



Newsletter 10 - October 2003

- **Fruit from a Spanish CSA project**
- **Introducing Laurence – the new farmer**
- **Updates on the vegetables and pigs**
- **New connections to Orchard Leigh**
- **Development worker needed**
- **Committing to Hawkwood**
- **Harvest supper invitation**
- **Financial update**

*Stroud Community Agriculture produces organic food locally. It is supported by a community of people who share the financial costs of the farm. They also share the produce that comes from the farm. For more details on Stroud CA – see back page.*

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### **Membership development worker needed - Do you know anyone who could do this job?**

Pending final confirmation of a lottery grant, Stroud CA will be recruiting someone to promote membership of the project to disadvantaged groups. The job will be for two days per week starting soon. It will include the following roles:

- Create and implement an action plan to increase membership
- Identify disadvantaged groups (toddler groups, care homes etc)
- Hold discussions with potential new members to understand how to make access easier (e.g. alternative payment arrangements, home delivery of food, welcoming children to meetings)
- Work with Stroud CA to address these issues practically
- Assisting with publicity materials (newsletters, leaflet/fliers, website, press releases, talks)
- Assisting with running farm events for members
- Assisting with administrative tasks (e.g. arranging insurance, printing newsletter)
- Attending core group and public meetings in the evenings

For a full job description and application form contact Jade on 01453 885233

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### **Hog Hands - Caring for our pigs co-operatively**

The Hog Hands initiative was conceived as a way to share the work in looking after the first Stroud CA livestock. Approximately one week in every two months, each Hog Hand will take a turn to visit the pigs in the evening to give them their food ration, check they are well and give them a good back scratch!

The site, in the field just above Hawkwood car park, has now been fenced and is now fully prepared, and we have 1 tonne of organic pig feed in the barn, so we are ready to receive our pigs at any time! We are simply waiting for a suitable time for their delivery.

There is still opportunity to become a Hog Hand. It will cost approximately £150 for a 'share' and will run between October and April 2005. A share consists of half a pig, which is potentially 25kg of pork. You will not have to receive this all at once as we will stagger the slaughter and butchering of the pigs, and we will arrange for a freezer in which we can store meat at Hawkwood. Half shares are also an option.

Even if you are not a Hog Hand you are welcome to visit the pigs and some pork will be made available for all SCA members to purchase in the New Year. If you would like to hear more about becoming a Hog Hand call Greg on: 01453 885 233

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## Farm News

Summer seems to be continuing into autumn at the moment. When is it going to rain? It has been a very productive season with the vegetables so far and the veg area at Hawkwood is looking very well established. It has been much more productive than I expected. I have had to do a lot of irrigating, and the birds were a menace earlier in the year but it is a beautiful site and at the moment I forgive it its difficulties.

The garden at Brookthorpe has also been productive. We must move from there in November so my focus is shifting more and more to Hawkwood. I have begun preparing a new area of land at Hawkwood, above the existing area, to replace the walled garden. We are also planning to erect a polytunnel this autumn (and another one next year and another....). I also have plans to cultivate more land on the other side of the road in order to extend the vegetable area for the 2005 season. To minimise the damage to the wildflowers I propose that we use the bottom of the field in the far corner. It will be an area of approximately 1 acre.

We have agreed to take on the lease of all the pasture land at Hawkwood (23 acres in all) for at least one year and we will be employing Laurence Dungworth for 2 days a week to farm the land. See Laurence's introduction in a separate article below. It is our intention to raise beef stock for the first year, though nothing has been finalised as yet. Hawkwood are very keen to support the CSA and will consider any plans that we may have. Hopefully by the time that you read this we will have signed the lease for the next twelve months.

All in all so far it has been an excellent growing season and the move to Hawkwood has been very positive. The work days that we have had have been very successful –thank you to everyone who has helped out, both during the work days and at other times, it all makes a difference, both in getting jobs done and in building our community spirit.

Mark Harrison 01453 753866

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### Coming in to Land

Now that Stroud CA has taken the definitive step to strike roots at Hawkwood College, Painswick Old Road, Stroud it seems a good moment to reflect on the kind of place Hawkwood is and where it originated.

