



The nature of food

Why good food doesn't have to
cost the Earth

www.naturalengland.org.uk





Foreword

By Prue Leith

The most celebrated meal of the year and most anticipated (sometimes, sadly, the most dreaded) is Christmas lunch. It is also one of those important occasions when the whole family sits down together to eat.

The food on our plates hinges on the well-being of our natural environment, a fact we have been slow to recognise. It is reassuring that over 35,000 farmers in England alone produce food with nature in mind and keep our unique countryside looking as beautiful as it does.

Even for those who've spent a lifetime working with or writing about food, it's often hard to know which foods to buy, cook and enjoy that support our values, do least harm to the planet and are within our budgets. Information about food production, cooking and culture from 'farm to fork' is therefore really important to the home cook's decisions.

Which is why I'm delighted to support Natural England to raise awareness of the need for food and the environment to go hand in hand. And that I've been able to contribute some recipes which make the most of British food at Christmas without compromising our desire to look after our wildlife and landscapes.

I can't guarantee that finding out where the ingredients for our Christmas lunch have come from and how they have ended up on our plate will instantly make us more responsible food shoppers, but I think it could just help us to be more savvy with our shopping and eating habits the rest of the year.

So bon appetit, merry Christmas and a happy New Year!



Introduction

Good food doesn't have to cost the Earth. With a little curiosity, planning and resourcefulness, we can still enjoy delicious food made using the best ingredients, produced with nature's help. Cooking from fresh, using cheaper cuts of meat, selecting different types of fish, making the most of leftovers, and wasting less food, can all help to make our money go further – without compromising on quality or values.

Our decisions about which foods to buy and eat can have an important influence on the natural environment, as well as our pockets. Producing food does not have to come at the expense of our landscapes or wildlife, if we adopt the right approaches. As well as producing our food, farmers in Environmental Stewardship schemes, which are run by Natural England, are helping to look after our natural environment. The Campaign for the Farmed Environment aims to get more farmers into these schemes as well as undertake voluntary measures, illustrating the determination of farmers to protect our wildlife and landscapes whilst producing top quality food.

The natural environment itself helps to produce our food by providing some of the things plants and animals need to grow, such as insects to pollinate fruit trees. Without a healthy natural environment we would struggle to feed ourselves adequately



A good start to greener eating is to find out what food is in season and what is produced in your local area or region. In the winter months there is still a rich variety of seasonal foods to choose from. More and more people are also growing their own food, whether it's in a garden or on an allotment. Not only does this mean a supply of fresh fruit and vegetables, it also provides fresh air, healthy exercise, and a chance to meet other people.

Much of the English countryside is used to produce food. Through public rights of way or open access land, there's always a great range of opportunities to enjoy the farmed environment, as well as its products. Of course it's important that we look after the farmed environment and don't get in the way of farmers doing their valuable work, so always follow the Countryside Code when out and about in the countryside.

There are now hundreds of farms across England who welcome visitors on annual open days or all year round to find out what's happening 'down on the farm'. Some of these farms are part of networks run by voluntary organisation or in 'agri-environment' schemes. These schemes, such as those under the Environmental Stewardship programme, help farmers and other land managers in England conserve wildlife and landscape features, protect natural resources, promote public access, and protect the historic environment.



Meat

The rearing of animals for meat and their associated products and dishes has a rich history in England and close association with our landscapes, whether it's beef from Hereford Cattle, lamb born and raised on the South Downs, or pork from pigs ranged in the New Forest.

England has more breeds of livestock than any other country in the world. We are perhaps most famous for our roast beef – including being described by the French as 'les rosbifs'. For many centuries, beef was preserved by salting. Spiced beef is a variation of this, where it is dry-salted, spiced and then smoked or cooked. It was a regular Christmas dish in many English country houses and farms, known for over 300 years by various names.

If you're looking to save money but still enjoy top quality British meat, then cheaper cuts include lamb shanks, minced beef, and belly pork. Also, by buying whole joints, rather than processed cuts such as skinless chicken breasts, and through carefully planning meals and using up leftovers, a family can be fed well without breaking the bank.



Beckhithe Farms, Reedham, Norfolk

Farmer Barry Brooks and farm manager Gary Gray have pioneered innovative farm management, environmentally sensitive practices and landscape-wide benefits in Norfolk. The farm's commercial beef herd grazes 1,295 hectares of floodplain in the Norfolk Broads – some of the most environmentally sensitive marshland in England. The meat from the animals has a reputation for premium quality, reliability and consistency.

