



The EFCF is a member of
the European Environ-
mental Bureau

Newsletter

European Federation of City Farms

Working together for a Sustainable Future



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The EFCF is a member of the European Environmental Bureau (EEB)

On 29 September 2005 the EFCF Board received the good news that the European Environmental Bureau (EEB) had accepted the membership application of the EFCF. The EEB is a federation of more than 130 environmental citizens' organisations based in all EU Member States and most Accession countries, as well as a few neighbouring countries. The aim of the EEB is to protect and improve the environment of Europe and to enable the citizens of Europe to play their part in achieving that goal. The EEB has an information service, it runs eleven working groups of EEB members, it produces position papers on topics that are, or should be, on the EU agenda and it represents the membership in discussions with the Commission, the European Parliament and the Council.



About 150 delegates attended all or part of the conference. Apart from the talks and workshops within the theme of the conference 'Exploring the benefits of City Farms and Community Gardens', the program also consisted of visits to London city farms and community gardens. The British federation has developed clever maps of farms and gardens in the UK. The London city farm and community garden map was the first in the series. The maps contain information about the projects and show how to get there.

For a report of the celebrations of the 25th birthday, visit the website www.farmgarden.org.uk.

The EFCF was represented by Pauline Wolters, who ran a workshop on the European & International context and visited the following projects:

The area of Mudchute Park and City Farm in Tower Hamlets was originally created over 150 years ago by dumping mud and spoil from the construction of a dock nearby.

Annual General Meeting 2006 in The Hague, the Netherlands

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the EFCF will take place in The Hague in the Netherlands from Friday 24th to Sunday 26th March 2006. EFCF Members are invited to send two delegates. The AGM programme together with route description, Annual Report 2005, Accounts 2005, Budget 2006 and Resolutions will be sent to the members after the Board Meeting in January. Sustainable development and animal welfare are important topics for the City of The Hague. The delegates will visit several city farms, among which a brand-new one with various applications of sustainable building.



Over time a wild habitat developed and after protests against plans to construct a high rise estate, the Mudchute Association was formed in 1977 to preserve and develop the area. Today Mudchute Park en Farm provide hands-on contact with nature and farm animals for visitors of all ages. The whole park covers 31 acres and consists of a farm, café & shop, an equestrian centre, a garden centre, nature reserves, wildflower banks, woodland, hedgerows, ponds and grazing areas.

The 25th anniversary of the British Federation of City Farms and Community Garden (FCFCG)



The 25th anniversary was held on the Isle of Dogs in London from 9 – 11 September 2005.

The Isle of Dogs is not in fact an island, being a peninsula, surrounded by the river Thames and designated by the British government for redevelopment. It is an area of social extremes, comprising some of the most expensive and luxurious housing and offices, while part of the area, Blackwall, is one of the poorest wards in England.



The farm is the largest inner city farm in Europe. Several projects have been developed such as guided walks, a nature trail, school activities (minibeast hunts, pond dipping), an After School Club, a Young Farmers Club and activities that all people can get actively involved in.

Work experience opportunities are offered to young people and pupils that schools are finding difficult to place. The farm houses farm animals like goats, sheep, pigs, horses, cows, ducks, geese, llamas and dogs. The farm is daily open from 9 – 4 pm. The main entrance is at the end of Pier Street off Manchester Road. More information: Tel. + 44 20 7515 5901 or e-mail: info@mudchute.org

Freightliners Farm was founded in 1972 on waste land behind Kings Cross Station in London. The farm owes its name to the fact that the animals were then housed in railway goods vans.



The removal to the current 2,5 hectare large site at Sheringham Road took place in 1979. The farm has farm animals ranging from rare breed pigs to sheep and goats to Dexter cows. There are 5 beehives, producing honey, beeswax and candles visitors can buy in the Farm shop. There is a sensory garden project, a carpentry workshop, a community composting scheme, a clay oven, a garden dome, an example of a 'square meter garden' * and a 'human' sundial * (* see Clever Ideas).



