RHET's



Cocolos Hamper



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Bats



ARE THEY A SUPERFOOD?

Oats are among the most nutrient-dense foods you can eat. Oats are rich in carbohydrates and fibre but also higher in protein and fat than most other grains. They contain betagluten which helps reduce cholesterol and blood sugar levels, promotes healthy gut bacteria and increases feelings of fullness.

HOW DO WE EAT THEM?

Porridge is the most common way we eat oats and during the cold winter months in Scotland porridge is a great start to the day For a nutritious snack, oatcakes and cheese are a healthy option. Oats are also what Santa will feed his reindeer to give them energy to fly all the way round the world.

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR?

Oats grow really well in Scotland, so always buy Scottish oats. Oats come in the form of porridge oats (rolled) or oatmeal. See if they have a Scottish flag on the packet.

Here is a great recipe for porridge Christmas Pudding from Hamlyns of Scotland.

Find out more about oats and other cereals in <u>our cereals</u> <u>library</u> and follow the oat story with <u>this short video</u>.





WHERE DOES CREAM COME FROM?

Cream comes from cows and all milk contains some cream. Cream is made of fat droplets and these float to the surface, if the milk is left to stand.

The milk you buy from the shop has been homogenised to spread the fat droplets throughout the milk. With cream, the fat is separated from the rest of the milk by spinning it very fast. This process is called 'centrifugation'.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

If you can support Scotland's dairy farmers when you buy milk this helps ensure we continue producing the milk and cream for you. Look out for the Scottish flag on your milk carton.

IS CREAM GOOD FOR US?

Cream consists of mainly fat and water in varying proportions depending on the type of cream. It is energy-dense and contains small quantities of other nutrients. So, cream can be enjoyed in small quantities as part of your Christmas meal.

HOW SUSTAINABLE IS MILK PRODUCTION?

Cows chew the cud, which means they regurgitate the grass and re-chew it to help them digest it. This process produces methane, which is a greenhouse gas. There is a lot of ongoing research looking at how the diet of dairy cows can be altered to reduce methane emissions. Buy only the milk and cream you need and as cream freezes well you can pour it into an ice cube tray and use it later. You can find more information and a range of videos linked to milk production in our dairy library.



WHAT IS ICE CREAM?

Ice cream is a mixture of milk, cream and sugar which can have other flavours added. Lots of dairy farms in Scotland produce the milk and cream required.

Scottish farms are very good at growing grass which in turn the dairy cows eat and convert into milk and cream.

Our climate is perfect for growing grass and although dairy farms can be found all over the low ground in Scotland, the majority of them are in the South West where they have higher rainfall, because rain makes the grass grow!

Scottish farmers can also produce the ingredients to add different flavours, like strawberries and raspberries.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

You can support Scottish Dairy Farms by looking out for the wee blue flag on both the milk and cream containers.

To make it more Christmassy try using up leftover Christmas cake or pudding in the following **recipe**.

Did you know RHET can offer schools a wide range of farm videos, including this one covering how ice cream is made.

For more information **contact your local coordinator**.

Raspherries



In Scotland, Angus is a really important area for soft fruit like raspberries and strawberries. Angus used to be best known for raspberries, Montrose even had an annual Raspberry Festival, a clip of which from 1959 can be seen **here**.

At the peak of raspberry growing in Angus 20,000 tonnes of raspberries a year used to be sent by train down to England. Raspberry production was overtaken by strawberry production for a number of reasons, one of which was a disease called Raspberry Root Rot, which made it more difficult to grow raspberries.

Raspberries are ideal fruit as they freeze really well, make great jam and also keep their shape and colour much better than strawberries when they are canned. This meant they are easy to preserve to use out of season. Angus was known for its canning and jam making factories and although jam is still made in Angus, the last canning factory closed in 2001.

If you wanted raspberries for recipes at Christmas it used to be that they had to be either frozen or canned, but the world market now allows us to buy fresh fruit out of season. Frozen, canned or fresh raspberries can be used to make a lovely trifle for dessert on Christmas Day. Why not try making one using this **recipe**.

RHET can offer digital and on farm visits throughout the year. If you are interested please contact your local project coordinator.





There are a number of duck producers in Scotland.

