

Better Organic Business Links

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Gwell Cysylltiadau Busnes Organig



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RWAS 2010

Diary Dates

Royal Welsh Show

19-22 July 2010

www.rwas.co.uk

Cardigan River and Food Festival

14 August

Abergavenny Food Festival

18—19 September

Organic Fortnight 3-17 September

Organic fortnight is a
nationwide campaign
for the sector.

Organic Food Festival, Bristol

11-12 September

Gwledd Conwy Feast

23 & 24 October

For other food events
in your area please
take a look at **Wales
the True Taste:**
[www.walesthetrueta
ste.co.uk/en/Events](http://www.walesthetrueta
ste.co.uk/en/Events)

BOBL Update Summer 2010

The BOBL project is continuing to make good progress with the main planks now in place, and a number of exciting initiatives in the pipeline. The staffing of the project was completed with the appointment of Lucy Watkins as Supply Chain Development Officer and she took up her post at the end of June. Anne Holley started as Project Administrator in July after her predecessor's departure for pastures green.

The Beaufort Research report on the **attitude of consumers to Welsh organic produce** will give an insight into people's purchasing decisions and quantify the value of different markets. The survey will provide valuable information to help

organic producers market their produce and inform the work of the communications company appointed to help promote organic produce in Wales. The **PR work** by StrataMatrix will include identifying the target audiences the sector needs to engage with and develop clear messages to convey the benefits of organic systems.

The **BOBL Steering Group** met on 14 June and supported two key projects which will deliver across a number of BOBL activities. One project will work with markets in **public procurement** to develop local and organic supply chains. The strategy is to build sustainable food production into supply chains and deliver on other

Welsh Assembly Government strategies. Achieving this will garner the support of other initiatives and extend the benefit of the work beyond the duration of BOBL.

The second project will support the development of **Secure Alternative Markets** by strengthening links between producers and the customer base in their surrounding communities. The project will draw on business models developed in Community Supported Agriculture. Contact : Tony Little, Ref 10-07.

Ethical toolkit

Sustainable Development encompasses the economy, the environment and society. Organic standards have led the way in supplying environmentally friendly food, and the willingness of consumers to pay an economic premium for good food has supported demand. In practice organic businesses have always tended to be a positive social force and the BOBL project is now looking to support this.

An ethical toolkit dedicated to the needs of small organic businesses will enable them to demonstrate to consumers and stakeholders that they are taking care to ensure the benefit of organic production extends to society as well as the environment. The BOBL project is working with the Food Ethics Council to assist ten businesses demonstrate that they are playing their part in promoting a fair and just community. Contact: Dafydd Owen.

Business Dialogue

An important benefit of the BOBL project is the access it gives producers to the three **Field Officers**, Tony, Phil and Mari. They also work on the Farming Connect programme and their experience with organic and farming businesses is helping BOBL activities support the development of the sector.

To ensure the project can benefit every business involved in the processing and supply of organic produce, a methodical and thorough programme of meetings with the estimated 200 organic proces-

sors in Wales has been initiated. The dialogue will give Field Officers the opportunity to show businesses how the support available from BOBL, and other Supply Chain Efficiency projects, can help their business. Greater knowledge of businesses' development plans will in turn help identify clusters that may be able to work together to supply specific markets or contribute to BOBL programmes.

Please contact the Field Officer in your area if you want to know how BOBL can help you. Contact: Field Officers.

Can we help you with...?

- Foot-printing
- Ethical Trading
- Attending trade shows
- Assessing public procurement markets
- Tourism
- Training, and more.

Project Team

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Public Procurement

Public procurement has the potential to resolve the chicken-and-egg challenge of **developing supply and demand together**. The long lead-in times and contracts can help businesses prepare and invest in a stable environment. The majority of public procurement is price driven and will remain so, but meetings between BOBL and key personnel involved in this sector have shown that other values, such as sustainability do have a part to play.

Procurement rules are prescriptive, but there is scope for variation and small proportions of a product category can sometimes be secured outside the main contract. The potential is greater where there is more than one market

within an institution, for example a hospital, which may cater for staff and visitors as well as patients.

Welsh Assembly Government strategies, particularly Sustainable Development and local sourcing may open doors for organic produce. Sustainability is central to organic production, and the inclusion of such a clause in a tender would open the door for producers to supply the distributor who wins the contract. Standards for organic production are supported by EU Directives and contracts can specify that a proportion of the food sourced is organic.

Product categories which could benefit quickly from public procurement are

dairy and Welsh lamb. Both can be sourced throughout Wales and will become increasingly competitive if the Euro continues to fall against Sterling. Contact: Lucy Watkins, Ref 10-23.

Tourism

The BOBL project '**Developing The Markets for Organic Food in the Welsh Hospitality and Tourism Sector**' supports the development of organic food tourism initiatives in Wales through research and working with tourism providers. The team has reviewed research studies to establish what determines the success of agritourism businesses and collect information on environmental accreditation schemes to see how far they include organic food.

The next phase looked at case studies of successful organic food tourism businesses in Wales. These demonstrate how agritourism on organic farms is a distinct and developing category, one where farm-based tourism is linked to the appreciation and consumption of organic produce and the provision of accommodation embraces principles such as recycling of wastes, use of renewable energy, and methods of carbon reduction.

In the current phase the team has undertaken a questionnaire survey of all known organic farm tourism businesses in Wales to explore the factors affecting the performance of organic agritourism farms.

Footprinting and business

Footprinting enables farms and businesses to monitor their use of resources and improve their performance over time. The purpose of footprinting is to reduce environmental impact and assess the vulnerability of businesses to resource depletion. Carbon is the resource most commonly footprinted as it includes fossil fuels. Footprinting is a valuable tool in enabling a business

to measure its sustainability and prepare for potential future event, such as the price of diesel doubling. BOBL have prepared a report which summarises the tools available to help producers to footprint their business (Dafydd Owen, ref 10-19a). A second report is being prepared for the post farm-gate supply chain and this will be made available when completed.



Cronfa Amaethyddol Ewrop ar gyfer Datblygu Gwledig: Ewrop yn Buddsoddi mewn Ardaloedd Gwledig
The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development: Europe Investing in Rural Areas



Canolfan Organig Cymru
Organic Centre Wales



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government