

Taste Britain

The latest food news and products from around the country

A celebration of the finest British cheese

September is definitely a special month for British cheese producers and lovers. Nearly 1,000 traditional and modern cheeses made by around 200 British cheesemakers will be competing for honours at the British Cheese Awards on September 8.

Taking place on the village green in Churchill, Oxfordshire, entries will include Cheddars, blue cheeses, raw milk cheeses, vegetarian, ewes milk and buffalo milk cheeses.

Attending the judging is for trade only. Special ticketed cheese-related events on September 9 and 10 include comparative tastings for cheese professionals.

The 2011 British Cheese Award winners will be announced at the Great British Cheese Festival, taking place at Cardiff Castle on September 24 and 25.

The focal point for British Cheese Week (September 24-October 2), the festival's attractions will include the Hall of Champions, where some of the award-winning cheeses can be tasted. More information, including ticket details, can be found at: www.greatbritishcheesefestival.co.uk.



Food award for farm shop

Traditional pork pie and lemon oil produced by Derbyshire-based Croots Farm Shop has gained prestigious UK food and drink industry awards.

The farm shop, run by Steve Croot (pictured) at Farah House Farm, near Duffield, won a one star gold Great Taste Award for each of the products. More than 7,400 products were entered for The Guild of Fine Food-run awards.

'We are thrilled that both our pork pie and our lemon oil have been recognised as gold star standard in the Great Taste Awards, which are one of the most highly regarded food and drink schemes in the UK,' said Mr Croot.



Tesco deal for pea farms consortium

A consortium of Yorkshire farmers is celebrating winning a major contract to supply branded frozen peas to 165 Tesco stores in the North of England.

The Yorkshire Peas Company frozen peas brand is owned by Swaythorpe Growers, comprising 40 Yorkshire pea farmers. It is the UK's first fully farmer-owned brand of fine peas. The peas are all grown on Yorkshire Wolds family farms and processed at a local factory.

'It's a huge coup for us to sign this deal with Tesco,' said Matthew Hayward, director of Swaythorpe Growers.

Pictured (left to right) are William Wastling, from Thirtleby, Robert Kendall, from Market Weighton, Paul Temple, from Driffield, and Zoe Harrison, from Kilham.



Farmers' Markets

9 September
Blandford Farmers' Market
Market Place, Blandford Forum, Dorset
www.dorsetfarmersmarkets.co.uk

11 September
Sedgefield Farmers' Market
Cross Hill, Sedgefield, Stockton on Tees
www.sedgefield.net/farmers.html

14 September
Pontarddulais Local Produce Market
The Institute, Pontarddulais, Swansea
www.food-passion.co.uk/markets/swansea-markets.html

16 September
Hawick Farmers' Market
Hawick, Scottish Borders
<http://www.fishforums.net/index.php?topic/224306-fish-in-cycling/>

17 September
Impington Farmers' Market
Impington Village College, Impington, Cambridge
www.farmersfayres.co.uk/impington.html

Farm shop of the month

LOCH ARTHUR CREAMERY AND FARM SHOP
Loch Arthur, Beeswing, Dumfries
Tel: 01387 760 296
www.locharthur.org.uk

Loch Arthur Farmshop and Creamery is not only a great farm shop, but is also unique, as it is based on a working community of around 70 people, many of whom have learning disabilities. Members of the community run their own Detemercertified farm.

The award-winning farm shop stocks their own organic, biodynamic beef, lamb and pork, as well as free-range chickens from Lanarkshire.

Organically certified fruit and vegetables are also available from the farm's own fields. The creamery – a member of the Specialist Cheesemakers Association – produces a range of cheeses from their own, and locally sourced milk. And to top it all, an exceptional range of pies, cakes and chutneys are now being produced in their farm shop kitchen.



Fresh pasta moves to Waitrose

Some of London-based The Fresh Pasta Company's range of Italian fresh pasta products are now available in 28 Waitrose stores, mainly in London but also in key centres including Bath and Newcastle.