The farm has a cordwood building with a 'green' roof and obtained permission to create a straw-bale building. The cordwood building, in use as an outdoor classroom, is made of short soft wood logs, bedded in lime mortar with soaked sawdust and sand and (in this case) concrete. This building technique allows the use of relatively cheap materials. Similar building techniques were already used thousand years ago. The straw building technique comes from the United States, where buildings from 1850 still exist. This volunteer project will comprise a classroom, a shop / tea-room and an office. The building will have under floor sheep's wool insulation. Activities at the farm are school visits, an after school club, an after school drop-in, an under 4's drop-in, cooking and arts and crafts.



There is a staff of 15 (fulltime and parttime) and about 50 volunteers (young people included). Open from Tuesday, 10 – 1 pm and 2 – 5 pm (4 pm in winter). More information: Tel. + 44 20 7609 0467 or www.freightlinersfarm.org.uk

Spitfields City Farm is situated at the end of Pedley Street on a former railway goods depot. A green line on the pavement shows the way to the farm, because signposts were not allowed.



The farm dates from 1979 and is located in one of the most deprived and densely populated wards of Tower Hamlets in London, a multicultural area. The 1.3 acres of land are owned by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets and Railtrack. The Farm's Shelter was built by a group of students from

the Prince of Wales's Institute of Architecture in 1994 and will be renovated. Soon the farm area will be cut in two by a new train track, but the farm will be compensated with space at the other end. The farm is currently developing a wildlife corridor to link the garden to the nearby Allen Gardens Park, including a nature trail. The farm has a sensory garden, a wildlife garden, a playground, a pond, composting schemes and a separated waste disposal facility.



There are farm animals like cows, donkeys, pigs, sheep, goats, chicken, rabbits, guinea pigs, ducks, geese, rats and mice, ferrets and cats. Schools come to the farm for programs like 'Habitats' (pond dipping and wildlife garden), 'Helping Plants Grow', 'Where do baby animals come from?', 'Animals and Plants', 'People and The Environment', 'Chicken & egg talk', 'Recycling and Composting', 'Meet the Animals' and 'Animals & Us'. A Farm Tour for schools includes a tour of the farm with activities like e.g. hunting for eggs and feeding the animals. The farm also has a mobile farm service. There are special groups like the Young Farmers club. The farm counts 18.000 visitors per year. The farm is open from Tuesday – Sunday from 10.30 – 5 pm. More information: Tel. + 44 20 7247 8762 or www.spitafielddcityfarm.org

Hackney City Farm was started in 1984 on the premises of a former brewery in Goldsmith's Row. The cobbled farmyard is surrounded by the original buildings.

The remaining part of the 1,5 acres of land are now used for growing and grazing. The farm keeps pigs, cattle, sheep, goats, chickens, ducks, geese, turkeys, rabbits, guinea pigs and other small animals. The large garden is used for herbs, fruit trees



and bushes, old fashioned flowers, a vegetable garden and a raised bed for wheelchair users. In the shop you can buy eggs, meat, organic fruit and vegetables, jam, toys and printed shirts. Also for sale are hay, straw, animals feed, pets, wool, hair and manure. The large board with a sight plan of the farm is also in braille, Classes are organized in upholstery, stone sculpture, textile printing, pottery, music & movement and yoga for young children. The farm also organizes holiday activities which commonly have an environmental theme.



In 2002 the management of the Farm Café was taken over by Frizzante and three Italian chefs have transformed it into a well-known family restaurant. The farm itself has a staff of 4. The school program consists of tours around the farm, projects like 'Hatch and Brood', 'Rent-a-Pet', minibeast hunts and sheep shearing. The farm works with a number of film television and radio companies supplying animals and props and is used as a popular location venue. A meeting room is available for hire for conferences and workshops. The farm is open Tuesday to Sunday from 10 – 4.30 pm. More information: Tel. + 44 20 7729 6381 or e-mail enquiries@hackneycityfarm.co.uk

Newham City Farm was started in 1977 on the site of a former zoo on Stansfeld Road.



The farm expanded, gained more grazing area and turned an existing park building into a visitors centre with classroom facilities and display room. The farm has a wide collection

many of whom attended two or more of the events. I have attached a few photos that will give you a visual understanding of what went on.



