

CAMBRIDGE ORGANIC GAZETTE

courgette



LOCAL, PERSONAL
& SUSTAINABLE

Let's celebrate local in 2024

Join the Cambridge veg box
people with a **FREE** box



Comment from Duncan:

Founder and owner of Cambridge Organic

It's a bit of a cliché, I know, but January is a popular time of year for people to join an organic vegetable box scheme. I guess being kinder to the planet and eating more healthily are right up there among the favourite New Year'-s resolutions. So, with a gaggle of potential new members out there deciding which is the right vegetable box scheme for them we thought this was a timely occasion to think about what it is that makes us special? What makes Cambridge Organic stand out?

The three things that are top of the list are our dedication to environmental sustainability, our direct links with local producers, and the personal service we provide. And it is these three things that we are focussing on in this edition of our newsletter.

I'm very pleased that 'personal service' made it onto the list. People generally get that we're local and sustainable, but I'm really proud of the way we do things at Cambridge Organic and how the person who packs your box is also the person who delivers it. This should rightly be up there amongst our strongest attributes. Doing it this way means the team

members have variety in their job role, and have ultimate responsibility for the quality of the boxes they are delivering. And trust me, they really do care about their customers. It's the way we've always done it. What we lose in terms of 'production line' type efficiency we more than make up for in terms of being able to give a personalised service to our customers, and job satisfaction for our staff.

We're ever so lucky to have Francesca as part of our team. She's such a lovely person, and a pleasure to work with. In this newsletter you can read about a typical day when she is packing and delivering vegetable boxes, and get a first-hand account of how the way in which we do things at Cambridge Organic means that our boxes have that personal touch.



Fran at Audley End Kitchen Gardens

Top photos from 2023

A look back at some of our favourite pics from our Instagram account in 2023. Follow us at @camorganic on Instagram and Facebook.



A day in the life of team member Fran

Fran has worked at Cambridge Organic since April 2023, packing and delivering veg boxes around Cambridgeshire 2 days a week. She kindly agreed to let me tag along one Tuesday so I could discover what her day looks like.

Hi Fran, thanks for taking the time to talk to us. Can you tell me what motivated you to join the team?

Prior to this job I was working in an office and fancied doing something completely different, and I really love driving. I also think organic farming is very important and the produce you get from it is so much better, so it's great to be a part of that.

What does your daily routine look?

When I arrive I start with setting up all the work stations; getting the fruit and veg out of the fridge, followed by getting the eggs ready for the day. I work through the day's delivery notes and start the box packing. I begin with Choice orders first and then move onto the Originals. With Original boxes I have some flexibility to choose what goes in depending on whatever produce our local farms have in season. Then I load the van, pack away and clean my work station before heading off on the day's deliveries following my round sheet.

Once all deliveries are done, I come back, plug the van in to be charged over night and empty my van of any empty boxes. We collect any empty

boxes customers have from previous weeks, as we aim to re-use them if they are in good enough condition to. I give the van a sweep

“

The connection is great. The customers are very friendly and are happy to see us

”



out if needed and hand in the key and round sheet for the day.

What do you enjoy about the job?

I love the people we work with, everyone is so kind and friendly and it's a great working atmosphere with lots of team spirit. I also love getting to see some customers on the rounds and getting wonderful feedback. It means a lot and makes it all worth it.



What do you find challenging?

Some weeks we can have items that take a long time to weigh, bag and pack and that can be very time consuming. However I like that we are in charge of our own packing and orders, seeing them right through to delivery, as you can take pride in compiling each and every box.

What are the benefits to doing the same rounds each week?

It makes planning the journey a lot easier as you become familiar with the routes. You also get to know your customers and have the chance to see some of them face to face which I think is important. On my Tuesday round I get to see at least 10 customers face to face which is lovely.

What is your connection to the customers you deliver to like?

The connection is great. The customers are very friendly and are happy to see us when we arrive and seem genuinely excited to receive the boxes, which is very satisfying as the box packer. It makes me want to present the best box possible for my customers, as you get to know them along the way and want to keep them happy.



