

FARM FOOD v FAST FOOD? – NO CONTEST SAYS NWFTI

Whether we're 16 or 66, we'd rather be tucking into a hearty farm feast than the latest burger deal according to research from the North West Farm Tourism Initiative (NWFTI).

Amongst every generation surveyed, the majority agree that if it's a case of farm food or fast food, the farm wins every time. Overall, 80% of us feel that the farm's tucker is superior to that served by our fast food outlets.

This thumbs up for farm food v fast food came from 89% of those aged over 65, but also 58% of the 16-24 year old age group and 78% of the 24-34 year old age group who have grown up in the fast food era.

Regionally, the vote for farm food was strongest in East Anglia, where 91% preferred it to fast food and in the South East and East Midlands (84%). The greatest support for fast food came from the North East, but even there, 72% felt food from the farm was the winner. In most age groups, farm food's appeal over fast food was also strongest amongst men.

The findings support the NWFTI's launch of its 2006 Enjoy the Farm brochure, which encourages families and individuals to visit 23 Cumbrian farms owned by the National Trust. The research suggests that this enjoyment is something many of us would relish, not only to tuck in to wonderful food that can be traced from farm to fork, but also to invigorate our lives. This is an aspect of a farm holiday 38% of us overall and 47% of 25-34 year olds say they would welcome.

The National Trust farms featured in the Enjoy the Farm brochure certainly know how to serve up a meal that is memorable as the farm holiday itself. Fresh organic eggs, home-reared bacon and other delights such as succulent and unique tasting herdwick lamb, home made damson jam and home-grown vegetables are just some of the wonderful ingredients that can comprise a farm meal.

The North West Farm Tourism Initiative's Farm and Rural Tourism Development Manager, Katie Read, says: "Our Enjoy the Farm visitors frequently tell our farms that the food tastes different and that is the huge plus of farm food. It is free from additives, how nature intended it to be and full of flavour. The fewer miles food travels, the better and more wholesome it tastes, which is one of the reasons why our farm holidays are now so popular. Children actually get the chance to taste food as it ought to be – for some, that's a first!"

Katie Read's comments are echoed in other research findings from the NWFTI's survey. 72% of people agree that the fewer miles food travels, the better it is for them and 68% think that farm food is healthier than that from other sources.

"Whatever way you look at it, when it's farm food versus fast food, it's just no contest", Katie Read concludes. "We serve knockout produce on our North West farms and look forward to a season in which we can introduce more children to the taste of real food."

Anyone wishing to find out more about the Enjoy the Farm experience can visit <http://www.golakes.co.uk/enjoythefarm> or call the brochure hotline on 01271 336185.

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Notes to Editors

The research survey was conducted in February 2006 with interviewees conducted with 1000 consumers by TNS's Omnimas division.

Cumbria Tourist Board is funded by the Northwest Regional Development Agency. The (NWDA) is responsible for the sustainable and economic development and regeneration of England's Northwest and has five key priorities: Business Development, Regeneration, Skills and Employment, Infrastructure and Image. For further information visit www.nwda.co.uk <<http://www.nwda.co.uk/>> or www.englandsnorthwest.com <<http://www.englandsnorthwest.com/>> or contact the NWDA Press office call 01925 400100.