

Welcome to our Spring Update 2009.

GROWING IDEAS

We have now launched the Growing Ideas page on the SFM website which will have handy pdfs to download to inspire you to get your school growing. If you have a Growing Idea, email us, and you can join our list of schools with great growing ideas.

SHOW US YOUR SPROUTS!

Waitrose loves school gardening and has agreed to give SFM space outside Kingston and Surbiton branches for schools that want to showcase their good work and raise money by selling their produce. If your school would like to get involved, email us. SFM has also put forward 18 schools for funding through Waitrose's Community Matters programme. If chosen, local schools will receive small grants to further their growing projects.

SCHOOL FARMS

Hot on the heels of our Growing Ideas page is a page dedicated to School Farms. This is a great time for school farms with more school farms opening than closing - a welcome reverse in trend - and numbers are now up to 74 across the country. This new page will also support our work with Grey Court School and enable you to watch the progress of their school farm project as things develop.

COMPETITION

Good luck to the fifteen schools who are hard at work on their entries for our competition. Joe Pecorelli from the Richmond Environment Network and Cliff Marriott of Rushall Organic Farm have been delivering workshops to competing schools and we hope that they've inspired our young film makers to tell the story of where their food comes from. Entries are due in on 27 March and winners will be announced on 1 April.

SHEEN MOUNT'S NEW MEAL SERVICE

Sheen Mount has launched its new school meal service. Now into week nine, Sheen Mount has a staggering 350 children taking school lunches 3 days a week (that's over 85% of the school) and 250 opting for a hot lunch every day! Caterers, Restaurants at School, must be getting something right with their fresh, locally-sourced lunches all cooked on site. But some of the credit must go to the school staff and governors who have worked tirelessly to get the dining room operation just right. SFM was able to advise on this important piece in the school meal puzzle, and the school now has new square tables, trays, plates and bowls to replace the dreaded flight trays, cutlery and brightly coloured cups and water jugs - all contributing to making lunchtime fun. The queuing has been kept to a minimum with staggered play times, and the few children still having packed lunches can sit with their friends eating a hot lunch - many have since been tempted to join the hot meal crew. If you want advice on how to improve you school's meal service, SFM is always happy to share best practice.



RICHMOND BOROUGH'S SCHOOL MEAL CONTRACT

Richmond already does great work in relation to sustainable schools - now it's time to get the food right. The Sustainable Schools framework would like all schools "to become model suppliers of healthy, local and sustainable food" and with the existing contract due to end in 2011, Richmond Council has an ideal opportunity, and the lead-time required, to make the borough's school meal service a model of excellence for local authorities across the country. Be part of this exciting reform by signing the SFM petition

<http://www.gopetition.com/petitions/school-food-matters.html>.

SFM will be working with Kingston Council later this year towards a fresher more sustainable meal offer for Kingston schools.