

Editorial

Welcome to the summer edition of the newsletter

The government is now considering the many responses to its consultation paper, *Choosing the Right Ingredients – The Future for Food in Scotland*, with a view to producing the country's first-ever national food policy. But the debate will – and must – continue.

Some of the big issues that will need to be thrashed out include: how can we marry sustainable economic growth in the food and drink industry with affordable, accessible food? Are we sending out the right messages on obesity? How do we help consumers to be more knowledgeable and questioning about the food they buy?

A statement on the key findings of the discussion and the way forward for the national food policy will be made by Richard Lochhead, the Cabinet

Secretary for Rural Affairs and the Environment very shortly in June.

As FHA members we are in a unique position to influence this debate and the resulting policy. In particular we need to think carefully about what is required to ensure that our food and health work is joined up and we're working across the sectors. And that's where the Alliance comes in. The Alliance will keep you informed of the next stages and how you can get involved.

In this summer's edition we focus on oral health and how NHS Health Scotland aims to make new links between the public health nutrition and oral health specialists. We also find out what's so special about the winner of the healthy eating category of the Scotland Food & Drink Excellence Awards.

Kate Barlow
Food & Health Alliance
Coordinator

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Guidance on healthy weight programmes for children

NHS Health Scotland has produced guidance for health boards on how to help overweight and obese children.

The guidance supports the delivery of the Scottish Government's HEAT¹ Target (H3) for NHS Scotland to help tackle the growing problem of childhood obesity. It sets a target for health boards on the number of overweight

and obese children aged between 5 and 15 who should complete government-approved healthy weight intervention programmes by 2011.

Boards are advised to check that the intervention programme they choose is compliant with this guidance, which was developed by NHS Health Scotland with the support of an expert reference group.

The guidance can be downloaded from www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Health/health/19133/healthyweight

More information about current intervention work has also been uploaded onto the Alliance website and can be found under the healthy weight section.

¹ HEAT targets stand for health improvement, efficiency and governance, access to services and treatment targets set for the NHS service.

NHS Borders one-year MEND pilot

NHS Borders, in partnership with Borders Sport & Leisure Trust and Scottish Borders Council, are running a one-year pilot of the MEND – Mind, Exercise, Nutrition, Do It! programme.

The pilot started in April 2008 and will involve programmes running in three different areas across the Borders.

Families take part in fun two-hour sessions, twice a week

for ten weeks. The programme aims to improve eating and exercise habits, thereby improving fitness, physical activity levels, nutrition and self-esteem.

The pilot is part of the Borders Childhood Obesity Strategy implementation plan and Care Pathway for the Obese or Young Person and will contribute to NHS Borders achieving the HEAT target (H3).

An evaluation of the first ten-week programme will be

presented in a future edition of this newsletter.

Further Information

For more information contact Aileen McCraw, Public Health Nutritionist and MEND Programme Manager, on **01896 824500** or email aileen.mccraw@borders.scot.nhs.uk

Funding bids invited for healthy eating activities

Groups and agencies are being invited to apply for funding to develop new or existing activities that will improve food access or take-up of a healthy balanced diet in low-income communities. Further information on Community Food and Health (Scotland)'s

small grant scheme, offering funds between £500 and £3,000, is available. Visit www.communityfoodandhealth.org.uk. Applications packs are also available from Alice or Rita on 0141 226 5261. Closing date for applications is 27 June 2008.



New Infant Nutrition Coordinator

Ruth Campbell has been appointed Scotland's first National Infant Nutrition Coordinator. The remit of this new post will include maternal nutrition, breastfeeding and infant feeding of children up to the age of two. Ruth, who took up the reins of her new job in early May, has an extensive background in public health nutrition. She was previously Public Health Nutritionist with NHS Lanarkshire.

Scotland is setting the standard in catering awards

Another 144 Scottish catering establishments successfully achieved the healthliving award this spring and were awarded their certificates. The types of establishment ranged from restaurants, cafes and works canteens to further education catering establishments and even a mobile catering van.

In fact some national organisations have been so impressed by the benefits of working to the criteria of the healthliving award that they are now spreading the word to their other establishments in the rest of the UK.



