

Year of Food & Drink 2016



tourism
northernireland

A toolkit for event
organisers



We
Catch

We
Enjoy

We
Breed

We
Grow

We
Craft

We
Cook

Northern
Ireland

Year of Food
& Drink 2016

Are you ready for a year of delicious events?

Northern Ireland's Year of Food and Drink 2016 is a year-long celebration of our wonderful food and drink and is a golden opportunity to incorporate our incredible local larder into your event. Whether you are hosting a food festival, a country fair or a music weekend you can bring the best of Northern Ireland's food and drink to your visitors and make the most of a whole year of celebrations.

Food and drink experiences have become increasingly important to tourism as they offer destinations an opportunity to differentiate and celebrate indigenous foods. While food and drink are a vehicle through which our visitors can learn about our heritage, landscape and culture as well as meet our people, it also accounts for a significant proportion of visitor spend.

That means that this is a great time to make food and drink an essential part of your event. Not only do your visitors get fed and watered with the best, but they also get an extra flavour of Northern Ireland and a sense of our rich heritage in growing, catching, breeding, crafting and cooking.

Northern Ireland. Relish the place.

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Thinking Events? Think Great Food.

In Northern Ireland with tumbling seas, green acres and more than our fair share of rain, we're producing some of the world's finest and freshest ingredients. With delicious indigenous offerings, brilliant eateries and creative artisan producers, Northern Ireland is fast becoming a foodie mecca – and hungry tourists are flocking.



Northern Ireland has 3 products with a PGI; Lough Neagh Eels, Armagh Bramley Apples and Comber Early Potatoes.

70 LOCAL COMPANIES scooped up almost **200** GOLD STARS

£282 Million was spent by NI residents on tourism day trips, of which, approx **40%** was on 'eating out'

33% of all spend by GB and overseas visitors to Northern Ireland is on food and drink

What are we aiming for?

Aim: To improve and enhance the food and drink experience offered at events.

Events provide a unique opportunity for visitors to experience food and drink; they can **learn about, appreciate, consume** food and drink that reflects the local region, food and drink culture, heritage or traditions.

For some festivals it's a matter of celebrating Northern Ireland food and drink itself, and others celebrate their own passions – music, heritage and culture. They too can bring the very best of Northern Irish food and drink to spoil and delight their visitors.

This toolkit will help you to cultivate and elevate the food and drink experience at your event.

We Breed

We Craft

The Year in a Clamshell

A calendar of fantastic food themes month by month for 2016. Where do you fit in?

January Breakfast Month

Celebrate the wonderful charms of a real Northern Irish breakfast. You could teach visitors about food provenance, hold an early morning breakfast fair in the city centre or hire a gourmet breakfast van for your music festival.

February Love Local

Put a shout out for our wonderful local producers. Wherever your event is taking place you will be only a stone's throw from a farm, factory, brewery or bakery that can bring a little artisan excellence to your festival or event.

March Heritage & Traditions

Many of our finest chefs and food producers use methods and recipes that have been passed down for generations. Events and festivals that are exploring history may be able to intertwine our culinary past with our other heritage.

April Brewing & Distilling

In Northern Ireland there has been an explosion in the manufacturing of craft beers and ciders and unique gin and whiskey. If your event has a social or an evening element to it and you want your visitors to enjoy the best of NI hospitality use our local distillers and brewers.

May Landscape & Places

Our locations and our landscapes are tied to our food and drink. If you are near Lough Neagh get some pan fried eels, if you are near Glenarm put some salmon on your menu, or if you are hosting an event in Fermanagh serve Black Bacon for brunch. It would be rude not to!

June Love Dairy

With the amount of lush grassland that covers Northern Ireland it is no wonder that our dairy is award winning. From farmhouse cheeses to traditional ice cream, we put our dairy to good use. If you are hosting a summer festival make sure it is legendary!

The Year in a Clamshell

A calendar of fantastic food themes month by month for 2016. Where do you fit in?

July
Seas, Rivers
& Loughs

Our coasts, rivers and lakes are out of this world, so it's no surprise that we catch and cook some of the best seafood imaginable. If your event is on the shore of a lake, the bank of a river or the edge of the land, incorporate this in your event. Get some seafood stalls to bring your visitors a real taste of the ocean.

