Durham schoolchildren to explore First World War



School children at Durham Farmers Market

In contrast to recent headhlines were it was revealed that households throw away 13lbs of food a week (more than any other country in Europe), people during the First World War had to give a lot of thought to making their supplies last. This was in part due to many agricultural workers being away fighting in the conflict and with merchant ships being under constant threat.

The Food for Life project will see children from 18 Durham schools team up with Durham Light Infantry Museum, Beamish Museum, Broom House Farm and Garden Organic's Heritage Seed Library for a variety of workshops, practical demonstrations and role-playing.

From animal rearing and seed cultivation to savvy storage and shopping techniques, young participants will get hands-on experience of the ways people during the First World War made their food go as far as possible.

By exploring the stories of people who lived during the conflict, the project will also cast a personal perspective on the effects the First World War had on Durham communities.

Memories, traditional recipes and reflections on our changing relationship with food will be used to create a Food for Life cookbook. The children will also host a stall at the Durham City Farmers Market in summer 2016 to share their findings

and the produce they will grow during the project.

Barbara Chrisp, School Farmers Market Project Coordinator at Food for Life, said: “We are delighted to be a part of this HLF project, which will teach children about the food issues from 100 years ago, much of which is still pertinent today. We at Food for Life believe it’s really important for children to learn and understand where food comes from and how it gets to our plate.”

Ivor Crowther, Head of HLF North East, said: “Our food heritage is fascinating in that it can reveal a lot about communities through the ages – including the impact of conflicts such as the First World War. We’re pleased to support this project which will enable the future custodians of our heritage to gain a hands-on insight into how our communities lived during this time and just how much things have changed over the past century.”

Notes to editors

Soil Association Food for Life is a national programme whose core ethos is transforming food culture - making healthy, tasty and sustainable meals the norm, reconnecting people with where their food comes from, teaching them how it’s grown and cooked, and championing the importance of well-sourced ingredients.

This project delivers Food for Life aims through the context of a school history project: with pupils visiting farms, cooking traditional recipes and growing with heritage seed varieties, culminating in a themed farmers’ market.

To find out more about Food for Life in Durham, visit the Food for Life website.

Further information

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