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## Introduction

Welcome to **coretalk**. The summer has been a busy time for the **healthy living award**, with a number of 'firsts' to celebrate. These include our first award in Orkney, and the first smoothie bar and first cookery school to achieve the award (see page 5).

August sees the **healthy living award** celebrate its second anniversary, which means the first wave of award holders are now reaching the end of their

award term. Information about the quick and easy reapplication process is available on page 4. This month also sees our 900th registration, with caterers across Scotland continuing to support healthy eating and receive recognition for their efforts through the award.

Recent research carried out by both the Food Standards Agency and National Consumer Council shows that customers would like information to be made available about the food they buy when eating out. Our Scottish caterers are clearly leading by example, using the green apple as the sign of healthier food and making it easier for their customers to make informed choices. Read more about the research on page 3.

We're always pleased to hear from caterers across the country, and our new '60 Second Microbites' feature lets you see what our award holders think of the award. If you would like to share your experiences then please contact us.

## What's cooking?

### **healthy living award sets the standard for the rest of the UK**

The **healthy living award** is leading the way for the rest of the UK. A report published by the UK Government acknowledges the success of the **healthy living award** and the contribution that it is making towards improving the diet of a nation. *Food Matters – Towards a Strategy for the 21st Century* cites the award as an example of good practice and encourages others to follow its lead.

In July, the Prime Minister commissioned the report to provide an overview of the Government's food policy. It includes a section specifically focusing on the provision of information and advice for customers when eating out. The **healthy living award** is featured as a case study demonstrating how caterers can help their customers to make informed choices.

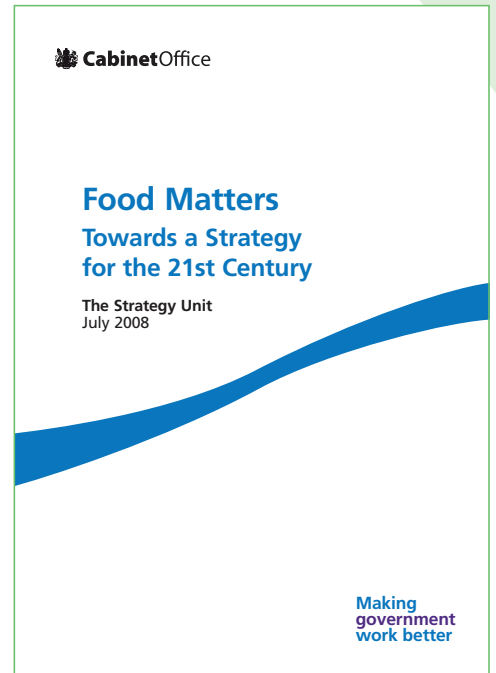
## What's cooking? (Cont)

The **healthyliving award** team is delighted with such a positive acknowledgement, especially as the report calls for stronger partnership between Government and the food services industry to help consumers make healthier choices. This support will continue to strengthen demand for the award from caterers and consumers alike.

The report demonstrates that Scotland is leading by example and that the success of the **healthyliving award** has not gone unnoticed. Already a number of local authorities in England are developing similar models, with several having sought advice from the **healthyliving award** team before launching their own schemes.

One such local authority, Macclesfield Borough Council, has developed the "Golden Apple" award to recognise local food outlets which offer healthy options for young children. The award aims to help parents provide their children with healthy food when eating away from home.

As the **healthyliving award** is only available to Scottish food outlets, the team are not in a position to actively cultivate relationships with English businesses. However the success of the award has obviously spoken for itself and the team is very happy to share good practice as English local authorities develop their own schemes based on the **healthyliving award** criteria. So long as the source is acknowledged of course!



## Nibbles

### New name for the Scottish Consumer Council

The Scottish Consumer Council is merging with energywatch and Postwatch to form a new organisation – named **Consumer Focus Scotland**. The new organisation will start work in October 2008, championing the interests of consumers.

**Consumer Focus Scotland** will take on responsibility for managing and delivering the healthyliving award, funded by the Scottish Government. The award team remains unchanged, and will continue to be based at the same address in Glasgow.

Look out for the new name and logo in the coming months.