August
Love NI
Meat

Nothing is more tempting at an outdoor event than a pulled pork sandwich, a gourmet beef burger or a succulent lamb kebab. Send your guests away happy by giving them something special from the fields of Northern Ireland, where we know how to treat meat.

September
Bread &
Baking

One of our staple foods is undergoing a renaissance. New and different breads are emerging in cafes and bakeries across Northern Ireland and with that is coming a resurgence in baking talent. Bring baking to your event. Have a bake-off, a cake fest or a bread spread – use your loaf!

October
Harvest

Harvest time has been celebrated for centuries in song, poetry and prayer. It is a time for us to enjoy the fruits of the land and be thankful for our wonderful climate and the talents of our farmers. It's a great time to include harvest in your event combining food, craft and craic – reimagine the Harvest Festival.

November
Legacy &
Learn to...

This wonderful year-long celebration of our food culture is a chance to instil an ever-growing love for food and the culinary arts in people of all ages. Why not get some cookery schools to put on a show at your event or get some local chefs to demonstrate their skills?

December
Christmas &
Premium
Foods

We all know that Christmas is a time to indulge ourselves with our favourite treats but let's find some local favourites to treat ourselves with this year. No 2016 Christmas event should be without the very best local produce to fill the hampers and the stockings of families everywhere.

Do It To Perfection

Tips on how to make your event a gastronomic delight.

No matter what the event, people love some quality on their plates and in their glasses. The question is, what is the best way to make that happen?

How do I source local NI produce?

This will depend on the size and nature of your event, but whether you are looking for artisan food stalls, quality food to go providers, cookery theatre equipment and chefs, recipes and photographs or local produce you can cook yourself, visit the Food NI website at www.nigoodfood.com where you can find a host of helpful resources. Food NI have current knowledge of the food scene in Northern Ireland. You can also download the 2016 Food NI Producers Guide, Taste of Ulster Guide and the brand new Local Drinks Guide from the Food NI website. A dedicated Street Food Guide will be available very soon. You can contact Food NI on **028 9024 9449**.



Look around your local area and start creating networks.

Pop into your local baker, butcher or fishmonger and ask if they would be interested in working with you.

What local artisan products are available to you?

Is there a brewery or distillery nearby? Give them a chance to supply your event. Think about source local cordials and juices for your event, a tempting treat for visitors.



Why not create a food village?

At any event people love wandering along between vans and stalls offering different gourmet delights. Why not get local partners to bring their produce to your event as part of a food village? There are hosts of quality, local providers who are ambitious and creative – passionate about their food and drink and constantly working to create new ideas that push the boundaries using fresh local produce.

Here are some tips on how to make the most of Street Food at your event...

-  **Make food the focus**
Even if your event is not centred around food and drink, try to offer something to remember. Why not include some healthy options such as fish, goat or salad and all from Northern Ireland!
-  **Setting the standard**
Create a standard for your event to attract producers that best complement the ethos of your event allowing them to apply so you can see the **menu** provided for your visitors, proof of **local sourcing** and a preview of the **street food van** set up prior to confirming the booking. You can download a version of this on nigoodfood.com
-  **Let them do the talking!**
A number of high quality, local street food providers have a very strong online presence. If they are providing food at your event, they will share, tweet and talk about their participation, helping to promote your event across big audiences.
-  **Pitch perfect**
Offer street food providers a prime location at your event (working in partnership with your local authority).
-  **Get a Drinks License**
Northern Ireland has some of the best local craft ciders, beers and spirits. Don't forget to consider they will need an extended license.



What practical things do I need to think about in advance?

