

13 October 2010

Local Food News

News from our East Anglian suppliers: Hughes Organics

We have enjoyed some wonderful Autumn sunshine today, which was a treat and long overdue I must say. So we went to the coast and left the Glasshouse crops to grow. I'm sure we'll see a difference tomorrow. We have been cropping faster than it can replenish itself in this dull weather, so long last the Autumn sun. There seems a good chance of a decent spell so that will help things along. Autumn crops continue to arrive, with Parsnips making an appearance this week. There is also plenty of Squash, although I think the flavour will improve with storage and a good range of Apples and Pears from Cambridgeshire and several varieties of Potatoes from Wakelyn's Farm in Suffolk. The Brassicas are also abundant with Romanescu, Cabbage Greens and Broccoli especially prolific and possibly even a few early developing Sprouts this week.

Best wishes
Grahame and Lizzie Hughes

In your bags this week

Our produce is as local as possible. It comes from Hughes Organics (H) and small farmers in Norfolk, Cambridgeshire and Suffolk; or from Hawkwood Nursery, our own growing site in Chingford and local Cropshare producers. Other suppliers include Hughes' cooperative partners in Europe and Langridge Organics (L). Contents may occasionally vary due to availability.

Standard Vegetable Bags have potatoes, carrots, onions and garlic (Spain) and mushrooms through Hughes Organics, and from Hawkwood in Chingford: salad bags, curly kale, leeks and tomatoes. The 'no-potato' bags have savoy cabbage.

Small Vegetable Bags have Pink Fir Apple potatoes, onions and mushrooms through Hughes Organics, and from Hawkwood in Chingford: salad bags and Red Russian kale.

Standard and Small Fruit Bags have bananas (Dominican Republic-H), Rhubarb (Lincolnshire – L) locally picked apples and locally picked pears. **Standard bags** also have clementines (Spain – L).

On the Stall this week...

(fanfare please...) The return of – Winter Squash and Parsnips!! We've had more than one eager request on the stall for Norfolk's finest parsnips, and the wait is finally over. Your winter Sunday lunch is complete! We will also be juicing apples and pears so come and enjoy some fresh juice.

Thought from Rebecca: Bananas

I watched the programme Food: What Goes in Your Basket on Channel 4 this week and the piece on Fairtrade banana trading with St Lucia gave me occasion to reflect. I adore bananas, but sometimes wonder if we should be buying from so far away. Shipping is still incredibly carbon-heavy and most times of year there is plenty of European fruit to provide some choice. But, like it or not, as a nation we have had a part in creating a global economy and while our monetary systems are still creating havoc with food prices, it's important to show solidarity with growers on the other side of the world too. Have a look at the programme – our bananas mainly come from the Dominican Republic but I'm guessing the simple co-operative process that gets them from farm to port is fairly similar. Watch again on 4OD, and find out about the World Development Movement's campaign on food speculation at www.wdm.org.uk.



Turn over to read about our trailer travels...



Organiclea Community Growers and the Hornbeam Centre

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Can we bring our trailer to your school?!

We took the trailer, with example produce, leaflets and lots of free apples and pears, to publicise the box and stall to parents and children at a primary school in Leytonstone last week. It was great, really fun and we'd love to do it again! The end of the school day or a morning nursery session seems a good time to chat to parents, and we're happy just to set up at your gates and catch people as they come and go.

Do you know a school or Children's Centre you could arrange it with? If so, please let them know about us and give them our details. If they're happy for it, you could also pass their details on to Rebecca – box@organiclea.org.uk See you at the school gates!

Recipe Ideas...

Leeks and Potatoes -

it's hearty autumnal soup time... and leek and potato is a classic. Pop into the cafe for a good loaf of bread to go with it, or make a leek and potato gratin: baked in the oven with onions and a creamy sauce.



Kale – Red Russian or Curly – this couldn't be fresher, as it's been picked in Chingford just a day before your bag is ready for collection! Make the most of this by frying it for a tiny amount of time with lots of garlic – it will stay a beautiful colour and retain its vitamins and flavour.

Table on the Marsh



A dining table for public feasting is being installed as a permanent structure in Coppermill Fields, Walthamstow Marshes. On Sunday 17th

October the table will be celebrated in an afternoon of autumnal merriment. There will be workshops (12 - 2pm), a feast in which you are invited to bring along a dish to share with others (2 - 4pm) and live music from local folk

and



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bluegrass bands. www.tableonthemarsh.co.uk.

Vegetables 'Sott'olio'



Second instalment from our recent Italian preserving workshop:

Courgettes – Zucchini sott'olio

1. Cut courgettes lengthways and remove middle section where the seeds are. Slice into 3mm thick slices. Lay out on clean tea towels and leave for about 3 days in an airy dry warm place (if necessary finish off in a very low oven for an hour).
2. Fill a saucepan with 1 part vinegar and 1 part water, enough to cover the courgettes, and bring to the boil. Put the courgette pieces in for 3 mins. Drain in a colander and leave to dry or pat dry.
3. Place the courgette slices in sterilised jars – add a layer of courgette, then some garlic and herbs, salt and pepper, and pour in olive oil, then another layer of courgette and so on. Ida's favourite seasoning is mint and garlic and a bit of chilli.
4. Make sure all the courgettes are submerged in the oil and that there are no air gaps or bubbles (it's best not to pack the veg in too tightly) – check after a day and top up with oil if necessary

Aubergines – Melanzane sott'olio

1. Peel and slice into rounds, lengths or strips. Layer into a colander and add salt to each layer. Put a weight on top and leave for 24 hours to drain the liquid out.

Then follow from step 2 above. Ida recommends garlic, oregano and chilli for flavouring.

French beans (Fagiolini) / Broad beans (Fave) / Mushrooms (Funghi)

These don't need much pre-preparation – top and tail French beans and if you like you can boil them for 5 mins. Shell broad beans, slice the mushrooms if they are large. Then follow from step 2 above.

The vegetables are ready to eat in a couple of weeks. Store them in a cool place and make sure the veg stays covered with oil. Use the flavoured oil



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afterwards for salad dressing or for dipping bread!



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