



Press Release

Monday 26 April 2010

Diamond Award Chef Champions Shropshire Produce at British Food Fortnight Launch

Shrewsbury chef Michel Nijsten championed Shropshire food and drink at the launch of British Food Fortnight in London last week where he was invited to be a speaker.

Michel, who is chef at the Albright Hussey Manor Hotel, was asked to speak at the event which took place at The Great Hall at Westminster Cathedral on Thursday. The event was held to mark the start of preparations for British Food Fortnight 2010 which will be held from Saturday 18 September to Sunday 3 October. It was also announced that British Food Fortnight 2012 will be moved to fall in line with the Olympic Games. HRH The Duchess of Cornwall was the special guest at the event supporting the work of British Food Fortnight.

Michel runs a successful menu throughout British Food Fortnight promoting regional food and drink which he spoke about at the event.

"I work with a wonderful group called HEART of ENGLAND fine foods who introduced me to a lot of different producers across the region," he said.

"We use regional produce everyday at the Albright Hussey and have been doing for the last 10 years so we're not doing anything different, but British Food Fortnight enables us to better promote our offering and do a special menu at a special price which the customers love."

HEART of ENGLAND fine foods (HEFF), the regional food group for the West Midlands, is holding its Diamond Awards Gala Dinner on Saturday 15 May at Aston Villa Football Club to celebrate the fantastic food and drink available from across Staffordshire, Shropshire, Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Warwickshire and Birmingham and the Black Country.

Michel will be part of a Brigade of Chefs from across the region representing the British Culinary Federation who will be producing a six course dinner using some of the region's finest ingredients. Michel also prepared the products for the award judging which took place in February.

"It's good to be working with HEFF again, this is the third year I've been involved in the Gala Dinner and I'm looking forward to preparing the menu once again.

"It's great to be an ambassador of regional food and drink and I'm grateful to have fantastic, devoted growers and food producers on my doorstep here in Shropshire," he said.

There are nine product categories in the Diamond Awards that regional producers compete to win; Bakery & Confectionery, sponsored by Tesco; Condiments and Preserves, sponsored by Taste of Birmingham; Dairy, sponsored by NOM Dairy UK Ltd; Desserts, sponsored by Heart Distribution; Drinks, sponsored by

The Belfry; Fresh Produce, sponsored by Hatchers Solicitors LLP; Meat, sponsored by EBLEX and BPEX; Poultry and Game, sponsored by Whittingham Riddell and Prepared Foods, sponsored by Asda.

The winners of each product category will then go head to head to win the highly coveted Special Diamond Award for Taste sponsored by Musgrave Retail Partners.

In addition there will once again be the Special Diamonds Awards of Grow, sponsored by Business Link West Midlands; Innovate, sponsored by the West Midlands Regional Food Academy and Excel, sponsored by Advantage West Midlands. These awards recognise business achievement in the food and drink industry.

The evening is open to anyone who works in or supports the food and drink industry. Tickets are £60 and can be reserved by calling the HEFF office on 01743 452818.

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Notes to Editors

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For a list of finalists visit www.heff.co.uk

HEART of ENGLAND fine foods was formed in 1998 to promote and raise awareness of food and drink within the West Midlands including Shropshire, Staffordshire, Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Warwickshire and Birmingham and the Black Country.

Through an extensive programme, the organisation helps the region's food and drink businesses to develop and create profitable and sustainable markets for their products.

Projects managed by HEART of ENGLAND fine foods on behalf of the West Midlands Food Partnership are part-funded by Advantage West Midlands, the European Regional Development Fund and the Rural Development Plan for England.



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