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Everyone is welcome to come along to Stroud Community Agriculture's first



Apple Juicing Party



On Sunday 1st October at 2 pm.

The juicing party will be followed by a harvest supper at Hawkwood starting at 7 pm - details to follow. We will be picking apples and making apple juice for you to take away. The juice will need drinking quickly, or freezing or pasteurising if you want to keep it for any length of time.

Come along to the orchard at

Resthaven Nursing Home

Left of the A4173 between Pitchcombe and Edge just after Pitchcombe church. You can see the orchard from the car park.

Please bring;

- *Any apples from your trees or your neighbours' trees.* Don't worry if there are some bad bits - we can cut these out before we juice them. You don't have to bring apples in order to take away juice - there will be plenty of juice for everyone!
- *Some empty, clean bottles with lids to put your juice in*
- *A chopping board and a sharp knife for anyone who wants to do some chopping,*
- *Musical instruments to entertain the workers (optional).*

We will be asking for £2 per family, to cover the cost of hiring the apple pressing equipment and a donation to

Resthaven Nursing Home.

We have also been offered apples on a pick-your-own basis from several orchards around Stroud if you fancy picking some in advance.

We would like to borrow/hire more juicing equipment. Please let us know if you could help provide this.

Hope to see you there

Gary Morter and Nick Weir

Stroud Community Agriculture Orchard Group

01453 766350

Farm Report

On the farm we seem to be fairly prepared for winter already, having had good crops of hay from both **Hawkwood** and **Brookthorpe**. There was a great turnout on a Saturday in July, only taking three hours to bring the **Hawkwood** hay in. The hay at **Brookthorpe** dried very quickly, it being cut on a Friday and baled the next Monday, and it is all in big round bales in the huge barn.

The rain we had in August, whilst not being welcomed by those of us taking our holidays then, has made the grass grow and all the stock are happy. This has been helped by the ungrazed fields at **Brookthorpe**, which the cows are munching their way through. They have been joined by our three new cows – traditional Herefords – that have settled in very quickly.

Things are not so well with **Dulcie** though. This summer, like last, she failed to have her litter of piglets and so I have taken the difficult decision to replace her, and she will be going off to the butchers in the autumn. We will be keeping two of her gilts from the last litter and they should have piglets in February or March.

Since July I have slowly been taking the new farm in hand. This was greatly helped by the special workday that we had at the end of August. It was such a great atmosphere on the farm and we got so much done. Though there is a still lot to do and we are planning to arrange a regular workday to complement the one at **Hawkwood**.

September is a significant time in farming, being the end of one year and the beginning of the next. Traditionally it was when farm labourers would be taken on and it is still when most farm tenancies began. In some ways this is odd because all of the work of the preceding months has been in preparation for the coming winter, and by moving farm one gives all that up. But, this does underline the fact that we have always been dependent on our forbears and that our descendents depend on the integrity with which we work. Farming is not about what we can get out of it, it's about what we can put into it.

The reality is, however, that we do get a lot out of farming, and it is also around this time that there is a show of gratitude in the form of a harvest celebration. But, a question that has come to my mind as a result of reading '**We want real Food**' by Graham Harvey, is the quality of the harvest. I feel assured that our methods of farming – vegetable growing based on compost and using green manures, and grass-based cattle-rearing – and of course the biodynamic preparations, all contribute to very good quality fresh food.

But, what is quality? Quality can be determined by the amount of nutrients that are in the food and this is very important, but there is something more. Almost everything that we eat has at some point been alive and depended on the light of the sun. The further that it gets from this living state, the less nutritious it is. Thus fresh vegetables are better than those that have been packaged and transported around the world. Even worse is if the food is processed to such an extent that it no longer resembles the original ingredients. This '**vitality**' is very hard to objectively measure but it can be seen in the appearance, with healthy vegetables having a sheen, or 'bloom'.

