

# Innovative local marketing

Whitmuir the Organic Place

Working farm

Shop

Restaurant

Butchery

Online shop

Living learning space...









# The Scottish context

- Organic sales rising from very low baseline – 0.5% total groceries
- Little ambition in organic policy, sector not well co-ordinated
- Government focus on exports, based on ‘lochs and mountains’ brand
- Activism focus on ‘local’ and on community growing

# Challenges and opportunities at Whitmuir

- Small farm, indifferent wet soil, north-facing slope starting at 260m and going up
- Local area sparsely populated (more people in 1750) and quiet road for through traffic
- But... 16 miles from Edinburgh
- Pretty farm when the sun's shining
- Only farm shop out in this direction

# What we're marketing:

- Food as a relationship not just a commodity: personal friendly customer service
- Organic food – good and not overpriced (esp in restaurant); and why it matters
- A very short transparent supply chain (the menu is outside the window)
- An alternative to corporate, but not weird
- An organic initiation zone
- A place to meet with a good community feel



# More successful marketing efforts

- Word of mouth
- Farm supporters scheme – still a big chunk of monthly income, slow churn
- Mailchimp – weekly farm news
- Online shop– new customers join, existing customers order more when they can see the range
- Events at the farm – wine tasting, courses, open days
- Promotions – 5% off, red dots, £5 vouchers
- Cards through letterboxes
- Coming soon – Frank the food truck

# Less successful marketing

- Ice Cards
- Articles in press/pieces on radio/TV
- Organised visits from local groups, students etc
- Talks to various groups, raffle prizes
- Farmers markets
- Adverts in press..
- Twitter and facebook (we could try harder but it feels like free entertainment rather than sales)

# Why people come

- Organic as identity
- Familiar local (warm) place
- Changes with seasons – bring the kids see what's new
- Great food in the restaurant
- Excellent meat and veg/fruit in shop, also bread, wine, cosmetics draw people in: some people come for specific dry goods eg teas

# Why people don't come

- Organic = snotty/posh perception
- Organic = green/dirty hippy/countercultural perception
- Organic = expensive perception
- They find the food a bit odd/different in the restaurant
- No brands they know in the shop
- There's no bus
- The weather's generally worse than anywhere else and it's in the middle of nowhere
- They are conventional farmers: organics = the enemy