



HEART of ENGLAND fine foods

Public Sector Food Procurement Initiative

Report – Project Three

**Facilitating the use of less popular cuts of meat within the Shropshire County
School Meals Service, leading to increased quality within a set budget.**



**GOVERNMENT OFFICE
FOR THE WEST MIDLANDS**



Department for Environment
Food and Rural Affairs

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PROJECT 3: Facilitating the use of less utilised cuts of meat within the Shropshire County School Meals Service delivered by Shire Services, leading to increased quality within a set budget.

Main Aims

Outputs from the project will be in line with the priority objectives of the PSFPI:

- ◆ **Raise production and process standards**
- ◆ **Increase tenders from small and local producers**
- ◆ **Increase consumption of healthy and nutritious food**
- ◆ **Reduce adverse impact of production and supply**
- ◆ **Increase the capacity of small and local suppliers**

Project approach and delivery

1. Liasing with partners and conducting research to determine potential successful inclusion of less utilised cuts of meat into school meals.

MLC (now known as EBLEX and BPEX)

Research into potential cuts of meat to use successfully in school meals has been undertaken. A meeting with Tony Goodger, MLC was held on 22.01.08. Tony Goodger gave an overview of the MLC's activity in the school meals sector and the work the MLC had done to date with butchers. The different cuts of meat and their merits were explored and those most suitable for use in schools were identified. The MLC has a databank of recipes aimed at the consumer and foodservice markets that could be adapted for schools; a selection of these was offered which would need to be 'scaled up' for inclusion in the cookbook if required.

Shropshire County School Meals Service (Shire Services)

HEART of ENGLAND fine foods (HEFF) has a successful working relationship with Shire Services, the Shropshire School meals provider, which has been established over recent years. A number of Shropshire schools have embraced the HEART of ENGLAND fine foods healthy eating projects and have HEFF vending machines and smoothie bars installed. Meetings and open dialogue were frequent throughout the project, Shire Services were fully supportive of the PSFPI initiative and allowed HEFF to liase directly with the cooks.

Research with school cooks was completed, a meeting was held on 26.02.08 with primary and secondary school cooks. HEFF introduced the project, detailing all elements and the commitment required from the cooks. The school cooks were enthusiastic and keen to be involved. The MLC recipes were presented to the cooks as a working document, recipes were favoured on the basis of them being feasible to cook in school kitchens. HEFF invited the cooks to submit their own recipes using those from the MLC as a guide.

Food for Life Partnership, Soil Association

On commencement of the project, HEFF organised a meeting with Food for Life Partnership (Soil Association). Discussions were productive and Food for Life Partnership offered their support if needed, including involvement from the flagship schools.

2. Development of main course recipes in consultation with a nutritionist and in partnership with MLC, EBLEX, school cooks, chefs and regional school children (in particular those from Flagship Schools) to utilise the above cuts. Target audience primary and secondary schools.

Recipes for the cookbook have been developed after consultation with the MLC and Shire Services school cooks. The cooks have submitted the majority of the recipes that have been selected for the cookbook demonstrating their commitment to the cookbook which should provide a sense of shared ownership of the publication, more likely to result in greater uptake and implementation.

Discussions with school cooks highlighted that cooking whole joints of meat is not feasible in primary schools and only achievable in some secondary schools due to length of cooking time, available kitchen equipment and kitchen staff working hours.

All recipes entering the cookbook will have been nutritionally analysed with 'SAFFRON', an analytical programme used by Shire Services. All recipes need to be subjected to SAFFRON before being adopted into the school meals menus.

3. Training of school cooks to implement new recipes containing less utilised cuts of meat, focussing on school cooks in Shropshire.

It was decided that the best way to train the school cooks was to provide them with an interactive, hands on training approach. HEFF coordinated a day where school cooks learned about the different cuts of meat and how to cook some of the recipes proposed for the cookbook. The school cooks training day took place on 04.04.08 at Radbrook College. A meeting was held with head chef Sean McNulty on 17.03.08 to cover the criteria for the training day and the objectives of the project. Sean McNulty delivered the training to school cooks, demonstrating how to cook the chosen recipes and the advantages of using less utilised cuts of meat, imparting nutritional information on the different cuts. The meat for the training day was sourced from a local butcher, Morgan's of Telford, a supplier to Shire Services.

Ten school cooks were booked to attend the training; further school cooks were contacted but due to reasons beyond our control could not attend. Of those that could not attend all asked to be kept informed of future activity. On the training day, seven school cooks attended with three making contact that morning with apologies.

The training day started at 10.00am and was completed at 4.00pm. During this time school cooks observed the chef cooking and talking about the different cuts of meat including some insight into butchery, before having time themselves to actually cook the recipes. The school cooks also had the opportunity to try all the dishes; all were met with approval.