There are also many other things that '**feed**' us, from beautiful sights to meaningful conversations, and it makes me happy that things like these are as important to our farm as the wonderful food we are so lucky to receive.

Laurence Dungworth

News from the VEGGIE Patch

We are now approaching that mellow time of year when the garden is at it's most productive and our workload begins to slacken (and I can go away on holiday). It has been another productive year with the usual mix of successes and failures. The heat of July really favoured those sun loving plants, tomatoes, peppers and sweetcorn, but really gave our more temperate crops such as lettuce and spinach a hard time. However it rained just in time and plants recovered and life goes on. I think that the vegetable share has been very full over the summer and we have also been busy supplying some of our surplus to **Hawkwood College** and **Global Organic Markets**.

In my June news article I mentioned my trials with different tomato, pepper and flower varieties. The peppers are looking very productive and taste sweet. We have only just begun harvesting them so I'm still not sure how they will be overall. As I mentioned the tomatoes have been very prolific but the new varieties grown have been rather disappointing. I think that I'll just stick to the tried and tested varieties next year. (All gardeners say that until they get the seed catalogues in the winter and see all the shiny pictures of all the shiny vegetables- it's a slippery slope). It's been the same story with the flowers. The cosmos variety that I grew last year have been fantastic, and the other flowers that I have tried have been much more variable. I will try others next year though- it's nice to have the variety.

We have now ploughed the new vegetable patch down at our new farm at **Brookthorpe**. It is roughly 4 acres in total (we have 1.5 acres at **Hawkwood** plus the polytunnels). About a third of it will be used for vegetable growing next year. The rest will be sown with clover and grass until the following year. The land there has been neglected and will need a lot of work to overcome weed infestation. We also have a beautiful walled garden that will need a lot of attention over the winter to clean the ground. Plenty to keep us busy but an exciting development for the farm and **SCA**.

Hawkwood have agreed to allow us to erect another polytunnel. This tunnel will be of a similar size as our other two and will sited alongside them. We have applied for planning permission (in advance this time) and if we get the go ahead we will begin work on it over the winter (there's nothing else to do over the winter is there?).

I think that's enough. Hope to see you at the harvest festival.

Mark.

The Brookthorpe Acres

For many members of **SCA** the farmland at **Brookthorpe** will be very familiar, for others it is totally new. I thought it might be useful therefore to give a brief historical sketch. The farmland was originally part of the estate belonging to Wynstones House. The property was purchased and donated to the founders of Wynstones Steiner Waldorf School in 1937. The school began in this building. Then during the Second World War it took on and moved to its present site in Whaddon. Wynstones House continued as a boarding hostel for the next 40 years. In 1986 the hostel was closed and the building sold. Since then it has been used by the current owners as a nursing home. The farmland however was retained by the school.

Throughout this period the farmland has been run as a small farm serving the occupiers of Wynstones House. It has never been treated with chemicals or artificial fertilizers. It produced milk and other produce and the children boarding there were actively involved with the farm. Most of the time it was managed as a biodynamic farm. This continued until the hostel was sold in 1986. It then ceased being a farm for a number of years and the fields were let out for grazing by neighboring farmers.

In 1992 a new farm initiative began and farmers came with a strong wish to create a community farm on a CSA model. However although there was a lot of active community support, the time for a structured CSA had not yet arrived. This was the beginning of **Kolisko Farm**. Its aim was to develop an identity that was independent of the school and which had farming as its primary focus. The longer-term goal was to provide an educational facility for school classes and be a place where people could reconnect with the land and find healing. A not-for-profit company was formed and supporters bought shares to capitalize the farm. Over the next ten years the farm developed a successful milk round delivering green top milk to customers across the Stroud district and also grew about five acres of vegetables. An expanded farm shop sold a wide range of dry goods and served as a village store. There were many successful social events on the farm and for several years the farm was just able to survive economically.