Soft-fruit company wins top food and drink prize

Good Natured Fruit – strawberries grown with no artificial pesticides – picked up the supreme award at the annual Scotland Food and Drink excellence awards last month (May).

Good Natured Fruit is produced by Angus Soft Fruits of Arbroath, and represents the culmination of extensive research and development in reducing reliance on artificial pesticides in soft fruit production.

The awards, now in their seventh year, organised jointly and co-sponsored by the Royal Highland and Agricultural Society and Scottish Enterprise on behalf of Scotland Food & Drink, are seen as the Oscars of the industry, enhancing a firm or product's reputation and offering extensive marketing and promotion opportunities.

The supreme award – one of 16 excellence awards from a shortlist of over 30 – was presented by First Minister Alex Salmond at a gala dinner at The Mansfield Traquair, Edinburgh.

The Food and Health Alliance-



sponsored award for healthy eating went to Glasgow-based company Morton's Rolls Ltd which produces Nick Nairn's Choice Rolls, a premium range of hand-made bread rolls (see facing page).

The full list of category winners is:

Retail – Soup, Preserve, Pickle and Sauce. Sponsored by The Grocer
North Highland Products Ltd, Wick
Range of Mey Selections Conserves and Preserves

Retail – Fish and Seafood. Sponsored by The Grocer
Loch Fyne Oysters, Argyll

Retail – Meat – Red, White and Game. Sponsored by The Grocer
Jian's Dumplings Ltd, Edinburgh

Retail – Fruit or Vegetable (including vegetarian). Sponsored by The Grocer
Angus Soft Fruits, Arbroath
Good Natured Fruit – Strawberries & Raspberries

Retail – Dairy, Confectionery and Snacking. Sponsored by The Grocer
Cream o' Galloway Dairy Company Ltd, Gatehouse-of-Fleet
Made Fair Ice Creams and Smoothies

Retail - Bakery and Cereal-based. Sponsored by The Grocer
Dean's of Huntly
The Collection – Flavoured Shortbread Biscuits

Retail – Drink – Alcoholic and Non-Alcoholic. Sponsored by The Grocer
BrewDog, Fraserburgh
Paradox Imperial Stout

Food Service Sponsored by Scottish Enterprise
Hardiesmill, Berwickshire
Hardiesmill Medley – Smoked & Cured Beef for Salads & Starters

International Business of the Year. Sponsored by Scottish Development International
Barr Soft Drinks, Cumbernauld
Irn-Bru and Strathmore Water to main markets (Russia, Australia and Spain)

Brand Development. Sponsored by Scottish Enterprise
Dean's of Huntly
Developing brand in export and UK gift markets

Direct Marketing Development. Sponsored by the RHASS
Rannoch Smokery, Kinloch Rannoch
Range of smoked meat and game

Collaboration in Supply Chains. Sponsored by Scotland Food & Drink
North Highland Products Ltd
Mey Selections – range of high quality products with ingredients sourced from North Highlands

Environmental Award
Cream o' Galloway Dairy Company Ltd
Manufacturer of organic and fair trade ice cream and smoothies

Healthy Eating Sponsored by Food & Health Alliance
Morton's Rolls Ltd, Glasgow
Nick Nairn's Choice Rolls

Best From Previous Year's Winners
Graham's The Family Dairy, Bridge of Allan
Scotland's largest independent dairy company – conventional & organic milk and milk products

Supreme Award
Angus Soft Fruits

Nick Nairn's healthy recipe for prize bread rolls



Left to right, Scotland Food & Drink Excellence Awards ceremony presenter Louise Batchelor, Dr Jonquil Dawson and Louise Creevy of Morton's Rolls with Pam Whittle, Director of Public Health and Wellbeing, Scottish Government.

Celebrity chef Nick Nairn has for long been exercised about the unhealthy levels of salt and fat in processed food. He always believed it was possible to cut them substantially while retaining flavour – and the Nick Nairn Choice Rolls range are, he believes, proof of the pudding.