If you are inviting producers and suppliers to take trade stands at your event, you need to be clear about things like:

- ✓ **Format and equipment**
What kind of stands are you offering? Are there any restrictions to what they can bring?
- ✓ **Positioning**
Avoid a free-for-all on the day and work out in advance who goes where.
- ✓ **Cost**
Check what other events charge by going on to their websites. Be realistic and understanding of your customers' needs.
- ✓ **Facilities**
If companies are serving food and drink they may need power and water. Make sure you know who needs what and get organised well in advance.
- ✓ **Payment terms**
Know whether you will charge a flat rate or commission on sales. You will need an advance deposit to help your cash flow.
- ✓ **Setting up and breaking down**
Be clear about details like parking and times to get on site. It's worth insisting that no one breaks down their stand before the end of your event as it diminishes the overall atmosphere.

- ✓ **Stand operation**
Specify what people can sell from their stand. You don't want people trying to sell items that aren't food or which lower the standard of your event.
- ✓ **Don't forget health and safety**
Ensure you cover all health and safety requirements for your event – risk assessments, event safety plans, licencing and insurances are all key considerations. Check out the Purple Guide!
- ✓ **Recycling and refuse**
Consider how your event will impact on the area and what measures you need to consider to minimise this. Local Authorities will be able to advise further.
- ✓ **Communicate and evaluate**
Communicating and listening to your visitors will help shape the future of your event and measure its success. Collating your attendees views will help with future planning of your event.





How can I tailor the food offering to my event?

To ensure that your food offering is tailored to your event make sure you understand who your audience is and what they will respond to.

Where are they from?

How many will come?

How long are they likely to stay?

Answering these questions will help you establish how best to serve your visitors' needs. Let your producers and providers know who they will be cooking for.

Be sure to tell your visitors your food and drink offerings are from local suppliers!

How can I make sure that my event is seen as a big part of the year?

- Tell your food and drink story in all your marketing and publicity
- Highlight use of local Northern Ireland produce on event signage, menu boards and promotion at your event
- Encourage suppliers and producers to promote your event on their marketing channels and at other events
- Ensure local suppliers tell the Northern Ireland food and drink story at your event via food demo's, workshops and question and answer sessions
- Brief all staff and volunteers on food and drink offering and ensure it is a Northern Ireland message
- Use of Year of Food and Drink 2016 design assets on all channels of activity
tourismni.com/yearoffoodanddrink
- Shout about your event before, during and after. Let your success be known by all media channels and incorporate your Year of Food and Drink 2016 story!

We
Breed

NI Classics

Flavours of the Foyle Seafood Festival

Northern Ireland's largest Seafood Festival took over Derry~Londonderry's Guildhall Square in July 2015—proving the city's gourmet food capital credentials. With **Food NI**, the **Loughs Agency**, the **DARD Regional Food Programme**, stakeholders, celebrity chefs and media movers and shakers promoting and supporting the event, it was a sure-fire success.

With a targeted marketing campaign and a big push on digital platforms the Seafood celebration gathered spectacular momentum. Impressively, **99%** of attendees confirmed that they would recommend the event to a friend and **75% of attendees bought local produce**. From the industry side, **100%** of participants stated that they would take part again next year.

Flavours of the Foyle is a superb example of how impactful and effective a united front can be in the events sphere. Working together with other business, bodies and agencies will give your event more momentum. Plus, keeping local as king and being thoughtful about your location and theme will stand you in good stead. Previous events prove that **the appetite is there for unique foodie happenings** so be inspired by the produce, businesses and destinations around you and throw your own event. You never know, it could be the talk of the year!



NI Classics

Open House Festival, Bangor

With a new foodie flavour the 3rd annual Open House Festival in Bangor was a little different in 2015.

Running throughout the month of August, the festival featured an impressive

110 events
36 venues

– a mix of music, film, comedy, theatre, spoken word and visual arts.

The new food and drink events in the line-up were created in partnership with local businesses in Bangor's Town Centre and proved to be a big draw – each sold out in advance and some could have been sold many times over.

Favourites included:

- The Bangor Gourmet Trail
- Reggae Barbecue at the Jamaica Inn by the Bangor Seafront
- Bollywood Night
- Flamenco and Tapas Nights
- Pop-up restaurant events with guest chefs

The success of the food and drink themed events surpassed everyone's expectations, so much so that many of the partner restaurants are repeating the format again later in the year.

