



GRAMPIAN
FOOD
FORUM

Acting in partnership with industry

Annual Report 2010



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Grampian is the main producer of food and drink in Scotland. Its rich arable land and North Sea coastline provide excellent raw materials and fresh, natural produce that is world renowned. The region covers every aspect of the food and drink industry from fishing, farming and food processing to nutrition and food sciences.

Foreword

**by Alan Meikle, Grampian Oat Products,
Chairman, Grampian Food Forum**

We are in a period of change; change in the economy, change in the government and change in the food and drink industry. We have also seen a change in the leadership of the Food Forum, with the retirement of James Knowles. James was head of Economic Development at Aberdeenshire Council and a founder member of the Grampian Food Forum nearly 20 years ago. We were fortunate to have had Jim's involvement and commitment to the industry over all those years and wish to ensure that we continue to build on this commitment by engaging with our public sector partners moving forward.

Grampian Food Forum will continue to work closely with Scotland Food & Drink and within the industry strategy for growth. Early in the New Year we review our local strategy, how it aligns to the industry strategy and how we can contribute towards national targets. This may mean changes in the activities we offer, but we will continue to put Grampian companies at the forefront of our activities.

We first introduced the annual report in 2008 to highlight the range of activities that have been delivered by the Grampian Food Forum during the year. It has proved to be a reminder of the strength and support we have from our public sector partners and the commercial companies in Aberdeenshire, Aberdeen and Moray. 2010 was another successful year, with 192 different organisations from across all aspects of the food and drink industry taking part in our activities. I hope 2011 will be as successful.



"The Grampian food industry is growing from strength to strength and it is very satisfying that with input from the Operations Group, who themselves run successful businesses, we can help to move it forward. The time and effort afforded by the team and through their experience of current markets means that we, together with our public sector partners, can help our industry contribute positively to the local economy. 2010 has been a year of challenge, however we look forward to 2011 with fresh eyes and a determination to boost sales, margins and brand recognition not just on a local, Scottish or UK basis, but a global level too."

Keith Whyte, Mitchells. Chairman of the Operations Group.

Achievements in 2010

Innovation Awards

The Innovation Awards were held for the 20th time in 2010 and are well established as a key event in the Forum's calendar. The awards reward local companies for new products launched and are judged by a panel of high profile judges.

David Reid, chairman of Tesco plc, said "The professionalism, enthusiasm and commitment of all the producers has been inspiring. You could see the depth in the way in which they have considered local heritage and local and natural ingredients. Also a great awareness of what their customers are looking for. They deserve every success. The Grampian Food Forum should be encouraged to keep up their good work in supporting enterprise and innovation in the food and drink industry."



Pre-judges - David Knight, Andy Roger, Sarah Mackie



Judges - David Reid, Andy Roger, Lady Claire Macdonald

8 of the 30 companies who competed were entering the awards for the first time.

Over 200 industry representatives attended the awards presentation dinner. 49 local food and drink companies were represented.

The event overall rated 4.21*



30 companies, 109 product entries

* Rating given when 4=very good and 5=excellent.

Taste of Grampian

Taste of Grampian celebrated its 11th anniversary in June 2010. The one day food and drink festival attracted an estimated 14,000 visitors and local consumers.

Scottish Government Rural Affairs Secretary Richard Lochhead, said "Clearly Taste of Grampian is going from strength to strength and each year we are seeing new businesses coming on board. With more than 100 stands showcasing food and drink there is clearly a healthy appetite for our food and drink from Grampian and beyond."

"We showcased our first ever consumer brand, DeviliShh™, and our 'cheeky devils' were inundated with eager foodies wanting to be the first to buy our cheeky posh puds." Karen Scott, DeviliShh™.

46% of exhibitors reported sales higher than anticipated.

The event overall rated 4.24*.



Silvena Rowe and James Tanner. Photo courtesy of The Press and Journal.

"We had an amazing day at Taste of Grampian. We sold just about everything we'd brought, the sun shone and we were thrilled to see our old friend James Tanner."

Nicky Braford, Kincardine Kitchen.



Food and Drink Shows

A number of local companies exhibited under the Taste of Grampian banner at the Royal Highland Show in June, Dundee Flower and Food Festival in September and the BBC Good Food Show in October. There was also a farmers market at Union Square in Aberdeen with 15 companies taking part.



"It was great to be part of Taste of Grampian stand at the Highland Show and there were a lot of good comments from visitors about it. Overall, we had very good show and look forward to going back."

Jamie Hutcheon, Cocoa Ooze.

* Rating given when 4=very good and 5=excellent.

Dining Club



The concept of the Grampian Food Forum Dining Club is for chefs, restaurateurs and food producers to build better relationships and to help promote the greater use of local produce in the region's eating establishments.

Representatives from 77 different organisations attended Dining Club events, which were held at the The Carmelite Hotel in February, Meldrum House Hotel in May and Country Club and The Barn and Bushel in September. Guest speakers included Fergus Younger of Food from Argyll, writer and chef Christopher Trotter and Paul Tamburrini executive chef of Hotel Du Vin.



An average of 76 people attend Dining Club events.

93% of those who responded said they would recommend the Dining Club to colleagues.



"Excellent event, as ever. Well done."
Martin Simpson, Deeside Spring Water.

"A very nice evening. Lovely folks and many new products introduced to me on the evening." Robin Baird, Gadie's Restaurant.

Grampian Chef of the Year



The Forum also supports Grampian Chef of the Year, which is the annual event to showcase the skills of local chefs who compete using the best local and seasonal produce in their menus.

