

Taste of a Better Future

Newsletter for community food growing groups Winter 2000



Women's Environmental Network

Welcome to our first newsletter. The Taste Of A Better Future network has come a long way since its launch in 1999. We are currently in touch with 19 groups. Some of these are already growing while others are at the planning and research stages.

New report We have produced a 16 page report based on talking to members of some of the groups we have been involved in. We hope you find it useful and interesting. Thanks to all the women and workers who took part. If you have not received a copy please let us know.

Growing organic food locally and sharing skills and knowledge brings about exciting changes in the foods we eat and the environment we live in. Groups have been busy this year: growing, getting funding and nurturing exciting new projects. The following is to help you stay in touch, stay inspired and keep growing!

Jagonari Older Women's Group: will resume growing in March after a successful harvest this growing season. They are awaiting funding for raised beds and invite women 40+ to join them and learn to grow vegetables and herbs. Contact: Shahanara Kalam 020 7375 0520. The group is assisted by **Thrive**. (Formerly Horticultural Therapy). Contact 020 7739-2965.

Coriander Club based at Spitalfields City Farm: Lutfun Hussain, who has been growing vegetables for over 30 years, is now running this thriving group which is still going and doing well. Spitalfields City farm is hoping to set up a box scheme in the near future and food growing groups on the Chicksands Estate. Tel 020 7247 8762

Langdon Park School: there has been more interest recently in the growing group with help from WEN volunteers and the BCTV. The school has received a grant for raised beds and a polytunnel and construction of them should start early next year. Pupils have been constructing compost bins for the growing area.

The Garrett Centre: there has been a change of staff recently and Wahida Haque is now involved in the growing project. The centre has secured a new lease and the move to the basement area will provide more space for container growing. The lunch club is doing very well.

Thomas Buxton School: have a lovely garden and will resume growing in the spring. WEN is assisting to re-initiate the parents' growing group.

ToCh (for families under pressure): have successfully secured Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) funding for container beds and gardening sessions. They will soon be recruiting a garden development worker. We can expect to see innovative ideas as they face the challenge of growing in a confined space 3m x 9m.



Wapping Women's Centre: celebrated their first Garden Project Anniversary in September. The first and second stages of the project

have been successful and they have received SRB funding towards the final stages-building the last few beds, a compost heap and putting down gravel paths.

Freightliners Farm: are expanding their community composting scheme and we hope to hear more about their plans.

Nal Zindagi: this Bolton group have received a SRB grant and will use their allotment as a training ground for women to try out techniques they can then use in their own gardens. They are receiving guidance and training in organic growing by the Bolton Wildlife Trust and the Bolton Gathering of Organic Growers.

First Step in Newcastle have been drawing up plans for their site. They are deciding whether to build a solar heated greenhouse or they may create a hot bed from manure. They are particularly interested in growing duggi, mouli, coriander and ginger. They have some coriander seed that was collected in Pakistan so they are keen to see how it does.

Make a wooden compost bin for your group. Workshops on this are planned if you are interested sign up now.

Looking for somewhere to grow? There is growing space available at the following places:

- **Becontree Organic Growers** have a large garden in Dagenham and are looking for community growing groups to share their space with. Tel 020 8592 8941
- **Vauxhall City Farm:** they have two allotments. a dad and kids group are laying a path and building raised beds in one growing area. They are hoping to start growing in the Spring. Other community groups and individuals are invited to get involved. Tel: Amanda Rew 020 7582 4204
- **Anne Fell**, a WEN member, invites women to help grow vegetables in her Essex garden. She is disabled and a keen organic grower – vegetables will be shared. Contact WEN for details.

Join WEN. If your group is not already a member of WEN now is a good time to join. The group could join at the special individual price of £15 (normally £35) and be kept informed of all the campaigns including Real Nappies, waste prevention and health.

Joining Sustain's **Food Poverty Network**, is another good way of keeping in touch, sharing successes and failures with others working on food poverty-and is free for a year for all groups in touch with The Taste of a Better Future project. Contact Caroline for details.

Thrive is also keen on groups joining their network and going on their database because they want to make their network more diverse. One advantage of this for you would be that you would be kept informed of training and networking events in your area. Contact Carol Deadman 0118 9885688

Congratulations to all the groups, keep in touch and happy growing in 2001.

If you no longer wish to be on our mailing list please let us know.

Newsletter compiled by Enrica Passafonti.

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