These activities have kept us quite busy, and although they were very successful, we are feeling now more than ever that it is important to reconnect with you both and reestablish some conversations on the development of our City Farm. We value your extensive experience and would love to continue learning from and with you."



Andrea Jones
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Interesting websites

Language is often a problem. These websites may be useful.
www.worldlingo.com/en/products_services/worldlingo_translator.html
www.freetranslations.com

A Child Friendly City is a city, or any local system of governance, committed to fulfilling children's rights. It is a city where the voices, needs, priorities and rights of children are an integral part of public policies, programmes and decisions. This list of 821 Child Friendly Cities is organized in alphabetical order. www.childfriendlycities.org

Slow Food, founded in 1986, is an international organization whose aim is to protect the pleasures of the table from the homogenization of modern fast food and life. Through a variety of initiatives, it promotes gastronomic culture, develops taste education, conserves agricultural biodiversity and protects traditional foods at risk of extinction. www.slowfood.com (English, Italian, French, German, Spanish, Portuguese) www.slowfood.nl (Dutch).

EFCF conference in Turin, Italy

The 15th EFCF conference was held from 14 – 18 September 2005 and was organized by the City of Turin and Istituto Torinese per una Educazione Responsabile (ITER). Several organisations in the Province of Piemonte work together in the field of environmental education. Daniela Viroglio (ITER) and Margherita Borri (Consorzio Agriturismo Piemonte) explained their work to the about 50 delegates of 6 different countries who attended all or part of the conference. Representatives of different organisations which are involved in environmental education in other parts of Italy, Stefania Pendezza (Bergamo), Paola Lecardi (Pavia, Rossana Mari (Emilia Romagna) and Alessandra Somaschini (Rome) also stated that there is a functional cooperation between city farms and educational agricultural enterprises.



After the introductions visits were paid to Turin's city farm Cascina Falchera, two agritouristic farms in the Consorzio Agriturismo Piemonte: Cascina Neri and Il Frutto Permesso and to the Centre of Environmental Education in Pracatinat (Val Chisone). The organisation had gone out of its way to please the delegates. For example all the practical workshops in Cascina Falchera had been translated into English!

Cascina Falchera dates from the 18th century and has been used for educational activities since 1996. At Cascina Falchera children experience the spirit of the farm not as passive spectators but as participants in activities as harvesting and processing fruits or cereals. School classes come to the farm for a specific project, involving five to eight visits to the farm. In total about 15,000 children per year visit the farm. Each day there are about 100 children at the farm. The didactic excursion into the agricultural companies are completely in economic charge of the City of Turin, so that the schools have not costs. About Cascina Falchera's, running costs are covered by the City of Turin and the schools have to pay a contribution fee of • 70 per class. There are also activities during weekends and holidays.



The farm covers about 17 hectare. There are vegetable gardens, an orchard and a herbal garden. There are farm animals like a cow, donkeys, pigs, chicken, goats, sheep and rabbits. Staff consists of 6 teachers (trained in pedagogy and agronomy), farmers, pedagogical director, administration and security. During the conference the Green Hostel was officially

opened, which will provide accommodation for 27 persons.

The farm wants to link up with local agricultural farms that represent a choice of life, of income, a culture and a new promotion of critical consumption of food. Every year the City of Turin, in collaboration with the farms in the Consortium organizes educational meetings and didactical visits to help farmers become 'agricultural educators'. More information: + 39 011 2621996 or e-mail: labfalchera@comune.torino.it

Consorzio Agriturismo Piemonte was started in 1991 and consists of 115 Piedmont farms offering agritouristic hospitality. Thirty of these farms re-organized their farmhouses and became educational farms to receive children, teachers and families. Every year more than 80,000 persons visit these farmhouses to learn about agriculture, rural environment and gastronomy. Children harvest the corn, cook the polenta, bake bread and make cheese and



jam. The groups stay at the farm for half a day, one day or two days or more in the same week or in different seasons.

