

## BECOMING A FARM SUPPORTER

Most people just come to the shop like regular customers. But many become farm supporters. That means taking out a monthly standing order to the farm for your food, based on how much you want to spend.

It's that simple. Supporters get fresh, organic food at a good price and can visit the farm as often as they like to see what's going on.

We do a weekly delivery run for farm supporters to Edinburgh, Biggar, West Linton and Peebles.

## FROM FARM TO FOOD SERVICE

### Growing for people we know

We're passionate about organic food and farming, so we want more people to eat more organic and seasonal food. That means doing all we can to make our food affordable and convenient. But we want to do even more...

### Buying for people we know

At the moment we are selling whole boxes of English organic apples, and we do sacks of potatoes, cheese, flour and rice in bulk, and stash packs of meat to keep the costs down.

These bulk buys make us competitive with the supermarkets, and although we charge less than them for deliveries we charge nothing for the cheerful and informative service in the shop. We are always happy to source products for customers, from salt toothpaste (an acquired taste) to organic marzipan - just ask.

Whitmuir Organics is a Soil Association certified farm just south of Edinburgh. We produce organic beef, lamb, mutton, Tamworth pork, genuinely free range eggs, soft fruit and vegetables and turkeys for Christmas. Our shop stocks over 1500 lines of organic produce. We are on the A701, (the Moffat road) 4 miles south of the Leadburn Inn junction and 2 miles north of West Linton.



## ABOUT OUR TURKEYS

**Our turkeys are different...**This year, as usual, we have Kelly Bronzes and also traditional Norfolk Black and Cambridge bronzes, as well as a handful of Lavender Blues and Bourbon Reds.

**Our turkeys taste great...**We know that the Kelly bronzes ooze with flavour but in a blind tasting last year the traditional single-breasted turkeys came out on top - so you choose!

**Our turkeys have the right to roam...**Most days this means they hang around the shop car park and admire the vegetables on the porch.

**Our turkeys mature...**We hang them in the barn for 7-10 days after plucking, to develop a fuller taste and texture.

**Our turkeys graze...**On grass and nettles and blackcurrant leaves and the strawberry patch and of course our turkeys are Soil Association certified organic, as are all our meat and vegetables.

WHITMUIR  
ORGANICS  
FOOD WITH ATTITUDE NOT ADDITIVES

Pigmail  
NOVEMBER 2008

## Have a very Whitmuir Christmas

In addition to our own turkeys we make our own stuffings and trimmings boxes, cured hams, pork roasts, beef roasts, seasonal veg boxes, Christmas cakes and Christmas puddings as well as a range of bespoke gift hampers. Visit our shop or contact Heather to place an order now.

## and a Green New Year

Thanks to a grant from Scotland Rural Development Programme and a loan from Triodos Bank, we are building a new café, shop and gallery just above the site of the old cattle sheds.

This timber-framed building will be carbon-neutral, with most of its heat coming from passive solar gain and the heat generated inside the building, along with high standards of insulation. Solar panels will meet most of the demand for hot water, with top-up for heating in winter from a log boiler. Photovoltaic panels will meet a proportion of electricity needs, and much of the cooking will be on a wood-fired range.

In addition, we will be putting up a wind turbine to meet all the farm's electricity needs, and making some waymarked paths through the farm. The current shop will become an education centre on organic and sustainable food.

Meanwhile, we are just completing the new timber cattle shed, and the cows are waiting patiently to get inside for the winter.

## We are a UKTV Local Food Hero

Whitmuir Organics is thrilled to be one of the 5 Scottish Finalists in the UKTV Local Food Hero Competition for 2008.

It's a great honour to be in such good company and receive recognition for both the quality of the food we produce and the ways in which we are working to try and

change our local food culture. Congratulations to the other four Scottish finalists; Café Cree, Craigies Farm, Fencebay and 88 Degrees.

## Gary Rhodes and the judges are looking for people who meet the following criteria

**Local** - Supporters of the community; who champion food with a strong connection to the local area.

**Food** - Great taste and quality, top-notch produce and super customer service. An awareness of seasonality, animal welfare and ethical issues is important, together with a respect for the land and the people who farm it.

**Hero** - They should demonstrate sound business practice, confront the challenges they face with tenacity and treat their valued customers with respect. They have a story to tell and can communicate their passion to others. They deliver above and beyond expectation and their trade is more than a job - it's a way of life.

The 10 regional programmes will be screened on Monday - Friday evenings at 9.00pm, starting on Monday 17 November. To see how we do watch the Scottish programme on UKTV Food on 24 November at 9.00pm. The Grand Final will be screened on Friday 28 November at 10.00pm. Did we make it?



