



Brockleby's

Asfordby Hill, Melton Mowbray

Leicestershire LE14 3QU

Tel: 01664 813200

Sweet taste of success for county farmer

A farmer who champions the home-grown taste of Leicestershire and Rutland is celebrating the first birthday of his unique farm shop. Ian Jalland set up Brockleby's Farm Shop in Asfordby Hill, Melton, a year ago, selling rare breed lamb and pork from his own farm, alongside top quality food and drink produced in Leicestershire.

Next week (Sunday, May 7), customers, suppliers and local dignitaries will get the chance to sample the best of the county's produce when they gather to mark the anniversary of the shop's opening.

Former Hambleton Hall chef Chris Ansell will be demonstrating innovative contemporary recipes, using local produce from the shop's extensive range. Among the delicacies on offer, Chris, who now runs his own cookery consultancy, Zest Cuisine, has prepared bresaola, using fillets from the shop's range of slow-matured organic beef, marinated in spices and thinly sliced.

The shop's larder is packed with the pride of the county: Locally produced cheeses include Stilton from nearby Quenby Hall and the only Red Leicester made in Leicestershire.

Shoppers can pick up organic flour which has been ground in the traditional way at Whissendine Windmill as well as the freshest of seasonal fruit and vegetables grown in the area. The store stocks fresh milk from Normanton, yoghurt churned in Thrussington and wild venison from Castle Donington. Bread, honey, jams and preserves, all made in Leicestershire, can be washed down with a glass or two of wine from the Welland Valley, or beer from the Vale of Belvoir.

Brockleby's also houses a farmhouse kitchen where traditional pies and meals are cooked on a daily basis, using local ingredients, while customers watch. Recipes such as free range chicken tikka masala and sweet and sour rare breed pork have brought first-time customers flocking back to the shop on a regular basis to stock up their freezers.

The shop opened last year thanks to a grant from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). The department provides support for farmers seeking to diversify. Ian's family had been raising livestock in Upper and Nether Broughton since 1603.

With four hundred years of family history resting on his shoulders - and what could be described as the most challenging market conditions for farmers in as many centuries, Ian knew he had to evolve to survive.

"We wanted to develop a closer relationship between the farmer and the customer. This is how farmers operated before the war and we needed to get back to that way of working in order to make a living.

"Selling direct, through farmers' markets and at the farm shop, also means that shoppers know

exactly where their food has come from. This is becoming more and more important to people these days," he said.

Ian farms rare breed pigs and sheep - the old-fashioned Jacob and Hebridean varieties - using traditional methods. That means that the farm's fields are free from artificial fertilisers, pesticides and GM crops and the meat is free from hormones and antibiotics.

The animals have a longer life than intensively farmed livestock - and a shorter, and therefore less stressful, trip to the abattoir - all the meat on sale at the shop is slaughtered locally.

Over the past year, Brockleby's Farm Shop's environmentally-friendly approach to business has earned it a Green Life award for its contribution to the environment and its culinary delights have also won it three Great Taste awards.

"We're looking forward to celebrating our achievements with customers past, present and future on Sunday - and raising money for the Mayor of Melton's annual appeal. It's been a great year for the business and we're excited at the prospect of building on our successes in the next 12 months," said Ian.

ENDS

Members of the press are invited to attend the Brockleby's Farm Shop's first birthday on Sunday, May 7, from 10.30am. There will be a cake cutting ceremony at 11am. Further information is available from:

**Sarah Hall
Tel: 07963 269992
sarahmlhall@aol.com**

or

**Ian Jalland at Brockleby's Farm Shop
Tel: 01664 813200
Email: ian.jalland@btconnect.com**