



# Ceredigion Producer Support Service II

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Jean-Christophe Novelli, Celebrity Chef at Lampeter's Food Festival shares his thoughts on the area, local produce and the countryside with Jennifer Jones, Antur Teifi's National Community Newspaper Network Information Officer.



**Is this your first time in rural Wales?** *I have visited Wales frequently but this is the first time for me to visit this particular area.*

**What do you think of the area?** *I was supposed to leave after the festival but have decided to cancel my next appointments and stay on longer as it is a different world here. What I like very much about the area is not only are the people very nice but that you can see the potential of the produce here. I think we are standing on top of a time bomb in terms of the produce. This morning I visited some cheese producers and was blown away - was absolutely shocked.*

**What with - the quality of the produce?** *The quality and the commitment - it was phenomenal. It is not because its a multi-million pound business but a passion which is growing.*

**Which cheese producers did you go and visit?** *I saw two chaps called John from Teifi Cheese and David from Cenarth Cheese, - their spirit is unbelievable.*

**Do you use any Welsh produce in your restaurants?** *Yes I do - Lamb- Welsh Lamb has always been my No. 1.*

**What do you think of imported lamb from New Zealand for example?** *I don't know because I don't buy it. I was in Dubai not long ago for a gastronomique week and I was amazed at the fact that the lamb had come from New Zealand. I am going to make lamb as one of my dishes today here at the festival - Welsh Lamb of course. This dish has followed me everywhere. I have cooked it at many events that have been organised for me. Welsh Lamb is the most consistent not only just in terms of quality. I am quite amazed with the purity of the air in Wales -*

*the grass is perfect - there is no dust and no pollution.*

**There are many organic producers here in Lampeter today - do you think that using organic produce gives you superior quality?**

*Yes you are better off using organic and it lasts longer believe it or not. If you're talking about yourself it's always better to buy organic and nothing else but for me because I am mostly in the business and have an academy you have to have a number of things every day in order to be able to cook your menus.*

**How important do you think it is to source local produce for example in your restaurants?** *You need to know what is around you locally. You can't do without a doctor or a dentist. I think food is vital - it's important to know what's there. Most people don't have a marketing budget. It's good for people to have the time and the respect to investigate what is local for them - it's like booking a holiday - you need to know who you are dealing with.*

**Would you say that festivals such as this one are important for marketing local produce?**

*Yes, you need festivals. I believe there are around 60 festivals a year in Wales. In France you have markets on a Monday, Wednesday and Saturday. Here you have festivals. There is always somebody who has something new to offer - always.*

**What has most inspired you about your visit to this area - what will you take home with you from here?** *I love Wales, therefore it is as simple as that. I've been to Wales many times and I nearly took a job 15 years ago on the North Coast. It is the way of living that is important here. There are things that you do here that you don't do where I am - you don't lock your doors - it is a completely different way of life.*

*For more information on Antur Teifi's National Community Newspaper Network contact [jennifer.jones@anturteifi.org.uk](mailto:jennifer.jones@anturteifi.org.uk) For more information on Jean-Christophe Novelli visit [www.jeanchristophenovelli.com](http://www.jeanchristophenovelli.com).*

## News in Brief

Are you a local producer looking for an opportunity to sell your produce and reach a wider customer base? Then why not consider trying a Farmers' Market. For more information on selling your produce at Farmers Markets' within Ceredigion, please contact, Jan Fenner on 01970 633066.

Do you get confused over the real meaning of 'best before' and 'use by dates' found on our food packaging? If so please read on ...

'Use By Dates' are used on highly perishable foods and 'Best Before' dates show how long the food would be at its best, used on food with a longer shelf life. For more information check out the foodlink website at [www.foodlink.org.uk](http://www.foodlink.org.uk), which offers a complete guide to food safety.

Craft producers, Second Time - Bookbinding and Boxmaking, Clems Daughter - Fabric Folk Art and Quilting, Aderyn Designs - Lacing Fairy Collection & Robert and Maureen Price - Watercolour Artists, will be holding an exhibition at Pendre Art in Cardigan between 6<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> of November and the 11<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> of December. All welcome.



# Profile of Local Artist, Diane Mathias

This beautiful and diverse land in which we live, holds many fascinations for landscape artist, Diane Mathias. Diane paints atmospheric scenes from around Ceredigion, Carmarthenshire and North Pembrokeshire in oils and pastels. Her subjects include many of the most tranquil places that surround us, yet in our busy lives, they may be passed by, un-noticed.