Minced Pork: using belly and shoulder. The cut is discussed before a dish suitable for school meals is cooked.

4. Training to be made informative and fun with suitable venue to be used.

The training day achieved what it aimed to do, train schools cooks in ways to implement recipes that use less utilised cuts of meat in an informative and fun manner. It should be noted that the cooks gave up a day of their own time over the Easter period to participate in the training (a collective decision instigated by the cooks).

The training pack was provided for attendees (see **Appendix A**). On an evaluation form (see **Appendix B**) all school cooks rated the training as 'good' (options were; Poor, Average or Good) with comments such as 'Enjoyed the hands on approach' and 'Informative, helpful and well presented'. School cooks were also asked if they would use some of these recipes in schools, all answered 'yes'. A further question asking: 'Would you now request less utilised cuts of meat from your butcher when ordering for certain recipes?' was also answered with a 'yes' from all, including one commenting 'Amazing how cheaper cuts cook well'.



Training Day: School cooks preparing recipes utilising the less utilised cuts of meat under supervision of head chef, Sean McNulty.

Radbrook College, part of Shrewsbury College of Arts and Technology was used as a venue. This is a catering college and has suitable kitchens to train up to 12 pupils at one time. On the evaluation form completed by the school cooks all said the venue was very suitable with further comments such as 'Ideal situation for cooking and observing' and 'Very, very good'. For full results of the evaluation form see **Appendix C**.

5. Research, development, design and production of a school cookbook containing the above recipes and contributions from schools to be distributed across the Shropshire School Meals Service delivered by Shire Services and beyond.

The cookbook is near completion. Pictures from the training day have been used in the cookbook; a photographer was commissioned to attend the event.

All recipes have been selected for inclusion in the cookbook; the recipes have been split in accordance with their suitability for the three school terms. The book also includes information on the less utilised cuts of meat through illustrations and through information provided by the MLC.

The cookbook will be distributed to schools within Shropshire (those with kitchens). HEFF will print 250 copies, which will enable distribution to all schools and school catering providers in Shropshire as an example of the work carried out. A version will also be available to download from the HEFF website.

Further hard copies for schools in other regions could be available if costs were met.

The cookbook includes an introduction page demonstrating the partners that contributed to its development.

The success of the cookbook will be monitored through an evaluation form that will be sent after the first quarter to all recipients of the cookbook. This monitoring form will help determine how many of the recipes have been incorporated into the school meals service and will look at which recipes are favoured by the school children. An additional evaluation form will be sent again at the end of each school term.

The inclusion of new recipes will not be instant as many schools have a set menu to adhere to. The recipes will have to find their way onto this standardised menu. Work with Shire Services will be ongoing to encourage this to happen.

OPPORTUNITIES HIGHLIGHTED

Potential extension of the project in liaison with the MLC and the Soil Association

Complimentary activity to be carried out alongside this project was identified in the tender document subject to additional funding being provided. HEFF liased with both partner organisations concerned. The additional activity was not delivered by March 2008 but there is scope to deliver this in the future should the support be available. HEFF has the experience and skill that can be utilised to explore the opportunities identified below:

◆ Organic and non-organic meat producers' willingness to tender for Shropshire School Meals Contracts

Tender opportunities need to be readily accessible to potential producers. This issue was addressed in 2007 when HEART of ENGLAND fine foods compiled a database of food contracts for the West Midlands region that now sits within the HEFF website. It assists producers to see how the contracts are broken down by category and area and allows them to see when the contracts are due for renewal so if they wish they can compete in the tendering process. Wherever possible contact names, numbers and emails for each contract are provided so producers can talk to the person responsible for the tender process. HEFF's work in this area is ongoing. Additional support to encourage Local Authorities to cooperate and submit this data would be of value.

In conjunction with Shire Services and Staffordshire County Council, HEFF conducted a programme of tender workshops for producers. This model could be repeated and expanded upon in the future. Workshops aimed specifically at meat producers could be explored to keep the momentum going with use of less utilised cuts of meat.

Further work could be explored with the Soil Association to encourage organic meat producers to tender for school contracts.

◆ **Training of butchers to produce the cuts of meat required by the schools as a result of the findings of Project 3.**

Additional training was discussed with the MLC. The organisation is willing to deliver this and has quoted for the work.

This training would be aimed at butchers who are already supplying the school meals service and for those wishing to supply. The training would incorporate which cuts the school cooks could use and the ways in which the cuts could be presented in order to encourage school cooks to request the less utilised cuts of meat on an ongoing basis.