The bread rolls, which are produced by Morton Rolls Ltd in Glasgow and last month won the prestigious healthy eating prize at the Scotland Food and Drink Excellence Awards, have been a long time in gestation – fitting perhaps for a food item that has one of the longest fermentation processes of any current bakery product.

Commenting on the award Nick Nairn said, 'I am passionate about bread, so winning this award is excellent news! Bread shouldn't just taste great, it should be good for you too. That's what these Choice Rolls are all about.'

It was four years ago that Nick first approached Morton's to propose a new healthier version of the traditional handmade roll after hearing about the company's work in creating a reduced salt range of rolls for Scottish schools.

'It takes 8-10 hours to produce our roll,' explains Morton's New Product Development

consultant Jonquil Dawson. 'The idea was to use that process to replace any flavour we lost by reducing the salt and fat content.'

The first of the new-style Scottish morning rolls – developed with technical support from BakeMark UK – was launched last year. They are now available in several varieties including white, multigrain, light rye and seeds, and oats and wholemeal.

The rolls are already on sale in many Waitrose supermarkets around the UK as well as Lidl and Somerfield stores in Scotland. Retailing at £1 for a pack of six, a big selling point is undoubtedly the dramatically lower level of salt. All the rolls have less than 300 mg of sodium per 100g compared to 4–500 mg for most comparable products. They are also high in natural fibre, low in total and saturated fat and completely free from hydrogenated fats and trans fatty acids.

The whole purpose of the range was to produce food that was nutritious and healthy while ensuring it remained tasty and full of flavour, explains Jonquil.

The biggest challenge was cutting down the salt content. The long fermentation process traditionally relied on a relatively high salt content. Adding in other flavours such as

seeds and grains also presented problems.

But ultimately, as Jonquil notes, everything comes down to taste. 'It's flavour that at the end of the day causes the consumer to repurchase. So it doesn't matter how healthy it is, they will never repurchase if they don't like it.'

She admits they rejected a number of formulations before finally hitting on the right formula. And the last word was always Nick's. 'There were quite a few he has thrown out for various reasons, I can tell you!'

The response of customers so far has been extremely positive but the real challenge is to expand the market beyond the traditional health-conscious audience.

Given the increasing focus on healthy eating, Morton's are keen to expand their range of healthy foods beyond the bread roll range. They launched an olive oil and black pepper scone last year and are even thinking of expanding into sweet goods. To cut the fat and sugar contents in those goods could be even more challenging than producing healthy rolls, says Jonquil. 'But it's certainly possible if we can get the customer base behind us.'

Food Chain

Top; David Eaton, Inverloch Cheese. Left to right; Katie Ritchie, Barbreck Farms; Alexandra Marshall, Bumble Puddings; Virginia Sumsion, Loch Fyne Oysters.



Local food is a big hit at music event

Rock festivals don't tend to be associated in most people's minds with good food, let alone healthy eating. But in their own small way local food producers the Argyll and Bute Agricultural Forum (ABAF) are hoping to change all that.

Last year the forum's farmers' market-style food marquee was one of the surprise hits of Connect, the three-day music festival at Inveraray Castle, selling a range of fresh, local products from roast beef and salmon rolls to kippers, cheeses and vegetarian dishes and providing a welcome contrast to the usual fare of burgers, chips and fizzy drinks.

The venture was so successful the forum is now booked in for a further four music events this summer, including a return visit to the Connect festival as well as the Rockness and Belladrum festivals and the prestigious T in the Park, which is expected to pull in 70-80,000 fans over the course of its three days.

The main purpose of ABAF, a rural partnership of farmers and other interested agencies, is to highlight the benefits of sustainable agriculture and crofting in the area. But for Fergus Younger, brought in two years ago as development manager to help raise awareness of its aims, a music festival is a perfect vehicle for spreading the message to an audience that might otherwise be off the radar.

‘Our main message is about promoting our region and our food producers,’ he says. ‘But we’re not just focusing on food because there’s a recognition that it has a cross-sectoral benefit for tourism and health.’

At the same time he is well aware that the traditional ways of putting across the healthy eating message have had limited success.

