

CAMBRIDGE ORGANIC GAZETTE

courgette

Here comes
Christmas!

Important information
about your Christmas
deliveries

Festive products
available to buy now

Team tips for your veggy
side dishes

The bigger picture to
being a Cambridge
Organic member



Comment from Duncan

Founder and owner of Cambridge Organic



Season's greetings. It's time to start making plans and preparations for the festive period, so please keep hold of this edition for information about our Christmas schedule, to peruse the festive goodies we have on offer, and to get some great tips on preparing your Christmas dinner veggies.


I was deeply saddened to hear that my former college tutor Marina O'Connell passed away recently. I did an HNC in Organic Farming and Growing at Otley College around twenty-five years ago when the Cambridge Organic Food Company was in its infancy. Marina was my tutor and course leader and as such she has played an influential role both in my life, and in that of

the company. I remember that course very fondly. Marina had curated an impressive array of field trips, expert tutors and excellent guest speakers. However, it was Marina herself that really made that course what it was. Her passion for growing and sustainability came through in everything she said, it was infectious. It was through being on this course, and through Marina's inspiration, that I began to look beyond organic food as simply the means by which I made my living, and started to recognise it as something of vital importance to the health of our planet, and a mission worth devoting to.

Tidings of Wintercomfort & Jimmy's - The Christmas Appeal



We've now launched our Christmas appeal. As we do every year we will support two charities in Cambridge who help those who are rough sleeping, vulnerably housed or in danger of losing their homes: Wintercomfort and Jimmy's. You can contribute by adding a donation to your weekly veg-box in your online account. You'll find the donate option in the 'add items to your order' menu on the website.

 "Christmas is a time well documented for giving and sharing. For us here at Jimmy's it is important for our residents to feel they are valued, supported and thought about. With the Cambridge Community and beyond supporting us at all times of the year but especially Christmas, we can help provide the Christmas that people deserve. Thank you in advance of your support this Christmas."



" We are so grateful for the support of Cambridge Organic and their lovely customers for supporting Wintercomfort this year, their continued support helps fund our services for people experiencing homelessness in Cambridge."



A Tribute to Marina O'Connell 1961-2024

The world of horticulture and sustainable food has been celebrating the life and achievements of Marina O'Connell, who sadly passed in September.

A devotee of sustainable and regenerative farming systems such as Permaculture, Agroforestry and Biodynamic agriculture, Marina was highly respected as both a practitioner and an educator.

After studying horticulture at Bath and Essex University she went on to form close links with the Permaculture Association and Schumacher College, both of which were fledgling organisations at the time.

In the 1990's Marina, and husband Mark, set about transforming a four-acre plot near Manningtree in Essex into a Biodynamic smallholding. It was around this time that Marina ran the HNC course at Otley College where we met. Not long after they moved to Devon to realise Marina's vision of creating an agroecological education and wellbeing farm...The Apricot Centre. Marina and her team did an incredible job of turning this vision into reality. Today the Apricot Centre is highly regarded throughout the sustainable food movement.

In 2022 Marina's book 'Designing Regenerative Food Systems, and Why We Need Them Now' was published. And I was delighted when I saw my former tutor feature in the recent documentary film 'Six Inches of Soil', mentoring the next generation of sustainable farmers; our very own Adrienne from Sweetpea Market Garden.



Marina was a lovely person, and highly respected throughout the sustainable food movement, to which her contribution is considerable. She will leave a lasting legacy of individuals, who have been trained and inspired by her, and of course the many more people who will continue to learn about regenerative farming and sustainable food at the Apricot Centre.



Talking About The Bigger Picture

The way we spend our money has an impact. It's an effective way to support the values that we hold dear, while going about our daily lives. By being a Cambridge Organic customer, or a 'member' (as we consider you) you are supporting sustainable business practices, the local community that we are all a part of and various local initiatives that are good for people and planet. It's much more than a box full of veg:

Organic is climate action

Organic farming avoids the use of chemicals which contribute to climate change, through their manufacture, application and degrading effect on the soil - reducing its ability to store carbon.

Every organic purchase helps protect more land from chemical agriculture, with added benefits for preserving nature and wildlife.

Minimising Waste

Our waste funnel starts with how we pack. We have developed a special process for packing vegetable boxes that is designed to minimise waste. The 'Original' box is key to this. Also when we have produce that is still good to eat but not appropriate for the boxes, we donate it to local schemes, such as The Harston Community Food Hub. Any items not fit for human consumption go to local farms and their 4 (or 2) legged friends such as Bagend Rescue Farm near Royston.