The farm is located in an area designated as one of the world's most important wetlands. The grazing regime is vital to keep the marshes in good condition and rich in wildlife. Around 85 pairs of lapwing and 20 pairs of redshank nest on the marshes every year. On the farm's arable land, Barry and Gary also provide habitat for farmland birds and have restored over 6,400 metres of hedgerow.



Turkey overtook goose as the most popular meat eaten on Christmas Day sometime ago. Originating from the wild turkeys of North America, the first birds are thought to have arrived in England around 1520. Norfolk and Cambridgeshire are the counties where many of our turkeys are produced today.

If you eat meat, then next time you're buying it in a shop or ordering a meal in a pub, why not look on the label or ask where it has come from and how it has been produced.

Did you know?

- Poultry meat, particularly chicken, is the UK's most popular meat.
- Cattle have been reared in the UK for over 6,000 years.
- There are over 40 different breeds of sheep in the UK.
- Pigs have no sweat glands, which is why they love to wallow in water or mud to keep cool.

Woodlands Farm, Lincolnshire

Woodlands Farm lies on the fertile Lincolnshire fens in an area known as South Holland, south-east of Boston. In 1996, farmer Andrew Dennis established a small flock of turkeys as a first step towards developing a more mixed and sustainable farming system. Paddocks were created and fruit trees and osiers (a willow tree whose branches are used for making baskets) were planted to provide the birds with shelter, shade, insects, and occasionally roosts. Given that the wild turkey is a woodland bird, it seemed appropriate they should be reared in the most natural setting possible.

The turkeys are fed a mix of home-grown organic peas, beans, wheat and barley, which is milled on the farm. Andrew says, "Our flock of 600 organic Norfolk Bronze and Norfolk Black benefit from being in a setting very close to the natural environment of their wild cousins. Our customers appreciate the high animal welfare and environmental standards the birds have been raised to".

For more information, visit
www.woodlandsfarm.co.uk





Dairy

Britain is famous for its milk and dairy products, having the natural advantages of a mild, damp climate, ideal for growing grass. It is claimed we now have more speciality cheeses than any other European country. From milk, cream and yoghurt to butter, cheese and ice cream, we still produce many of our dairy products ourselves, although this has fallen dramatically in recent years.

Dairy farms can often contain a host of interesting wild animals and plants, adapted to the pastures and hedgerows of the farms: from bats, spiders and other insects, to foxes and birds such as lapwings and barn owls.

Almost 4,500 or 45 per cent of dairy farms in England are part of the Environmental Stewardship's Entry Level Scheme. One supermarket sources its milk from dairy farms which dedicate a minimum of 10 per cent of their area to wildlife habitat and each has a plan to protect and enhance wildlife on their farm.

Most cheese is made by heating milk and letting it curdle. Rennet is added to help form the curds which are then sliced, separated from the whey and pressed into round 'truckles' or blocks. Some cheeses, such as cottage cheese, can be eaten very soon after making, whilst others, such as Stilton, need to be matured for a number of weeks or even months!



Blaze Farm, Peak District

The 69 hectares of Blaze Farm, within the Peak District National Park, has been owned by the Waller family since the 1950s. The farm has a dairy herd of 60 cows, made up of pedigree Holstein Friesians that produce an average of 7,000 litres of milk per year. The milk is used by the Wallers to make their delicious Hilly Billy ice-cream.

In August 2006, the Wallers entered a 'Higher Level Stewardship' agreement, part of the Environmental Stewardship scheme. The agreement includes the 'Educational Access' option to host visits for children and adults, as well as measures to help protect wildlife habitats and landscape features. Everybody at Blaze Farm is passionate about looking after the environment, as well as making people more aware of how and where food is produced.

For more information, visit <http://www.blazefarm.com/index.php>

If you love cheese, it's always a good idea to find out about the cheese producer, how long the cheese has matured for, and if the milk used to make the cheese has come from dairy farms operating to high environmental standards.

Yorkshire Wensleydale Cheese

The landscape of the Yorkshire Dales with its limestone pastures and hay meadows is dependent on the continuation of traditional farming practices. This in turn requires assured markets for the farms' products if they are to stay in business. Originally made from sheep's milk, Wensleydale is a semi-hard cheese, now made using full-fat cow's milk. Dales' legend says that monks developed the cheese recipes which led to the production of Wensleydale. In Yorkshire, it is traditionally eaten with fruit cake, oatcakes, or apple pie.