These tend to be smaller producers, often raising ducks for the Christmas market which can be bought either direct from farm, through butchers or at farmers' markets.

It is also possible to eat wild duck and these can be bought from butchers and game retailers.

Farmed duck is available all year round and wild duck is in season from September to January.

Duck naturally has a high level of fat in the skin which is generally rendered off when roasting or pan frying.

This fat can be kept and used for roasting potatoes and vegetables.

Duck meat is a good source of protein as well as B vitamins and minerals such as zinc, potassium, magnesium and iron.

Mistletoe



WHAT IS MISTLETOE?

Mistletoe is a parasitic plant that attaches to its host tree with a special structure called a haustorium. This lets the mistletoe suck up food and water direct from the tree.

Apple and lime trees are favourites for mistletoe to grow on. In the UK, most mistletoe is found in the south and west Midlands with particularly good populations in Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Gloucestershire, Gwent and Somerset.

Mistletoe is a rare occurrence in Scotland due to the colder climate. However, this may change as the climate changes. Make sure you get mistletoe from a sustainably-harvested source.

This helps ensure the plants and the trees on which they grow will continue to flourish. Mistletoe is a fascinating plant which has played a huge part in tradition and mythology for centuries. It is also an important plant for encouraging other biodiversity.

Holly and Tvy



Holly is part of the traditional greenery at Christmas time. Holly is an evergreen shrub so it keeps its leaves throughout the winter.

There are male and female holly trees but once the flowers are pollinated, only the female trees produce holly berries. These berries are eaten by birds throughout the winter months. A lot of holly grows in Scotland's woodlands, hedges and old gardens.

WHAT IS IVY?

Ivy is found across Scotland and flowers till quite late in the year, providing a good source of nectar for late bees and butterflies.

Ivy can grow across the ground as well as up trees and provides good cover for a range of creatures, particularly as the weather becomes colder.

Keep your holly and ivy cool and it will last you over the festive season. Both holly and ivy are poisonous so keep this in mind if you have pets and/or young children.



Bnions



Onions are an essential, healthy food for the modern consumer. Our ideal climate and the expertise of British Onion growers, packers and processors, means British Onions are the world's finest!

Onions are a staple of many world cuisine, and are known to have many health benefits.

The extensive health benefits of onions are frequently overlooked or even unknown.

Studies reveal the onion as an all-encompassing multitalent; from supporting brain fitness and preventing cancer to fighting anxiety and depression. It also acts as a natural probiotic and sleeping pill.

Here are some of the essential facts about the makeup of the humble onion.

Fibre - High in dietary fibre Low in calories - 36 cal/100g

Sugar - 5.6g/100g

Starch - nil

Fat Content - nil

Cholesterol - nil

Protein - 1.2g/100g

Carbohydrate - 7.9g/100g

Essential minerals - potassium, sodium, calcium, magnesium, iron, phosphorus, folic acid, selenium and zinc

Vitamins - Vitamin B and high in Vitamin C

Scotch Beef



SUSTAINABLE BEEF

Some people opt to break from tradition and choose beef for their main meal instead of turkey. Beef cattle are an important part of Scottish Agriculture particularly on the east coast of Scotland and in the Highlands. There are many breeds of cattle that are used to produce beef for us to eat, and many people will be familiar with some of the iconic Scottish Breeds such as Aberdeen Angus, Highlands and the Belted Galloway.

Beef calves are fed on their mother's milk, until they are old enough to start eating grass. Cows are very efficient at digesting grass and turning it into muscle. In the colder winter the grass stops growing, so the farmer needs to preserve grass in the summer to feed the cows in the winter, this preserved feed is called silage.

Often cows are brought inside in the winter as the fields become wet and muddy, and it is easier to look after the cows in a shed. When livestock is inside the farmer has the daily job of feeding and making sure the animals have clean bedding so they stay healthy.

Beef that is produced in Scotland is produced sustainably, and does not impact on climate change. This is a very complicated subject, so if you would like to understand more **click here**.



Year of Beef 2021/22 Beef from animals born and reared on assured Scottish farms carries the Scotch Beef PGI (Protected Geographical Indication) logo. Scotch Beef PGI is sourced from farms that meet stringent criteria regarding animal welfare, feeds and natural production methods. 'Scotch Beef' isn't the same as 'Scottish beef'! 'Scotch Beef' is an assurance of quality and great taste, so look for the label when you buy your meat.

