

*This is Devon -
come and be part of it!*

Foreword by
HRH The Duchess of Cornwall
President, Devon County Show 2008



It is a great pleasure to be so closely involved with the 2008 Devon County Show, of which I am very proud to be President. It is particularly special for me in this, the Year of Food and Farming, which is an exciting campaign to help children find out more about the countryside and where their food comes from through first-hand experience. The Year is championed by my husband, The Prince of Wales, who is its Patron; he is, of course, also Patron of the Devon County Show.

A healthy and vibrant rural economy is vital for the wellbeing of so many, not just those who live and work in the countryside. This is why campaigns such as the Year of Food and Farming are so important, allowing more people to gain a better understanding of how eating locally produced food can be not only delicious and healthy but can also reduce our impact on the environment.

The Devon County Show puts these values into the spotlight. It is here that we can meet the farmers who have the traditional skills and knowledge to produce some of the best food in the country, if not the world. We can also sample the wares of the producers who take the farmers' raw materials and turn them into all manner of delicious food and drink.

When I visited the Show for the first time with my husband in 2005, I was enormously impressed by the passion and commitment of the people we met. They are the very foundations of what so many of us hold dear and I hope they once again receive real support and encouragement from the Show's visitors who, in turn, are then inspired to become more involved themselves.

Camilla

Welcome to the show...

AT the Devon County Show we understand the importance of teaching children exactly where their food comes from and explaining all about the journey it makes from farm to fork.

That's why our theme for this year's Show is very much in support of the Year of Food and Farming – an exciting campaign aimed at putting children in the know when it comes to their food and its origins. This national school curriculum campaign is all about the whole industry pulling together to bridge the gap between consumers and the countryside. And you'll see that this theme also runs through these pages.

We want to share our love of good, honest, local food with our visitors of all ages and have devised a great 'Your Year of Food & Farming Show Challenge' for the children to take them all over the showground to 'six pit stops' or features, where they can find the answer for the questionnaire and even win a bug bookmark, or a recyclable pen. From plough to plate and cow to carton, to bees and honey and tree spotting, we've lots to keep everyone informed and entertained.

Of course, as consumers we have a great deal of power when it comes to buying food; as well as influencing our health, our choices really do make a difference to our countryside and the environment. It is much better to make informed choices, and where better to start than by showing the next generation the benefit of living in such a beautiful area, where people produce, process and sell the very best local food?

But the Show's not all about food – well, not if you don't want it to be! What we offer is a unique blend of shopping and entertainment so that visitors can enjoy the best of rural Devon in just one great day out. We have a practically non-stop programme of events including the thrilling stunt riding Bolddog Lings Free-style Motorcycle Display Team, top horse and dog competitions, country life activities and the street-theatre sensation the amazing, two metre tall, high-tech robots, Titan 1 and Titan 2!

At the same time as we encourage everyone to celebrate the richness of our rural life, livestock farming in Devon, as elsewhere in the UK, is constantly under the microscope. TB (bovine tuberculosis) is wreaking more havoc than foot and mouth. Farmers generally, including many who bring their best animals to our Show, are seeing their herds destroyed and their family livelihoods ruined – this disease is literally ripping out the hearts of the best animal producers and carers in this country.



Bovine TB is a disease hidden from most of us – unless we live on or near a farm we're unlikely to see animals taken away for slaughter – but its impact is striking at the very heart of livestock farming, which will in turn affect our food choices. Tragically many of these cattle are slaughtered unnecessarily because although they are deemed 'reactors', the majority that are tested will not necessarily develop, bovine TB and when the test results are confirmed, more prove to be clear than positive.

There's a great deal of debate about what can be done to eradicate this fast-growing problem but ultimately it lies in the hands of the Government. It's time they listened to the experts who produce the animals, not the experts who rely on science and end the terrible suffering on our farms; make a decision and agree the way forward so our farmers can concentrate on doing what they do best – providing you, the consumers, with some of the very best food and drink in the world.

So, please, do come and visit YOUR Show and see for yourself the love and care that goes in to producing these beautiful beasts and then, when you do your next weekly shop, look out for local products in local shops and farm shops and persuade the top supermarkets to stock more local produce. They will see the benefits in the tills and you will see the benefit in your health. Have a wonderful time!

Ollie Allen

Ollie Allen - Show Secretary

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