The only producer of the cheese in Wensleydale itself is The Wensleydale Creamery in Hawes, North Yorkshire, which has applied for special protected status for the cheese from the European Union. All of the farms supplying The Wensleydale Creamery are in the Yorkshire Dales 'Environmentally Sensitive Area'. As well as quality milk production, the farms have a focus on the conservation of the herb-rich limestone pastures and hay meadows of the Dales.

For more information, see <http://www.wensleydale.co.uk/>





Did you know?

- Dairy farms in the UK produce over 13 billion litres of milk a year, coming from over 2 million cows.
- One study to determine the effect of cheese upon sleep discovered that the dreams produced were specific to the type of cheese.
- A giant Cheddar cheese was given to Queen Victoria as a wedding gift. It weighed over 1,000 pounds.
- It takes six pints of milk to make a pound of Cornish Clotted Cream.
- Milk bottles were first introduced in 1880. Before this, milkmen filled customers' jugs.



Fish

Being an island nation, where we are always less than a hundred miles from the sea, fish and other seafood have long been a part of our diets and food culture. In the Middle Ages, Fridays and 'saint days' were nominated as 'fast days' when meat should not be eaten, and so fish was often chosen instead.

In the UK today, we buy 385,000 tonnes of fish and other seafood in shops every year, with more eaten in restaurants, pubs and fish and chip shops. The UK imports large quantities of fish, in 2007 approximately 783 tonnes valued at £1,847 million, whilst we also exported 439 tonnes worth £923 million.

As well as fish, there is a range of other seafood on offer: from mussels and oysters, to crab, lobster and scallops. One of the best places to buy seafood is as near to the sea as possible: from fishing ports such as Whitby and Brixham, to 'beach fisheries', such as Beer in Dorset and Hastings in Sussex.

Seafood is a seasonal food. In winter, well-known examples of fish include haddock and whiting, as well as less familiar ones such as gurnard, grey mullet and sea bream. Coley is also available and makes a good substitute for cod and haddock in fish pies and casseroles.



South-West Mackerel Handline Fishery

Certified in 2001 as 'sustainable' according to Marine Stewardship Council standards, this fishery supports around 150 small vessels which fish between the River Exe and Hartland point on the north coast of Devon.

In 2007, the fishery landed 841 tonnes of mackerel. In minimising a wide range of potential environmental impacts, the fishery is considered a good example. This includes hand-lining where each fisherman operates only one line each with usually 20–35 hooks. As this technique is selective, by-catch of other species occurs only occasionally.

For more information, see <http://linecaught.org.uk/>

With increasing concerns about the decline in fish stocks, it is useful to ask where the fish you buy has come from, what methods have been used to catch it and how the fishery is managed. It should always be labelled as either wild or farmed.

Freshwater fish are also an important part of our history and food culture. Many monasteries raised carp and pike in their own 'stew ponds' and rivers often featured fish traps and weirs.

Two species of trout are farmed in the UK – the indigenous brown trout and the non-native rainbow trout. The most commonly farmed species is the rainbow trout and, in 2005, we produced 16,500 tonnes. Some trout farms are open to public to show how the fish are raised and how environmental impacts can be minimised.

Whether it's eel or perch caught from rivers or trout or carp from fish farms, there's usually a good range of freshwater fish available at the fishmongers or supermarket, or from farmers' market or even local fish farms themselves.





Did you know?

- The first fish and chip shop opened in London in 1860, and there are now about 11,500 in the UK.
- Billingsgate market in London is the largest fish market in the UK.
- Fish farming supplies around half the world's fish supply.
- In one survey, most people thought environmental issues were important when buying fish.



Fruit and vegetables

In England we grow a superb variety of fruit and vegetables: from carrots, broccoli and tomatoes to apples, pears, strawberries and blackcurrants. We currently grow over 60 per cent of the vegetables we eat, equivalent to 2.3 million tons, but only around 10 per cent of the fruit. East Anglia is the largest horticultural growing area, followed by the East Midlands and the South East of England.

Roast potatoes are often a favourite part of Christmas dinner, as well as at other times. Potatoes were brought to Britain from South America in the sixteenth century, becoming particularly popular in the Industrial Revolution. Around 450 varieties are now grown throughout Britain and we consume 94 kilograms of potatoes per person, per year – making us the third largest consumer of potatoes in Europe.



Potato farmers, like all farmers, can increase their yields and save money by using good soil management practices. These include the use of organic manures to build soil fertility and help retain soil moisture, cultivation along the contours of fields (rather than up and down slopes), and the use of tied ridges ('ties' are constructed at intervals across the furrows). Many soil organisms are important to ensure potato plants are healthy and yield a good crop.

