

**ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING & COUNTRYSIDE COMMITTEE – 23 MARCH 2006  
BRIEF BY PEMBROKESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL ON PUBLIC SECTOR FOOD  
PROCUREMENT**

**Introduction**

The Authority had historically purchased a great proportion of its food from Pembrokeshire Suppliers and it was keen to build on this. In May/June 2004 it commenced a Supplier Development Programme to help encourage greater use of Welsh and local produce under the current contracts and also to encourage more local SMEs to tender for our future requirements.

**Supplier Development Programme**

- Meetings with current suppliers to ascertain the scope for increasing the amount of Welsh and Pembrokeshire produce available under the current contract;
- The staging of a food supplier seminar in Pembrokeshire to communicate future requirements to local companies to encourage them to tender for the April 2005 contracts. This took place on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2004 and was attended by representatives of 23 Pembrokeshire companies. The seminar was also attended by members of the WDA who were there to offer a free follow up 'How to Tender' workshop. Fifteen of the local SMEs subsequently signed up to attend.

The Council has six main categories of food contract. In January 2005 the 2005/2007 food contracts were advertised with the new contracts starting on 1<sup>st</sup> May. Responses and results are shown at table 1 below.

**Table 1**

<b>Tender</b>	<b>No. of Pembrokeshire Companies which Applied for the Tender</b>	<b>No. of Pembrokeshire Companies which Submitted a Tender</b>	<b>No. of Pembrokeshire Companies awarded the tender</b>
<b>Groceries, Provisions &amp; Confectionery</b>	4/21	4/13	2/2
<b>Frozen Foods</b>	13/6	4/5	0/1 (Kent)
<b>Meat, Poultry &amp; Offal</b>	9/13	5/6	3/3
<b>Fresh Fruit and Vegetables</b>	6/13	3/4	0/1 (Carmarthenshire)
<b>Milk &amp; Dairy Produce</b>	8/13	5/7	3/3
<b>Fresh Bread &amp; Bakery</b>	4/13	1/3	1/1

Given this success, the WDA subsequently offered a similar programme of Supplier Development workshops throughout Wales, using the work done in Pembrokeshire as a model.

Carwyn Jones, Minister for Environment, Planning & Countryside, highlighted the Authority's commitment to local supplier development when he formally opened the Supply & Buy Wales 2005 Conference in Llandrindod Wells on 27<sup>th</sup> April. The conference brought Welsh food producers and buyers together and the Council's work was one of a number of case studies produced for delegates on the day.

### **Sustainable Schools Food Procurement Project**

The Sustainable Schools Food Procurement Project evolved through positive feedback resulting from the above initiatives and recognised the will of the Authority and local producers and suppliers to work together in a move towards increased local procurement.

To increase opportunities for local companies and in support of the Authority's Sustainable Development and Health and Wellbeing strategies, from October 2004 – September 2005, Pembrokeshire County Council undertook a pilot scheme in two of the county's primary schools to investigate the implications of increasing the amount of fresh, seasonal and locally sourced food purchased by the Authority. Cardiff University's publication of its report "School Meals: Healthy Eating & Sustainable Food Chains", argues that the quality of a Local Authority's school meal is indicative of its commitment to sustainable development. Pembrokeshire County Council is committed to both sustainable development and to the provision of quality and nutritious school meals. The project was concurrent with, and supportive of, the Pembrokeshire Health Promoting School Scheme and Food and Health Strategy.

The project was funded by the Welsh Development Agency and the WAG Sustainable Development Fund which is administered locally by the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park. Matched funding was provided by the Authority in the form of "in kind" contributions calculated in officer time and loan of equipment.

The Catering Service had, for some time, been investigating and developing links with local producers and suppliers with many local products already included in catering menus. This project investigated the practice of maximising local sourcing and studied the implications which arose, taking into account practical issues of cost, time and availability, together with the reactions of suppliers, school staff, parents and children, as well as those involved in the Authority's Procurement and Catering teams.

The completed report resulting from the project is due to be published shortly and it contains the following recommendations:

- A Food and Health Promoter will be appointed to build on the work done in the project. The post will promote the healthier menu options now available in Pembrokeshire schools; familiarise children with these foods and encourage them to taste introductions to the menus; work in partnership with Primary School staff and the Catering Service to address issues relating to arrangements for school meals and to regularly consult with parents and children.

- We will continue to support sustainable food procurement by working with local producers/farmers and suppliers to identify options to extend the amount of fresh and seasonal produce included in our menus, taking into account the issues surrounding cost, quality, quantity and continuity of supply.
- When we produce future menus our Catering Service will work with our Food Officer to take into account peak harvesting times when local produce is at its best and at its most economical price.
- We will seek to review the organisation and presentation of school meals on a school by school basis to help enhance the lunchtime experience for children.
- We will seek to ensure that the ongoing programme to re-furbish/upgrade kitchens and dining rooms recognises the requirements of the move towards increased prime cooking and the preparation of meals using fresh ingredients.
- Whilst this is a Primary School Initiative we will also look at what lessons can be implemented in our Secondary Schools.