

Recipe for success — focus on our food businesses making headlines



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LOCAL food producers were guests of honour at a special event at Prince Charles's Llwynwrmedd estate in Myrddal.

The evening was held as part of a week-long series of meetings organised by the Prince's Charities in Wales. It included a series of small, high level seminars involving leading policy makers.

The aim was to highlight key themes which, it is hoped, will help shape the long term future of Wales.

DISCUSSIONS: Rowland Watkins of Cwmcering Farm and Peter Davies, chairman of Cambrian Mountains Initiative steering group.

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TALKING SHOP: Loraine Malokowski-Heaton of Kid Me Not chats to Marion Williams, deputy private secretary to Prince Charles. 0909330107266

Getting right ingredients to make a success



HARD AT WORK: Chef from Y Polyn, Maryanna Wright, at work in the kitchen. 0909330107266

Local food production was just one of the issues covered. Youth unemployment, the economic contribution of older people, business, sustainability, rural regeneration and rural health were also on the agenda.

The local food evening on Thursday was part of the Cambrian Mountains Initiative which was set up by Prince Charles and aimed at raising the profile of local producers.

Guests at the evening included representatives from local restaurants and hotels.

Tim Berran, curator of estates at the National Botanic Gardens, Clive Southford, owner, chef, executive

board member for regional food producers and retailers and Peter Davies, chairman of the Cambrian Mountains Initiative.

The evening was hosted by Marion Williams, deputy private secretary to Prince Charles. Dr Williams said that when

Prince Charles bought Llwynwrmedd, he wanted to ensure it would be used as an asset for the local community.

He is coming here as a visit job — he feels very at home here and has been embraced by the local community.

Prince Charles cares passionately about the fate of rural communities — it is a matter close to his heart.

Also at the event was Catherine Gazzoli, chief executive of the UK branch of the internationally renowned Slow Food Trust which promotes the production of locally-grown heritage food

and regional cooking. And raising the profile of food producers in West Wales is top of her agenda.

At the moment all our products are from England and we see this as a problem we need to address, she said.

Part of Slow Food UK's work includes bringing little known products or endangered foods

to the attention of consumers. "I am really interested in the Cambrian Mountains Initiative. We are interested in working on heritage foods which deal with the identity of Wales. There has to be an exciting story behind the food."

Following the meal, delegates were encouraged to discuss the problems and issues faced by the local food producers and how they could be overcome.

One of the main points for discussion was how 'marketing and advice' for developers, businesses in Carmarthen-shire could be improved. Simon Wright from Y Polyn said how Welsh foods had improved and developed over the last 10 years.

He said that when he was editing the AA Food Guide in the mid 1990s, Welsh food was seen as an embarrassment. "There was no way I could put Welsh cheeses on our menu. But now, we have fantastic cheeses and I would bring in any food critic to taste our cheeses now."

Go online to enjoy our slideshow of pictures from the event. Visit our website www.thisiscarmarthenshire.co.uk

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