He admits that a marquee menu that includes cakes and sticky toffee pudding isn’t the healthiest in purely dietary terms. ‘But we are about promoting a balanced diet as well as an interest in where the food comes from.’

‘We’re not looking to hit any targets. I don’t think that’s the most important thing when you consider how bad the diet in Scotland often is. We’re trying to get people interested in food that’s not just burgers and fizzy drinks.’

‘There are a lot of foodie events that are just preaching to the converted. Events like Rockness and T in the Park are reaching a really big audience that may not come into contact with this sort of message otherwise.’

Although he has no doubt the effort has been worthwhile, Fergus admits setting up stalls offering fresh, high quality food at a music festival is ‘not for the faint-hearted’. The planning often has to start six months in advance and working at the event itself can often involve 18-hour days.

It also meant a steep learning curve for many of the farmers and local producers who had never had to prepare such large quantities in such a short space of time. ‘To begin with we had some work to do to persuade them it was worthwhile,’ he admits.

The proof of the pudding is in the eating, of course, and the enthusiastic response to what was on offer suggests the investment has paid off.

The marquee wasn’t very well advertised so things began slowly but once the word got around, it all changed. ‘By the end it was absolutely heaving,’ says Fergus. ‘It was amazing.’ And the praise was coming from unexpected quarters. ‘We were getting very positive comments from a lot of young folk, which was especially gratifying.’

He is also understandably grateful to the promoters, DF Concerts, who helped put the producers in touch with Connect in the first place.

It would be nice to think that high quality, locally produced food could become the norm at future rock festivals. But given the economics of most festivals, which tend to rely heavily on the burger and chips franchises to maintain their profit margins, Fergus is doubtful. Nevertheless that would all change if festival-goers themselves began to demand better food. And now they’ve got a taste for the real thing, who knows?

Further Information

www.argyllagriculturalforum.com

Food Culture

FSA Scotland's innovative live cookery roadshow, *A Recipe For Success*, has scooped the winning prize at the prestigious Scottish Communicators in Business Awards for 'Best Live Communications Event 2007', at a ceremony in Glasgow.

The Recipe For Success show, which has toured Scotland and is now in its third year, has gone from strength to strength with celebrity chef Phil Vickery pulling in capacity audiences.

It has proved to be a very effective vehicle for engaging in direct dialogue with large



From left to right; Lydia Wilkie, Assistant Director, Food Standards Agency Scotland; Siobhan Gillies, Assistant Producer, Speakeasy Productions; Fiona Thomson, Assistant Communications Officer, Food Standards Agency Scotland; Suzanne Pack, Communicators In Business (CIB) National Chairman; Cathy Macdonald, TV Presenter and host for the evening.

audiences about the food issues that matter to them. The show is highly interactive and has been an outstanding success, not only in promoting key Agency

messages about nutrition, food hygiene and traffic lights labelling but also in inspiring audiences to healthier cooking and eating.

Nothing to SCOFF about

The acronym of the Scottish Colloquium on Food and Feeding (SCOFF) might lead the unwary to assume this was an organisation for the enjoyment, and rapid consumption, of good food.

In fact the colloquium's aim is the rather worthier one of promoting debate and discussion around different aspects of food, diet and eating, from a sociological perspective.



Originally it was an off-shoot of the BSA (British Sociological Association) Food Study Group, which

was set up at the Association's annual conference in Manchester in the early 1990s. BSA study groups encourage specialists to organise smallscale events and networking, bringing together sociologists and others to talk about the work they do in their chosen area.

SCOFF has maintained an independent presence in Scotland through bringing together interested people (academics, practitioners and policy-makers) at regular meetings and seminars. The group's development has been as much a product of its membership, including member groups such as Community Food and Health Scotland, as of its coordinator and steering committee, although the enthusiasm and commitment of the latter have always been essential. It is particularly interested in finding ways to link theory and practice, policy and academia.

Current convenors are Sue Gregory at the University of Edinburgh and Debra Gimlin at the University of Aberdeen. Sue has a research background in gender, families and, more recently, chronic illness, topics that directly and indirectly relate to issues around food, diet and eating. Debra's research on gender and ageing, size rights and organised slimming also complement the group's interests.