The foodie flavour of the 2015 Open House Festival proves that partnering up and using a little imagination can really give your business a boost. Plus, it shows that **adding a foodie twist can elevate an already successful event** – after all, people will always be hungry!



Using the brand

Some helpful guidelines and suggestions...

You can help create momentum and really show your support for the Year of Food and Drink 2016 by using the brand across your communications.

Our logo

Say hello to our primary logo. We have provided various colour options to suit differing needs and we would love to see it being used to celebrate and promote the year.

Size and scale

To make sure the logo can clearly be seen and is legible, its minimum size is **30mm**.

The fine print

To view the logo and for details on how to download it and read all the terms, conditions and nitty gritty, visit: tourismni.com/yearoffoodanddrink

Our Food. So Good.

Is your food so good? Food NI is passionate about promoting the best of Northern Ireland's food and drink. They have excellent branding elements that you can use.

For more information check out nigoodfood.com

Full Colour



Full Colour with Strap



Mono White



Foodie Partners

Your food and drink support system

Our food and drink sector wouldn't be so fantastic, and this year long celebration wouldn't be possible, without these organisations. Check them out and see how they can help you better promote your business...



Niall McKenna at Hillsborough Oyster Festival cooking demonstration

Food NI

Food NI is passionate about promoting the best of Northern Ireland's food and drink. They have a wealth of experience in showcasing the finest food and drink from Northern Ireland. Food NI publish a range of guides on everything you need to help plan your quality food and drink event. You can download them from www.nigoodfood.com

Local Authorities

Local Authorities have a unique opportunity to showcase their local destination through their food experiences. A Local Authority can provide leadership in their area to improve the range, quality and availability of food tourism experiences at festivals and events.

The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) aims to promote sustainable economic growth and the development of the countryside. DARD assists the competitive development of the agri-food, fishing and forestry sectors of the Northern Ireland economy, having regard for the need of the consumers, the welfare of animals and the conservation and enhancement of the environment.

www.dardni.gov.uk

The Department for Employment and Learning

The aim of the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) is to promote learning and skills, to prepare people for work and to support the economy. It is responsible for policy, funding, corporate governance and service delivery across the spectrum from employment through training, careers advice, further and higher education, research and innovation, all underpinned by employment rights.

www.delni.gov.uk

Invest NI

Invest NI is committed to enhanced food and drink promotion, highlighted by the PfG and in the Agri Food "Going for Growth" Strategy. The Food and Marketing Team secures new and first time sales for NI food and drink companies in specified export markets.

www.investni.com

Over to You

How to share your brilliant plans

Here's a few ways to get your plans out there and into the world...



Get online

If you're throwing an event which you'd like us to pop on our website discovernorthernireland.com, simply email the details through to the Visitor Information Unit.

E: events@tourismni.com



Get social

Join in the conversation on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and share your updates using [#enjoyNI16](https://twitter.com/enjoyNI16). From chats to photographs and videos, find all the latest news on our website and social channels. Drop us a line for digital promotional opportunities and content sharing.

E: digital@tourismni.com



Get downloading

There is plenty of food and drink related information at nigoodfood.com. Pay a visit to download some useful toolkits.



Talk to us about funding

Check if your event is eligible for support from Tourism NI's Tourism Event Funding Programme. Swing by our events pages for more details.

tourismni.com/events

Contact Us

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St. Anne's Court
59 North Street
Belfast, BT1 1NB

T: 028 9044 1579
Txt: 028 9044 1522
F: 028 9024 0960
E: eventsunit@tourismni.com
W: tourismni.com/events

Your handy checklist



Everyone has a role to play as an ambassador for food and drink. Are you and your staff ready?

- Check online for tips, news and assets at tourismni.com/yearoffoodanddrink
- Check out our calendar and share your ideas with us
- Have you downloaded the powerpoint and shared the video to inspire others?
- Check online to view the logo and for details on how to download it
- Check if your event is eligible for support from the Tourism Event Funding Programme
- Check online for the Toolkits:
 - 'Our Food So Good' Toolkit
 - 'Knowing Your Customer and Growing Your Business' Toolkit
 - 'A toolkit - Make the most of a mouthwatering year'