Aim
The Open Farm Events project aims to engage people, especially in disadvantaged communities, with organic food and farming. This will be done primarily with farm walks and events on organic farms, together with farmers’ markets being held in the school grounds. This will provide an inspiring and enjoyable learning experience for children and people from the local community to raise awareness about sustainable farming and its effect on the landscape, local economy and environment. It will give them an insight into working in the land based sector, and hopefully encourage more sustainable purchasing from parents. Additionally it will provide new markets for sustainably produced local organic food – potentially through becoming a drop off point for box schemes and organic buying groups as well directly through the markets themselves.

The project will contribute to a wide range of BOBL project objectives and will deliver against activity:

- 2.5 – Open Organic Farms

The project proposal includes holding farmers markets linked to local schools and is therefore relevant to:

- 1.5 – Innovative distribution models and;
- 2.6 – Reaching young people and families in urban areas.

Background
The Soil Association is working with the MWFLT to develop the School Farmer’s Market project in Wales and a number of regions in England. It uses a low-cost model which can become self-funding that brings educational, health and nutrition benefits to participating schools.

The drive to increase health and wellbeing is a key theme within education both at primary and secondary level, and is currently reflected across the curriculum in terms of health, nutrition and diet. The design of the project takes into account both the curriculum and teachers’ needs; developing appropriate educational resources, based on activities around a school farmers’ market, which support learning outcomes at a range of levels for Primary School children. In addition, the project is in line with Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship which is a cross-cutting theme in the revised curriculum for Wales, as required by the Welsh Assembly Government. As such this project provides a means whereby teachers are enabled to incorporate the critical food and farming aspect of sustainable development into their lessons.

The review of a pilot project in Powys demonstrated the broad benefits the approach can bring, including encouraging healthier diets for children and their families; highlighting the importance of agriculture to local culture and the economy; the school becoming a focal point for the community, especially where others such as shops, Post Offices and even the religious centre for the community have been lost or are in decline; and reviving the importance of food in a cultural context, preparing and consuming food together as a family, to strengthen the family and rural community at large.
Traditional “food skills” are no longer promoted in the school curriculum, for example, home economics teaching has declined. To address this we have developed programmes of activities which use an experiential learning environment, such as a Farmer’s Market, to support learning in Food Technology and healthy eating, as well as science and key skills. These wider community based activities are particularly important in communities where food and farming has been the core of the economy. As well as the vital need to educate young children about “healthy eating” and food choices, this wider approach that promotes choosing local, and ideally organic, is one that supports many other aspects of rural development, such as the economy, sustainability and community cohesion.

Project summary
The project has worked with 24 schools in Wales to embed food and farming education into the curriculum through the mechanism of a school farmers’ market. Over 5200 pupils have had the opportunity to benefit from the project from schools throughout Wales. A range of schools have been involved, from small rural schools with on 30 pupils, to larger inner-city schools with 350 pupils. Each school is different, and each school farmers’ market project has evolved to meet their needs, largely led by the pupils themselves.

All the materials that are developed through the project as educational resources are available both in English and Welsh. In addition non-participating schools are able to access the resources through the internet; consequently the resources from the project can easily be accessed by a much wider constituency of schools, ultimately bringing the concepts of healthy food and farming to many more school children.

Activities:
The project has been very successful and so far, the following have been successfully completed:

- Run a school farmers’ market in 24 schools in Wales (see Appendix 1)

- An initial visit to each school enabled us to work with teachers to set up the school markets and develop educational ideas such as cookery, growing food, healthy eating and farm visits - linking the activities with the curriculum. Pupils and teachers from the school, parents and other community members trained as volunteers to support the running of activities

- Educational materials were developed to facilitate lessons and agreed events, that will link to the school farmers’ markets. A toolkit was given to each school at the educational visit

- The educational visit involved working with children in the school to completely engage them in the decision making, development and set up of the markets. This provided a platform which the teachers could build on in the weeks running up to the big day
• Provide on-going advice and support to teachers in the run-up to the market, helping them contact and recruit producers, promote the event and set up school stalls at the markets. Outreach ideas have also been developed to link the schools with their communities, local networks, church groups and the elderly.