The group's meetings currently take place in Edinburgh and usually

involve informal discussions around research and other activities. People are also encouraged to make more formal presentations of their work from time to time, occasionally with invited speakers. Their last meeting on 30 May involved Andrea Tonner, from the University of Strathclyde, talking about her work on 'cookbook choices: a matter of self identity'.

The UK Food Study Group is holding its first conference this year - Food, Society and Public Health at the British Library Conference Centre, London on 14-15 July.

Further Information

Visit www.britsoc.co.uk/events/food.htm

For details of SCOFF meetings contact Sue on s.gregory@ed.ac.uk, or Debra on d.gimlin@abdn.ac.uk

Childsmile

A fresh approach to children's oral health



Childsmile is an ambitious programme aimed at tackling tooth decay at its root – in childhood.

The foundations for good oral health are established in infancy and early childhood. A healthy diet, effective regular tooth brushing with fluoride toothpaste and regular visits to the dental team are the keys to improving children's oral and general health and well-being.

Great strides have been made in recent years towards improving children's oral health in Scotland. Nevertheless, 46% of Scottish children have signs of dental decay by the time they reach Primary 1. This figure is even higher in areas of deprivation.

It is with this in mind that Childsmile, a national programme, has been designed to improve children's oral health and reduce oral health inequalities. The scheme is to be rolled out across the country over the next three years.

The programme consists of four main elements:

- **Core Toothbrushing Programme**
- **Childsmile Practice**
- **Childsmile Nursery and**
- **Childsmile School**

Together these provide a clear pathway for oral health care and support throughout childhood.

So what do the different elements consist of?

The Childsmile **Core Toothbrushing Programme** provides free toothpaste and toothbrushes to every child in Scotland on at least six occasions during their first five years of life as well as free daily supervised tooth brushing to every three- and four-year-old attending nursery in Scotland. In addition, children who go to primary school in high priority communities will be offered free daily tooth brushing in P1 and P2 classes.

A DVD has recently been launched to support this programme. Designed for local oral health teams to use in their work with childcare providers, the DVD provides a step-by-step guide to setting up a tooth brushing programme and includes practical guidance and experiences from staff working in nursery, primary school and child-minder settings. To access a copy of the DVD, please contact your local oral health team.

Childsmile Practice will be a universal service giving every new baby access to Childsmile care, with additional support targeted on children and families most in need. After an introduction by the health visitor, families will be contacted by a dental health support worker (DHSW) when the child reaches three months. This service will be linked into primary care dental services for oral health promotion and clinical preventive care. It is

(continued)



recognised that some parents and carers may require only information and access to Childsmile dental services, while others may need considerable support and guidance in the early stages or over a longer time period. DHSWs will work with families in the home and community to support oral health needs.

Children living in more disadvantaged communities will receive additional preventive care through the targeted **Childsmile Nursery and School**. This will take the form of twice-yearly fluoride varnish applications to children's teeth by dental care teams within the nursery or school. The teams consist of extended duty dental nurses (EDDNs), extensively trained to provide this type of care, supported by DHSWs attached to the nurseries and schools.

The dental care teams will be available to offer advice on oral health and healthy snacks and drinks. Furthermore, any children not registered with a dentist will be helped to access primary care dental services.

Childsmile School will also offer a fissure sealant programme offering additional protection against decay. A pilot is currently under way in NHS Fife to apply fissure sealants to the teeth of six and seven-year-olds within targeted primary schools.

The development of a fully integrated Childsmile model across Scotland provides a unique opportunity to improve children's oral health in a coordinated way across community, educational and primary care dental settings. Working with families to encourage health promoting behaviours from birth and

early engagement with dental services, Childsmile can help parents and carers to keep their children's teeth healthy.

Lynn Brewster, Programme Manager, Childsmile Practice

Carolyn Skinner, Programme Manager, Childsmile Nursery/School

Laura Hunter, Oral Health Co-ordinator, Health Scotland

Further Information

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nhs.uk

Visit www.child-smile.org

Time to brush up on oral health

Laura Hunter has been appointed as the new Oral Health Coordinator for NHS Health Scotland. Here she talks about her priorities and why oral health and diet are so closely linked.

