

Take cooking tips from your parents to improve animal welfare

TV presenter and food writer backs RSPCA campaign

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The RSPCA is urging people to take cooking tips from their parents as new research shows shoppers struggle to find higher welfare picnic food in the shops and younger generations are reluctant to make their own.

A YouGov poll* shows that animal welfare is important to most shoppers but they said they struggle to buy higher welfare picnic food because of confusing labels, they don't know what to look for and there is a limited range.

One solution is to make your own picnic treats but the research showed under 44s, are less likely to try their hand at making their own quiche Lorraine, sausages rolls and sandwiches than our parents or grandparents.

The RSPCA has teamed up with Richard Johnson, TV presenter and food write, to encourage more people to roll up their sleeves and make their own higher welfare party and, when the rain stops, picnic goodies.

Richard, dad-of-one, said: "Everything tastes better eaten outdoors. Everything. But there's no need to go overboard with the food - Glyndebourne-style picnics with napery, silver cutlery and a candelabra are a bit OTT.



"Some of the best meals I've ever eaten were picnics. As a child I remember bread and cheese on the edge of a cornfield in Devon. Picnics should be lengthy, sociable affairs, and that bread and cheese seemed to last forever. As an adult I'll never forget sitting down outside a church in Corfu to eat tomatoes, ugly and fat, sprinkled with sea salt and tasting of the sun.

"My little girl still talks about it. It's not a time to spoil happy memories with products that have involved pain and suffering.

"Even separate courses and elaborate dishes are considered a bit Hyacinth Bucket these days. Just keep it simple - and animal friendly.

"It's a shame that younger people seem to be cooking less as it will mean many of them will be buying lower welfare pre-prepared food even though they don't want to."

The RSPCA YouGov survey of those who take meat-based food on picnics revealed**:

- A majority of people (89 per cent) make their own sandwiches but only three per cent would have a go at making their own pork pies, while only 18 per cent make sausage rolls and 29 per cent make their own quiche Lorraine.
- Over 55s are more likely to make their own scotch eggs, sausage rolls, quiche and sandwiches than younger generations.
- Almost six out of 10 shoppers who buy meat for picnics 56 per cent) and 62 per cent of women think animal welfare is important when buying picnic food.
- Shoppers who said animal welfare is important were asked what the barriers to buying higher welfare picnic food in their supermarket were, over half (52 per cent) said it isn't

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clear which picnic food is higher welfare because of confusing labels, more than a quarter (27 per cent) said they didn't know what to look for and a fifth (21 per cent) said their supermarkets only sell a limited range.

David Bowles, director of communications for the RSPCA, added: "Cooking with children is great fun and a brilliant way of making higher welfare treats. My 11-year-old daughter absolutely loves cooking with me but somehow I always end up doing the washing-up."

He added: "The RSPCA is working with supermarkets to make it easier for shoppers to buy higher party and picnic food but in the meantime if you want to feel good about what you are eating this summer, our advice is to look for meat that is labelled RSPCA Freedom Food, or if you can't find it, at least buy options like free-range, organic, outdoor bred or reared and make your own picnic favourites by following our simple recipes."

Richard Johnson has written some simple to follow recipes for the nation's favourite picnic treats to make cooking fun for all the family. To find the recipes and information on where to buy RSPCA Freedom Food, which labels to look for and why buying higher welfare picnic food matters, visit www.rspca.org.uk/picnics

ends

Notes to editors:

- *All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 2148 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 4th 6th July 2012. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all UK adults (aged 18+).
- ** Only respondents who usually take each item on picnics were asked whether they usually make or buy them.

Key findings:

- 40 per cent of over 55s make their own quiche, only 10 per cent of 35 to 44 year-olds do the same.
- 15 per cent of over 55s make their own scotch eggs, only 9 per cent of 25 to 34-yearoldswould give them a go.
- 21 per cent of over 55s make their own sausage rolls compared to 13 per cent of 18 to 24-year-olds.
- 19 per cent of over 55s would cook their own cold meats at home compared to 8 per cent of 25 to 34-year-olds.
- Even when it comes to the straightforward sandwich, while 92 per cent of over 55s usually make their own, that figure drops to 84 per cent in the 25 to 34 age group and 81 per cent of 18 to 24 year-olds.
- Topping the list of the nation's favourite picnic foods are: sandwiches (51 per cent); cold meat (42 per cent); sausage rolls (40 per cent), pork pies (32 per cent), scotch eggs (28 per cent), mini sausages (28 per cent), quiche Lorraine (18 per cent) and Cornish pasties (13 per cent).
- For more information, recipes or photographs please contact the RSPCA press office.
- Richard Johnson is a food journalist, TV presenter and judge of the RSPCA's Good Business Awards. He has presented Full on Food and Kill It, Cook It, Eat It for the BBC. Richard is the supertaster judging the food on ITV's Taste The Nation and Channel 4's Iron Chef. And is currently the man giving the thumbs up (or down) to contestants on Channel 4's Cookery School.

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