

Fair deals for co-operators

You are warmly invited to our
Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 22 September 2009

A networking opportunity and visit to AGM hosts, Anglia Farmers Limited

Morning. Coffee on arrival. If you arrive early enough before lunch, you can take a 20 minute **guided tour of the three co-operatives** that operate from the Honingham Thorpe site: Anglia Wood Fuels, Eastern Machinery Ring and Anglia Farmers Limited. These tours will be organised on an ad hoc basis and do not need to be pre-booked. You are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity, as you could not fail to be impressed: AFL is the leading agricultural purchasing co-operative in the UK, operating for the benefit of its 1850 members out of smart new premises.

12:30 Lunch. Catering will be provided in house by AFL from local, traceable sources. Food is, of course, their business – so expect something special.

13:15 Co-operatives East AGM

Speakers

- **Clarke Willis, Anglia Farmers Limited: *Returning Value to Members.*** AFL won the Co-operative Excellence Award for 'Returning Value to Members' in 2009.
- **Keith Grinsted, Chelmsford Star Co-operative Society: *Returning Value to the Community.***
- **Sally Chicken, Rainbow Saver Anglia Credit Union: *Credit Union Trends***

Networking

Stalls and exhibitions by co-operatives and associated organisations from all over the East of England. Intertrading and information exchange is encouraged.

All details are subject to change. This event is FREE, but we need to know numbers, dietary requirements, etc., so please contact the Secretariat (see back page) if you would like to attend or put a stall up.

Thank you – we look forward to seeing you there!

Event hosted by Anglia Farmers Limited, Honingham Thorpe, Colton, Norwich, NR9 5BZ
www.angliafarmers.co.uk

Tastes of Anglia



**Championing
quality local
food and drink**

The regional food group for the Eastern Region, Tastes of Anglia, is a membership organisation that works with its members to promote the fine food and drink produced in the six counties of Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk. They are dedicated to helping producers and processors of food and drink to serve and sell regional products to the retail, catering and food service sectors.

They also operate a wholesale business, called Tastes of Anglia Table, that distributes for some 55 local and regional food producers to over 200 customers across the region. Started in 2001, Table was designed to be a route to market for smaller producers and give food service and retailers a one-stop shop for sourcing quality local food and drink. The idea of one order point, one delivery and one invoice appealed greatly to delis, farm shops and independents and the business grew rapidly. They now offer some 900 local and regional chilled, ambient and frozen lines.

In 2006, Table began a delivery service

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Celebrating co-operative excellence: award winners revealed

The 'Returning Value to Members' award was won by Anglia Farmers, an enterprise that has made considerable efforts to acknowledge the importance of its members. Anglia Farmers has a clear vision to be the best agricultural purchaser in the UK, and to be recognised as such, for the benefit of its 1,300 full and 550 associate members farming over 520,000 hectares.

Ben Reid of Co-operatives^{UK} commented: "Anglia Farmers is a prime example of how farmers working together in a co-operative way can maximise financial advantage for the co-operative's members. Their success demonstrates that farmers can work together in a way that is fair and equitable – in terms of control of the business, investment and the benefits generated by

their co-operation."

Clarke Willis, Chief Executive of Anglia Farmers, said: "Co-operative excellence is what we strive for and we are proud to have gained this national recognition. In these days of financial uncertainty, there has never been a better time to work together for the common good of the farming community."

Credit Union News

Harlowsave Credit Union is having one of its busiest times ever. New members are on the increase month by month. The same period last year showed an average of 3.5 new members per month signing up but this year there are up to 20. Most of these are by word of mouth, i.e. existing members introducing friends and family.

Harlowsave CU's Manager, Jenny Smith, says, "At Harlowsave we offer a new member promotion whereby an existing member can have £10.00 put into their account if they recruit someone and that person begins to save. This scheme has been running for over a year now so the upsurge in members is not just due to the financial incentive. I believe that people are discussing the credit crunch and sharing information about safe and good value financial services. Credit Unions are obviously hitting the right spot."

With the imminent change in legislation we are looking forward to being allowed to be more flexible with areas of coverage, and the new ability to work in partnership with organisations. Credit Unions will be able to offer accounts to organisations from 2010, this is a great opportunity to offer our fair ethical accounts to small groups, charities and social enterprises.

