



## Local produce shop and new producers

The Local Produce Shop in Keighley opened in December. Currently the shop is open on Fridays from 10.30am to 2.30pm. It is run on the same principles as Bingley Local Produce Market, although producers do not sell directly to the customer, the produce is not sold for profit. The Local Produce Shop is supported by Action for Health, which is part of Keighley Healthy Living Network.

The vegetables are particularly popular so far, and there are also preserves, honey and fresh home baked goods. There are monthly cooking demonstrations and tasting sessions, and the first one with mushroom soup went well. We hope to raise the funds for chilling equipment so we can include meat and dairy products.

The shop is run by volunteers, and with just two more we can extend the opening hours to include Saturdays, so do get in touch if you'd like to be involved.

We are pleased to welcome four new producers to Bingley Local Produce Market. Diane and Tim Persson from Smearber Farm near Skipton bring mushrooms, mushroom compost and delicious home baking. There is Calder Valley Trout from Martin Gibbons, lamb and pork from Soylands Farm Shop in Sowerby Bridge and honey from Honey Piglet in Huddersfield.

DEFRA funding totalling £3,500 has been secured to deliver training, and we have applied to the Craven Trust for match funding. The training will be specially tailored to producers' needs, and will be delivered in partnership with other organisations, including Target Training.

Looking ahead to the future development of B-FIT, we are undertaking a programme from First Steps, a London based charity Community Links, to help us clarify and achieve our objectives. This incorporates our values, aims, plans and policies, budgets, project management, resources and marketing.

We are working to develop other outlets

for local produce. Bradford markets have asked us to consider holding a midweek market in Shipley, which we hope to do with a rent-free period and help with publicity.



Fresh veg at the new Local Produce Shop

We are building up awareness of local food, with lots of coverage in local media, and the Keighley News has been particularly supportive in the last couple of months.

So, there are lots of promising developments to report, but all the work is being done by over-stretched volunteers. You can help by becoming a member of B-FIT or maybe by becoming a volunteer.

*Carolyn Lowing, Chair of B-FIT*

### Bingley Local Produce Market

is usually held on the 4th Saturday of every month 9am - 1pm at Chapel Lane Market

Sat 23rd Feb

Sat 27th April

Sat 23rd March

Sat 25th May

For more information contact Carolyn Lowing, B-FIT Chair tel: 01535 670950

### Local Produce Shop

43 - 49 Lawkholme Lane, Keighley

Opening hours: Friday 10.30am - 2.30pm

- Delicious local produce including: vegetables, mushrooms, home baked goods, preserves and honey
- Cooking demonstrations and

## Mushrooms and home-baking

Tim and Diane Persson produce many delicious fresh foods at Smearber Farm in Elslack near Skipton, including mushrooms and a range of home baking, which will be available at Bingley Local Produce Market this January.

Mushroom growing is a tricky business, and Tim researched it for 3 years before 'getting the bottle' to embark on the venture 6 months ago. As befits their delicate flavour and texture, mushrooms have very precise temperature, humidity and hygiene requirements. The mushrooms grow in a mix of straw, horse manure and gypsum, usually from a mushroom farm in Ripon.

After fourteen days at 22° C the mushrooms appear as tiny white pinpricks. The temperature must then be reduced to 18° C, which shocks the mushrooms into growth. This explains why wild mushroom enthusiasts know to go looking for mushrooms on a dewy morning.

There has been a crop of mushrooms every day so far, even though recent temperatures as low as minus ten degrees have made keeping the

required constant temperatures difficult. Tim already supplies his mushrooms to local pubs, hotels and restaurants.

No machine is gentle and nimble enough not to damage the delicate mushrooms, so they are always picked by hand. The mushrooms are very fresh, strikingly different from mushrooms which have had several days of storage and transportation. Frozen mushrooms, including mushrooms coated in Diane's own eggs and breadcrumbs, are also available. Tim also supplies mushrooms to local pubs, hotels, restaurants.

Mushrooms are vulnerable to pests, and hygiene is very strict. No-one is allowed into the three mushroom sheds as they could bring in pests or diseases from the surrounding moorland.

Tim also sells mushroom compost, which is wonderfully nutritious for all kinds of plants. A good response to advertising for the first batch of compost indicates that high demand can be generated. Tim is currently looking for a polythene bag supplier

for packaging the compost, and wants to print his and the farm's name on the bags, noting that major food businesses print their logo on every bit of packaging for a good reason.

Diane's home-made produce is very fresh, with no artificial additives. Customers can taste the difference and are very loyal. The range includes quiches, pies, pates, soups and quiches. The quiches are particularly popular, and fillings include salmon and dill. Ingredients include very fresh free-range eggs from the farm's four hens, and from neighbouring farms.