## News bites

### Takeaway health

By Jeff Alder, National Consumer Council

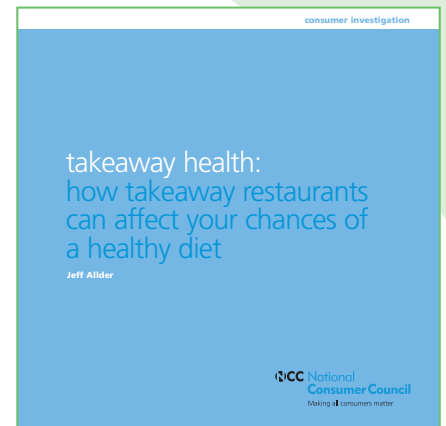
In July NCC released the report *Takeaway Health* which looked at the availability of nutrition information in seven leading takeaway restaurant chains. We wanted to find out how easy it is for customers to make healthier choices.

The results showed that although nutrition information is available in some of the leading chains, it was often hard to find and difficult to understand. Some companies offered information in leaflets or on tray liners after food has been purchased, others offered no information in store at all. We also looked at the nutrition content of food on offer and found that often meal options were high in salt, saturated fat and sugar – making it even harder for people who are trying to eat more healthily.

To see if there is a consumer appetite for a policy of simple to use nutrition information at restaurants we asked people their views. Our results showed that nearly three quarters (72%) would find such information useful, and 60 per cent said they would use such information to pick healthier choices.

It's important that people can choose a healthy option if they want one, especially with consumers' growing appetite for fast food and the rise of obesity and diet-related illnesses. The NCC is calling for takeaway restaurants to take up the challenge and provide clear, effective, easy to understand nutrition information on menus. We also want to see more healthy options on menus with lower saturated fat, sugar and salt levels.

To find out more go to [www.ncc.org.uk](http://www.ncc.org.uk)



### Consumers want extra helpings of information when eating out

A survey by the Food Standards Agency has also shown that people want to be able to make informed choices when eating out, not only in takeaways but also in restaurants and cafés.

The Agency surveyed more than 2,000 people across the UK to provide a snapshot of what consumers want when they eat out.

Restaurants, pubs, canteens and cafés have a responsibility to make it clear what is in the food they serve, according to 85% of those surveyed. Respondents were also asked where nutritional information could be shown most usefully and 81% said they would like to see it at the point when they order food, such as on the menu in a restaurant, or visible when they are buying a sandwich or a muffin in a coffee shop or cafe.

Catering outlets that hold the healthy living award are already highlighting the healthier choices on the menu or at the server, making it easy for customers to eat healthily.

You can view the full survey results at

[www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/cateringresults.pdf](http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/cateringresults.pdf)

## Tasty morsels

### The time has come...

Your **healthyliving award** is valid for a period of two years, so the time has come for some holders to re-apply. We strongly encourage you to do this as soon as your reminder letter arrives, to ensure that your award remains continuous.

- We will write to you three months prior to your award expiring, explaining what you need to do and enclosing the documentation.
- Once we have received your completed documentation and checked your food safety status with Environmental Health, an assessor will call to arrange a mutually convenient time to visit.
- A full inspection visit will take place, incorporating an examination of the front of house service and a detailed discussion with the Head Chef and/or Catering Manager.
- Following the visit, we will issue a feedback report telling you if your award has been successfully renewed.

So look out for your reminder letter when the time comes, and by following the steps above we can work together to ensure that your award continues without a break.

## A flavour of ....

### Pork Meatballs with Ribbon Pasta and Mushrooms – Serves 10

Recipe courtesy of Sodexo at the Scottish Government

#### Ingredients:

##### For the meatballs:

1.4kg minced pork, 250g red onions (diced), 400g fresh brown breadcrumbs, 4 garlic cloves (crushed), 10g oregano, 10g chopped parsley

##### For the Italian tomato sauce:

225g white onions, 1kg chopped fresh plum tomatoes (not tinned), 4 garlic cloves, 5g dried oregano, 40g tomato paste, 2g caster sugar

##### For the pasta:

750g tagliatelle, 250g button mushrooms, 125g cherry tomatoes, 60ml olive oil, 300g fresh brown breadcrumbs, 10g parsley, 200g grated mozzarella and low-fat cheddar mix

#### Instructions:

1. Place meatball ingredients in a bowl and mix well.
2. Mould into 50 evenly shaped balls, cover and refrigerate until required.
3. For tomato sauce, finely dice onion, crush tomatoes and garlic. In a large saucepan heat all the ingredients together, bring to a simmer and cook gently until onions are soft. Puree in a food blender. Return to a clean pan and cook, stirring sauce from time to time until thickened.
4. Cook pasta in boiling water until al dente. Slice mushrooms and cut cherry tomatoes in half.
5. Heat a little oil in a frying pan and cook meatballs until golden brown and to a core temperature of 75°C.
6. Add mushrooms, tomatoes, meatballs and pasta to tomato sauce. Portion evenly into individual bowls.
7. In a food processor, blend breadcrumbs, parsley and cheese until a fine green crumb is formed. Sprinkle this over pasta and bake at 180°C until golden brown. Serve.