Red meat, like beef, is a natural source of protein, iron, zinc and B vitamins. 100g of lean beef (avoiding the fat) contains 175 kcals, 32.2g Protein, 5.1g Fat, 2.5mg Iron

You can find more beef resources here.





In Scotland, there are 862 dairy units milking 177,459 cows giving an average herd size of 206 cows.

1478 million litres of milk are produced per year from Scottish farms and 38% of that goes into cheese.

The origin of cheese dates as far back as 6000 BC.

Cheese can be produced using a variety of milk including cow, sheep, buffalo, goat, horse, and even camel, but cheese from cows' milk is the most common.

Most traditional Scottish cheeses are of the hard, mature variety. Scotland now has around 30 cheese producers. Although Scottish Cheddar accounts for about 75% of total production, modern cheeses crafted by artisan and family farmhouse makers are becoming more popular.

Cheese eaten in moderate quantities, is an excellent source of protein, calcium, and phosphorus. Find out more here

Why not have a go at making some macaroni cheese?

Red Cabbage



Red cabbage is part of the 'Brassica' vegetable family along with things like broccoli, cauliflower and Brussels sprouts. Red cabbage can be grown in Scotland for most of the year and once harvested, it is very easy to store, meaning that we can buy it all year round!

The cabbage seeds can either be sown directly into the ground or in seed trays. If they are sown in seed trays, the little plants will need to be transplanted into the ground when they have about 5 or 6 'true' leaves. They take approximately 70-120 days to grow, depending on the variety and time of year.

Red cabbage is a tasty side dish for Christmas day which can be cooked a couple of days in advance and just reheated on the big day! Check out this <u>great recipe</u>.

Red cabbage contains a huge amount of vitamin C. 100g of raw red cabbage can provide up to 95% of your daily required intake! As well as being high in Vitamin C it is also jam packed full of powerful antioxidants (flavonoids) which help to improve your eyes, teeth, bones & immune system. It is one of these flavonoids, called ANTHOCYANIN, which gives the red cabbage its colour. It can also be found in things like blueberries, flower petals and leaves (this is what makes them turn red in autumn)!

Red cabbage can be used for kitchen science experiments. The purple leafy vegetable is considered an indicator, which can be used to distinguish between acids and bases. You make cabbage juice and see if it changes colour when you add another liquid to it. <u>Click here</u> to find out what to do, and what it all means.







HOW ARE PARSNIPS GROWN?

Parsnips are grown in Scotland and are at their best after the first frosts. The parsnip is a root vegetable and is harvested by machines from November until February.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Look for the Scottish flag for the most local in-season parsnips.

ARE THEY GOOD FOR US?

Parsnips pack a nutritional punch providing plenty of essential vitamins and minerals including folate, potassium and some vitamin C. 100g parsnips have 28% of reference nutrient intake (RNI) of vitamin C.

They are also a good source of dietary fibre. Just one medium cooked parsnip provides nearly 5g, which is more than the same amount of most 'high-fibre' breakfast cereals. Most of the fibre found in parsnips is soluble; soluble fibre is known to help keep the heart healthy by reducing levels of cholesterol in the blood.

Just be careful not to add too much oil in the roasting process.

WHAT ABOUT THE WASTE?

Parsnips are grown locally and if you ensure they are clean they do not need peeling so there is no wastage. You can help by ensuring you only buy what you need and opt for loose rather than bagged parsnips.

Venison



WHAT IS VENISON?

Venison is the name of the meat we get from deer. Venison is in season in Scotland in the winter months. There are five breeds of deer in the UK - red, roe, muntjac, fallow and sika. In Scotland, red deer provide the majority of venison we eat.

As well as culling wild deer, we also produce farmed venison. Wild deer management is important, as Scotland no longer has any large predators to keep deer numbers under control at numbers that are sustainable on our hillsides. Venison is a healthy lean meat.

The meat is high in iron and low in fat providing an ideal Christmas choice. Per 100g roast venison haunch contains: 2.5g fat, 35.6g protein, 5.1 mg iron, 165 kcal.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Look out for the Scottish flag on venison products. Read the label to find out how the meat is being produced, as there are both wild and farmed venison products on the market.

