

ATC CONTACTS

HB Alternative Technology Centre,
 Hebble End Mill, Hebden Bridge, HX7 6HJ.

Tel: Daytime: 01422-842121
 Fax: 01422 84 31 41

info@alternativetechnology.org.uk
 www.alternativetechnology.org.uk

Think globally - eat locally

Seeing the wood for the trees

LAST TIME YOU WENT OUT AND BOUGHT SOME WOODEN FURNITURE OR TIMBER, WAS YOUR CONSCIENCE NIGGLING YOU A BIT? Was it saying to you "Think of all those trees – all those forests chopped down, just so you can have few chairs!"?

Given the fact that, between 1980 and 1995, the extent of the world's forests decreased by an area the size of Mexico, your conscience has a fair point. Global demand for wood products is predicted to increase by almost 60% by 2010 and this huge demand is putting an enormous strain on forests worldwide.

Ideally, we all need to reduce our wood consumption or, wherever possible, choose second-hand wood (such as salvaged timber) or recycled products. But even with new wood products, there is a way to shop with a clear conscience and help to protect the world's forests. By choosing Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified products you can guarantee that they come from an environmentally and socially well-managed woodland. Like the organic standard for food, the FSC label guarantees sound practice in forestry.

"But it will cost you much more!" you now hear your wallet niggling you. Well, it may do a bit but not necessarily. Many of the major retailers stocking FSC products are committed to not charging a 'green premium'. And with the FSC scheme now gathering support from all sectors of the timber trade it is getting easier to find FSC prod-



ucts in the shops. Once you start looking for the FSC logo you will be surprised how many products are now available. B&Q are particularly good at stocking and promoting FSC certified products – everything from curtain poles to gazebos. Other major retailers such as Homebase and Wickes also sell FSC products.

For a list of what FSC products are available where, call in to the ATC at Hebden End for information.

Thanks to Friends of the Earth and the Forest Stewardship Council for the information contained in this article.

The Forest Stewardship Council can be contacted at Unit D, Station Building, Llanidloes, Powys, SY18 6EB. Tel. 01686-413916. Email: fsc-uk@fsc-uk.demon.co.uk Website: www.fsc-uk.demon.co.uk

The Good Wood Guide is available from Friends of the Earth, 26-28 Underwood St, London, N1 7JQ (price £5.95). Tel. 020-7490-1555. Email: info@foe.co.uk Website: www.foe.co.uk

A copy of the Good Wood Guide is also available for reference at the ATC.

A quick ring round of local timber merchants by the ATC found the following suppliers of reclaimed wood:

- **Aaron Beam Centre**, Aaron Hill Farm, Cragg Vale. Tel. 834026
- **Aaron Reclaim Timber**, Atlas Mills, Sedburgh Rd, Halifax. Tel. 330138
- **Hartley & Sutcliffe**, Cornholme. Tel. (01706) 812843.

FSC certified wood is available from:

- **James Chambers**, Pellon Lane, Halifax. Tel. 361251.
- **B&Q**, Pellon Lane, Halifax. Tel. 348421.

Remember to look out for the FSC logo on each product you buy.

Going Green for Softies

- **BUY YOURSELF A DRINKS CAN CRUSHER** and stick it on the wall near your bin – hang a carrier bag there to put them in. It's fun to use and it will make it a lot easier to take your cans to the recycling point with your bottles and jars (you do take them there don't you?). Rinse them out first so they don't get sticky.

It takes 14 kilowatt-hours of electricity to make 1 kilo of aluminium cans from scratch, but only one twentieth of that to make new cans from old. Putting them into landfill throws away that energy FOREVER. We sell domestic can crushers at the ATC.

Even the smallest space can be used for some tasty food - like here in the ATC demonstration garden

Have you ever looked at food on your table and wondered where it all came from? Butter from New Zealand, peas from east Africa, strawberries from Spain....?

In the UK we import some 20 million tonnes of food – and export 12 million – each year. Most of this food travels huge distances before it gets to our tables. Granny Smiths fly nearly 14,000 miles from New Zealand, while prawns jet in 13,000 miles from Bangladesh. Even within the UK, food is on the move: it travels 50 percent further around the country than it did only 15 years ago. Around a quarter of transport in the UK is food related and 12% of the nation's fuel consumption is spent on transporting and packaging food.

All this transport uses a great deal of fuel. It has been calculated that for every 10 litres of orange juice we drink in Europe, 1 litre of polluting diesel fuel will have been used for processing and transport.

Reducing 'food miles' is one of the aims of an exciting new scheme called Food Futures. Locally, Calderdale and Kirklees Food Futures is one of 15 schemes being pro-

moted nationally by the Soil Association. It aims to develop a more sustainable local food economy through a number of initiatives, including local farmer's markets and vegetable box schemes.

As well as reducing 'food miles' and the resultant pollution, the scheme aims to have a number of other benefits, including:

- ★ The support of local farmers and food producers
- ★ Access by local communities, particularly people on low incomes, to fresh, affordable, local (and possibly organic) food
- ★ Empowerment of local communities as a result of being involved in the develop-



ment of local food projects

- ★ Reduced waste generation because less packaging is required.

There is a farmer's market running at Holmfirth every four weeks selling produce from within a 40 mile radius and another one started this month at Heckmondwike.

Now the first farmer's market in Calderdale is to be held at the Piece Hall in Halifax on 28th August 2000 as part of the Country Fayre event.

Plans are also afoot to hold one in Hebden Bridge – so watch this space!

On July 8th and 9th the ATC ran a café in its acoustic tent at the Riverside Festival. The vast majority of the food was sourced locally – the dairy products and bread from Holmfirth via Todmorden, milk from Hebden Bridge and the salad and veg from Copley. The tea and coffee, though, we had a problem with! Various other bits and pieces came from around the area. There is a wealth of food produced in locally.

If you are a user or producer interested in finding out about Food Futures or want to get involved please contact Polly at the ATC.

AGENDA 21 Newsletter

In 1992, all United Nation countries met at the **Rio Earth Summit**, and together made a commitment to improve the quality of life in their countries. It was named Agenda 21 because the intention is to have the actions in place by 2021.

Agenda 21 aims to improve the quality of life by tackling health, disease, poverty, pollution, the environment, transport issues and waste disposal so that the world can develop in a sustainable manner.

Countries all over the world, from England to China, are busy putting their

plans into action. In the UK, the job of co-ordinating the plans has been given to local authorities.

The role of the local authority has therefore become one of enabling strengthening the co-operation between different local groups and to build Agenda 21 into **everything** they do.

Underpinned by sustainability, and working together with business, industry, and voluntary and community groups, the role of the community is integral to Agenda 21 plans. See this space next month for what Agenda 21 means to you, the local community.

Did you know?

- ★ A one kilowatt solar panel can save one tonne of carbon dioxide emissions every year.
- ★ If every south facing roof and office wall in the UK were clad with solar panels, the sun's energy could generate more than the UK's complete electricity requirement

Students from Pecket Well College spent a day at the ATC making window boxes from reclaimed wood. They will be used to grow vegetables and herbs at the College.