The success of the farm however depended on a great deal of personal sacrifice on the part of the farmers and the constant struggle to survive gradually took its toll. This led ultimately to the sad departure of the farmers and with them the cows and much that had been built up during their tenure. Their lasting legacy is the big barn (and the one at **Hawkwood**), built with few resources and much hard work and an invaluable asset for the next stage in the development of **Stroud Community Agriculture**.

Over the last three years another farmer tried to make a living from the farm. He has now moved on and this summer **Stroud Community Agriculture** signed a lease with Wynstones. The school is delighted that a real community initiative can now take over the land.

Bernard Jarman

SCA in the Spotlight!

The summer has brought a lot of visitors to the farm and they have ranged from playgroups, organic gardeners, other farmers, to the media.

We have appeared in publications ranging from Brookthorpe Parish Magazine to The Independent and were filmed by a group collecting background material for a conference to be held in November. Radio 4 Food Programme came and recorded part of their programme at the farm and Cirencester College came to ask us how the college could meet our needs with training and support.

This has been a lot of extra work for the farmers and some of the members and has made the core group consider applying for a grant to pay for some of this development work to be done. Also, now that we have the two farms, we are in the happy position of being able to take on new members, particularly around the Brookthorpe area and would appreciate help with recruiting.

Carole Vaughan

What do YOU think?

What should the new farm at **Brookthorpe** be called?

It has, as Bernard says in this newsletter, formerly been called "**Kolisko**".

Should it keep that name or be known as something else?

So far opinion is divided

—

Some favour keeping the original name, some prefer just **SCA**
& yet more think a simple "**Brookthorpe**".

We will be asking for your opinions
In the Conversation Café
At the Harvest Supper
So, let us know what you think.

Collection Changes at HAWKWOOD

For those of you collecting your vegetables from Hawkwood we are going to make some changes to the collection days. From the week of the 17th October we will have two collection periods;

Tuesday 6 pm until Friday noon.

Friday 6 pm until Tuesday noon.

This change is necessary in order to accommodate our planned increase of 50 vegetable shares this year and another 50 shares next year. It means that you will have a shorter time period in which you will be able to collect your vegetables. Any vegetables not collected by Tuesday or Friday will be left in the gift box. We ask that if you are late collecting that you only take from the gift box and not any fresh produce left for those collecting later.

There will also be the possibility of collecting from our new farm site at Brookthorpe. This will be from 6 pm on a Tuesday till the following Monday.

If you would like to change to a Friday collection or to a Brookthorpe collection then please fill in the form that will be available in the packing shed from the 3rd of October and the rear of this newsletter.

Any queries please contact **Mark** on **07891 615 103** or **01453 753 866**.

Extra workdays.

From now until Christmas there will be monthly workdays at our new land in Brookthorpe. These will take place on the second Saturday in October (14th), November (11th) and December (9th), from 10 am until 1 pm. Picnic lunch to follow. Children's activities will depend on parent's involvement.

FFI: Laurence **01452 810763 / 07799015499**

Meat.

We currently have some very nice pork – roasts, chops, diced, mild sausages as well as lots of beef. It is all now at Brookthorpe and can be collected by arrangement with Laurence;

07799015499 / 01452 810763 / laurencedungworth@yahoo.co.uk

Apprentice.

*Sarah has now completed her apprenticeship with us and is due to leave at the end of this month – she has stayed a bit longer to be here whilst Mark is away. On the farm we have been very grateful for her many hours of hard work and the conscientious attitude to all that she does as well as appreciating her company. We wish her well for the **WUOO7** that she will do in Sicily, as well as whatever comes after that. Thank you Sarah, and we hope to see you again.*

Farm Succession

The Community Farmland Trust Option

Thursday 30th November 9.00—17.30

Stroud £25

A one-day workshop exploring issues of farm succession. How can land pass into community ownership and how can a farmer give up his main asset without losing everything?

How can communities support the farmer and raise funds to buy the farm?