Venison is in high demand and quite a lot of it is being imported from New Zealand. This is a long journey for something that can be produced here, so opt for Scottish where possible.

RHET can offer digital and on farm visits throughout the year. If you are interested please contact your local project coordinator.





WHICH TREES ARE CHRISTMAS TREES?

Putting up a tree is a sure sign that Christmas is on the way! There are lots of Christmas tree growers in Scotland who grow the type of conifer trees we want as Christmas trees. These trees have to be the right height and shape, and good at holding onto their needles.

These include species like Fraser Fir, Nordmann Fir and Norway Spruce. Before they are cut, fresh trees absorb carbon dioxide from the air and give out oxygen.

At the end of the festive season, make sure you take your tree to a shredding point where it will either be composted or used as wood chip/mulch.

If you have outdoor space to store it between Christmases, you can buy a living tree in a pot - and reuse it year after year!

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Look for the British Christmas Tree Growers Association logo. These growers are asked to comply with a code of practice so that trees are grown to the best environmental and sustainable practices.







Bread is made of flour and flour comes from ground wheat. Winter wheat is sown in the autumn. After germination and early growth, it lies dormant over winter and resumes growth in the spring.

Spring wheat is sown in the spring and usually matures two or three weeks later with a lower yield. Wheat can be hard or soft.

The climate in Scotland means hard wheat (used to make bread) is harder to grow and yields are lower. So we grow more soft wheat and import hard wheat.

Bread sauce can be high in fat when it is made using cream. If you make your own bread sauce using brown bread and milk, rather than white bread and cream, this is a healthier alternative. You can make **bread sauce** using stale bread.

Try to make only enough for your guests, to avoid having leftovers. Be sure to check the label on a ready-made bread sauce as the salt content may be high.

As well as wheat, we also grow oats which are used mainly for human consumption and barley which is used to make malt for human consumption but also for animal feeds.

For more information, presentations and worksheets on grains click here.

Have you <u>signed up</u> for our grow your own loaf project launching spring 2023?



Pigs in Blankets



These date back to the 1950's and can also be known as "Kilted Sausages" and "Devils on horseback".

Chipolata sausages, usually made from pork, are wrapped in bacon (the "blanket").

Both pork and bacon come from pigs. "Specially Selected Pork" is sourced from farms with the highest levels of animal health and welfare which implement modern professional farming practices - check for the logo as this means the meat has come from pigs born, reared and slaughtered in Scotland.

Look for a high percentage (%) of meat which will provide you with a good sausage. Cheaper sausages often have low meat content and are filled out with rusk and other ingredients. You can use leftover sausage meat or stuffing and wrap it in bacon to make your own pigs in blankets.

For more fascinating facts and some games why not visit Quality Meat Scotland's <u>interactive educational resource</u> which explores the journey Scottish red meat makes from farm to fork and the role that red meat plays as part of a healthy, balanced diet and in the economy and environment.



Earrots



HOW ARE CARROTS PRODUCED?

Carrots need well-drained sandy soils and there are a number of carrot producers in Scotland.

Carrot seeds are tiny and are planted using precision technology. Once the seedlings start to grow, they can be susceptible to carrot fly which the farmer needs to monitor closely.

Carrots can be harvested as green tops, which are young carrots with the leaves still attached, or they can be kept in the ground for longer and sold when they reach full size. Those grown to full size have the tops removed and are cleaned before making their way to the consumer.

Carrots are damaged by frost so those not harvested before the frost arrives are covered in straw to protect them. Look for the Scottish flag for the most local carrots or the UK flag if you can't find any Scottish ones.

BURSTING WITH GOODNESS!

Carrots are high in fibre and brimming with beta-carotene which the body uses to make vitamin A. Carrots are also low in calories, fat, saturates and salt. An 80g serving counts as one of your recommended five portions of fruit and veg a day. 100g boiled carrots have 340% reference nutrient intake of vitamin A.

You don't need to peel carrots before you cook them - just ensure you give them a good wash. The only part to compost is the very top where the leaves grew.



Salmon and Prawns

Seafood is often on the menu at Christmas with prawns being used as a starter and salmon as a main course. Scotland produces both wild and farmed salmon.