• Other schools have been encouraged to learn from the experiences of these “flagship” schools and enabled to adopt the approach themselves, and as part of this empowerment approach, the Riverside Community Market Association has helped deliver school markets to schools in Cardiff.

• Run a programme of 25 school visits to organic farms for over 600 children

• Organise 9 organic farm open days for over 2750 adults and children

Outputs:
The project has achieved the following outputs:

• Farmer’s markets have been set up in 24 primary schools across Wales

• 72 teachers and teaching assistants have been supported to fulfill learning outcomes through theoretical and practical activities based around food, health, the needs of the local community and farming.
• Over 5200 pupils have had the opportunity attend the school farmers markets in the schools. This will help them develop a healthier lifestyle through increased knowledge of where food comes from, how to grow and prepare food, and what is a nutritional diet.

• Over 700 children have gained educational benefits through the education session and follow up curriculum links to health, nutrition and diet.

• An average of 6 volunteers (pupils, teachers, parents other community members) in each school have been trained and supported in delivering the school farmers’ markets activities.

• Over 50 local producers have been involved in selling produce at the markets.

• Over 2000 community members have visited and the markets.

• 24 rural and urban communities re-engaged and invigorated around school based activities to support healthy food and farming.
Example Market Case Studies:

YSGOL RHOSHELYG, FLINTSHIRE

Producers: Harvey’s Pies  
John Sigsworth – Buffalo meat/Sausages  
Mrs Sandra Blackwell- Cakes  
Pantglas Preserves  
Cakes for a date  
Snowdonia Ready Meals

School stall: Cakes, biscuits, fruit crumbles, plants in painted pots

Other school activities: (PTA) Cafe area selling hot & cold drinks.

Market Profile:
Ysgol Rhoshelyg has developed an impressive garden area with polytunnel within which they grow both decorative flowering plants and vegetables for the table. When the idea of running a school farmers market within the school was discussed the children immediately identified it as a project which could help them to raise funds by selling their own ‘school garden’ produce. On the day of the market the hall area was decorated using straw bales to evoke a farming theme and pupils had clearly put a lot of effort into the preparation of every aspect of the venue. Their own stall was well thought out with cakes, biscuits all being sold under their business name of ‘The Pudding Parlour’.

Nothing had been left to chance and although this was a very successful market, the pupils were clearly keen to improve for the next one. To help them pupils were asking for feedback from customers which were recorded on questionnaires that they had designed and made themselves.

YSGOL GWENFFRWD, FLINTSHIRE

Producers: Harvey’s Pies  
John Sigsworth – Buffalo meat/Sausages  
Mrs Sandra Blackwell- Cakes  
Janine Clark - Cakes for a date  
John Brimble - Plants  
Pantglas Preserves

School stall: Cakes, jam, apple crumbles

Other school activities: (PTA) Cafe area selling hot & cold drinks.
Market Profile:
Pupils from Ysgol Gwenffrwd worked hard to prepare for their market. They had produced plans of where producers would be setting up their stalls and clear signs showing people where to go. A team of pupils were allocated to meet the producers and help them to carry produce to the tables and they carried out their duties with great efficiency and enthusiasm, with stallholders noting what a great help they were.

There was a healthy showing of producers with a wide range of produce. School pupils had produced jams, cakes and a large quantity of apple crumbles which were stored in a fridge behind the table and brought out as needed to replenish their stock. The market was well attended with all producers stating that they were very happy with sales and some asking if they could attend further markets in the area, which was subsequently arranged.

YSGOL BRO CARMEL, FLINTSHIRE

Producers: Harvey’s Pies
John Sigsworth – Buffalo meat/Sausages
Sandra & Lyn – Cakes
Mrs Tierney - Cheese
Michael Murphy – Quiches
Tabi Moss – Free range Eggs
Ben Garbutt – Chutney and Toffee
Mrs Poldon – Cottage Pies
Mrs Kadelka Williams – Bags
Mrs Lancelott – Knitted Dolls

School stall: Cakes, Homemade Ginger Biscuits,

Other school activities: Cafe area selling hot & cold drinks.
Bouncy castle for younger children
PTA stall and raffle at entrance.
Gardening club – bird seed cakes

Market Profile:
The market at Bro Carmel was well supported by the parents of the school community and was very busy considering it was a first market at this venue. Food producers (identified, contacted and supported by the project) were joined by school stalls and activities, and stalls from other local groups such as the local playgroup (Carmel Playgroup) and Holywell Transition Group, who showed a film in the canteen.

