

Ideas, tips and tricks for your Cheese Festival event



YORKSHIRE DALES
National Park Authority

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Event theme suggestions

Some food for thought...

- feature a special local dish or unique cake for the weekend long Festival
- pairing of a tasting tray of local drinks with a tasty local dish to accompany
- discount for the weekend on fresh local produce
- offer a special, homemade recipe
- presentations on the history of the product and/or how it is made, or a talk by a local game keeper, chef or food producer
- cookery demonstration - virtual or in person
- 'Meet the Maker' events in the National Park Centres
- guided walks to highlight the farming of local produce
- guided walk or cycle ride with a delicious local picnic or incorporate a lovely local pub/café pit stop into your route
- hands-on experience, make and take away your own

Collaboration

Making connections with other businesses can be a powerful tool. The more businesses involved and promoting their events under the banner of the Cheese Festival the louder the voice and the greater the pull.

Create partnerships which make it easier for visitors to experience the special qualities and develop promotions which can benefit all involved, for example a Food Town Trail.

For the Cheese Festival 2021, the Wensleydale Ice Cream Parlour created a new ice cream flavour using jam from Raydale Preserves – a wonderful collaboration and a unique and exciting offering!

If you are a restaurant, you could create a board of local cheeses on your menu – benefitting you and the supplier - creating awareness of the local cheeses on offer and providing a unique and personal experience for your visitors.

Food business toolkit

Local products, in particular local food, have seen a huge increase in interest and popularity, with more people wanting to know and understand the provenance of food they eat and drink.

Many destinations have become renowned for their food and drink offer. People come to the area to experience the food, local culture and history of a place and to experience it with all of their senses. Dishes created with fresh, local produce on the doorstep with a conscious thought about sustainability will appeal to visitors and enhance a business's offer.

It's not just about cheese

We are famous for cheese in the Dales and this reflects the wonderful farmers and producers we have in the area, and of course we are proud of it, but there are many other delicious local products special to the area too...

And it's not just food and drink - there are also wonderful examples of local products, including arts and crafts that can draw on the special qualities of the area making them unique and special to the area.

Create a structure for your event

Content:

1. Theme
2. Tell your local produce story – create an experience
3. Where and how will you deliver the experience

Example:

1. Sheep farming – local cheese
2. The story of the artisan maker. The journey of the product from the farm, grazing, milking, to creating the product.
3. At the farm/local business – talk, hands on demonstration, tastings/pairings and opportunity to buy the product. Provide information for your visitors.

Don't do anything different to what you are doing already

For the Cheese Festival 2021, Keelham Farm Shop took on board our emphasis on keeping things simple and created a cheese board consisting of three local cheeses to sell in their Deli and were so pleased with the interest and sales that they kept it running even beyond the Cheese Festival!

The Festival is for everyone

Maybe you are an accommodation provider who would like to be involved—why not share local events with your visitors or see if those coming to the area for the festival are looking for a place to stay. Maybe those businesses who are taking part can share details of accommodation providers where visitors can extend their stay.

Non food and drink businesses such as activity providers can also get involved. Bike rides and runs can be loosely connected to the Festival, for example a run along a route in the shape of a wedge of cheese.

Be sustainable

1. Cut food waste and reduce your carbon footprint - only buy what you need and research food waste schemes near you.
2. Buy seasonal - support local suppliers, think about the food miles and inform your customers of the measures you take.
3. Take action together - creating a sustainable culture in the business community has many benefits.

Points to consider

- Does the event/activity reflect an important aspect of your local area?
- The event should not negatively impact the asset in your locality.
- Understand your audience.
- What resources will you need?
- Perhaps pilot a low cost/risk event.
- Is it sustainable?
- Once the event is established visitors should associate it with you. They will be aware of your offer, you will have a captivated audience and it can become a regular event in your calendar.
- Promote, promote, promote!
- Record data and feedback to make future improvements.