Consorzio Agriturismo Piemonte collaborates with the city of Turin to realize educational courses for the day nursery children or the elementary schoolchildren. More information: + 39 011 2629135 or www.agriturismopiemonte.it

Cascina Neri was one of the first working farms which started with an educational program for schools of Turin in 1988. Since then 5000 children per year have visited the farm. The main activities are maize (harvest, cooking and eating), strawberry harvest, making jam, baking bread and excursions.



The children stay for one day. There are holiday programs of five days. The costs are 12-13 Euros per child per day. The farm is organic but does not have an official organic certification. The farm keeps six pigs (for the salami, which is the farm's speciality), two horses, chicken, goats and sheep. The restaurant is open to tourists on Sundays and the products of the farm are sold to the tourists or to other tourist centres. The farm covers 10 hectares and has a staff of three. More information: tel./fax: + 39 0172 57 4543, Cell phone: + 39 335 703 2534 or e-mail: borri@mail.karmanet.it

Il Frutto Permesso covers 25 hectares of fruit, 100 hectares of grass and 8 hectares of corn and co-operates with the farm La Siia. The two farms together have a staff of 25.



The children are taken from one farm to the other by bus. About 5000 schoolchildren per year pay a visit for a program. Some teachers prepare the program and carry it out with the help of the farm. Other teachers leave everything to the farm and this will be more or less an excursion. Costs are 13 Euro per child, lunch and transport included. The farm sells 1/3 of its products at the farm and also sells products from other farms. The wooden path with the shelters towards the farm over the wetlands is meant to become a kind of museum/classroom: every shelter will have a theme and a display of old agricultural equipment and tools. La Siia also organises summer camps, where children can make music, learn to paint and learn English. More information: Tel.: + 39 0121 559421 or www.fruttopermesso.it

The Centre of Environmental Education in Pracatinat, at an altitude of 1900 meters, used to be a sanatorium. Since 1983 it has organised environmental workshops for schools from Monday to Friday. The children discuss the environment, make maps of the surrounding area, and participate in outdoor activities and games. There is 40 staff to run the Centre and 20 educators to supervise the schoolchildren. The centre is a consortium of 3 organisations. In 2004, 45,000 children have visited the Centre. Costs per school class are 150 Euro per week. The centre also organises summer camps and courses for educators. More information: Tel.: + 0121 884884, Fax: + 39 012183 711. www.pracatinat.it

International meeting in Rome 26th – 30 October 2006

Marc de Staercke, chairperson of the EFCF, was asked to represent the EFCF at the presentation of the translation into Italian of the activity book 'Project Seasons' of the Shelburne Farms in Vermont, USA. During the conference there was also a meeting of Fedenatur (European

Federation of Urban Parks. (www.fedenatur.org) and a public event on sustainability in the Decima Malafede Natural Reserve.

EFCF Conference Sweden 2006

During the Turin conference the Swedish 4H organisation presented the program of the 2006 EFCF conference. The theme of the conference will be: 'Well being for body and mind'. The different workshops and lectures will concern Fair Trade, Healthy Living and Eating and the importance of organic farming. More information will be on: www.cityfarms.org: 'Events, Activities, Conferences'.

Child in the City 2006



In co-operation with the City of Stuttgart the foundation Child in the City is organising the third European Conference Child in the City on 7 and 18 October 2006 at Stuttgart City Hall. This international event which was earlier held in 2002 in Bruges, Belgium and at the City Hall of London last year is further supported by the Research Centre Childhood and Society, Freizeit und Spiel, the City of Stuttgart, Child Friendly Cities, Jantje Beton, and Play & Leisure. More information: Child in the City Foundation, P.O. Box 822, 3700 AV Zeist, The Netherlands. Tel: +31 (0)30 6933 489, fax: +31 (0)30 6917 394 or www.europoint-bv.com/child2006

EFCF Conference Guidance Paper

The EFCF annual conference is hosted and organised by a member federation. Full and associate member federations can propose to put on the annual conference open to all member federations and city farms. Conferences are allocated, where possible, three years in advance by the EFCF Annual General Meeting. The EFCF Board evaluates each conference and will update the Conference Guidance Paper regularly. The 2006 version of the paper will be sent to the member federations for approval (AGM).

**Merry
Christmas
and a happy
New Year!!!**