Producers attending the market confirmed that the market had been profitable and that they would be very happy to support further markets. Meeting new customers and discussing their produce was felt to be of great benefit.
BEAUMARIS PRIMARY SCHOOL, ANGLESEY

Producers:  
Hryd y Delyn - Cheese  
Harvey’s Pies  
Hampers bach Nadolig – Hampers  
Ffrem y Foel – Chocolate

School stall:  
Fruit crumbles, biscuits,

Other school activities:  
Cafe area selling hot & cold drinks.  
School fete

Market Profile:  
The school farmers market was timed to coincide with the school Christmas fete, but unfortunately the weather was poor on the afternoon of the event with considerable snow making it difficult for many of the producers and some customers to get to the school. The event did, however, take place with four producers braving the elements and the fact that the school had put on other entertainment still allowed it to be considered a success.

VALLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL, ANGLESEY

Producers:  
Cain – Gifts  
Da Da Da – Sweets  
Mervyn Lewis – Christmas Trees  
Acacia Florist  
Cigydd y Fali – Butcher  
Anwen Jones – Vegetables, Cakes  
Valley Church – Cakes, Cards  
Hampers bach Nadolig – Hampers  
Now and Then – Knick Knacks  
Louise Evans – Wooden Gifts  
Ffrem y Foel – Chocolate  
Traed Moch – Bacon & Pork

School stall:  
Fruit crumbles, biscuits, decorations, marmalade

Other school activities:  
Cafe area selling hot & cold drinks.  
Father Christmas with grotto, music, snow machine, raffle

Market Profile:  
The educational visit to valley was very lively with all the children in the school attending the powerpoint and discussion and lots of very creative ideas being suggested, so we were not
surprised when the market reflected this and turned out to be a very well organised and entertaining affair. Every class took part in the event, with each providing a different produce to sell on the school stall. Lots of different activities and events had been organised to give this Christmas market a very seasonal feel.

The market started at 3.30pm and was very busy with lots of producers and good support from parents and members of the local community who were there to support the event. A snow machine had been hired to set the scene for the arrival of Father Christmas who arrived at 5.00pm followed closely by a sale of Christmas Trees and Wreaths. A very lively and creatively planned event.
**School Farmers’ Market Feedback**

**Teacher Feedback**

Our school Farmers Market brought the school, producers, and community together. It gave the pupils fantastic opportunities to develop numerous key skills including numeracy and literacy. The pupils thoroughly enjoyed the experience of running the farmers market and the parents supported the venture. Our Farmers Market was so popular with the pupils and parents we decided to make it an annual event in our school calendar. We believe children should be given the chance to explore different career avenues in primary schools. By hosting the farmers market in our school all the children were given the chance to develop their business/enterprise skills.

Kind Regards,
Rhys Glyn, Head teacher, Ysgol Cefn Coch

Dear Rupert,
My Year 4 and 5 class (8 - 10 years old) had a fantastic visit yesterday afternoon to Gwel Enlli farm, Rhoscolyn where they saw many interesting and worthwhile things including the welsh Cattle, wild flowers and various ponds. The children were amazed by the farm and both Dr W and Dr D Roberts were fantastic with the pupils asking interesting and appropriate questions.

Many thanks for your support
Medwyn Roberts, Holyhead, Anglesey

**Producer Feedback**

**Cefn Coch School Farmers’ Market**

Please thank the students and staff for today - and of course yourself. I have not smiled and laughed so much at such well-behaved and polite kids ... although I'm sure they're not always so good. They are a credit to their teachers and parents. That's one school I'll revisit, even if I haven't got a large order to deliver in the area.