Love them or hate them, Brussels sprouts are an essential vegetable at Christmas. First cultivated as early as the eleventh century in what is now Belgium, in Britain we grow around 80,000 tons a year. It's best to avoid overcooking Brussels sprouts as this can release a chemical which smells a bit like sulphur, and results in less vitamins.

David Westwood and Son, West Yorkshire

David Westwood's family has been farming and growing rhubarb since the 1800s. The farm covers approximately 500 acres near Wakefield and is in the middle of West Yorkshire's 'Rhubarb Triangle'. As well as rhubarb, David and his family grow a wide variety of vegetables including Brussels sprouts. All the produce is certified to 'Leaf Marque' standards, which includes measures to help protect the environment and create habitats for wildlife. As well as supplying national and regional retailers, the Westwoods run a vegetable box scheme, supplying the local community with fresh fruit and vegetables.

For more information, see www.dwsyorkshireboxes.co.uk/index.htm



Wild crop relatives in developing Brassica varieties to adapt to climate change

Brassica species play an important role in agriculture and horticulture. The species has been domesticated into a variety of crops including swede, cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, Brussels sprouts and mustards. Wild Brassicas are known to contain genes which provide resistance to climatically stressful growing conditions. Hence, they are being researched as possible sources of genes which will allow the development of new crop varieties more able to adapt to climate change.





The traditional orchards of England, primarily apple but also pear, plum and cherry, have a close association with the English landscape. Most farms in England once had at least a small orchard to supply the needs of the farm, its workers, and the local community.

Kent was the centre of dessert and culinary apples but was also important for other orchard fruit, especially cherries. East Anglia and other southern counties too were very important for orchard fruits, while Gloucestershire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire were particularly important for pear production.

Since the 1950s, nearly two-thirds of England's orchard area has been lost, and we now import about three quarters of the apples we eat. The importance of domestic fruit production and orchards needs to be recognised by retailers and shoppers, if we are to enjoy home-grown fruit in the future.

Support is now available for the restoration and management of traditional orchards through the Environmental Stewardship programme. And, encouraged by Common Ground and other organisations, there are now many local orchard and apple groups looking after traditional orchards, celebrating traditional orchard fruits and establishing new community orchards.



The Travelling Press

Travelling presses were used widely in the nineteenth century, pulled by horses around the countryside for farmers to bring their apples to press for cider, charged by the gallon.

The East of England Apples and Orchards project has re-established the tradition in the UK with a modern pressing appliance, which can be used for apples, pears and grapes. 'The Travelling Press' can turn up to an orchard or vineyard and press 2,000 bottles of juice in a day.

Jonathan Briggs, Mistletoe expert

Orchards offer a range of other produce, as well as fruit, nuts and fruit products. In one example, Jonathan Briggs from Tenbury sells mistletoe from orchards via the Internet. Mistletoe is often found on apple trees and requires pruning, but much of the mistletoe sold at Christmas is currently imported from Europe.

For more information, see www.mistletoe.org.uk



Norfolk Beefing Apple

'Beefings' were apples much favoured for drying in the nineteenth century. If they were dried in baking ovens, they were known as 'biffins'. In the Victorian period the apples were grown and dried by Norwich bakers and dispatched as presents or to London fruiterers. They were often a Christmas delicacy – Charles Dickens mentions a window display of biffins in 'A Christmas Carol'. Although commercial cultivation of Norfolk Beefings has died out, the trees can still sometimes be found in the gardens of East Anglia.

Did you know?

- The Peruvian Quechua language has more than 1,000 words to describe potatoes.
- All our apple varieties are thought to have originated from their wild cousin found in just one area of Northern Kazakhstan.
- There are around 2,000 varieties of apple, with names such as Peasgood's Nonsuch and Colonel Vaughan, although only a few are grown commercially.
- In one survey, 1,868 species of wild animals and plants were found in just three orchards in Worcestershire.

If you like to eat super-fresh fruit and vegetables, why not try growing some yourself, whether it's on a local allotment, in a back garden, or even on a window sill. There are many organisations and groups which help people 'grow your own' and some, such as local authorities and Landshare, which help people find suitable land for food growing.

Alternatively, your local farm shop, 'pick your own' farm or farmers' markets will stock a range of locally produced seasonal fruit and vegetables. If you can't get to a farm shop or farmers' market, there are now a number of vegetable box schemes which deliver straight to the door.