The main house dating back to the 18th century stands in the midst of mature grounds. A spring bubbles up near the house beneath a mighty sycamore tree. The spring water and the tree are at the heart of the whole estate. Surrounding it at a distance on three sides are the woods. To the south is an original beech wood while to the north ash and sycamore regrows in abundance - the northern slopes were clear felled in the late sixties and were replanted using larch as a nurse crop. These woods encircle and protect the valley, the garden, the house and the ancient grasslands that spread out below the house. The place used to be known as The Grove, possibly after the rows of ancient yews that ran up behind the house, the pure water and its seclusion.

Below the house on the rough and thistle-bedecked field, are stretches in which remnants of a medieval ridge and furrow system can still be seen. This implies that once even this rougher land was cultivated but also that it has remained unploughed ever since. Only the two flat fields by the drive show clear signs of being regularly worked, though probably not during the last sixty years.

In the immediate post war period, Hawkwood had a small herd of Jersey cattle. These were kept and milked in the derelict byres on the upper drive while behind the walled garden remnants of a pig sty can be found. In the same area there are remains of a far more ancient cattle holding system including byres and an area where cattle would have been bedded down on layers of small twigs.

The Hawkwood estate extends to nearly forty acres. This includes 23 acres of farmland, nearly 12 acres of woodland an acre of orchard and vegetable garden and 4 acres of parkland. The CSA is now renting the 23 acres of farmland from Hawkwood. As we develop and grow, our community farm

has the opportunity of creating or recreating a rich and productive landscape whose every part benefits not only the eager members of the community but also the health, diversity and natural wealth of this small piece of the earth.

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### **Spring Water**

Hawkwood College has said we may take water from the spring. The spring is under the sycamore tree in front of the house. We have to warn you that you drink the water at your own risk because it is not officially fit for drinking and in hot weather contains some bacteria. Nonetheless lots of people enjoy it without any ill effect.

Please be respectful to others using the college when collecting the water

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### **Finances**

The CSA is in a stable position financially, with over £6000 reserves, which are increasing slowly. This is a significant achievement for a small ethical enterprise in its first year. The income has come from members' support and from selling surpluses to other local social enterprises, especially last year. This year Kolisko farm shop have not bought produce from us and so the proceeds from surpluses will be smaller. We will still be able to welcome people who cannot contribute the full share price for vegetables this year. We also have been strongly supported by contributions of labour from members. Our main costs have been wages for growers, rent for land and organic seeds.

We don't own much of value and have been able to borrow tractors etc. We will need to invest our reserves in order to grow into new enterprises, with big bills for machinery, fences, labour ahead of produce, etc.

We have had no grant aid until now, but having shown we are viable we have been able to apply for a lottery grant from their SEED fund. We are waiting for final confirmation but it looks like we will be granted about £20,000 for capital items such as a polytunnel and for worker time to help disadvantaged people get more involved (see front page article)

We have also received £1000 from the Soil Association, which has recognised that we are demonstrating a new way to approach farming and community. The Soil Association would like to see this model spread and will support us with a website, leaflets and publicity.

With the lottery grant and the reserves we have built up we will start to buy vital equipment such as a tractor and polytunnels. We would also welcome any donations or loans to continue this momentum. Stroud CA is very grateful for the following capital donations already received: A cheque for £50, a full bee-keeping kit and 3 hives and a fence electrifier. Please contact Simon on 01453 755614 if you would like to connect with the farm by helping to build up the capital stock or purchase animals.

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### **Now is the time to invest in the future life of our earth**

We have a very beautiful piece of our planet to look after. 23 acres of mother earth full of millions of wriggling worms.

This is where grass roots socio-environmental change is happening, and it can feel really quite exciting to be part of it. I'm sure the worms are feeling good about it too.

However our land workers and volunteers need tools, equipment and livestock and this means capital investment. We have been lucky to have been able to borrow tools and machinery up till now and many thanks are due to Andrew at Kolisko Farm and Adriaan before him for their help. However, now we are moving away from Brookthorpe it is no longer practical to continue borrowing.