Avoided 6,000,000 + pieces of plastic packaging

All organic produce sold through supermarkets has to be wrapped, to keep it separate from non-organic food. At Cambridge Organic we minimise the use of plastic packaging as much as possible, only using it where we feel it's necessary to avoid food from otherwise spoiling and being thrown away.

Always Paying Fair

We always pay fairly - to the growers and producers we buy from and when it comes to our team. We are proud to be a living wage employer.



Avoided 69+ tonnes of CO2

Since 2015 Cambridge Organic has been growing its fleet of electric vans. We now have 5 beautifully decorated, zero carbon-emitting vehicles making our deliveries. To date that equals over 225,000 miles of fruit and veg delivered with zero emissions! That's 9 times round the world!

Supporting Local

We prioritise buying local and have spent over £2,500,000 directly with local growers. This means supporting organic and regenerative growing practices that protect the environment – soils, air and water - where we live. Plus it keeps food miles to a minimum. It really is at the core of what we do. It helps support the local economy and strengthen our food resilience with a stronger local food ecosystem.

“I'm eager to continue the excellent relationship we've had with Cambridge Organic this past year; it really does help us grow as a charity (pun totally intended)” from The Prospects Trust, organic farm near Reach.

Supporting ethical companies

Our grocery items are either from local producers, or if from farther afield, organic-only products. So you can feel confident that your money is being passed on to people and businesses that care.

Planting Trees

This year we are working with the national tree sponsorship scheme 'Trees For Streets'. Funding has been raised through customers adding one-off or regular donations to their boxes. Plus as a company we have also donated a tree to the tally. Planting will start this winter, helping to make our city streets greener.

At the time of writing this we are very close to reaching our target of funding 5 trees. More to come!

2024's festive treats

2024's festive items from our **local** producers.

- Wooden Christmas decorations from local creatives **Studiotwenty4**
- Christmas puds, mince pies and other festive goodies from **Fitzbillies**
- Irish whisky vegan chocolate bar and vegan chocolate baubles by **Ombar**
- Christmas jams and chutneys from **The Prospects Trust**
- Coffee from **Hot Numbers** Christmas blend
- Red cabbage and cranberry sauerkraut by **Totally Cultured**
- Christmas Ham flavoured crisps from **Savoursmiths**



Find all these items under
'Christmas Treats'
www.bit.ly/CamOrganicChristmas



Tasty Team Tips!

As self-proclaimed veggy lovers the team has some festive advice on how to spruce up your veggy sides this Christmas.

"I roast Brussels as they taste more nutty and less sulphuric" *Serena*



"I agree, I roast them with oil, salt and pepper and when ready to serve I mix in a tablespoon of balsamic vinegar and a teaspoon of honey - delicious!" *Kat*



"Star Anisi and Port in red cabbage - A 'Nigella' I think...She always adds that 'extra something' that elevates - so good for Xmas food ideas" *Louise*



"I cook red cabbage over a low heat with butter till it starts to soften. I then add salt and pepper to taste along with nutmeg. For last few minutes I add a chopped up apple and some raisins" *Dave*



"I like to add toasted sliced almonds on top of celeriac mash to add that festive something" *Dean*



"I turn my parsnips into party crisps by peeling them into thin strips, tossing with oil and pepper and roasting in the oven. After they are crispy I sprinkle with sea salt and serve as a festive snack" *David*



Your Christmas Deliveries

We'll be delivering veg-boxes up to and including Friday 20th December. Then we'll take a break. We'll be closed throughout the whole of the following week. Veg-box deliveries will resume on Tuesday 31st December. The only exception is Wednesday customers - who we will inform separately of our delivery plans, to ensure you don't miss out on two weeks of super veg (due to both bank holidays falling on a Wednesday)

Order extra for a veg-full Christmas

Introducing...the Christmas extra boxes.

You can always increase your weekly order by adding on extra items under the 'Fruit & Vegetables to add to your veg box' option.

Alternatively, to cover the week when we are closed, we have **exciting new Christmas box options**, so you can get 2 boxes of that beautiful veg to last you and your guests till the New Year. This second box will come with a **20% discount**.

Original and Original Plus customers will receive a 2nd box with the same bases but some different festive items too. Choice customers can purchase boxes that give them extra points to spend on whatever vegtastic items they desire.

You can order your additional 'Christmas box', for delivery in the week before we close, from now and up until that last week of deliveries under the 'add items to your order' menu option followed by the 'Add-on Christmas Boxes' option. Alternatively follow this link www.bit.ly/48lpPIK or follow the QR code:



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