Baking and preserves

Bread has been a staple of the British household for centuries. In past times, many old country houses had their own bread oven, often built into a corner of the hearth. Bread was baked first because it needed the hottest temperature, followed by pies and tarts.

Many types of cereals have been used to make bread and other foods such as porridge. Wheat and barley were first cultivated by Neolithic farmers, whilst Rye was cultivated by German tribes and Spelt introduced by the Romans.

Once the grain has been milled, whether by watermill, windmill, or roller mills, the flour is sometimes blended with other types to produce bread flour. Britain's new breed of artisan bakers often only mix flour with water, salt and yeast to make a range of tasty loaves and rolls. Making bread at home with a bread maker can also produce a top quality loaf and save you money.



Richard Bramley, Manor Farm, Yorkshire

Yorkshire farmer, Richard Bramley, and his family grow cereals and potatoes on their 190 hectare farm at Kelfield near York. Yields of milling wheat of 9.9 tonnes per hectare were achieved in 2008.

The farm has embraced environmental stewardship by joining the Entry Level Scheme of the Environmental Stewardship programme. Richard is keen to provide positive benefits for wildlife, as well as increasing the public's knowledge about farming and food.

Environmental practices on the farm include hedgerow management, buffer strips sown with native grass species and clover, tree planting and nest boxes to encourage bats. About 7 per cent of the farm is specifically managed for wildlife, benefiting the eighty identified species of birds, ten of which are endangered.

Lincolnshire Plum Bread

Lincolnshire Plum Bread is a speciality bread made with dried fruit. It originates from the county of its name and dates back more than a hundred years. It is made in batches and has a low, rounded shape and a deep gold colour speckled with the dried fruit. Although available all year round, it is most popular at Christmas and is sometimes eaten with cheese.

Did you know?

- Compared with the 1940s, we produce three times more wheat and barley per hectare.
- Cereal production in the UK is worth over £2.5 billion, with about 3 million hectares of land under cultivation.
- 54 per cent of cereal farms are part of the Environmental Stewardship programme's Entry Level Scheme.
- The biscuits 'Bath Olivers' were originally known as Dr Olivers, having been invented by Dr William Oliver in the eighteenth century.
- 'Bedfordshire Clangers' are meat pasties. Their name derives from the old Northamptonshire word of 'clang', meaning 'to eat voraciously'.



As well as its delicious bread, Britain is famous for its cakes, pastries, biscuits and puddings. Examples include gingerbread, scones, crumpets, Eccles cakes, treacle tart, gooseberry fool, rhubarb crumble, and sticky toffee pudding, to name but a few. We are also blessed with a strong tradition in preserves and jam making: blackberry and apple jam, quince jelly, lemon curd, mince meat, piccalilli, and pickled onions all feature in Britain's larder.

Honey is one of nature's sweetest treats. Bees were kept for honey production by the Ancient Greeks and today top chefs are extolling its virtues. Not only does honey taste great, it's a natural sweetener and can soothe a sore throat. When you open a jar of honey, spare a thought for the bees which have flown about 55,000 miles to produce just one pound of it!

To collect nectar to turn into honey, bees won't travel further than they need to. So, if you have a garden, why not grow some wildflowers which your local bees will love: buddleia, phacelia, and clover are all good sources of food for bees. And, next time you buy a jar of honey, look out for English honey which has all the wonderful flavour of English orchards, fields and hedgerows.

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Ged Marshall, Buckinghamshire

Ged Marshall has been producing honey for over 15 years. Ged takes his hives out, 12 at a time, to farms surrounding his own three acres in Buckinghamshire. Here his bees (all 15 million of them) have a range of sources of nectar: oil seed rape in the spring, followed by lime trees and chestnuts, borage and clover, as well as field and hedgerow flowers. During the summer Ged takes his hives to Kent, where his bees pollinate plum, cherry, pear and apple trees in local orchards.

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Did you know?

- About 5,000 tonnes of honey are produced in the British Isles every year.
- Honey has been found to contain chemicals which have antibiotic properties.
- Globally, about a third of all the food we eat relies on bees and other insects for pollination.
- It is estimated that the value of the pollination services by honey bees in the UK is worth £165 million.



Drink

In the Middle Ages, everyone in England drank ale – from the moment they were weaned. Water wasn't safe to drink and most milk was made into butter or cheese. Any drink brewed from malted grain and water was described as ale, which was much weaker than the beers we have today.