The SEED lottery grant is only partly for capital, so there are still a lot more needs to cover. As individuals there are two ways we can help; either with an outright gift to cover the purchase of a

particular animal, tool or other item; alternatively we could loan the necessary money and the SCA project will repay as the value is realised from the asset. The repayment times would vary according to the type of asset purchased – longer for a tractor than for a sheep!

Choose from the list below what you would like to help purchase and how. Saving the planet could not be simpler!

Oak barrel	£20		Rotovator	£150
Potato ridger	£50		Spring tine cultivator	£50
Rigid tine cultivator	£40		Cambridge roller	£80
Tipping trailer	£150		Hay trailer	£300
Livestock trailer	£350		Soil leveller	£75
Bale spike	£80		Sprayer	£50
Seed drill	£100		Pasture topper	£100
Muck spreader	£150		Tractor	£3500
Diesel tank	£100		Metal gates	£100
Livestock feeding barrier	£150		Harrow	£100
2 freezers	£300		Hay turner	£100
Scales	£50		Hand tools – hoes, rakes, pitchforks, wheel barrows, spades, etc – items from £5 to £40	£300
			Livestock – 10 bullocks and heifers - £150 to £250 each	£2000

Tools and equipment are generally to be purchased second hand.

Please contact Simon Charter on 01453 755614 if you would like to help.

### Newsletter

Thanks to Sean Nolan and Carolyn Buckley for all their work in producing all the previous SCA newsletters to such a high standard. Due to parental (congratulations!) and work commitments, they have had to stop the newsletter production. If there is anyone out there who is willing to do a slightly more interesting job of laying out the newsletter than we have achieved here, please call Nick on 01453 840037.

### Attention SCA members!

Make sure you benefit from the full freshness of your SCA veg. Mark often has the vegetables ready to collect from the pick up point at Painswick Inn by Tuesday evening. Sometimes he isn't able to go until 9am Wednesday though, so please wait till then if you want to be sure of not wasting a journey.

As the nights draw in..... For those of you who use the veg pick up point at the Painswick Inn, there is a light switch just to the right of the door.

All SCA members: If you do not need your vegetables for a particular week and you are not able to arrange for anyone else to pick it up in your absence, please let Mark know as far in advance as possible. We have had to throw away quite a lot of veg this summer because people have not collected it and it has got too old to sell. If we had known in advance that it was not needed, we could have sold it to the PIP café, Global or Plum Tucker and the money could have been saved up for capital development (polytunnels, etc)

## Farm days - 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of every month

Everyone is welcome to join the SCA Farm Days in the grounds of Hawkwood College. We will be working on the vegetable field, maintaining the fences and barn and looking after the pigs. You can join in the work or just come and chat and we will show you around.

We will be working (off and on!) from 9.30am to 1pm. Then a bring and share picnic at 1pm.

Farm Days are always on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturdays in each month (except December when the Farm Day will be on 6<sup>th</sup> December followed by the Stroud CA public meeting).

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## Diary dates

**Harvest Supper:** Friday 10<sup>th</sup> October at Orchard Leigh – see separate invitation.

**Farm Days:** Saturdays 18<sup>th</sup> October, 15<sup>th</sup> November, 6<sup>th</sup> December and every 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday in 2004. See article above for details.

**Stroud CA public meeting:** Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2pm to 4pm in Studio 2 of Hawkwood College. We will be asking for your views on the future plans for the project.

**Genetic Modification - The Sad Misunderstanding of Plant Nature:** Friday 17<sup>th</sup> October 7.30pm at The Space. Contact 01453 759501 for more details

**Seed Exchange Evening:** Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> November 7.00pm Painswick Inn

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## Hello to you all

I thought I should introduce myself to those of you whom I have not met as yet. My name is Laurence Dungworth and with a name like that all I could really do with my life was to become a farmer who really appreciated the true value of that which the animal gives so willingly, and is essential for the health of the land and of course the vegetables that come from that land.