To make it easier to make payments into Harlowsave the Essex based credit union has just introduced PayPoint through the Co-operative Bank. Members can now pay into their savings account or make payments off their loans at the Post Office or, of course, at Co-operative stores. "Encouraging people to save for the holiday or other special occasions is certainly paying off. We have just supported one member to book a lifetime ambition to go to Mexico. I hate to say that we are back to old fashioned values but it is cheaper in the long run to save rather than pay on credit cards," adds Jenny.

Rainbow Saver Anglia is seeing a significant increase in membership and is now taking referrals from private sector landlords, a new partnership reaching into the private sector which is welcome. Ipswich and Suffolk Credit Union has seen new joiners increase month on month too, with an increased willingness to pay in benefits and save a little bit more.

The imminent change in credit union legislation is anticipated for April 2010

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Co-operative Group sponsors the Cambridge Folk Festival

The Co-operative Group has this year begun its sponsorship of Europe's largest folk festival. The Co-operative Cambridge Folk festival, which was held at the end of July, attracted over 14,000 festival goers who enjoyed four days of music over 3 stages. The Co-operative Group has had a presence at the festival for the last four years, but with the launch of the "Good for Everyone" adverts this year, it was felt a great time to become the festival's title sponsors.

The deal recognises the affinity with co-operative ideals shown by the festival organisers and by the attendees to this most ethically-minded celebration of all kinds of music from across the world.

The Co-operative had a 24 hours store on the main site and the campsite close by



The thought-provoking Co-operative Group stall

and Membership had a massive presence talking to festival goers about what the Co-operative stands for and engaging them in discussion on a number of environmental issues.

Look out for the folk festival TV shows on BBC4 in September.



CAMGRAIN ANNOUNCES FURTHER EXPANSION PLANS

Camgrain's Chairman, John Latham, announced ambitious expansion plans at the opening of the Advanced Processing Centre (APC) at Wilbraham that could double the tonnage being handled by the co-operative. Planning permission had been granted for a further 210,000t processing facility and Camgrain has entered into an option with Boughton Estate to develop a similar facility working with a group of Northants farmers at a site between Corby and Kettering in the East Midlands. Once completed, both the Camgrain and Northants Grain operations would convert over 500,000t of grain every year into process ready ingredients, making this farmer-controlled business one of the UK's leading suppliers to the food and drinks sector. No other UK processing facility comes anywhere near this scale.

"There is a clear and increasing need for world-class processing and food secure storage facilities for UK grain," said John Latham. "The development of our effective and ongoing partnership with Sainsbury's proves that with the right facilities and management the UK can compete with any global supplier – either to replace imports or supply added value exports. It is particularly pleasing to see that this pioneering venture has been undertaken and delivered by a farmer-controlled business – thus ensuring the delivery of stakeholder benefits throughout

the region for the foreseeable future."

Marketing of the majority of grain for both the new APC in Cambridgeshire and that of Northants Grain will be carried out by leading farmer-owned grain business Openfield. Openfield itself has been instrumental in supporting and helping the development of central storage businesses, now under the wing of NetworkGrain UK. "The support of national business of the size and scale of Openfield has been pivotal in getting the Northants project off the ground," commented John Latham.

Christopher Sparrow of Boughton Estate added "These facilities will allow us, as farmers, to trade on improved terms, manage the risks associated with our business much more effectively and, in the medium term, unlock other opportunities associated with antiquated stores."

John Latham concluded by paying tribute to the continued commitment of Camgrain members to supplying the best in raw materials; to an excellent staff team, and to his board of directors for their professionalism and vision.

"Thanks must also go to EEDA for their support via the Rural Development Programme for England" he said. "They bought into the vision of the APC, and the grant of £4 million in 2007 enabled our rapid growth in the past two years."

Consumer champion named as Chief Executive designate for Co-operativesUK

Co-operativesUK has announced that Ed Mayo is to take over as Chief Executive following the retirement of Dame Pauline Green in the autumn. His appointment follows a career promoting social and economic innovation. Currently Chief Executive of Consumer Focus, a new statutory body, Ed helped to found the Fairtrade Mark and has been described as “the most authoritative voice in the country speaking up for consumers”.

