

News Release



Release ref.: Walk the Supply Chain

Release date: 3 October 2007

£25k project in bid to boost farm gate margins

West Midlands based farmers and growers are being urged to “walk their supply chain” as part of a £25,000 project designed to help them build more collaborative relationships with processors and retailers.

This series of eight events is designed to increase farmers’ understanding of the food supply chain.

They aim to improve relationships between producers and processors as well as highlight areas where farmers can increase their margins through on-farm added value processes.

Delivered by food and farming collaboration experts EFFF and 7Y Services, the farmer-controlled business services group, the free seminars will tackle issues ranging from the milk retailer’s perspective on milk production to different approaches to on-farm bioenergy generation.

Simon Thelwell, EFFF regional manager explains, “The events will walk a group of farmers through a supply chain. One example is milk, starting with the farmer looking at technical success on-farm, then onto the dairy to understand how that business works and finally to a local retailer or a national supermarket to hear about consumer trends and how farmers can play a more active role in making the supply chain work more effectively.

“By walking through the whole supply chain farmers and growers will build a greater understanding of the complete process from start to finish, make contacts from other

parts of the supply chain and understand how essential it is for everyone involved to work together.”

Richard Jackson, managing director of 7Y Services, EFFF’s co partner on the project added, “Growth in direct sales and farmers markets have eased the burden for the few but the vast majority of UK farmers have had prices squeezed whilst supermarkets profits soar.

“Yet most UK farmers and growers have to rely on the larger retailers for their livelihood and that’s why it is essential producers, processors and retailers start to work more closely together in pursuit of better quality and fairer prices.”

The project is part of the Natural England Farm Demonstration Programme and events are planned in the milk, arable, added value, horticulture and bioenergy supply chains. They will be co-delivered in conjunction with the West Midlands’ Rural Hubs.

The project is for regional groups, including buying/discussion groups, marketing groups and others. Interested groups should contact Simon Thelwell on 07834 337347 or email sthelwell@effp.com

-ends-

For further press information, please contact Sue Bown at Severn Communications on 01905 791996 or email sue.bown@severncom.com