More on that in the future of course, but I should say what my connection with SCA is. Earlier in the year I was planning a move from a Camphill Biodynamic farm in Thornbury, near Bristol, to the Stroud area. I approached the SCA about work opportunities, as I had been the vegetable grower at Perry Court CSA ten years ago. There were no openings at the time, but over the summer however, there were a number of developments that changed this.

The land at Hawkwood had been part of Kolisko farm for a number of years, however, the Dyers who now farm at Kolisko are giving the land up on 30<sup>th</sup> September and there was an opportunity for SCA to take a step on the path to realising its objective of having a farm. Over the summer there was much discussion and reviewing of budgets until the core group were able to say that they would like me to become the SCA farmer at Hawkwood.

As part of our commitment to Hawkwood we have cut and bailed the hay there. With a combination of contractor, borrowed machinery and the brute force of a small number of SCA and Orchard Leigh volunteers (not forgetting Mark and Nick – the Red Van Heroes) to bring in 730 bales of hay (more than we expected) for the winter, unloading the final bale about an hour before it rained. Thanks to everyone who helped out. It was very much an eleventh hour operation.

I am looking forward to signing a contract with SCA in October. The winter workdays will probably be more focused on the fields and so I hope to meet some of you then – round a big fire of fallen branches after a good morning's tidy, perhaps.

Once we have all the information about the cows that are at Hawkwood we can see when the first will have to go off to the butchers, and at that point we will have to work out how we distribute the meat will come back. So I hope that over the course of the year to come I will get a chance to meet you all.

Have a beautiful autumn,  
Laurence.

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### **FruitShare**

We have heard of another CSA project based in Spain. They have offered to deliver a share of their harvest to Stroud in early March 2004. Each share costs £49 and contains:

- 5 litres of finest cold pressed unfiltered organic olive oil,
- 10kg of organic mixed citrus and nuts ,
- 1 litre of organic olives in brine,
- a bunch of wild herbs.

We asked Mathis (the farmer) to describe the olive oil..... “ a mild fruity flavour without the otherwise often experienced bitter aftertaste. Well , and as to the citrus, have you ever tasted sunripened citrus as supposed to the citrus that gets picked half green to last for weeks of transport and distribution mills?” Stop Mathis, stop!

The olive oil is also available separately from the shares. It costs £32 for 5 litres and £150 for 25 litres. You can phone Mathis direct on 0034 652 608456 or email mathis@onetel.net.uk. Alternatively we could get together a bulk order in Stroud and arrange one drop-off. This would allow us to split shares between several households. Anyone interested in organising this, please contact Nick on 01453 840037.

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### **Sale of surplus vegetables**

We have surplus vegetables from time to time, which we would like to sell to other local enterprises, preferably who share some of our principles. We currently supply the Painswick Inn Café, Plum Tucker and Global Organcis, but they can't take everything.

If anyone is involved with a group that is interested to buy our surpluses, please give Mark a call on 752 484

#### **Pickling party**

If anyone is interested in getting together to pickle beetroot, please call Jade 885 233. We'll be needing jars, if anyone has some?

#### **Delicious biodynamic eating apples**

of various kinds available from Hawkwood College at 60p / lb.  
Contact Bernard Tel 01453 757436

## Orchard Leigh

Orchard Leigh is a small, landbased community on the edge of Eastington, straddling the road to Frocester. We have around 30 people living in 4 households; families, adults with special needs and young volunteers – mostly from abroad.

The SCA core group has had several discussions with the Orchard Leigh community about setting up links between the two organisations. There is a possibility of Orchard Leigh keeping chickens for an **SCA egg scheme**. SCA could offer Orchard Leigh land for grazing their cattle and work opportunities.

Orchard Leigh has about 8 acres of farmland, which has been worked biodynamically for the last 18 years. We also have an established bakery and a newly developing basketry. While we are not entirely self sufficient, we do produce a good deal of our own vegetables, fruit, cheese, eggs, beef and lamb which goes a good way to providing for our needs. We produce a surplus of many things some of which is processed for the winter months and some of which has in the past been supplied to William Morris House Training Centre, on the other side of the village. Our bakery supplies ourselves, William Morris House and Kolisko Farm Shop. We are currently exploring ways of increasing our markets and production.

