales, but are continuing to open in a challenging climate; 23 opened in 2011 and we predict a further 20 to open by the end of 2012. At the current count, there are 280 community-owned shops in existence, the majority of which have been supported by Plunkett, and we're helping a further 184 communities to explore community ownership as a way of saving their village shop.



"Community-owned shops succeed where commercial ventures have failed because they engage with the whole community. When the owners are the customers, the business can directly respond to consumers' needs in a way that larger retailers just aren't able to; for example, they can stock food produced by local farmers or offer other services, like cafés, meeting places or delivery services. And the important thing about community ownership is once a community has saved one service or asset, they realise they can use it to solve a whole range of issues, from broadband provision and transport services to saving the local pub."

Download the report and read coverage of it in the Sunday Telegraph at <http://www.plunkett.co.uk/newsandmedia/news-item.cfm/newsid/622>.



Making Local Food Work **Newsletter**

Helping people to take ownership of their food and where it comes from



Events

CSA UK – growing and developing the Community Supported Agriculture movement

Friday 14th September 2012, 10:30 – 16:30

The Community Farm, Chew Magna, Bristol, BS40 8SZ

This event will be an opportunity to network and exchange ideas for developing a useful CSA network. It will include CSA Beacons – a chance to hear from those already doing a great job, and understand how they can be further supported and developed; a tour of The Community Farm, enabling you to hear first-hand about their inspirational model and there will be plenty of Soil Association and Making Local Food Work resources and case studies for you to take away.

Who it's aimed at

- For CSA farmers and growers, CSA members and other practitioners;
- Individuals and organisations interested in helping to develop CSAs, a CSA network and grow the movement.

£15 booking fee includes a guided farm tour and local organic lunch. For all bookings and enquiries contact Traci Lewis, tlewis@soilassociation.org 07870 268 654.

This is the final Soil Association CSA event as part of Making Local Food Work programme so we really do hope you can join us.

Inspirational stories

Local food: A celebration

The Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) has just published its major research which presents findings and recommendations from the Mapping Local Food Webs project of Making Local Food Work, which aimed to engage local volunteers across England to research their local food 'webs': the network of links between people who buy, sell, produce and supply food sourced locally. As part of the research, CPRE has also published its 'From Field to Fork' reports which map specific local food webs in the geographical areas they studied. They have featured some of the great examples on their website (<http://www.cpre.org.uk/magazine/features/item/2893-local-food-success-stories>) and in celebration of this, we have featured some of the examples here. Do visit their site and find out about the local food webs in your area!



Otley Farmers' Market

Otley Farmers' Market sells fresh and organic produce, direct from the producer and sourced as locally as possible. From just 12 stalls when it opened in 2002, the market now has nearly 50 during peak times – many more than at other markets in the area. Its reputation attracts visitors in droves – footfall is double the national average, according to a 2011 market health check supported by the Farmers' Retail and Markets Association (FARMA).



Canalside CSA, Leasow Farm, Warwickshire

The farm's aim is to provide local organic, seasonal vegetables and fruit to local people and reconnect them with their farm land, by getting them as involved in production as possible. Professional growers manage the site but the CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) project runs volunteer open mornings so people can muck in. Members can also sit on the steering committee or subgroups that run alongside.



Heeley City Farm, Sheffield

The farm and its café, set in a deprived area, reach out to the community in numerous ways: 'We work with Sure Start to help children learn about eating well...we also work with children with learning difficulties. They particularly like to work with animals. We provide a community atmosphere and meeting place which includes schools and health services,' says Jill Brooks, Heeley City Farm. The farm has three growing sites including Wortley Hall Walled Garden just outside Sheffield.

Set up as a social enterprise in 2004, the garden supplies organic food to local shops, restaurants and farmers' markets. The garden also provides learning opportunities through local food courses, workshops and volunteering, educational visits for schools and public events.