Salmon farming (aquaculture) is an important industry in Scotland and provides most of our salmon. Scotland exports salmon round the world as well as supplying local markets.

Prawns are also a highly valuable commercial species. While many of the prawns which are eaten in the UK are imported, there are commercial fisheries for UK prawns, mostly working out of ports in south west England and parts of Scotland.

Choose responsibly caught fish, that is handled with care and can be traced right back to a sustainable source. This helps maintain fish stocks and protect from overfishing. Look out for the blue MSC label.

MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR FISH

Both prawns and salmon are a source of protein and low in fat. However, remember to watch how you prepare them as the calories often come in the dressings that are used like Marierose sauce.

Fish pie is a good way of using up any leftover fish. You can use salmon, prawns, haddock and pollock amongst other fish in the pie and top it with potatoes.

Fats and Vils



There are a wide range of fats and oils available with which to cook. Olive oil, sunflower oil, vegetable or rapeseed oil are some common liquid oils. At Christmas time, we also use more hard fats like goose fat for cooking or butter for baking and cooking. Rapeseed oil is produced in Scotland and comes from oil seed rape - you will see the fields of yellow over the countryside in the April and May. This plant produces pods with seeds inside. These seeds may be small, but they contain oil and many seeds, which when squashed, give you rapeseed oil. A crop of rapeseed oil will be harvested in the summer. Butter is a dairy product made from separating whole milk or cream into fat and buttermilk. The fat is compressed and chilled into blocks of butter. It can be used directly as a condiment or melted for frying or coating. Butter is also used in baking, such as in sponges, biscuits and pastries, or for enriching sauces. Why not trying to make your own **butter**? For those who enjoy baking, we have included a recipe for **Santa's Rich Butter Shortbread** - if you make a batch, there will be some left over for you too! Goose fat is available in UK shops and will probably have been sourced within the EU. This is obtained by cooking the goose and collecting up the resulting fat. The three most prominent goose breeding countries are France, Hungary and Poland. There is also a small artisan manufacturing industry in the UK

WHICH FAT TO USE?

Fats and oils help aid the cooking process and provide the crunch on roast vegetables. Hard fats like goose fat have a higher percentage (%) of saturated fat whilst oils tend to have less saturated and more polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fatty chains which are healthier fats. However, they should still be used sparingly as they are high in calories. Make sure you don't put fats and oils down the drain - it's a no brainer - use a container! Look for butter and oilseed rape brands from Scotland and the UK - that way you are supporting our farmers and the local economy.



Potatoes



Scotland has the ideal climate for growing potatoes. Potatoes grown for human consumption are called 'ware' potatoes.

As well as growing ware potatoes, we also grow 'seed' potatoes. Scotland produces most of the seed potatoes for the UK potato industry and is a leading producer of seed potatoes for export to other countries.

Potatoes are classified according to when they are harvested. The early potatoes come first, followed by the main crop and then the late potatoes.

Potatoes pack quite a nutritional punch. They are naturally fat-free, a source of fibre, potassium, salt free, low in sugar and naturally saturated-fat free.

What you do with the potatoes will determine the health benefits - baking is better than roasting but if you do roast them, limit the fat you use and keep the size of the potato pieces larger which means they absorb less fat. Farmers are able to store potatoes in ideal conditions (cool, dry and dark) so that they will keep for many months. This slows down the greening process and keeps the potatoes fresh for longer.

Buying from Scottish producers means that you are supporting Scottish farmers and saving Scottish jobs. You are also doing your bit for the planet by buying food with fewer food miles.

The potato has been an incredibly important crop across the world for centuries and is the fourth biggest crop grown world wide (after rice, maize and wheat)

Apples



Apples grow on trees. In the spring apples trees produce blossom (flowers) which bees and flying insects help to pollinate. This blossom, if fertilised, then turns into apples which can be picked in the autumn in Scotland. There are around 40 different varieties of apples which have been grown in Scotlish orchards over the years.

Apples are a great part of your five a day being rich in Vitamin C as well as other vitamins to keep us fit and healthy. The old saying "An apple a day keeps the doctor away" comes from the 1830s to basically encourage people to eat apples to help their general health.