The work is done with the minimum of machinery and is labour intensive, providing most of the employment opportunities for our special needs residents. The soil is heavy clay and quite difficult to work, being very dry in summer and waterlogged in winter! The years of patient toil are beginning to make a difference in the vegetable patch though and the quality of the soil is improving year by year.

Orchard Leigh has always been an outward looking community and has had a long established co-operative association with both Kolisko Farm and Hawkwood College. Some of our more experienced residents go regularly to work with Bernard Jarman at Hawkwood. This provides them with good outside work experience and Bernard, we hope, with valuable help.

A central part of Camphill life is the celebration of the Christian Festivals. Many of these we base around the land, for example, Candlemass, St John's and Michaelmas. At such times we create an opportunity to celebrate our relationship to the land. We are all excited at Orchard Leigh about our first small steps of association with the SCA and we look forward to meeting many of you at our Harvest Meal on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> October (see invitation below).

Julie Woods, Orchard Leigh

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### HARVEST SUPPER

Orchard Leigh Community in Eastington would like to invite all members of the S.C.A. to a Harvest Supper on Friday October 10<sup>th</sup> at 6.30 p.m. This will be held in our barn, and soup and rolls will be provided. Any musical or similar contributions would be very welcome. To help us assess numbers and to get directions, please phone 01453 823811 or 823341. If anyone would like to help to decorate the barn on Friday afternoon please feel free to come.

Simon, Orchard Leigh

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### WANTED

The SCA is looking for 2 large chest freezers, a large fridge or fridge/freezer, a shed for storing tools etc, polytunnels, and largish greenhouses, to purchase or as a donation .We will collect. If you know of any please give Mark a call on 01453 753 866.

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## What is Stroud Community Agriculture?

In 2001, a group of people came together wanting to care for land and grow food in a new way. We agreed the following principles:

To support organic and biodynamic agriculture.

To pioneer a new economic model based on mutual benefit and shared risk and ensure that the farmers have a decent livelihood.

To be fully inclusive. Low income shall not exclude anyone.

To encourage practical involvement on all levels.

To be transparent in all our affairs. To make decisions on the basis of consensus wherever possible. To strive towards social justice.

To offer opportunities for learning, therapy and re-connecting with the life of the earth.

To network with others to promote CSA to other communities and farms and share our learning (both economic and farming).

To encourage CSA members, in co-operation with the farmers, to use the farm for their individual and social activities and celebrations.

To develop a non-exclusive sense of community around the farm.

We have about 50 members who share the costs of running a 23-acre organic farm at Wick Street, near Stroud. Two farmers work with us. The farmers are paid a fair wage and the farm works for the principles above, not for profit. Members can work on the farm if they wish, but this is not compulsory. They can also use the land for celebrations and social events, and we often come together for work days, bonfires, picnics, meetings etc. We are a co-op and the members decide collectively how to run the farm. A 'core group' of members undertake most of the organising. Members share the produce and receive a weekly box of vegetables. This is a quote from a recent new member "I just received my first bag of vegetables and they are great and bursting with health". We have some pigs for meat and hope to expand towards a 100-acre farm for eggs, beef, milk, bread, fruit, and other produce.

We would like to welcome more members. Members agree to support the principles above, and pay different contributions according their means and how much food they would like.

Everyone is welcome to join in and enjoy the farm, including non-members.

### **Stroud Community Agriculture core group contacts:**

Bernard Jarman: 01453 757436 bdaa@biodynamic.freeserve.co.uk

Jade Bashford 01453 885233 jadebashford@hotmail.com

Greg Pilley 01453 885233 gpilley@soilassociation.org

Simon Charter 01453 755614

Laurence Dungworth 01452 812285

Mark Harrison 01453 753866

Paul Sheridan 01453 855989

Nick Weir 01453 840037 nick.weir@freeuk.com