Whitmuir Farm, Lamancha, West Linton, EH46 7BB  
T. 01968 661 908  
E. heather@whitmuirorganics.co.uk  
www.whitmuirorganics.co.uk

## Shop opening times

Monday - Friday 10-6  
Saturday 10-4  
Sunday 12-4

## Five a day

If we eat our recommended five portions of non-organic fruit or vegetables a day, roughly half of them will contain measurable residues of at least one of the 354 different pesticides found in food products across the EU.

About once a week one of our portions of non-organic fruit or veg will contain more pesticide than the maximum legal residue. It's not just non-organic fruit and vegetables - most samples of non-organic flour and bread also contain measurable residues.

### What pesticides do

We are not sure what exposure to small doses of different pesticides in combination over 30 or 40 years might be doing to us - because there is only one sure way of finding out. (For comparison, the lag period between exposure to asbestos and developing cancer is 20-30 years.)

We do know that pesticides can be harmful to the environment, particularly to fish and frogs which are sensitive to very low doses.

We also know from the history of pesticide use that chemicals once thought to be harmless have turned out to be damaging.

Only this year aminopyralid was withdrawn after gardeners across the UK reported distorted and stunted growth in vegetables grown with manure from cows or horses which had been fed on hay from pasture previously treated with this herbicide.

A pesticide used to treat seed before sowing was banned in Germany this year after it was shown to have killed millions of honeybees.

### Pesticide use in Europe

Recently, the EU proposed delisting some of the pesticides where there is most evidence that they cause cancer, are toxic to babies in the womb or disrupt the endocrine system. Many of these pesticides are already banned in countries such as France and Italy.



The British Government opposed the proposals, arguing that agricultural yields would be massively reduced and the cost of food would increase.

At the time of writing, MEPs voted to reduce from five years to two the period for finding safer alternatives to the most toxic substances. They also voted for national action plans to reduce pesticide use. Negotiations on the final details are still to take place.

As Europe still accounts for over 25% of the world market in pesticides, this legislation sends an important message.

### Pesticide use worldwide

However, poorer countries experience greater damage to human health and the environment. Farm workers on banana plantations in Central America became sterile through applying pesticides which had been banned years previously in the USA. Populations of migrating songbirds in the US have declined rapidly due to pesticide use in South America.

### Pesticide use in cotton

Cotton accounts for 16% of all insecticide use in the world, and accidental poisoning with pesticides causes acute and chronic health problems for millions of cotton farmers in the developing world.

A single drop of Aldicarb - a neurotoxin commonly used in cotton farming - is enough to kill an adult if absorbed through the skin. Pesticides like this are often applied by children, or without any protective clothing, and are typically stored in the bedroom.

For the pro-pesticide case, learn more at [www.pesticideinformation.eu](http://www.pesticideinformation.eu), a website run by the European Crop Protection Association (where you can find this gem "The idea of chemical-free farming is absurd and dangerous").

For more from the anti-pesticide lobby, try the Pesticides Action Network on [www.pan-uk.org](http://www.pan-uk.org)

**But if you just want to adopt the precautionary principle and eat food free from pesticides, just buy organic bread, fruit and vegetables. And buy organic cotton.**

## One in five cows..

New Zealand has introduced a national emissions trading scheme which will apply to agriculture from 2011. Farmers will be given permits for 90% of their 2005 emissions from 2013 to 2018, after which their free allocation will phase out gradually until 2030 when farms will have to pay the full cost of their emissions.

The impact assessment study suggests that under the new scheme beef and sheep farms will become more profitable if they move 20% of their land from livestock to forestry.



## Fish forever

In response to popular demand we stock Fish 4 Ever tuna, anchovies, sardines and mackerel. Fish 4 Ever are working hard to make sure the fish they sell are from environmentally and socially sustainable fisheries. Also, all that oily fish helps you do Sudoku and remember where you left your keys. More on [www.fish-4-ever.com](http://www.fish-4-ever.com)

## Whitmuir Winter Talks 2009

January 15th

### Food and farming at Whitmuir

Heather Anderson and Pete Ritchie talk about the big ideas and the nitty gritty of organic food.

January 29th

### Jams and chutneys

Colin Torrance, West Linton potato expert, shares his passion for making seasonal food last longer. Bring and swap your own recipes and produce!

February 12th

### Making chocolate

Ali and Friederike Matthis from the Chocolate Tree in East Lothian talk about making organic chocolate and might even let you taste it.

February 26th

### Olive oil the hard way

Heather Masoud and Palestinian farmers talk about producing oil for Zaytoun in a conflict zone.

March 12th

### Making good bread

Andrew Whitley, founder of the Village Bakery, talks about why bread matters and how to make it better.

March 26th

### Poultry welfare

John Savory, retired poultry scientist, talks about better and worse ways of looking after laying hens and table birds.

**Talks are free and start at 7.30pm in the Hub, Old Moffat Road, Lamancha. Booking is essential.**