Many years ago apples were used as decorations on Christmas trees and it is thought that a shortage of apples one year resulted in people making glass blown baubles similar to those we use today.

If you have space in your garden why not think about planting an apple tree? There are lots of great things that apples can be used for. Why not try this **apple and cinnamon Christmas pie recipe**?





Brussels sprouts are at their best from November through to February and we grow them in Scotland. They grow on stalks and the **sprouts are picked** either by hand or machine.

Brussels sprouts belong to the same family as cabbages and cauliflower.

Sprouts are a rich source of Vitamin C and folic acid. One 100g serving of boiled sprouts has 103% of the reference nutrient intake (RNI) of Vitamin C (four times the amount of vitamin C than an orange) and 44% of your RDA of folic acid.

Frozen sprouts are harvested, prepared and frozen very quickly so have all the nutrients locked in until they are ready to cook. Using frozen sprouts also means you only use what you need.

If you have any sprouts left over after Christmas why not try this **recipe**. Support British sprout growers and buy Scottish sprouts.

RHET can offer digital and on farm visits throughout the year. If you are interested please contact your local project coordinator.





Garlic is one of the oldest cultivated plants in the world. The garlic bulb is a source of vitamin B6, vitamin C and minerals which include manganese, selenium, phosphorous, calcium, potassium, iron and copper.

At Christmas, garlic is delicious roasted in foil in the oven to accompany roast vegetables or made into garlic butter for garlic bread.

Most of the garlic eaten in the UK comes from China, France and Spain, but we also have specialist growers on Scottish and English farms producing garlic.

Look out for UK or Scottish grown garlic.

Why not try growing garlic on a small scale at home. Garlic is easy to grow and can also be grown in pots or containers.

Turkeys



The traditional meat at Christmas time is the turkey and we produce many turkeys for the Christmas market. There are several main breeds of turkey which are used - Norfolk Black, Bronze Turkey, Bourbon Red and white turkeys.

Turkey wins! You get around 150 calories in a 100g portion of cooked turkey breast which is lower than almost every other meat.

Let's face it, we ALWAYS cook far too much food at Christmas! Save money and do your bit to save the planet by using up all those leftovers. Leftover turkey can be mixed with potato, vegetables and breadcrumbs and put into a pastry case, like a pasty.

Turkeys are available straight from the farm, local butcher or supermarket. Please make sure it has the Scottish or UK flag with the Red Tractor logo. Never wash your turkey (or other poultry) - this is because bacteria can splash onto worktops, dishes and other foods. Proper cooking will kill any bacteria.

Turkey is the most common Christmas meal here in the UK, but what about other countries around the world? What do they eat at Christmas time, or for their main winter festival?

Why not find out more and perhaps make contact with a school in another country to share ideas and recipes? Why not try making some of these and sharing them with other people in your school or community?

Herbs



Many herbs grow well in Scotland and there are commercial producers here, as well as in the rest of the UK. Fresh herbs, both cut and sold in bags and as small pot grown plants, are widely available in shops.

Most commonly found as bags of cut stems are flat and curly leaved parsley, mint, sage, rosemary, dill and coriander, while parsley, basil and coriander are also widely found for sale in pots. All these herbs are also available in dried form, which can be substituted in place of fresh in a recipe, but it needs to be remembered that dried herbs are more concentrated in flavour, so you need to use less dried herbs than fresh herbs.

Herbs can be easily grown at home or in school. Herbs such as sage, rosemary, chives and mint are perennial plants, dying back or losing their leaves over winter and then growing vigorously again in the spring. Parsley, basil and coriander are annual plants and so new seeds have to be sown each year in order to have them to harvest.

The great thing about growing herbs in school is that many of them can be used without needing any cooking. Parsley can be finely chopped and sprinkled into sandwich fillings, chives are great mixed into egg mayonnaise. Parsley can, like basil, be used to make pesto and parsley, chives, basil and coriander can all be added to salads.

The herbs commonly associated with Christmas are sage, thyme and parsley as they are used in quite large quantities in stuffing. Rosemary is often scattered over potatoes as they roast. Why not try making your own stuffing with these **recipes**.



CAROLA STANCES

RHET can offer digital and on farm visits throughout the year. If you are interested please contact your local project coordinator.