The farmhouse is just off the Pennine Way footpath, and the dining room is a popular café area, with tables outside in summer. She has run a successful sandwich and soup run, but would rather focus on cooking the produce and catering from home, rather than selling, so outlets like Bingley Local Produce Market are crucial.

**Smearber Farm, Elslack, Nr. Skipton**  
**tel: 01282 842369**

## Local branding initiative from Yorkshire Dales

Liz Hird has been involved with Hawes Auction Mart for many years, and took on the job of developing marketing for Yorkshire Dales produce. She is working with local farmers on a feasibility study into developing branding for local produce, with funding from the Single Regeneration Budget.

'We need a distinctive trade mark that people can relate to, reflecting the many benefits of local produce, including traceability, animal welfare, reduced food miles, non-intensive farming and the countryside it comes from.' says Liz. As well as supporting Dales lamb, beef and pork, the project will encourage diversification into a wider range of produce and value-added goods.

Liz adds 'It is crucial that new markets are developed for local produce. We need to work together,

not compete with each other. Otherwise we risk displacing producers who have worked hard to build up a customer base. Joint marketing gives more power to our elbow. We can increase the return to the producer through combining our buying power for production costs such as feed, equipment and haulage.'

'Closer co-operation will also help local producers, such as lamb producers with different lambing seasons, provide the continuity of supply demanded by many retailers. Co-operation beyond the Dales area is also important, as there may also be potential for supplying the major urban population centres south of the Dales.'

Liz and her husband Stuart run Yockenthwaite Farm in Langstrothdale, Upper Wharfedale.

The farm is part of a National Trust estate and has been farmed by Stuart's family for six generations. Lamb reared on the farm's rich herb pastures proved popular with guests at the farm's Bed and Breakfast, and a next day delivery fresh lamb mail order business has been built up over the last three years.

**Elizabeth Hird**  
**tel: 01756 760835**  
**email: liz@yockenthwaitefarm.co.uk**



# Calder Valley Trout

Martin Gibbons sells Calder Valley Trout at many farmers' markets throughout the region, as well as local pubs and restaurants. The range of produce includes smoked fillets and pates. Martin combines traditional methods with ongoing experiment and improvement.

The young trout, 2 inches long, and known as 'fingerlings', come from Brassington. At 6 – 8 months the fish are transferred to tanks. There are no chemical inputs, and Martin would like to use a renewable energy source for the electricity needed to pump water round the tanks.

At Staups Farm, water is continually filtered and re-circulated, and 250 gallons per day, with the correct bacteria for the fish, are used. The fish are not stressed by being over-fed. The small amount of waste water is discharged through a settling tank, then bacteria in the ground deal with toxins and plants are provided with oxygen.

The wool from half a dozen angora goats is combed in Bradford, spun in Halifax, dyed in Hebden Bridge, then knitted into warm socks. Staups Farm also produces and sells free-range eggs and vegetables and nearby heather will provide good nectar for a new bee-keeping venture.



Staups Fish Farm at Blackshaw Head, Todmorden (photo by Geoff Boswell)

'In Britain we can produce the finest food going' says Martin, 'our production standards are very high, and combined with the dominance of supermarkets, the most ruthless buyers, life is very difficult for producers.' Martin's production costs are higher than conventional trout farms, so direct selling is vital. Martin

would like to see farmers' markets in town centres such as Bradford, accessible to more people. 'Many customers buy from farmers' markets because it is cheaper, we need to blow our trumpet about this.'

'We need to promote the wider benefits of local food to the community and local economy. Local food brings potential for a wide range of associated local industries – such as packaging, labels, feed and fertiliser, processing, equipment and machinery. These benefits seem small but do add up.'

'We have won the argument, and we can hijack the high level of public interest in healthy food. Publicity does not have to flash and glossy, but based on building links with consumers, who are becoming more aware of the benefits of healthy, locally produced food. The tide is turning but far too slowly.'

**Staups Fish Farm, Todmorden**  
tel: 01706 810728  
email: martin@caldervalleytrout.freeserve.co.uk



Yorkshire & Humber Regional

## Food Technopole

*"linking business needs with technical solutions"*

Yorkshire and the Humber's 3,500 regional food production and processing businesses (not including agriculture) employ 54,000 people. But there is strong competition, and a real danger that, within a decade, nearly all our food will be produced and processed by our near European neighbours. The Food Technopole assists businesses in the Yorkshire and Humber region by supporting:

- innovation and international competitiveness
- profitable growth through inward investment
- collective servicing of home and export markets
- effective and sustainable links along the food supply chain

The Food Technopole links the food manufacturing sector with expertise in technology and commerce, and provides support with process and product development, food health quality systems, management efficiency, staff development and environmental impact management.

