

Food group meeting – 18/08/2009

Present Hayley Mills, Barbara Holden, Clare Hamilton -Sturdy, Katie Connolly, Fred, Louise Barron, Kirsten Fricke & her mum Mrs Fricke, Andy McKie, Adam Day, Kieran, Georgina, & Lynn, who were attending the MTP Permaculture course

Guests – Rosemary Champion Central Scotland Smallholders Association & Rebecca Vivers from the Climate Challenge Fund.

After a brief introduction Clare & Hayley gave a short description of the transition movement & the importance of it and how it relates to the food group.

Guest Speaker – Rosemary Champion

Rosemary Champion, from the Central Scotland Smallholders Assoc & the Accidental smallholder gave an entertaining and informative talk around the 2 organisations she is connected with. She gave a potted history of how she got interested in smallholding going back some 10 years. She started by growing her own vegetables in her front garden before moving into a property with approx 1 Acre and planted an orchard (Apple, pear & plum trees) & more Veggies. Her top tip was “don’t plant cherry trees, they look great but you get no fruit” She then progressed on to livestock & started with 3 hens. She now has a variety of hens which are used as layers & for the pot. 5 years ago she started with pigs and obtained 2 Tamworth Weiner’s. She rears them for eating and uses the slaughterhouse in Dunblane & Irvine’s in Blairgowrie for butchering. She also has Sheep to keep grass down and has 3 lambs this year with the idea that the Ewes are for grazing and the Tupps for the freezer although not adhering to the golden rule of giving them names has meant that they have all survived! She has found that she has learnt as she has gone along and decided to set up a web-site the accidental smallholder in 2003. The function of the website is to log progress each year and also has a very active forum sharing best practice etc. The Central Scotland Smallholders Association was set up in 2008 for smallholders & aspiring smallholders. They meet monthly for shows/talks/socials etc. They try to manage their land organically without being registered organic with the focus on good husbandry and happy animals. They offer advice & help to existing smallholders or people just thinking about setting up and cover all aspects from Fruit & veg to poultry & other animals. A number of questions were taken from the floor and Rosemary provided advice around Regulation – You register with the rural payments authority & animal health and as long as meat is for your own consumption no other licences are required.

Jamesfield was identified as a good site to purchase poultry as they have different varieties.

For locating Tamworth’s she has suggested Sue & Mike Melville from Crieff – details can be found on the website. A few leaflets detailing the organisation were handed out & Hayley proposed thanks.

Apple Press Update – Most of the equipment had arrived apart from the big press (it has now) and was displayed at the meeting and apple press flyers (on recycled, unbleached paper) were distributed amongst the attendees. The presses will be displayed at the Food Festival and MTP are to have an apple fair on the 31st of

October with a barbecue and social to follow. More details to be announced nearer to the time.

Fish Box Scheme –After consultation it seemed most people quite like their own fish man and it was not seen as a viable option although Katie did suggest that it could be done on a private basis when people are in Pittenweem and can purchase direct from the boats. It also turned out that the Wholesaler would not sell at trade prices to individuals so the scheme is not going ahead as proposed.

Monimail Bartering Table –Katie has started a pilot scheme whereby every Tuesday a barter box is put out on the Monimail green. Among items being bartered so far has been Jams, Eggs, Veggies & herbs. There was an interest in an E-Barter group which has been set up and advertised but so far has not been met with as much success as the Barter Box.

Local Food Festival – A further meeting was held and Hayley has indicated that everything is on track with remaining actions passed out to the relevant people.

NHTT Household Survey – Clare gave an update of the survey sub-group meeting 3 weeks ago. Target is to undertake a survey of every household in the NHTT. It is envisaged that there will be Household visits with response recorded in paper format. The NHTT is looking to gather info for energy, food & transport, encourage people to join groups and inform them of when projects are starting. Concerns at the moment are that there appears to be a lot of questions and how the survey is going to be introduced is key in getting participation with focus on the key area that the participant shows interest in. Certain baseline info is required for CCF projects – Neil to take forward at coordinating group meeting on Monday.

CCF Climate Challenge Fund – progress reports are due 8 weekly – Rebecca from the CCF has suggested we can extend to longer period of reporting if required and Andy is to take to the coordinating group on Monday.

Future Meetings – It was agreed that after the meeting in Sept that meetings every two months would be appropriate unless further business needed discussing. Members agreed that they would like the format of talks/workshops with a bit of business to continue. Barbara also suggested it may be beneficial to have a food festival debrief and this is to be considered.

Garden Supplies – James had provided Andy with an update on the project and this was read out to the group.

Bulk Buying Food Project – A pilot is being considered for the Bulk Buying project which has funding from the CCF. There are related questions to this within the household survey. Hayley had also mentioned about setting up a food co-op and provided details of a food co-op toolkit showing how this could be set up. It was decided that a specific sub-group meeting using data from the survey would be the best way forward.

Date of Next meeting: September 8th 7.30pm Collessie Hall