Scotland's record on oral health still leaves a lot to be desired. At the moment almost half of five-year-olds in Scotland are suffering from dental decay.

That is not good. Dental decay is a preventable disease and tackling children's dental health will contribute to future improvements in adult oral health.

The main reasons for our high dental disease rates in Scotland are excessive levels of sugar in our diet and poor oral care, mainly lack of tooth brushing – on the part of many children and adults.

As oral health coordinator I will be involved in a range of activities to ensure our children's oral health gets off to a healthy start. For instance, I will be supporting the work of the Childsmile programme (see pp9-10), promoting the HEAT target around dental registration and developing a guide to dental health for health professionals.

I will also be linking with

partners to ensure the delivery of priorities from the Dental Action Plan *Improving Oral Health and Modernising NHS Dental Services* (Scottish Government, 2005). In particular we will focus on child oral health, oral health in later life and oral health programmes for adults (including workplaces and prisons as well as the homeless and those who have special needs).

A great deal of work is going on to bring further oral health improvement, so liaising with NHS boards and pulling together local good practice to accelerate national developments will be a key thrust of the post.

Another top priority will be building links with food and nutrition programmes to emphasise the key messages of good oral health and healthy eating habits from early childhood. It is important to connect the agendas between diet and oral health to improve both oral health and dietary targets.

I am planning to set up a national reference group around oral health and food and nutrition. Although there is a huge amount of advice from various sources, much of it is conflicting. An expert multidisciplinary group, which can agree a greater consistency of messages and joined up approaches, is a practical way forward. Work will start on this in due course.

As oral health coordinator I am determined to champion oral health and make sure that oral health is prioritised in Scotland.

There is a great deal to do. Contributions and commitment from everyone will make the difference.

New oral health web pages will soon be added to the Alliance website under 'Topics'. These pages will provide information on the current policy context, research, publications and related websites.

The three key messages in promoting good oral health:

- 1. Diet:** reduce your consumption of drinks, confectionery and foods with sugars.
- 2. Tooth brushing:** brush your teeth thoroughly twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste.
- 3. Dental attendance:** have an oral examination every year.

(The Scientific Basis of Oral Health Education, 2004)

Further Information

Please contact Laura Hunter on 0131 537 4738 or email: laura.hunter@health.scot.nhs.uk

Forthcoming Events

2 July

Scottish Food Advisory Committee (SFAC) Meeting

Apex International Hotel, 31-35 Grassmarket, Edinburgh

For more information, visit www.food.gov.uk/scotland/aboutus_scotland/advisorycommittee

14-15 July

BSA Food Study Group, 'Food, Society and Public Health' Conference

The British Library Conference Centre, London

The aim of this conference is to explore the interface between food, society and public health through a sociological lens.

Find out more at www.britsoc.co.uk/events/food

3 September

Scottish Food Advisory Committee (SFAC) Meeting

6th Floor St Magnus House, 25 Guild Street, Aberdeen

Find out more at www.food.gov.uk/scotland/aboutus_scotland/advisorycommittee

26 September

Feeding Young Minds: Nutrition in Childhood – Meeting the Challenge Conference

The Newton Hotel, Nairn, Highlands

For more information visit www.fabreaserch.org

6-7 October

National Obesity Forum conference 'Obesity: The Scourge of Modern Civilisation'

The Royal College of Physicians, London

Find out more at <http://nationalobesityforum.org.uk/content/blogcategory/67/190/>

28 October

10 Year Anniversary Conference on Food, Diet and Health

Glasgow Royal Concert Hall

Conference organised by University of Glasgow

For more information visit www.gla.ac.uk/developmental/cpd/NewCourses.html

29 October

Scottish Food Advisory Committee (SFAC) Meeting

Apex City Quay Hotel, 1 West Victoria Dock Road, Dundee

Find out more at www.food.gov.uk/scotland/aboutus_scotland/advisorycommittee/

How to Join the Alliance:

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