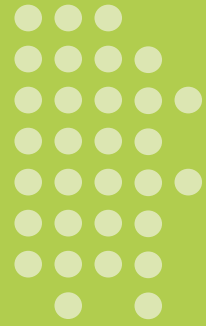


Newsletter
September 2011

Growing Rural Enterprise Ltd



Vision

- To deliver innovative and meaningful learning opportunities for rural business.
- To inspire and make a difference to rural business, building confidence, knowledge and skills.

What we do:

- Courses & workshops for rural businesses
- One to one coaching, mentoring and advice
- Manage and deliver externally funded projects which help rural businesses to start, develop and grow
- Working with partners to improve the rural economy, business sustainability and viability
- Managing trans-national projects that inspire those running rural businesses and share good practice with our European partners

helping rural businesses to start, develop & grow



Farm Meat Retailing

A programme of courses for farmers wishing to sell meat direct to the public will take place in autumn 2011. Growing Rural Enterprise has worked with Warwickshire Rural Hub and Shropshire Hills AONB to put the programme together.

Courses are also suitable for those who are already retailing meat and wish to improve their skills and become more profitable.

- Introduction to Farm Meat Retailing- including legislation, using the whole carcase. Links to useful organisations and people who can help
- Marketing- identifying potential customers and ways to advertise and promote your produce profitably
- Sausage making and Bacon curing
- Pates Pies and Terrines

For full details see our website www.growingruralenterprise.co.uk

Traditional Bacon Curing Course

Growing Rural Enterprise was pleased to welcome John Mettrick from the award winning Mettricks Butchers of Glossop to share his knowledge and skills with farmers wishing to produce traditionally cured bacon.

John visited Beechcliffe Farm, Trentham in July and ran a one day course with tastings and shared a host of interesting and innovative recipes.

John shared the following advice

"To produce consistent bacon I would always suggest using one of the commercially available cures as a base. By doing this you are making sure that you are compliant with all the necessary legislation and producing a safe product. Curing is an exact science too much cure and your bacon will be oversalty, too little and it will be tasteless and look pork. There is no such thing as the magic scoop of cure that cures all pork no matter what size and thickness! You need to weigh out the curing ingredients accurately. Although traditional dry cured bacon will usually always be the top seller try to find local products that will compliment your bacon to give it local appeal and attract attention. This could be a local ale, honey, mustard or marmalade for example combine these with a commercial cure and you could be on to a winner.

Keep tasting your home produced bacon to check its what you like, do taste tests with family and friends and when you have got it right stick to the exact method you have used. Remember a lot of customers don't like it over fat- it might taste good but if they don't like the look of it they wont buy it."

John Mettrick
Mettricks Butchers
www.mettricksbutchers.co.uk

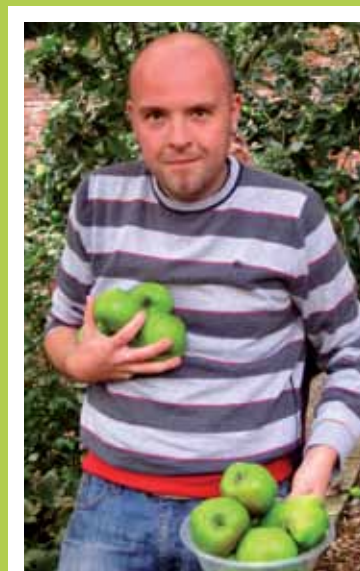


Community Wellbeing project

A new project has been funded by The Community Wellbeing Fund in Staffordshire. It will work with a new social enterprise cafe in Stafford called Food 4 Thought, part of Quest Day Opportunities, who wish to build upon their partnership with local farms and create their menu around locally produced food. The project will work with people recovering from mental ill health and incorporate farm walks to get a greater understanding of food and farming, some practical skills including sausage making, bacon curing and burger making courses and some one day training workshops in Customer Service, Display and Visual Merchandising and Marketing.

The project will promote wellbeing, healthy eating and develop the skills and knowledge for a successful social enterprise cafe based upon good quality, affordable food from local farms.

The Community Wellbeing Fund is funded by Staffordshire County Council.



Craig Price from Quest

Care Farming Discussion Group

The Care Farming Discussion Group funded by Lantra West Midlands continues to meet monthly and brings together those in The West Midlands who are interested in Care Farming or already offer care farming opportunities. Each month about 20 people get together at one of the care farms in the region and have supper, network and discuss issues pertinent to their enterprise. In autumn 2011 the discussion topics will include:

- Awards for All Lottery Funding- a master-class to improve bid writing skills - **Wednesday 21st September in Staffordshire**
- 2 hour Business Review and Business Action Plan- Where are you now? Where do you want to be? How will you get there?
- **Wednesday 19th October in Staffordshire**
- Animal Assisted Therapy
- Ten things you need to know about your Care Farming business
- 100 ways to market your Care Farming business
- More details and dates coming soon!

Susdev – Leonardo Project

Growing Rural Enterprise recently hosted a visit from partner countries from the Susdev project which is looking at sustainable and cultural development in Europe. Participants came from Leipzig in Germany and Barcelona in Spain. Among the group were care farmers, two organic farmers and a manager of a community city garden.



