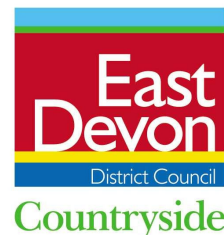




INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

News Service



Strictly embargoed until 11.00 am on 17 September 2007

COUNCIL AND CELEBRITY CHEF SUPPORT YEAR OF FOOD & FARMING

East Devon serves up some Food for Thought

EAST DEVON District Council launched an educational film and unit of work today (Monday 17 September) to be distributed free-of-charge to all secondary schools in Devon, about consumption, sustainability and local food and farming.

The film is part of a scheme of work for the Key Stage 3 geography syllabus, and was a collaboration between East Devon District Council (EDDC) and Televisionary, a TV production company based in Modbury. It was supported through funding from Natural England, EDDC and the East Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Sustainable Development Fund.

EDDC's Education Ranger, James Chubb, brought the funding streams together to get the project off the ground and approached local Chef Michael Caines for his support.

"I really wanted Michael's name behind the project," explained James, "as he is such a high-profile ambassador for Devon food.

"I met with him hoping to persuade him to put his name to three recipes, and left with his promise to star in the film and give up more time than I could have ever wished for!

Passionate

"Local food is something I am passionate about," said Michael Caines. "Food 4 Thought looked to sow seeds in young people's minds about issues surrounding local food and consumption and I was happy to help with anything that gets kids thinking about where their food comes from.

"Devon is blessed with a unique geography," explained Michael, "which creates uniquely flavoursome food – the more people who understand that, the better!"

The project sets out to spark discussion within the class, to encourage students to ask questions about where their food comes from and what impact their consumption has on their world.

The unit has been written to replace schemes of work studied by Devon's students when learning about consumption, which previously used West African cocoa production as a case study. Uffculme School's Head of Geography, Amanda Roff, was asked to write the schemes of work, as her school taught the previous syllabus to a very high level.

David Weatherly, Devon County Council's Adviser for Geography and Education for Sustainability, will be instrumental in ensuring the materials are rolled out county-wide: "Devon County Council is delighted to be involved in this exciting project. We feel this will form a very useful module for our students," he said.

The film is presented by James and three local students from Exmouth Community College. To find the budding stars, the Community College organised The Exe-Factor auditions, co-ordinated by Dan Eynon, head of Geography at Exmouth Community College.

"The response from the students was incredible," said Dan. "We had to whittle down from hundreds of applicants, until we came up with a short list of 40 for the production team to interview. It could have been the thought of a career in television that attracted so many to apply, but some of them thought they were going to meet Ant and Dec, so perhaps that had something to do with it too?"

"The level of talent we saw at the auditions was amazing," said Jeremy Hibbard, Creative Director of Televisionary. "Most of the students Dan arranged for us to meet would have made excellent presenters, but we chose three who had just that little bit extra."

Out of the classroom

Filming took place over three days in July, as luck would have it the only three sunny days of the entire month. The issues of consumption and sustainable food production were covered in a formal classroom setting – with a twist – before the students headed out of the classroom and visited three local farms.

Each farm provided an ingredient that the student took back to Michael Caines, who created a dish especially for the project with each ingredient. These recipes feature in the teaching materials and it is hoped students who study the course will be motivated to try the recipes themselves.

Included in the teachers' pack are references and links to accredited farm visits for schools provided by Farming And Countryside Education (FACE), as it is hoped that the film will encourage schools to create closer links with their local farms.

Natural England's South-West regional director Janette Ward said: "This is a fantastic resource for the schools of Devon and the South-West. It encourages children to consider important issues such as food miles and carbon footprints in a relevant and accessible way. The use of local farms and producers is a perfect example of the messages Natural England wants to get across during the Year of Food and Farming."

Ends

PHOTO CALL ON MONDAY 17 SEPTEMBER
12.15 – 12.45 Council Offices, Knowle, Sidmouth, EX10 8HL

Editors are invited to send press photographers and reporters to interview Michael Caines, and others involved in the project, at a photo call at the Council Offices, Sidmouth.
Members of the press are asked to arrive at the council offices by 12.15 and ask for Jane Voller.

NOTES FOR EDITORS

The Year of Food and Farming, launched on 12 September 2007, aims to give young people in England hands-on learning experiences based around three core areas: visits, growing experiences and cooking or preparing food. HRH The Prince of Wales is Patron for the Year.
For more information visit www.yearoffoodandfarming.org.uk

The three local food suppliers involved in making the film are:

- ◆ Four Elms Farm, Harpford, Sidmouth, EX10 0NJ. Tel: 01395 568 286
- ◆ Piper's Farm, Cullompton, EX15 1SD. Tel: 01392 881 380
- ◆ Quickes Traditional, Home Farm, Newton St Cyres, Exeter, EX5 5AY. Tel: 01392 851 222

For information, please contact:

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