

The Future for Yorkshire Food - Hazlewood Castle 03 02 05

Speakers: Lord Haskins (Yorkshire Forward), Joanne Denney-Finch (IGD), Karen Todd (Asda), Dominic Dyer (Food & Drink Federation) and Karen Carlyle (Regional Food Group for Yorkshire and the Humber).

For regional food ... *"The moment is now"* Joanne Denney-Finch

- 96% of shoppers want a wide range of local food on sale nearby
- 72% take an interest in local food whilst on holiday
- 69% say local food is very important
- 69% of visitors recognise that food makes a positive contribution to holidays
- 67% of shoppers are prepared to pay more for local food
- 47% are buying local food from supermarkets at least once a month
- 33% expect local food to be more expensive than national food
- 27% buy local food products because they are a higher quality
- 26% buy local food products as they are fresher
- 21% think local food should be cheaper than national food
- 11% buy local food products to support the local community

Asda have a £160m target for regional food: 2% of sales. Some stores have 200 local lines (Cornwall?). Nationally there are 1,500 lines from 250 local suppliers. Shoppers request lines via "pipeline". In Yorkshire, Asda has 23 stores ("Stores of the Community") just under 10% of their estate. The launch of Yorkshire's Best in March 2004 (5th regional initiative) saw 61 new lines introduced from 15 new suppliers. Yorkshire Milk is their number one regional line.

Key messages:

Focus on Quality – Running businesses well to inspire trust: eg manufacturers using local produce. Communicating provenance and quality effectively. Safety as an absolute given. Price must reflect quality.

Productivity – Essential even if you have provenance and differentiation. Regional food employs 55,000 people in the UK and is worth £2.7bn, this is £49k turnover per worker against the national food & drink average of £132k (Source: IGD/FDF).

Innovate to Differentiate – Shoppers and retailers are looking for overall value, not just price. Successful products need a well-communicated Unique Selling Proposition beyond provenance:

- Taste
- Freshness
- Variety
- Heritage
- Convenience
- Speciality
- Production method.

"The secret of success is to know something nobody else does"

Aristotle Onassis

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