

Press release: Friday 9th February 2018

Stroud Farmers' Market goes online

Stroud's multi-award-winning Farmers' Market has linked up with Stroudco Food Hub to offer [an online ordering service](#) to extend the availability of the rich variety of local produce available from the amazing range of farmers, growers and producers in the Five Valleys.

Last year there were very positive and productive discussions between Kardien Gerbrands a.k.a. Gerb (Farmers' Market co-founder) and Nick Weir (Stroudco co-founder). As a result, Stroud Farmers Market now offers an online ordering service through Stroudco Food Hub where shoppers can pre-order selected produce at stroudco.org.uk



Gerb and Nick with a Stroudco box including Day's Cottage apple juice from Dave Kaspar

Shoppers place orders up until Thursday morning each week and Stroudco helpers then collect the ordered produce from stall holders, collate it into customer boxes and either deliver these to shoppers' homes on Saturday or make them ready for collection from the Food Hub at the Congregational Church Hall GL5 1AY just down from the Farmers' Market beside Fawkes Place car park.

Gerb says, "We are very pleased to link up with Stroudco. The Farmers' Market and the Food Hub have been working towards the same goals for years – to encourage more people to do more of their shopping with our amazing local producers and less in the supermarkets. It is now time to make a proper link with the Food Hub.

"Some of our regular market shoppers have to miss out if they are away for the weekend. With the online ordering system they can still make all their regular purchases and then arrange to collect from the Stroudco Food Hub when they come back from their weekend away."

Nick is equally positive: “Stroud Farmers’ Market has a justifiably fantastic reputation and we are very pleased to be able to provide it with an online service to make the Market more easily available to more people. Some people find it inconvenient to carry heavy food shopping so we are happy to deliver it to their homes. Our drivers are very friendly and can often be persuaded to bring the boxes and freezer bags right into your kitchen!”

Helen Brent-Smith and Dave Kaspar of Day’s Cottage Apple Juice were founder members of the Stroudco Food Hub 12 years ago. They have a regular stall at the Farmers’ Market and sell through Stroudco too. Dave says “we are very happy to sell our juice and seasonal orchard fruit online but don’t want the hassle of dealing with the online orders and distribution. So Stroudco makes it very simple for us. They send us an email first thing Thursday telling us what has been ordered online that week, then they come to our stall to collect it on Saturday. They deal with all the customer collections and home deliveries including processing all the payments. We recommend Stroudco to all the market stallholders.”



Above: The Stroudco team preparing boxes for collection and home delivery and below Stroudco driver Mark Parris loads up the boxes to go to Stroud families.



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Background and additional quotes:

Stroud Farmers Market has won multiple national awards and is well known as one of the biggest, busiest and most popular farmers' market in the UK. The market has twice been awarded Best Farmers' Market by [FARMA](#).

Stroudco Food Hub started in 2006 at Parliament School (now Severn View Academy) and has grown to a co-operative of more than 40 local food producers working with over 300 local shoppers to develop and manage this not-for-profit online shopfront, now based at the Congregational Church Hall on Bedford Street GL5 1AY. An elected group of producers and shoppers steer the project with support from a paid manager and helpers who run the weekly online food box service.

More [details about how Stroudco works here](#)

More [details on the historical background of Stroudco and how the food hub model has been replicated across the UK here](#)

As a result of meetings between Gerb and Nick, the following links are now established:

- All farmers' market stall-holders have been invited to apply to sell online.
- Shoppers order online from all participating stall-holders plus the existing Stroudco producer base.
- Stroudco Food Hub collects orders from the farmers' market stalls early every Saturday morning and sorts the produce into shoppers' boxes
- Online shoppers collect their orders from Stroudco's Food Hub located at the Congregational Church in Bedford Street GL5 1AY or have their orders delivered.

More quotes from Gerb:

"Some of the farmers' market stall-holders are not able to be at the market every week, so the online service will mean that shoppers can continue to buy from these producers every week - even when they don't have a stall. The producers can bring the pre-ordered produce to the Stroudco Food Hub instead.

"We are also hoping that some of our stall-holders will want to make a little extra cash by providing a local pick-up point at their home farm or small-holding. Most of our producers are going home from the market with empty vans; so they now have the option of picking up some of the customer boxes prepared by Stroudco and taking them back for online shoppers in their area. These shoppers will pay a small fee on top of their online basket and this will be passed on to the stall-holder who provides the pick-up point. This is a simple way to extend the

geographical reach of the market and make all this delicious, local produce available to people in outlying areas with no increase in food miles.

More quotes from Nick

“As Gerb says, both our organisations are focused on helping people rely less on the supermarket habit and we know that it helps if you can buy all your shopping in one go. Stroudco is here to do just that. Not only can shoppers buy a wide range of local produce all in one place, we also stock a range of ethically-sourced store-cupboard items so that shoppers can buy things like toilet paper, kitchen roll, flour, tinned tomatoes and cleaning products at the same time. Our online shop allows shoppers to easily find what they are looking for. They can even filter products so to only show those which are ‘local’, ‘plastic-free’, ‘organic’, ‘gluten-free’, etc.

“We are very pleased to provide an online shopfront for the farmers’ market and invite anybody who would like to browse our range of produce to visit our website at www.stroudco.org.uk or just pop in and visit us any Saturday from 12 to 1pm at Stroud Food Hub, Congregational Church Hall, Bedford Street, GL5 1AY.”

For more details or photos contact Nick Weir on 01453 840037 or nick@nickweir.co.uk