Although Diane has been painting since early childhood as a hobby, her career as an artist did not begin until after her fifth child had begun school in 1999, when she enrolled at Preseli school on the lifelong learning scheme as a means of improving her skills, which after having five children had not been used to their full potential for several years.

By the year 2001, Diane's paintings were proving to be popular and so she decided to devote all her time to her art and so became a self employed artist. In 2002, Diane joined the Cardigan Open Studio's scheme, which invites members of the public to visit local artists at their studios. This inspired Diane to open her own 'home studio', which she has done for the past last two years. Recently she has invested in large format printing equipment, to enable her to produce her own fine art reproductions. Future development will include the building of a purpose built studio/gallery adjacent to her house in Henllan, which she hopes to have up and running by next year. Diane also exhibits in local galleries, including Pendre Art, Cardigan, Origin Dyfed and the Lounge Gallery at the Waverley in Carmarthen, and the Victoria Fearn Gallery in Rhiwbina, Cardiff, as well as local shows and solo exhibitions. Her next exhibition is at Jibinc in Aberaeron and opens on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> October at 4pm, running until the end of the year.

Diane welcomes visitors all year round, on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday's between 10am and 6pm, at her studio 'Plas Waun', Henllan, Llandysul, or alternatively to view a variety of her artwork, why not visit Diane's website at [www.dianemathias.com](http://www.dianemathias.com) or telephone 01559 371608.

***The Soil Association is Celebrating its 60th Anniversary in 2006— it's role is more relevant than ever, Melissa Kidd, Information and Support Services Officer for the association tells us more.***

The Soil Association, the UK's leading environmental charity promoting sustainable, organic farming and championing human health, celebrates its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2006. Over the last sixty years, the organisation has grown from a small, but influential voice challenging the accepted orthodoxy of chemical-based, intensive agriculture to become an internationally-recognised pioneer and guardian of the practices and principles of organic farming.

But our interests and activities have always extended more widely, covering a wide spectrum of public concerns about factory farming, impacts of pesticides on our environment and health, fair trade and development issues, to promoting local food and seasonality, as well as supporting rural culture and employment in the UK.

The ideas set out by Lady Eve Balfour in 'The Living Soil', provided the inspiration

for the foundation of the organisation in 1946. With the benefit of hindsight, those ideas and their manifestation through practical organic farming encapsulate what is now called 'sustainability'.

Organic food is increasingly popular, the market rose by a massive 30 per cent last year to reach a staggering £1.6 billion, showing that more than ever people from all income and social groups are turning to organic food. People choose organic for many reasons: because they believe it tastes better and offers health benefits, such as having proven higher levels of vitamins, minerals and key cancer fighting antioxidants; and to avoid controversial food additives and pesticides. It's also been confirmed that organic farming supports more wildlife, as well as creating more jobs that sustain rural communities.

Patrick Holden, Director of the Soil Association, an organic farmer, himself said,

"Our latest Organic Market Report shows a three-fold increase in organic sales in the UK on the previous year. We're reaching a 'tipping point' where millions of people are using their buying power, not just to get food that's tastier and to avoid pesticides and GM, but to consciously support a system of farming that they see benefits the environment and offers the most sustainable method for producing our food."

In January 2006, there were 72,631 hectares of organically managed land in Wales, a 13% increase on the previous year. Organic farmers in Wales continue to have access to support through a range of agri-environment schemes including the organic farming conversion scheme and then maintenance phases; as well as Tir Cynnal or Tir Gofal.

For more information please call our Welsh-speaking certification officer, Sian Thomas on 0845 121 2321. This is also a useful source of information:  
<http://www.organic.aber.ac.uk>

## Ceredigion Craft Makers (CCM) Announcements

We would like to welcome our new members: -

- Aderyn Designs - Lacewing Fairy Collection
- Sarah Lloyd Williams - Wood Carving
- Robert and Maureen Price - Watercolour Artists

Anyone interested in joining us, please contact our Membership Secretary Chris King tel: 01570 493347.

CCM will be in the Bandstand, Aberystwyth, between 23rd and 26th November, 10am to 5pm.

The CCM Annual AGM will be held in November, with meetings resuming in January 2007 after the Christmas break.

For further information please contact: - CCM Secretary, Nia Hobbs, on 01239 654198 or CCM Chairman, Chris Thomas on 01570 423200.

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