Wider news

Co-operate: The new app from Co-operatives UK

Co-operatives UK has launched the UK co-operative sector's first mobile app as part of Co-operatives Fortnight 2012, which is currently taking place.

Co-operate, the new app, makes it easy for people to find co-operatives and mutuals across the UK. Whether they need food or phones, electricity or banking, Co-operate allows customers to download a better world on to their mobile phone. And there are plenty of community food enterprises listed, from community shops to food co-ops and farmers' markets. Find out more at <http://www.uk.coop/pressrelease/thumbs-ready-co-operate>.

New website launched to support communities' Right to Build

A new website (<http://mycommunityrights.org.uk/>) has been launched to give communities help and support in understanding the new Community Right to Build, part of the Government's new Community Rights powers.

The Community Right to Build is a new way for communities to choose for themselves where and when to build homes, shops, facilities and businesses. As an alternative to the traditional application for planning permission, it gives communities the power to decide for themselves what happens in their neighbourhood.

The Community Right to Build came into force on 6th April and forms part of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations made following the Localism Act 2011. The new website providing information about all the Community Rights is being provided by Locality, the Social Investment Business and its partners and the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

National Countryside Week 2012 Announced

This year's National Countryside Week, supported by The Prince's Countryside Fund, will run from 9th – 16th July to raise awareness of the importance of the countryside to the UK and the serious issues facing its rural communities and farmers.

The rural economy employs 5.5 million people, with domestic food and drink production contributing a massive £22 billion to the UK economy. Yet the countryside is under greater threat than we realise.

To find out more visit <http://www.princescountrysidefund.org.uk> to join the Countryside Club and receive our free newsletter or join our online community on Facebook or Twitter. Further details of events and activities during National Countryside Week will be announced over the coming weeks.

Farmers Apprentice launched

Take on farming's toughest challenge to win £10k

If your dream job involves wearing wellies to work every day, Farmers Weekly's Farmers Apprentice <http://www.fwi.co.uk/farmersapprentice/>, sponsored by McDonald's, could be your lucky break. There is £10k up for grabs for one lucky young farming wannabe to help kick-start a career in agriculture.

With 60,000 jobs to fill in the agriculture industry over the next 10 years, Farmers Weekly's Farmers Apprentice is scouring towns and villages, cities and suburbs throughout the country to find young, talented, would-be farmers, high on passion, with or without experience. So whether you're a full time student, unemployed, slogging it in a beauty salon, feeling uninspired in an office, or just longing to live off the land, this nationwide competition could be the break you've been waiting for. All you need is to be aged 18-25 and come up with a 60-second video showing what makes you stand out from the herd.

Go to [facebook.com/farmersapprentice](https://www.facebook.com/farmersapprentice) and click on 'Like' to get all the latest info as Farmers Apprentice progresses throughout the year or follow on @farmapprentice on Twitter to get updates before, during and after bootcamp. You can also tweet with the hashtag #farmersapprentice.

Community woodland consultation

Are you or a group you know actively interested in creating a new community woodland, where the group will either own the land, or take the leasehold or a management agreement? If so the Woodland Trust would love to hear from you as they are spending some time trying to understand what support groups require and how they might be able to help. Contact philippaborrill@woodlandtrust.org.uk or 01476 581111.

Community Shops Fortnight in full swing

Plunkett Foundation's Community Shops Fortnight is now well underway, with an overwhelming response from community shops across the UK. The Plunkett team sent promotional packs out to over 100 communities to help them celebrate, and they are receiving new photos and updates every day from people telling them how they've been using them and the feedback they've been having from their community. To share these updates, the team has created a mini blog which currently features the launch of the Fortnight by the Plunkett team, who are undertaking a cycle ride that will visit every community shop in Oxfordshire, as well as photos and features from the shops themselves. The whole team will be updating this over the next couple of weeks, and they are calling for examples from community-owned shops! The blog can be viewed at <http://communityshopsfortnight.wordpress.com/>.

