



localfoodworks



Peak Eats Ready Meals

A heat and eat ready meals service for holiday cottage guests in the Peak District. The range of high quality meals includes lamb, beef, vegetarian dishes and puddings. The dishes are sourced as locally as possible and from environmentally sensitive farming methods if possible. They are cooked locally and stocked in the freezer of the cottage owner or in nearby shops. The cottage owner promotes the meals with posters or leaflets in the accommodation, and makes a small profit on each sale.

A great interest has been shown in these ready meals by the media as this is a collaboration, where the environmental aspect of the farm management systems has played a marketing role and a direct link has been made between the recreational use of the landscape and the food produced from that land being bought by the recreational users.

CASE STUDY

3.

Local Food Works is a partnership project between the Soil Association and the Countryside Agency providing practical support and information for the development of local food networks.



The producers are:

i) Karen and Paul Beresford, Buxton
Shepherds Lamb and Peak Puddings



Paul Beresford is the third generation of his family to farm sheep at Stoop Farm, on the hills and moors above Hollinsclough in the Peak District National Park. He runs a flock of 600 ewes and will sell approximately 800 Suffolk cross lambs in 2002. The sheep graze on pastures with wild flowers and grasses, some of the land they farm is under a Countryside Stewardship scheme that allows wild flowers to seed before grazing. The lambs, born in April /May are reared very naturally and kept with their mothers for the first five months of their life. They have a simple diet of milk and grass. Karen is a graduate of Nottingham University School of Agriculture, a trained nurse and has three small children. She wanted to work at home, be self-employed and loves cooking.

ii) Arthur Gee and Carol Burns of Dovedale Traditional Beef

Arthur Gee is the latest of generations of his family farming Ridge Farm at Longnor. He rears traditional and rare breeds of beef cattle, among them White Park and Hereford. The farm is managed under an Environmentally Sensitive area scheme that ensures the survival of wild flowers and grasses and the maintenance of the characteristic dry stonewalls of the area. Carol Burns, Arthur's partner has a full time job but is very keen to build the Traditional Beef business with Arthur.



iii) Julie Shotton of Peak Feast

Cakes and savouries, made in an organic, vegetarian, vegan or traditional style. Some years ago Julie started one of the first vegetarian restaurants in Bristol- 'Poppies', and is aware of the exacting standards and the growing demand for fine quality vegetarian and vegan food. Her aim is to offer a tempting and unusual array of flavour and textures, all to the highest quality standards, using ingredients sourced as locally as possible. She is interested in trying to source some vegetables from local allotment growers.

One of the replies to the project's tourism business questionnaires said that pre-prepared meals were wanted for the owner's holiday cottage business. As the project was already working with Karen Beresford and was aware of her lamb ready meals, Karen was put in touch with the cottage owner. After discussions it became apparent that one type of meal - Lamb, was not enough of an offer, so Karen suggested a collaboration between herself, Julie Shotton and Arthur Gee; Peak Eats. Peak Eats now offers a full range of meals.

These are gradually being introduced by Peak District businesses. In some instances they are being offered by local village shops, and advertised in campsites, caravan parks and nearby holiday cottages. In other cases the meals are being stocked by the cottage owners and offered during the stay and also prior to arrival.

In the two months since February 2002, Peak Eats ready meals have been adopted for sale in:

- Three village shops, Hartington, Longnor and Hulme End

- Longnor Caravan Park
- A coffee shop in Eyam
- Two Holiday cottage businesses in Ilam, and one in Hope
- Cottage businesses in Wootton (5 units), Millers Dale (5 units), Waterhouses, Alstonefield and Stanshope (2 units) are all interested in stocking Peak Eats when microwaveable packaging has been developed.

Example of Peak Eats Menu

Main Meals £3.50

Buxton Shepherds Lamb:

Spicy Lamb with Apricots and Saffron Potatoes
Peak District Lamb Stew with a Herb Cobbler
Shepherds Pie with Potato and Parsnip Topping

Dovedale Traditional Beef:

Dovedale Beef Braised in Red Wine
Dovedale Beef Stew and Dumplings
Dovedale Beef Lasagne

Peak Feast:

Brown Lentil and Vegetable Stew with Dumplings
Butterbean Stir fry with Cashews, Lime and Ginger
Mushroom and Puy Lentil in a Red Wine Sauce

Puddings £1.75

Peak Puddings Chocolate Pudding
Peak Puddings Berry and Almond Crumble
Ginger and Apple Upside Down Pudding

Case study written by Sue Prince of Peak Eats Ready Meals

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