One answer to these questions can be provided by a Community Farmland Trust whose purpose is to provide affordable access to land and benefit sustainable agriculture.

This event arranged through Stroud Common Wealth and its Community Farmland Trust initiative is open to everyone and especially farmers and landholders considering succession issues as well as other farming and conservation organizations seeking to facilitate change.

FFI visit:

http://www.communitylandtrust.org.uk/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=41&Itemid=53

and to book contact:

Biodynamic Agricultural Association, Painswick Inn Project, Stroud Tel **01453 759501**

The Biodynamic Agricultural Association

Dear Friends - We are pleased to inform you of our forthcoming

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

6-8th October 2006 at:

Sturt's Farm, Three Cross Rd, West Moors, Ferndown, Dorset BH22 0NF

All welcome - Full programme & booking form can be downloaded from our website at www.biodynamic.org.uk

Best wishes - Jess Standing (admin)

Programme:

Friday 6th evening lecture

19.30 "The Task of Biodynamic agriculture for the Earth and Humanity" – Talk by Joachim Bauck (translated from German)

Saturday 7th

09.30 - 11.00 **AGM** business meeting

11.30 Proposal for a new Biodynamic Centre - discussion

13.00 Lunch

14.15 Farm visit around Sturts Farm

16.15 Seed selection and production at Sturts Farm – Eden Cormack

20.00 Conversation on theme of the year: Carbon & Climate Change - Manuring & Soil Dynamics in the course of the Year

Sunday 8th

09.30 Visit to Laverstoke Park to see some of its many enterprises. Jody Scheckter will speak about his vision for the farm.

13.00 Conclusion and depart

If you would like to attend the whole weekend or only part, you are most welcome.

In order to facilitate catering arrangements please book yourself a place by contacting the BDAA Office

Tel 01453 759501 Email: office@biodynamic.org.uk

Booking Deadline: Friday 29th September.

Meals and refreshments will be available for a small charge payable on the day.

Forthcoming BD events:

Beyond Organics: A Part time course in Biodynamics, Oct 06 - Mar 07, 7 weekends and 2 full weeks

Biodynamic Training: 3 consecutive weekends, begins 22nd Sept – Glos

Biodynamic Bee Keeping Workshop: 29th Sep - 1st Oct - Glos

Full details on all these events see our website

www.biodynamic.org.uk

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

We work to 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 community supported agriculture to other communities and farms and share our learning (both economic and farming).*
- *To encourage Stroud Community Agriculture 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.*

Stroud Community Agriculture contacts:

General Enquiries & Information

Carole Vaughan - Tel: 0845 4580814 Email: info@StroudCommunityAgriculture.org

Membership Admin

Carol Mathews - Email: membership@StroudCommunityAgriculture.org

Stroud Community Agriculture core group

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|----------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Laurence Dungworth | 01452 753768 07799 015499 | laurencedungworth@yahoo.co.uk |
| Mark Harrison | 01453 753866 | mark@plumtucker.co.uk |
| Jeannie Ireland | 01453 810998 | jeannie@ravendance.co.uk |
| Bernard Jarman | 01453 757436 | bernardnkarin@phoncoop.coop.uk |
| Ali and Dave Judd | 01453 889069 | daveandali@phoncoop.coop.uk |
| Carole Vaughan | 01452 310077 | cv005a6380@blueyonder.co.uk |
| Nadine Smykatz-Kloss | 01453 840351 | Nsmykatz-kloss@stroudvalleysproject.org |

Collection Changes at HAWKWOOD

Please circle either of the following if you wish to make any changes and leave the form in the box provided in the pack shed, or contact Mark (details above).

- A. I wish to change my Hawkwood collection period to a Friday, starting on Friday 20th October, (and not collecting on Tuesday 17th)
- B. I wish to change my collection point to the farm at Brookthorpe starting on Tuesday 17th October.

NAME; _____