**Serving suggestion: serve with a green salad or rocket leaves.**



## Sowing the seeds

### From Hollywood to healthy living.....

The tasty Italian dishes made and served at Bellini Restaurant in Edinburgh proved so popular with diners that owner Gina Giubarelli decided to help others re-create them. The Bellini Cookery School was launched in 2003 to teach customers how to prepare and cook their favourite meals.

Chef Angelo Cimini, who trained in Arbruzzo, Italy, develops the dishes and bases them all on classic, mouth-watering Italian favourites. Several celebrities have also given Chef Angelo their seal of approval: he has cooked for many famous guests including Sofia Loren, Clint Eastwood, rock group REM and Gloria Estefan, all of whom thoroughly enjoyed their meals!

Both Gina and Angelo are passionate about the food they serve and insist that all dishes are freshly made using the finest of fresh Scottish produce combined with authentic Italian ingredients, and absolutely no additives or preservatives. Both believe that this is why their restaurant is so popular.

Gina said, "Guests are always amazed by the difference in taste that they experience in our food. We receive many compliments about the distinctive, delicious flavours from made-to-order, natural food. Because of our passion for fresh food and fine ingredients, it seemed only natural to apply for the **healthy living award** when we heard about it." In doing so, they became the first cookery school in Scotland to achieve the **healthy living award**.

Bellini Cookery School holds classes on various topics including fresh pasta making, regional Italian cooking, dinner parties and fish and shellfish for beginners and gourmet. Many different types of cooks attend the classes - retired people, children, busy parents and dedicated Italophiles. The philosophy adopted by the cookery school is one that wholeheartedly advocates healthy eating, and achievement of the **healthy living award** supports this approach.

Gina explained, "To achieve the award, we did have to substitute some ingredients and change some of our preparation methods, but never to compromise the quality or taste of the food. We used Chef Angelo's extensive knowledge of Italian cooking to address all the issues that we faced by using different cooking methods or using different herbs or products for flavouring."

Half of the recipes offered in the cookery school classes are healthy living recipes, and Gina feels that gaining the **healthy living award** provides a definite advantage. She said, "From a personal point of view, it has made me more aware of what is needed to eat more healthily. From a business point of view, people who attend classes want to cook and learn about cooking. Having the award gives them the option and a clear explanation of how to cook more healthily if they want to."

All the people who attend the Cookery School share a love of cooking and good food. With more people attending every day, Gina and Angelo feel they are helping their customers to appreciate and be more aware of healthy food.



*Chef Angelo and owner Gina Bellini.*

## 60 Second microbites

In this new section we ask caterers who have achieved the **healthyliving award** what they think of the award and about the benefits it has brought them.

This time we asked Keith Hemingway, Senior Food Production Controller at Royal Edinburgh Hospital:

**Q. What were your main reasons for applying for the healthyliving award?**

A. To help to make all NHS establishments the same, as some had the award and others hadn't. Workers who use the dining room often ask for healthier choices so we were also responding to customer demand.

**Q. Do you feel that working towards and achieving the healthyliving award has been worthwhile?**

A. Yes, it has made a big change to our customers, and seems to be a big topic at lunch times. We have also developed question and answer sheets for diners and we are hoping to gain more ideas from our customers.

**Q. Would you recommend the healthyliving award to other caterers?**

A. All establishments should be looking towards healthy living, as there are too many quick, high fat meals.

### Dates for your diary

#### Highland Feast

1st–30th September 2008  
[www.highlandfeast.co.uk](http://www.highlandfeast.co.uk)

#### Dundee Flower and Food Festival

5th–7th September 2008  
[www.dundeeflowerandfoodfestival.com](http://www.dundeeflowerandfoodfestival.com)

#### Scottish Food Fortnight

6th–21st September 2008  
[www.scottishfoodfortnight.co.uk](http://www.scottishfoodfortnight.co.uk)

#### 10th Annual Food, Diet and Health Conference

28th October 2008  
[www.gla.ac.uk/fdh](http://www.gla.ac.uk/fdh)

#### BBC Good Food Show 2008

SECC Glasgow  
Come and visit us on stand C68  
31st October–2nd November  
[www.glasgow.bbcgoodfoodshow.com](http://www.glasgow.bbcgoodfoodshow.com)

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