A current project is a feasibility study for an Asian Cuisine Training Centre. The Yorkshire Forward Food Innovation Board has identified ethnic food as one of the fastest growing segments of the food market, and of strategic importance to the Y&H region. A recent industry-led workshop highlighted market opportunities including value added snack foods and prepared home meals, and the need for specialist support in the development of new

routes to market and more local supply chains, mentoring, technological support and strengthening the skills base.

GRAFT-ENT, short for 'graduate food technologists for entrepreneurs' will bring in graduates as consultants to work in small and medium sized food companies who want to develop new products and processes, at a rate companies can afford. The idea is that they stay in the area through setting up their own food sector enterprise or gaining employment to spearhead development in a local food company. Initially operating along the Humber estuary it is hoped to expand GRAFT-ENT into the wider region.

**Bill Horner, Food Technopole**  
tel: 01472 500350

## What's in Season?

Beetroot is a very nutritious and versatile vegetable. It contains high levels of many vitamins, particularly folic acid, and minerals such as iron. Many nutrition experts recommend beetroot as a blood and liver cleanser.

Peeled and chopped, beetroot adds an earthy flavour, and dramatic purple colour, to soups and stews. Or, simply boil the whole beetroot, unpeeled with top and tail still on, for about 25 minutes or until tender, then peel and serve hot or cold.

Try grated raw beetroot as a garnish for stews and salads. You could also try using young beetroot leaves as a salad or cooked vegetable, although older leaves may have a bitter taste.

### **Spaghetti Rossi**

#### Ingredients:

1 tbsp olive oil  
3-4 medium beetroot  
1 medium onion, finely chopped  
1/2 (250g) packet of spaghetti, broken into short lengths  
4 oz (125g) pecorino (or any mild cheese), grated  
vegetable stock  
seasoning to taste  
grated parmesan to serve

#### Quick method:

Peel and grate the beetroot. Place in a pan with a little water. Bring to the boil and simmer with a tightly fitting lid for 10-15 minutes until the beetroot is tender. Mash with a fork or potato masher. Heat the oil and saute the

onion until transparent. Add the spaghetti and cook for 2-3 minutes. It tries to climb up out of the pan and looks a bit like a hedgehog! Add the beetroot and sufficient stock to just cover. Cover the pan, and simmer adding more stock as necessary until the pasta is tender. Stir in the pecorino cheese and season to taste.

Serve with parmesan sprinkled on top with a green side salad. This recipe tastes good with a glass of red wine (1 glass of wine is counted in USA as part of their recommended 9 portions of fruit and veg every day).



## National Association of Farmers' Markets

NAFM is the national voice and information centre of farmers' markets throughout the UK, supporting existing farmers' markets and helping set up new markets.

Promotions such as the highly successful Farmers' Market Month last September, which some of you may remember as 'Fall in Love with Local Food' month, raise the profile of farmers' markets nationally.

We also encourage networking through our quarterly newsletter and the annual conference, due to be held at the Rheged Centre near Penrith on March 8th. We are also working towards certification of genuine farmers' markets – which we hope to launch at the conference.

For new producers (and market organisers too!) "The Knowledge" booklets are now available, aimed at helping producers to get goods to market. We are also producing a Tourist Information leaflet to be distributed in the regions.

*For more information or to join NAFM, please see our website at : [www.farmersmarkets.net](http://www.farmersmarkets.net) or contact us at:*  
NAFM  
South Vaults  
Green Park Station  
Bath  
BA1 1JB



**B-FIT (Bradford and District Food Information Trust)** is a voluntary organisation promoting local, healthy food. We believe that locally produced fresh food can provide a better diet than food which is transported long distances, and helps the local economy by providing local growers, farmers and producers with an outlet for their produce. We organise Local Produce Markets in Bingley, the Local Produce Shop in Keighley, and are developing additional outlets in the Bradford district. Our support for the Local Produce Markets includes insurance, provision of stalls, publicity, education materials and day to day administration. You can help by becoming a member of B-FIT, or perhaps by becoming a volunteer. B-FIT thanks the following for their financial support:

**Heartsmart** (Bradford District Health Promotion Unit)

**Keighley Healthy Living Network**

**Surestart Keighley**

**Shell Better Britain Campaign**

**5 A Day** – a Department of Health funded pilot project to increase fruit and vegetable consumption in Airedale and Craven

**Losalt**



Klinge Foods



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FOOD INFORMATION TRUST**

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