“In the current economic climate, I see more interest than ever in mutual and co-operative ownership models,” says Ed. “My role, and that of Co-operativesUK, is to build support among business leaders, politicians, workers and consumers for a more co-operative economy and society.”

“Businesses find themselves in extremely challenging times and those of us committed to the mutually-owned business model



should seize this moment to demonstrate how co-operatives can help the UK weather the current economic storm. We now have a real opportunity to deepen understanding of co-operatives and how they deliver tangible and valuable benefits to their communities, employees and members. I feel privileged to be taking over the reins at Co-operativesUK at such an important time.”

Speaking about the appointment, Chair of Co-operativesUK Ben Reid said: “We are

looking forward to working with Ed Mayo over the coming years. His dedication to and passion for co-operatives will be a great asset to us as we continue to demonstrate the value of business co-operation to the UK economy.”

Ed Mayo is co-author of the book “Consumer Kids: how big business is grooming our children for profit”, published earlier this year. He spent 11 years as Chief Executive of the New Economics Foundation, an award-winning think-tank, before moving in 2003 to lead the National Consumer Council. He has been awarded an honorary doctorate for his work to build an ethical economy by London Metropolitan University. He is currently nominated as a ‘Young Global Leader’ by the World Economic Forum and The Guardian has described him as one of the top 100 influential figures in UK social policy.



More than just a shop

East of England Co-op launches new resource pack for schools

The East of England Co-operative Society, well known for its strong commitment to ethical trading, has developed a new resource pack for primary schools entitled “More than just a shop”.

The Society, which is the largest independent retailer in the region, trades across 2,000 square miles of East Anglian countryside with more than 200 retail outlets and over half a million Members. It invests a proportion of its profits back into the communities it serves by engaging with Members, local communities, schools and young people. In 2008 it returned £4.28m of Dividend to its Members in the region.

This new resource pack, designed to support the primary curriculum, not only looks at how the business works by focussing on how a shop operates and the ethical issues of Fairtrade, local sourcing and climate control, but also looks at the values that underpin all that the East of England Co-op does across its trading area.

Richard Samson, Chief Executive of the East of England Co-op said: “I am delighted that we have launched this new resource pack for schools. A good deal of hard work has gone into its development and it will provide a meaningful and practical tool enabling teachers and young

people to explore ethical issues in the context of 21st Century retailing.”

The pack was launched with a teacher training session and celebration in Ipswich on 5th March, which was attended by teachers and young people, plus East of England Co-op employees involved in the creation of the pack. A further training session was held in Norwich on 9th March 2009.

It has been written and produced by teachers and young people from Suffolk schools: The Willows and Rosehill Primary Schools in Ipswich; Sudbury and East Bergholt High Schools and East Bergholt Primary School.

Supporting the development of the materials, 1st Question Co-operative of trainers and Offshoot Films, have also worked with the young people and the teachers to create a professionally produced resource that is integrated into the curriculum for pupils aged 5 to 11 years.

Judith Rawlinson, Assistant Head of The Willows Primary School in Ipswich, who has been involved in the development of the pack from the beginning said: “The pack is bright and colourful and contains a DVD of two films made by the pupils and students, which looks at what co-operation really means for people today. It explores



East of England Co-op President, Gillian Bober with local schoolchildren, unveiling the new education resource pack.

how co-operation works throughout the East of England Co-op Society as well as Timeline cards setting out how co-operatives have developed since 1944, looks at the jobs people do and explores ethical issues so relevant to us all.”

Pam Walker, Education Development Officer for the East of England Co-op commented: “The pack is suitable not only for schools, but also for youth groups such as Brownies, Cubs and Woodcraft Folk so we welcome delegates from all sectors to take part in our training sessions. We also encourage groups to visit our stores and see for themselves how a co-operative puts its values into practice.”