Cambridge Organic Waste Funnel

Our waste funnel starts with how we pack. We have developed a special process for packing vegetable boxes that is designed to minimise waste.

Our 'Original' box range and the people who pack them is key to this.

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 goes to a local pig farmer and her curly tailed friends!

Thank you to Briar Farm near Willingham, who welcomed us to take photos. They are in the process of setting up as a mixed agricultural farm with a patchwork of no dig market garden, forest garden, orchard, meadows and woodland with a big focus on biodiversity. Follow them on twitter @briar_farm

Celebrating Local

We prioritise local. It's at our core. However due to the UK growing seasons, local soil types and the small quantity of organically certified local growers, we do buy from farther afield too. But be assured we always buy locally first and we hold these organic growers in the highest esteem. It's no easy job and the margins are tight. These growers are protecting the very environment we live in while producing really good food, free of pesticides, to nourish us. They are local heroes in our eyes.

We also buy as much locally produced items as possible so that you can add them on as groceries. From flour, to jams to pastas! Were you aware of all these super local growers and producers we stock?

GROWERS

- Sweetpea Market Garden
- Waterland Organics
- The Prospects Trust
- Audley End House and Gardens
- Brownfields farm
- G's Fresh
- Wild Country Organics

PRODUCERS

- Fitzbillies Bakery
- Hot Numbers Roastery in Shepreth
- Kettle Leaf Tea
- Ombar Chocolate
- Cambridge Honey
- Janda Foods salsas and sauces
- Savoursmiths Crisps
- Pastificio Carleschi pastas
- Totally Cultured fermented foods

- OTHER GROWERS IN EAST ANGLIA (outs)
- Hodmedod's British Pulses & Grains
- Capel Mushrooms
- Bedlam Farms Organic
- Stort Valley Organics
- James Foskett Farms Ltd



New local farm this year is **Sweetpea Market Garden** based over in Caxton. It's both wonderful and essential to see motivated individuals like Adrienne enter the organic growing market. It takes passion, lots of hard work and belief that what you are doing is the right thing. We are excited to be putting her produce into your boxes in 2024. Follow her on Instagram

@sweetpeamarketgarden



“ Working with the The Cambridge Food Hub has helped me to reach a much wider range of customers. With Cambridge Organic's support, Sweetpea produce will be certified Organic in 2024 and can reach many more people locally through the veg boxes! ”

Kevin and Lynda from **Totally Cultured** produce fermented foods such as Saurkraut, Kimchi and Keffir. They use traditional methods to create new, tasty and health enhancing foods that can be easily included in your daily diet. They are based in local St Neots. www.totallycultured.co.uk.



“ We as a small local producer have been delighted to work with Cambridge Organic. We have always felt that we have an ethos, good food honestly priced with as few miles clock as possible. It's always been our hope to bring products to people through ethical suppliers and we really feel that through working with Cambridge Organic that's been achieved. People matter. ”

Kick off 2024 with healthy, organic and locally grown food from Cambridge Organic and receive a **FREE** veg box

**SIGN UP IN
JANUARY
AND
RECEIVE A
FREE BOX**



Current members can refer a friend with offer code **FRIEND2024** and receive a free gift
(ask the new member to email us with your name)



- 1.** Visit us at www.cambridgeorganic.co.uk and click 'get started'.
- 2.** Enter your postcode to see what day of the week we deliver to your area, and then choose your first delivery date.
- 3.** Choose your type of veg and/or fruit box, add any extras, choose your regularity and go to checkout!
- 4.** You will be asked to set up a direct debit as your weekly or fortnightly deliveries continue automatically after your first order. However the direct debit amount is taken a week after your delivery - so you are only ever charged for what you have ordered and received. Also you can pause or cancel membership at any time. You are not locked into any subscription.
- 5.** When prompted enter code **FREEBOX24** to receive your first box for free delivered to your door
- 6.** Wait for your box of delicious, organic, fresh and local produce to be delivered to your door in one of our fully electric vans by our friendly delivery team!



**CAMBRIDGE
organic**