

08 The Green Issue

Profiles of leading lights in the green movement, **Transition Towns** explained, **conservation holidays**, how to become an **ethical consumer**, fashion and beauty products that don't cost the earth.

PLUS: Interviews with **Will Self** and **Peter Blake**, **Buena Vista Social Club** comes to town, the **Brighton banjo scene** and **8mm films...**

Eat your greens

Eating healthily means eating ethically. **Nutritionist Susie Perry** gets to grips with the environmental food issues and offers some practical options on becoming a greener food consumer.

Go organic

By far the most obvious way to be environmentally friendly with your food is to buy organic produce. Food analysis has shown that many organic foods, in particular fruits and vegetables, can have higher levels of nutrients than their non-organic counterparts. Getting more vitamins, minerals and phyto-nutrients into your diet helps to boost your health and protect you from degenerative diseases. But buying organic foods from supermarkets doesn't always bypass the environmental issue of food miles and more often than not means you have pay hiked-up prices for the tag. To be a truly green food consumer you need to go a step further and commit to supporting your local organic farm. Signing up for an organic vegetable box scheme is the easiest and cheapest way to get great seasonal fruit and veg that's been grown in your region and you don't even have to carry it home.

Companies that cover Brighton include We Love Local www.we-love-local.com

Ashurst Organics

Tel: 01273 891219, Barcombe Organic

Nurseries Tel: 01273 400011, Abel & Cole Tel:

08452 626262 and Riverford Home Delivery

Tel: 01323 440780.

Guilt-free meat

The vegetarian and vegan cause is definitely an admirable one but this type of diet isn't suited to everyone. Intensive meat farming is a shameful side of our agricultural industry which many of us turn a blind eye to, but there are so many guilt-free options available. Okay, sometimes these options are a little more expensive but you get what you pay for. Cheap meat is laced with chemical preservatives, antibiotics and hormones all of which over time can have a negative impact on your health. Organic or even free range meat is cleaner, generally leaner and best of all – well reared.

Shop at Boathouse Farm Organic Shop

Tel: 01273 814188, Colmers Family Butchers

Tel: 01903 504327, or www.wellhungmeat.com

Fish freedom

For some reason it seems harder to associate issues of cruelty to intensively farmed fish; they're not as cute as our farmyard friends but nonetheless they deserve cruelty-free life. Intensive fish farming does have phenomenal environmental drawbacks, including increases in disease, changes to natural habitats and increases in pollution. From a

nutritional point of view farmed fish suffer the same pitfalls as intensively reared meats. Detrimental changes in the amounts and types of omega-3 fats and residues of chemicals and antibiotics make them less health enhancing than wild fish. So stick to ocean fish as much as possible – from Marine Stewardship Council certified catches – and take care of our salmon and trout species by shopping for wild or organic options.

Try www.graigfarm.co.uk, www.ableandcole.co.uk or www.thefishsociety.co.uk

Drinks and treats

It's not just the major food groups that you need to be aware of when you want to be a green. Sometimes it's the little things that you need to keep an eye out for. Coffee, tea and chocolate are produced in countries that are vulnerable to agricultural policies that destroy their natural local habitat and environment. By selecting Fairtrade or organic options on these foods you are helping to make sure that money and support gets to the right people in the right places.

Reputable brands and suppliers include Café Direct, www.simplyfairtrade.co.uk and the Co-op.