For more information about the pack or if you would like to be involved in future training sessions, please contact Pam Walker at the East of England Co-operative Society Tel: 01472 280316 or email education@eastofengland.coop.

direct to several of the Anglia Regional Co-operative's Rainbow stores. A range displayed under a large Tastes of Anglia banner quickly grew and the stores were able to offer local cider, preserves, flour and many other tasty local treats.

In July 2007, East of England Co-operative Society took up, extended and displayed the range in 15 of their key stores across the region. During the next two years, the range was introduced to many more stores and Chelmsford Star Co-operative Society adopted the range. East of England Co-operative Society are now in a continual re-fit programme – a larger display was recently put into their Framlingham, Leiston, Brightlingsea and Manningtree stores as the refits were completed. In-store tastings with the actual producers were also hailed as a great success by the stores and customers alike.

"Our partnerships with these Co-operatives have seen a great deal more local customers become familiar with local producers," says Tony Bower, General Manager of Tastes of Anglia Table. "We now deliver to over 80 stores and are delighted that the quality and depth of products offered reflects the diversity and quality of the products produced by our members in this region. Together we offer the customers quality local ambient lines, local beers and

wines as well as chilled lines like award winning local milkshakes, fish products and fantastic bacons and sausages."

The initiative fits perfectly with the Co-operative's thinking on quality and localness and of course has the added benefit of reducing food miles. Table delivers direct to the stores from their base near Ipswich, in multi-temperature vans. The products are then displayed in clearly identified Tastes of Anglia sections of the store – with specially designed supporting point of sale. "We want to help direct customers to shop in the local section of the store – customers increasingly want to know what they are eating and where it comes from. In the present economic climate, more people are choosing to dine in and buy higher quality products to do so; add to that the image of tradition and localness of the Co-op and the reduced food miles and you have a great recipe for success." Tony goes on, "We are now helping East of England Co-operative with their drive to offer more local fresh produce to its customers, including locally grown asparagus, mushrooms and strawberries in season – again the consumer gets the best freshness, supports the local economy and food miles are drastically reduced."

The "Best in Local Food and Drink" project with the Co-operative Societies has proven to be a tremendous success on many fronts. Tastes of Anglia have been able to help several Co-operative Societies

to source, receive and sell a range of local producers' lines. The work is developing and growing, with more exciting developments in the pipeline. Together they are committed to keeping a diverse local offering for the local consumers.

For more information, photos or further information visit www.tastesofanglia.com or please contact Tony Bower, tony@tastesofanglia.com

'Credit Union News' continued from page 2...

and will allow credit unions to offer accounts to organisations for the first time, and many of the region's credit unions are gearing up for this. If your organisation has had difficulties opening a bank account or you want to keep up to £10,000 ethical and local, why not talk to your local credit union?

Each credit union will be limited on how many of these accounts are held by organisations (10% of membership) to ensure that the credit union remains focused on personal accounts. Many faith groups and local councils have already expressed an interest in offering support to their local credit unions by holding a deposit at the credit union, and we are interested in knowing – as a sector – what would make the credit union account helpful to small organisations, whether third sector, charitable or voluntary based.

Harlowsave Credit Union:

Jenny Smith jenny@harlowsave.coop

Rainbow Saver Anglia and Ipswich and Suffolk CU:

Sally Chicken sally.chicken@gmail.com

About Co-operatives East...

The mission of Co-operatives East is to be the voice of the co-operative movement in the East of England region – that is, Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk.

Co-operatives East aims to:

- Bring together consumer and worker co-operatives, credit unions, housing co-ops, co-operative development bodies and other organisations sharing co-operative values and principles
- Represent and promote co-operative values and principles
- Raise the profile of the co-operative sector in the region
- Represent the co-operative movement and promote the co-operative difference to regional strategic

development bodies and opinion formers. By working together, we can make our voice heard and ensure that decision makers consider the role that co-operative, mutual and social enterprises have in contributing to the economy and culture of the region

- Represent the co-operative sector within regional media and regional forums (including regional groupings and sub-regional networks)
- Involve members and potential members in the wider co-operative movement and in particular in active membership of Co-operatives^{UK}
- Build partnership structures and arrangements with organisations with similar objectives
- Support the work of co-operative development bodies at regional level.

Co-operatives East is supported by

The co-operative
enterprise hub

Contact us

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