HEFF would work with the MLC to strengthen communication between school cooks and butchers to make sure the less utilised cuts of meat were being incorporated into the school meals service.

◆ **Cost benefits of using less utilised cuts of meat.**

Additional work could be carried out to explore and quantify any cost benefit, as well as nutritional benefit, of using less utilised cuts of meat in school meals. Cost benefits to the butchers could be analysed; a secure market for less utilised cuts should have a positive impact in terms of overall carcass utilisation.

CONCLUSION

In aiming to facilitate the use of less utilised cuts of meat within the Shropshire County School Meals Service delivered by Shire Services, leading to increased quality within a set budget, HEART of ENGLAND fine foods has delivered a programme, which has: -

- ◆ Explored and identified the less utilised cuts working with the MLC and the Soil Association
- ◆ Developed recipes incorporating less utilised cuts of meat in consultation with the MLC and Shropshire School cooks
- ◆ Provided a training day for school cooks on how to cook less utilised cuts of meat
- ◆ Produced a cookbook for use in primary and secondary schools
- ◆ Identified further areas of work

HEFF believes through the work carried out, less utilised cuts of meat will be used within Shire Services. The school cooks were extremely enthusiastic about the project and are willing to be involved in further activity. The training provided the cooks with the confidence to ask the butchers for less utilised cuts of meat knowing how they could use them successfully. Further work with butchers will help to encourage tenders for contracts and will lead to increased utilisation of the whole carcass and the production of cost effective nutritious meals for schools.

There is the opportunity for future work on this theme, all parties approached for the project were fully supportive of its aims and would welcome further work in this area.

USING LESS UTILISED CUTS OF MEAT

SCHOOL COOKS TRAINING DAY

Radbrook College

4 April 2008



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to your training day at Radbrook College.

Your trainer today is going to be Sean McNulty.

The aim of the day is for you to learn new recipes that incorporate the use of less utilised cuts of meat. HEART of ENGLAND fine foods (HEFF) was tasked with facilitating the use of less utilised cuts of meat within the Shropshire County School Meals Service, delivered by Shire Services, leading to increased quality within a set budget

HEFF has been working with the Meat and Livestock Commission (MLC) to research which cuts are less utilised and which ones can be used within the school meals service. Along with the MLC and school cooks HEFF has developed a number of recipes that can be used within the school meals.

Today you will be learning how to cook four of these recipes along with gaining information on the cuts of meat you will be using.

We hope that you find the day informative and enjoyable.

This initiative is being delivered by HEFF on behalf of Government Office for the West Midlands (GOWM) and is funded by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).



CHEAT'S CURRY

Recipe by MLC

Suitable cuts: Chuck steak cut against the grain

Cooking time: 10 – 15 minutes

Serves: 4

Ingredients

450g / 1lb Lean beef or lamb stir-fry strips
2tsp Oil
800g / 1.7lb Chopped tomatoes (2x400g cans)
4tbsp Medium curry paste
 Poppadoms
 Boiled rice

Method

1. In a large non-stick frying pan or saucepan, fry the stir-fry strips in the oil until browned.
2. Add the chopped tomatoes and the medium curry paste.
3. Bring to the boil and simmer for 3 - 4 minutes.

Serving suggestion

Serve on a pile of poppadoms with boiled rice.

SWEET LAMB PIE

Recipe by EBLEX

Suitable cuts: shoulder of lamb, neck fillet

Temperature: 170°C / gas mark 3

Preparation time: 30 minutes / Cooking time: 2 hours

Serves: 4-6

Ingredients

450g / 1lb	Lean boneless lamb shoulder, Leg or neck fillet, cut into 2½cm cubes	For the suet pastry: - 300g / 10.5oz Self-raising flour
	Salt and freshly ground black pepper	150g / 5.5 oz Light suet
15ml/1tbsp	Sunflower oil	Pinch salt
1	Orange, juice only	175ml / 0.3pt Cold water
1	Cooking apple, peeled and grated	
½	Lemon, juice only	
50g / 1.75oz	Ground almonds	
½tsp	Ground cinnamon	
½tsp	Ground mace	
600ml / 1pt	Lamb stock, hot	

Method

1. Place the meat in a large bowl and season well with the salt and freshly ground black pepper.
 2. Heat the oil in a large pan and brown the meat in batches for 4 - 5 minutes. Transfer to a clean bowl and add the remaining pie ingredients except the stock.
 3. Spoon into a 900ml/1½ pint ovenproof pie dish or four small ovenproof pie dishes and pour over the stock evenly.
 4. To prepare the suet pastry, mix together the pastry ingredients in a large bowl. Roll out enough pastry to cover the large dish or individual pie dishes.
 5. Brush the pie dish edges with a little water and top with the pastry. Lightly cover with foil and cook in a preheated oven for two hours.
 6. During the last 15 minutes of cooking remove the foil and return to the oven to brown the pastry.
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SQUEAKY PIE