The products include butternut squash and sage tortelli, handmade venison tortelloni and ricotta and walnut tortelloni, which are available at £5.99 for 250 grams.



Fantastic food at Exmoor festival

A mouthwatering range of events are being planned for the 10th Exmoor Food Festival, which runs from September 30 to October 9. These include an evening of cider, cheese and chutney and other themed activities, a networking session for budding growers seeking land, food fairs, cookery workshops, farm visits and tasting platters.

The festival is designed to showcase the Exmoor area's variety of quality, independent food and drink producers. Festival website www.exmoorfoodfestival.co.uk has further details.

September food dates

3-4 September
Soil Association Organic Food Festival
Bristol Harbourside
www.organicfoodfestival.co.uk

9-11 September
Ludlow Marches Food and Drink Festival
Ludlow, Shropshire
www.foodfestival.co.uk

10-11 September
Leamington Spa Food and Drink Festival
Royal Pump Room Gardens, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire
www.leamingtonfoodfestival.co.uk

17-18 September
Abergavenny Food Festival
Abergavenny, Gwent
www.abergavennyfoodfestival.com

23-25 September
The Real Food Harvest Festival
Southbank Centre, London
www.realfoodfestival.co.uk

23-25 September
Cornwall Food and Drink Festival
Lemon Quay, Truro, Cornwall
www.cornwallfoodanddrink.co.uk

23-25 September
Nantwich Food Festival
Nantwich, Cheshire
www.nantwichfoodfestival.co.uk

24-25 September
The Great British Cheese Festival
Cardiff Castle, Cardiff
www.greatbritishcheesefestival.co.uk

24-25 September
Taste Cumbria
Events around Cumbria
www.tastecumbria.com

24-25 September
Alnwick Food Festival
Alnwick, Northumberland
www.alnwickfoodfestival.co.uk

24-25 September
Stratford-upon-Avon Food Festival
Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire
www.stratfordfoodfestival.co.uk

Taste cheese

With British Cheese Awards taking place this month, here are some award-winning cheeses to try.



Golden Cenarth

Caws Cenarth Cheese

The cheese produced by Caws Cenarth Cheese Ltd, of Lancy, Carmathenshire, was the Supreme Champion at the 2010 British Cheese Awards.

It also received awards for being the Best Semi-Soft Cheese and the Best Welsh Cheese at the same awards.

People can visit the firm's visitor centre and see cheesemaking undertaken between Monday and Friday, with its shop open 10am to 5pm, Monday to Saturday.

● www.cawscenarth.co.uk



Cornish Blue

Cornish Cheese Company

What started as a diversification for Phillip and Carol Stansfield's farm, and adding value to the milk produced on it, has led to creating a world-beating farmhouse blue cheese.

The Stansfields started producing Cornish Blue on their farm near Liskeard, in Cornwall, in 2001. Last November, at the BBC Good Food Show in Birmingham, Cornish Blue was crowned World Cheese Awards Champion Cheese 2010.

● www.cornishcheese.co.uk



Wensleydale

Belton Cheese

Judged Supreme Champion cheese at the Royal Bath and West Show in June, the

Wensleydale is among the range of handmade cheeses, including organic ones, produced at Belton Farm, near Whitchurch, Shropshire.

Fourteen medals in all, including golds for the Wensleydale, and Caerphilly, were won at the show by Belton Cheese Limited.

Belton Cheese was founded in 1973 on the farm run by the Beckett family.

● www.beltoncheese.co.uk



Mature Cheddar

Quicke's Traditional

The Quicke family has been farming near Newton St Cyes, in Devon, for more than

450 years. Traditional cheeses using milk from their dairy herd and matured for up to 24 months are produced.

According to Quicke's, the most famous of the cheese range is the Mature Cheddar, which came first in class at the 2011 Devon County Show – when its Mild Cheddar and Cheddar with Herbs also gained first prizes.

● www.quickes.co.uk