Peter

**Penrhyndeudraeth Farmers Market**

The adults were obviously non-seafood eaters but the kids were fascinated with the Bass! They touched, poked, picked them up, commented on the facts they had eyes heads and tails! We were fascinated with the kids' reaction. One little boy asked would I be there 'til the end, having replied yes, he rushed off saying he would be back. Sure enough he returned clutching £3.50 for a bass! I put it in a bag and he was immediately surrounded by his friends wanting to see and hold it. I just hope someone at home cooked it for him.

Mary White, Selective Seafoods
# APPENDIX 1

## SCHOOLS INVOLVED IN RUNNING SCHOOL FARMERS’ MARKETS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Name</th>
<th>No’s</th>
<th>Date of initial visit</th>
<th>Date of education visit</th>
<th>Date of market visit</th>
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<td><strong>TOTALS</strong></td>
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APPENDIX 2
FARM EVENTS

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<th>No of visitors</th>
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<td>Hafod y Llan</td>
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<td>Slade Farm</td>
<td>12/06/2011</td>
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<td>Slade Farm</td>
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<td>Clynywy</td>
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<td>Cwmrath Farm</td>
<td>17/06/2012</td>
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<td>Henfron</td>
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<td>National Botanic Gardens</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTALS</strong></td>
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</table>
The project has led the schools involved to develop a number of supporting and follow up activities, such as cooking, growing and visiting farms. This case study is an example of a farm visit on the Isle of Angelsey organized after the school farmers' market.

**Valley Community School Visit to Gwel Enlli Farm**

Case Study by group leader: Ms Gwenda Newman

Tuesday July 12th
21 pupils - Age range 9-11

Prior to the pupil’s visit I was invited to the farm. I was shown certificates of Health and Safety and Risk Assessment awarded to Dr Roberts and Dr Barbara following courses they attended. I was given a tour of the farm with an introduction to the philosophy of the organic farming system.

Issues that I hoped to achieve from the visit were discussed.
Our objectives included:
- What is organic farming?
- What are the benefits of organic farming?
- How is organic farming good for the environment?

On the visit itself, we were warmly welcomed with a brief on Health and Safety issues followed by a talk on the location of the farm.
The children were seated for a very informative presentation on organic farming. Key words were placed under the headings Organic farming and Farming. Dr Roberts held the children’s attention throughout by questioning individuals. The pupils responded well. Any questions they had were duly answered.

A tour of the farm followed. The children’s welfare was ensured at all times.
At the start the pupils were told to collect as many types of grasses as they could within a square meter. It was then explained, on an organic farm a variety of grasses, plants and flowers thrive due to the non-use of chemicals. This in turn is a varied diet for the animals and a source of food for many insects, beneficial to the local wildlife.

During the tour Dr Roberts pointed out a wide selection of trees which he has planted on the farm. He went on to explain their benefits to the environment. Dr Diana joined us on the tour and talked about her interest on the farm, namely the presence of the water vole.
Many other issues were covered on the tour, too numerous to mention. The pupils were introduced to different aspects of the farm, including the farming (land and livestock) and the wildlife in various locations on land and in the ponds.
The sight of the Welsh blacks with their calves thrilled the pupils. They were fascinated by the tiny frogs everywhere we walked. They saw a number of different insects including mayflies, dragonflies and butterflies, some not seen by the pupils before.

At the end of the walk we were provided with hand washing facilities and a refreshing drink of apple juice.

Summary:
- A safe environment
- Well planned
- An informative introduction
- All the objectives were met
- A successful and productive visit
- Links with aspects of Science in the National Curriculum (Interdependence of organisms)
- Appropriate facilities and resources
- Use of digital camera
- (Photos and copy of resources used e. mailed promptly)
- Waterproof clothing and wellington boots were at hand should it be necessary
- Possibility of studying other issues / objectives on another visit

I wish to thank Dr Roberts and Dr Diana for their hospitality and their professionalism in leading a large group of pupils on a farm visit. Dr Roberts has a particular manner in which to address children, firm but friendly. The talk he gave at the start was most impressive.

I look forward to a second visit in the next school year.
Many thanks again,

With best wishes,
Gwenda Newman