Recipe by Sue Freestone

Suitable cuts: Minced pork (belly and shoulder)

Temperature: 190°C / gas mark 6

Cooking time: 1 hour

Serves: 4

Ingredients

350g / 12oz	Minced pork
130g / 5oz	Cooking onions
85g / 3oz	Tinned apples
1 tsp	Mixed herbs
350g / 12oz	Potatoes / instant mash
30g / 1oz	Breadcrumbs
30g / 1oz	Cheese (grated)

Method

1. Peel and boil the potatoes.
2. Place the pork and finely chopped onions in a pan, sauté dry until lightly golden.
3. Add mixed herbs and 425ml / 0.75 pints water, thicken with either blended flour or gravy mix, and stir in chopped apples.
4. Cream the potatoes.
5. Pour pork mixture into baking dish, spread over the creamed potato.
6. Mix together fresh breadcrumbs and grated cheese, and then sprinkle this over the potato.
7. Bake in the oven for about 45 minutes.

Serve with fresh vegetables.

COUNTRY PORK WITH PARSLEY SCONE TOPPING

Recipe by Sandie Evans

Suitable cuts: Shoulder of pork diced

Temperature: 180°C / gas mark 4

Cooking time: 2 hours

Serves: 4

Ingredients

225g / 8oz	Diced pork	Topping: -	
½	Small swede diced	75g / 2½oz	Plain flour
1	Carrot diced	½ tsp	Baking powder
1	Parsnip diced	3 tbsp	Fromage frais
1	Leek, sliced	1 ½ tbsp	Chopped parsley
1	Celery stick, chopped		
425ml / 0.75pt	Stock		
1 tbsp	Tomato puree		
1 tbsp	Chopped parsley		
30g / 1oz	Pearl barley		
	Salt and pepper		

Method

1. Dry fry the pork until lightly browned.
 2. Add vegetables and stir over the heat until lightly coloured.
 3. Pour into a casserole dish, stir in the stock, tomato puree, parsley and pearl barley.
 4. Season and cover, place in the pre-heated oven for 1 – 1½ hours.
 5. For the topping, combine the flour, baking powder and seasoning.
 6. Stir in the fromage frais and parsley; add cold water until it makes soft dough.
 7. Roll out until 1cm thick and cut into 6 – 8 triangles.
 8. Remove the casserole, raise the oven temperature to 220°C / gas mark 7.
 9. Arrange triangles over casserole, make sure they overlap.
 10. Bake in the oven for 15 – 20 minutes until well risen and golden in colour.
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EVALUATION FORM

1. How suitable was the venue?

Unsuitable Suitable Very suitable

Comments: -

2. How would you rate the training?

Poor Average Good

Comments: -

3. Did you find the day informative and interesting?

Yes No

Comments: -

4. Did you find the day enjoyable?

Yes No

Comments: -

5. Would you use some of the recipes in schools (subject to them being nutritionally analysed)?

Yes

No

Comments: -

6. Would you now request less utilised cuts of meat from the butcher when ordering for certain recipes?

Yes

No

Comments: -

7. Did you find that HEFF explained the objectives of the day fully?

Yes

No

Comments: -

8. Would you come to an event organised by HEFF again?

Yes

No

Comments: -



EVALUATION FORM: RESULTS

1. How suitable was the venue?

Unsuitable	Suitable	Very suitable
		100%

Comments: -

Brilliant.
Ideal situation for cooking and observing.
Very, very good.

2. How would rate the training?

Poor	Average	Good
		100%

Comments: -

Informative, helpful and well presented.
Very relaxed atmosphere.
Excellent.
Enjoyed hands on approach.

3. Did you find the day informative and interesting?

Yes	No
100%	

Comments: -

Enjoyed – what else can I say.
Very interesting.

4. Did you find the day enjoyable?

Yes	No
100%	

Comments: -

Brilliant, nice company.
Hands on experience very useful.
Really super day.

5. Would you use some of the recipes in schools (subject to them being nutritionally analysed?)?

Yes	No
100%	

Comments: -

Definitely.
Will take back to Shire Services to try.
Would use all of them.

6. Would you now request less utilised cuts of meat from the butcher when ordering certain recipes?

Yes	No
100%	

Comments: -

Amazing how cheaper cuts cook well. Time could be a problem.

7. Did you find that HEFF explained the objectives of the day fully?

Yes	No
100%	

8. Would you come to an event organised by HEFF again?

Yes	No
100%	

Comments: -

Made to feel very welcome.