They visited Woodhouse Community Farm, Lichfield Farmers Market, National Forest Llama Treks, My Time Gardening Project and The Secret Cloud House Holidays to see how small rural businesses operate in a way that is environmentally sustainable and works for the benefit of the community. Nick said "we looked at the way that environment, community and economy work together to create sustainable communities – the group loved Lichfield and were very interested in social enterprise and ecotherapy in its many forms."

Those who hosted visits to their businesses from UK will visit Barcelona in September 2011.

Susdev is a transnational Leonardo project.

Upland Farmers Study Visit

A group of upland farmers from The Peak District visit Cumbria for three days in September as part of a project to see businesses in a similar area that are shortening the supply chain and adding value to produce from the hills. Julie said "typically this is selling meat direct to the public, adding value to farm produce in such ways as making mutton pies and ice cream, making the most of tourism, Bed and Breakfast, farm shops and farm tea rooms" she added "this is a very powerful way of encouraging businesses to see how other farms are addressing the challenges of upland farming. Being away from the business and having the opportunity to talk to those who are running businesses outside the area can generate ideas and will help businesses to come up with an action plan to help them to develop their businesses."

The project starts with an introduction evening at The Farming Life Centre near Buxton where farmers will consider their current business, explore the possibilities and challenges and start to create a business development plan. After the study visit the group will meet again to reflect upon their progress and decide on their next steps.

Visits cost £67 per person including two nights accommodation and meals

This project is funded by Lantra East Midlands and Barclays Bank Agricultural Team.

It is offered in partnership with The Farming Life Centre with valued help from The Cumbria Farmers Network.

QR Codes

You may be wondering what the black and white blocky image is depicting, well, we are embracing QR codes. QR (Quick Response) codes are similar to barcodes and scanning the code on your smartphone will then make the phone do a predefined action. By scanning the QR code on this page you will be taken to our mobile website, containing a small synopsis of what we at Growing Rural Enterprise do, a link to our tweets, our mobile Facebook page and a selection of Growing Rural Enterprise videos and slideshows from our previous projects.



Shortly we shall be using QR codes to deliver short introduction videos to our courses, allowing you to see what the course involves and to see the individual leading the course explain what knowledge or skills will be gained from participating.

These are a great marketing tool - a very small printed code can convey vast amounts of information, allowing easy access to video or spoken word from a paper newsletter.

In order to be able to use these fantastic codes, the smartphone must have a "reader" to make sense of the codes. The simplest way to get a reader is to go to the application store on your smartphone (App Store on Apple mobile devices, Ovi Store on Nokia and Blackberry App World on Blackberry devices) and search for QR reader, on most stores the app you download will be free of charge. Once installed, open the application and take a picture of the code. The phone will process the code and then send you to our mobile site.





LANTRA
LandSkills West Midlands

CEVAS Courses

The Countryside Education Visits Accreditation Scheme offers training to people who would like to host educational visits on farm. It is a two day course which covers health and safety, planning, marketing, links to the national curriculum, activity planning and gearing the visit towards specific ages and abilities.

September 7th & 21st - Shrewsbury
October 7th & 14th - Lichfield.

Cost is £102 per person.

Farmers Recycling Club Booking Essential for catering purposes!

Wednesday 14th September 2011 - 7pm
for 7.30pm start. Cost £10 per person

The Green Technologies Discussion Group will hear about an innovative Farmers Recycling Club in Leicestershire who hit upon an inspiring solution to resolve the growing problem of farm waste such as fertiliser bags, feed sacks and other plastic packaging. They have set up a club!

Phil Jarvis from The Game Conservancy Trust's Allerton Project at Loddington explains "As most farmers are well aware, new Farm Waste Regulations mean that farmers will need to change the way they deal with their farm waste. For example, farmers will no longer be able to burn chemical containers and under the new regulations they will need to obtain a licence to keep, treat, store or dispose of waste.

"For many farmers this could be a major problem, so we have set up a Farm Plastics Recycling Club for local farmers and we are hoping that this idea will catch on nationwide."

The project involves a group of farmers working together to recycle their plastics on a monthly basis through the Trust's new recycling scheme.

Phil will talk about the project, its successes and challenges and we will explore the potential to run something similar in Staffordshire.

Come and join us at The Meynell Ingram Arms, Hoar Cross, Near Burton on Trent for Steak and Ale Pie with home made chips followed by Phil Jarvis talking about The Farm Recycling Project.

To book a place, email office@growingruralenterprise.co.uk or get the booking form from our website www.growingruralenterprise.co.uk.

We love this quote....

Life is like a wild tiger,
You can either lay down
and let it put its paw on your head,
Or you can jump on its back
And ride.

- Anon

Contact us

Julie White

07971 666474

Julie@growingruralenterprise.co.uk

Nick Platt

07767 844921

Nick@growingruralenterprise.co.uk



NckGRELtd



Growing Rural Enterprise

flexible, energetic, creative

www.growingruralenterprise.co.uk