- Grampian Chef of the Year - Michael Watt, Buchan Braes Hotel, Peterhead
- Grampian Contract Chef of the Year - Yoram Odentz, Sodexo Remote Sites
- Grampian Young Chef of the Year - Kevin Johnston, Restaurant 21, Aberdeen
- Grampian Seafood Chef of the Year - Bob Miller, The Milton Restaurant, Crathes

Accessing Premium Markets

43 representatives from 33 different organisations attended an Open Meeting in Elgin in November. The topic was 'Achieving Common Goals' and speakers included Alan Stevenson of SAOS, Ronnie Wilson of Taylors Regional Foods, Andrew Niven of INSIGHTS and Jim Maxwell of Cooperative Development Scotland and hosting the social media masterclass was Gordon White of fatBuzz Ltd.

Andrew Niven, said "The Grampian Food Forum provided the ideal platform for Scotland Food and Drink's INSIGHTS team to present its forecasts, market intelligence and shopper trend predictions for 2011. The range and number of food and drink producers who attended allowed the INSIGHTS team to reach a wide and relevant audience in an encouraging and lively setting. It also provided a great opportunity for networking and allowed the team to set up subsequent meetings with individual producers."

85% felt their business would benefit as a result of attending.

The event overall rated 4.1*.

60% of those who responded employ less than 25 employees.



Delegates at Baxters Highland Village

A total of 62 delegates attended awareness visits to the Raemoir Garden Centre in February, Dobbies Garden World in August and Baxters Highland Village in November.

"A useful visit that gave an insight to Baxters business and will hopefully prove beneficial to our company as a local supplier."
Helen Geddes, Sangs (Banff) Ltd.

3 new companies were listed with Raemoir Garden Centre as a direct result of attending the awareness visit.



Raemoir Garden Centre



Dobbies Garden World

Over 90% felt their business would benefit as a result of attending.

* Rating given when 4=very good and 5=excellent.

Innovation and Business Growth Programme



The Innovation and Business Growth Programme was first run in 2009/10 and has taken place for the second year with 14 delegates participating.

The aim of the programme is to provide food and drink businesses with the necessary competence skills and knowledge to achieve their growth ambitions through innovation, adding value, new market development and quality improvements.

As well as classroom learning, the workshops have included presentations by guest speakers who shared experiences and also best practice visits to the St Andrews Farmhouse Cheese Company, Fisher & Donaldson, Balgove Larder and Fletchers of Auchtermuchty.



"Very useful and informative and an excellent forum for networking with other local food businesses." Joanna McCallum, The Store.



"The programme has been a real treat and an experience I have enjoyed thoroughly. The people have been the real inspiration as there are delegates from all backgrounds and all career levels. The workshops have been a fantastic place to reflect on our practices and how we can better them through discussions and demonstrations."

Alice Stebbings, The Oatmeal of Alford.

Further Forum Activities

Industry representatives on the Strategic Group continue to meet three times a year to liaise with the public sector partners on the strategic direction of food and drink in Grampian.

The industry representatives on the Operations Group evaluate feedback from events, provide input to future events and generate the annual programme of activities.

The Innovation and Technology Group events help companies at a more practical level. This year's programme included a talk on refrigerant gases and a visit to the Keenan Recycling Ltd plant near New Deer.



In addition to www.grampianfoodforum.org.uk, the Grampian Food Forum issues two publications about the industry.

Grampian Innovations aimed at retail and food service buyers, highlights new products from local companies.



Food Matters provides information on Forum events and other food and drink related news and events.



GET INVOLVED

Grampian Food Forum activities are open to all those involved in food and drink in Aberdeenshire, Aberdeen and Moray, from small businesses to international companies.

For further details on the Grampian Food Forum, please contact Elizabeth Mathie on 01224 664334 or elizabeth.mathie@aberdeenshire.gov.uk.

Acknowledgements in 2010



A big thank you to all those who made 2010 a great year for the Grampian Food Forum. In particular, the fine effort given by our Strategic Group and Operations Group members is very much appreciated.

This year saw the retirement of James Knowles, Head of Economic Development, who had 42 years service with Aberdeenshire Council and had been the driving force behind the Forum for over 20 years. Martin Simpson also resigned from the Strategic Group.

During 2010, Scott Kelman of Dean's of Huntly handed over the duty of chairman of the Operations Group to Keith Whyte of Mitchells. Other changes included Patrick Hughes taking over from Ceri Ritchie, who had been involved with the Forum for a number of years, and Gregor Mackintosh joining the team.

Strategic Group

Chairman, Alan Meikle Grampian Oat Products

Vice-chairman, Michael Clark International Fish Cannery (Scotland) Ltd

Andrew Stephen Aberdeen City Council

Bill Dean Dean's of Huntly Ltd

Brian Pack ANM Group Ltd

Charlie Devin Lossie Seafoods

Graeme Ross JG Ross (Bakers) Ltd

Ian Urquhart Gordon and MacPhail

James Knowles Aberdeenshire Council

Mac Mackie Mackie's of Scotland

Martin Simpson Deeside Spring Water

Mandy Holmes Highlands and Islands Enterprise

Pierre Masson Moray Council

Ronnie Leggett Macphie of Glenbervie Ltd

Russell Stevenson Scottish Enterprise

Operations Group

Chairman, Keith Whyte Mitchells

Andrew Booth The Store

Bill Thain Mackie's of Scotland

Claire Rennie Berry Scrumptious

Gregor Mackintosh Mackintosh of Glendaveny

Ceri Ritchie Scottish Agricultural College

Louise Stratton Aberdeenshire Council

Neil Coull Macphie of Glenbervie Ltd

Patrick Hughes Scottish Agricultural College

Philip Andrade International Fish Cannery (Scotland) Ltd

Scott Kelman Dean's of Huntly Ltd