Cider was only drunk where there were cider apple orchards, primarily in the West Country, but also parts of the East and South East of England. While cider drinking was bounded by place, wine drinking was restricted to those who could afford it, as it was a luxury product imported from mainland Europe.

Like beer and cider, wine can be sugared, spiced, and heated up to make a warming winter drink. The old Christmas tradition of 'wassailing' – drinking a toast to your fruit trees – is still a much-loved event in the rural calendar.

Unlike some traditional British soft drinks which are fruit-based, elderflower cordial is made from flowers. It is a product of hedgerows where elder is a common shrub, flowering between late May and July. To this day large amounts of elderflowers are collected by individual households to make the cordial. It is also estimated that nearly a million litres of elderflower cordial are made commercially in England every year.

Did you know?

- Beer is thought to have been produced in Europe as far back as the Neolithic period, around 3,000 BC.
- The UK has the highest consumption of cider, producing around 600 million litres every year.
- The word “scrumpy” comes from ‘scrump’ – a local dialect term for a small or withered apple.
- There are now around 400 vineyards in England, producing over two million bottles of wine a year.
- Mead is a traditional drink made from honey. ‘Mulled mead’ was often enjoyed at Christmas.

Stroud Brewery, Gloucestershire

Stroud Brewery in Gloucestershire is a micro-brewery producing a range of beers. It sources its malt from Warminster Maltings in Wiltshire, Britain's oldest working floor malting, who enable them to guarantee a malt supply grown on the Cotswolds. Greg Pilley, the founder of the brewery, says, “Brewing a local beer is one thing, but brewing it using locally grown barley really sets it apart. Cotswolds farmers produce some of the highest quality malting barleys in the UK. Our brewery together with Warminster are the links in the chain that connect local drinkers with their local farms and the characteristic landscape they create.”



For more information, see www.stroudbrewery.co.uk

Next time you're enjoying a drink, whether alcoholic or not, look on the label or maker's website for information about how it has been produced and where its ingredients have come from.

Useful sources of information

Campaign for the Farmed Environment:

Campaign website
<http://www.cfeonline.org.uk/>

Enjoy the countryside:

Natural England
<http://cwr.naturalengland.org.uk/>
Countryside Code
<http://www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk/>

Visit a farm:

Farms for Schools
<http://www.farmsforschools.org.uk/index.htm>
Open Farm Sunday
<http://www.farmsunday.org/ofc/home.eb>
Soil Association Farm Network
<http://www.soilassociation.org/>

Buy seasonal and local:

Big Barn
<http://www.bigbarn.co.uk/>
Eat Seasonably
<http://eatseasonably.co.uk/>
National Farmers Retail and Markets Association (FARMA)
<http://www.farma.org.uk/>

British cheese:

The Cheese Web
<http://www.thecheeseweb.com/>

English honey:

English Honey
<http://www.englishhoney.co.uk/>

Apples and orchards:

Common Ground (including Apple Day)
<http://www.commonground.org.uk/>

Real beer and cider:

Campaign for Real Ale
<http://www.camra.org.uk/>
UK Cider
<http://www.ukcider.co.uk>

Real bread:

Campaign for Real Bread
<http://www.realbreadcampaign.org/>

Sustainable fish:

Fish Online
<http://www.fishonline.org/>
Marine Stewardship Council
<http://www.msc.org/>

Grow your own:

Garden Organic
<http://www.gardenorganic.org.uk/>
Royal Horticultural Society
<http://www.rhs.org.uk/>
Landshare
<http://landshare.channel4.com/>
National Society of Allotments and Leisure Gardeners
<http://www.nsalg.org.uk/>
Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens
<http://www.farmgarden.org.uk/>

Learn about food and farming:

Think Food and Farming
<http://www.thinkfoodandfarming.org.uk/>
Farming and Countryside Education (FACE)
<http://www.face-online.org.uk/>

Food and farming standards:

Conservation Grade
<http://www.conservationgrade.co.uk/>
Leaf Marque
<http://leaf.eversite.co.uk/leafuk/consumers/whatis.aspx>
Organic
http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/organic/home_en
Red Tractor
<http://www.redtractor.org.uk/>
RSPCA Freedom Foods
<http://www.rspca.org/>

Events and celebrations:

British Food Fortnight
<http://lovebritishfood.co.uk/>
Organic Fortnight
<http://www.soilassociation.org/>
Food festivals and events
<http://www.sustainweb.org/foodcalendar/>
Slow Food UK
<http://www.slowfood.org.uk/Cms/Page/home>

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