

Northants Christmas Vegan Food and Cruelty Free Fayre

Saturday 11 December 2010

Organised by Green Garden Cafe and Fairfoods in conjunction with NARN (Northants Animal Campaigning Group), this was the first vegan food fayre to be held in Northampton. It was very successful with positive feedback from visitors and stall holders alike.

Entry to the fayre was free. It featured stalls, a vegan cafe with delicious vegan food and two tables piled high with yummy vegan food tasters. The fayre was sponsored by several groups and companies who, by their generous support, helped ensure that the fayre took place.



Promoting the fayre

Throughout the duration of the fayre, volunteers leafleted outside to thousands of shoppers in Northampton's busy shopping centre. Shoppers were given information about the fayre and the opportunity to try vegan food tasters. This brought hundreds of people to the fayre, in total around 400 attended. Local campaigners also went on local radio a few days before the fayre and gave it a good plug.

The fayre itself...

The free food

This was a big focus of the event to give newcomers to veganism the opportunity to try out delicious vegan food. Homemade food was given out together with recipes so that people could try the food at home. You can download the recipe sheet given out on the day here: www.fairfoods.org.uk/images/InfoSheetNorthants2010.12.pdf

Ready-made food was also on offer. This included vegan hard and soft cheese (Sheese) from Bute Island Foods; granola and rice milk from Essential; sauces from Meridian; Nakd bars; coffee chocolate, mayo and chocolate spread from Plamil; a range of vegan cheeses (Cheezly), pates and cheatin' chicken from Redwoods; and chocolate from Venture Foods.



The cafe

The cafe offered hot and cold drinks and hot food, from lasagne and burgers to hot fruit punch and trifle. These were all sold to help fund future fayres.

There was very positive feedback on all the food with many requests for the recipes (even though they were available throughout the cafe area). Judy from Northampton summed it up: "Really enjoyed the food, it was excellent."

The information available

As well as recipes, the guide produced for the day included information about the reasons for going vegan, and a 'Vegan Toolbox' (a guide to going vegan) which included links to resources such as the vegan pledge and more recipes.



At the front desk there was information about every aspect of going and staying vegan. Stall holders held information on a wide variety of vegan and animal rights topics: from raw food to vegan sweets, from vegan nutrition to animal rescue, from anti-vivisection to vegan cosmetics.

The local group

The event managed to create a stronger local group with the same goals in mind; to spread awareness of an ethical and more compassionate lifestyle. NARN are already planning another vegan food fayre next year and received a positive response from local people who left their contact details and are interested in getting involved.

Some feedback

Here are some of the comments we received from fayre-goers.

"I totally enjoyed my visit. I came to support my daughter but found the info very interesting and it made me re-think my family's diet. Thank you." - unnamed

"Really enjoyed the food, it was excellent." - Judy, Northampton

"Carry on with this awareness." - Nisha, Northampton

"Great day, loved it!" - Julie



"Great idea - was as good as Lincoln two years ago." - Phil, West Haddon

"Everything was fantastic, thank you." - Tina, Northants

"Well done on a great event." - Ryan

"More events like this would be great!" - unnamed

We also received feedback from stall holders.

“Just wanted to say well done for all your hard work for the xmas fayre. I thought it went really well and I hope you were pleased with how it went as well. I thought the interview on radio Northants was good too!

We’ll definitely want to have a stall if you want to hold the fayre again next year! (Please pass on to fairfoods and green garden cafe as I haven’t got their emails, but wanted to let them know that their food was just scrummy).”

“The atmosphere was lovely on Saturday and when I popped into the food room it was great to see everyone sitting around chatting. You did really well and laid on a great event. Well done.”

“Just a note to say thank you for inviting us to be involved on Saturday. I think it is a great event and I hope you can relax a bit now! Keep us informed of anything else we might be able to help with!”

Finally, some feedback from Erica of NARN.

“I went to the Northants Veggie do last night and everyone there said the fayre was brilliant.

Northants Veggies had many forms handed in from people showing an interest in joining the local group and were extremely pleased with the feedback they got from the day. It was, without doubt, a hugely beneficial day for all the local stall holders and people that attended. Apparently many felt inspired by the huge range of vegan food and have already been trying out recipes from the free recipe sheet and everyone I know has raved on about the cakes which were ‘out of this world!’”

The sponsors

We would like to extend a huge thank you to all our sponsors.

Main sponsors

The Vegan Society (vegansociety.com)

Vegfund (vegfund.org)

The following companies donated food or toiletries

Bute Island foods (buteisland.com)

Essential Trading (essential-trading.co.uk)

Faith (faithinnature.co.uk)

Fullwell Mill (fullwellmill.co.uk)

Hapibean (hapibean.co.uk)

Kara (karadairyfree.com)

Meridian Foods (meridianfoods.co.uk)

Natural Balance Foods (naturalbalancefoods.co.uk)

Plamil (plamilfoods.co.uk)

Redwoods Wholefoods (redwoodfoods.co.uk)

Suma (suma.coop)

Sweetbird (hellosweetbird.com)

Venture Foods (venturefoods.com)

The stalls

The fayre featured 14 stalls in total, these were as follows.

Handmade By Di (handmadebydi.co.uk)

Redwoods Wholefoods (redwoodfoods.co.uk)

Hope Street Vegan Skincare (hope-street.com)

Daily Bread Co-operative (dailybread.co.uk)

Lush Cosmetics (lush.co.uk)

Artisan Preserves (artisanpreserves.com)

The Pink Sheep Company

Rita's books (new release for children - local author)

Lakeside Ethical Treats (facebook.com/lakesideethicaltreats)

Raw Alchemy (rawalchemy.org.uk)

Animals In Need (animals-in-need.org)

Speak Campaigns (speakcampaigns.org)

Northants Veggies (northantsveggies.org.uk)

NARN (narn.info@yahoo.co.uk, 07746 776823)

A bit about the organisers

The fayre was organised by Green Garden Cafe, Fairfoods and NARN on a voluntary basis.



The Umbrella Fair thanks two of the organisers.



greengardencafe.co.uk



fairfoods.org.uk

**Northampton
Animal
Campaigning
Group**

narn.info@yahoo.co.uk
07746 776823