



# fresh outlook

Company news and product updates from Gressingham Foods | Summer 2010



**new products**  
growing our range

**contract farmers dinner**  
a terrific success

**raising the standards**  
new DAS scheme

**new trial house**  
improving production

**see us at the Suffolk Show**  
we're on stand 175

## fresh thinking from gressingham foods

New product manager Ed Farrell gives us the lowdown on the latest products cooked up in our development kitchen.

At Gressingham, we continually strive to introduce new and innovative products to all our supply chain partners, be they supermarkets, independent retailers and specialist butchers, or those in the food service industry. As a result, there's always something new on the supermarket shelves to catch the customer's eye or, indeed, a tasty Gressingham Duck or Gressingham Foods product gracing a menu to appeal to discerning diners.

Our ongoing commitment to launching new products and increasing our appeal among consumers in turn offers increased brand value for our retail and food service partners. This year has been especially busy, with our latest market research, customer feedback and kitchen trials leading to an array of exciting product launches:

- 1) We've extended our speciality poultry range to include **two fresh poussin products** for the retail market. Available from Tesco and Sainsbury's, our Whole Poussin and Spatchcock Poussin will be marketed under our Gressingham Foods brand and represent the first in a series of own-brand product launches to complement our supermarket own-label range.
- 2) We've also expanded our added-value offering to include **two new duck products** – Gressingham Foods Duck Legs in Orange Sauce and Duck Legs in Plum Sauce, available exclusively in Sainsbury's. We were delighted to work closely with fellow Suffolk company, Stokes Sauces, on this launch to create the classic duck accompaniments of a zesty orange sauce and aromatic, sweet plum sauce. With the products attractively priced at £3.99 retail and ready to eat in just 30 minutes, they make an indulgent duck meal even more accessible and convenient.
- 3) Other exciting introductions include our irresistible half aromatic duck and shredded **duck kits** with Chinese-style pancakes and hoisin sauce, new to Asda, and slow-cooked duck legs available in Waitrose. And we haven't forgotten our friends in food service, launching pre-cooked honey roast half duck and skin-on shredded duck – convenient and cost-effective solutions for those in the catering industry preparing delicious duck snacks and meals.



# welcome...



William, left, and Geoffrey

## ...to our summer newsletter

Hello and welcome to our new-look summer issue newsletter, which we've crammed with exciting company news and new product developments.

Such positive stories show that Gressingham continues to go from strength-to-strength, with the company maintaining a steady level of growth in spite of the economic climate. What's more, with customer demand up we continue to bring new and innovative products to market, plus we've managed to pick up an award or two along the way!

Meanwhile, we are also stepping up our investment in our staff and factories to underpin this strong performance. We're particularly proud of our training programme, with almost all staff having undergone some level of training in the last 12 months, from factory staff taking their NVQs to machinery training for farm workers and accounts training for office staff, not to mention ongoing health and safety training for all.

Our chef, Vernon Blackmore, has also been cooking up a storm in the development kitchen and working closely with our product development team. Check out his tasty barbeque duck recipe on the back page – the perfect treat now the sunshine is here!

Enjoy,

*G.M. Buchanan*

*W. Buchanan*

Geoffrey and William Buchanan,  
managing directors



## terrific turnout at contract farmers dinner

We were delighted to welcome our contract farmers to our Green Label Farms LLP contract farmers dinner, held recently at the Angel Hotel in Bury St Edmunds.

Almost all our contract farmers attended – a terrific turnout – to meet with their fellow farmers and hear all the latest news and developments at Gressingham Foods and Green Label Farms LLP.

Hosted by chairman Maurice Buchanan, William and Geoffrey Buchanan, operations director Dennis Petersen and technical agricultural director Stephen Urwin, the evening included a brief overview of the business in the last year and a question and answer session.

The highlight, however, was a delicious three-course meal featuring Gressingham Duck, with guests enjoying a deserved knees-up well into the night!



Our new trial house will research ways to improve performance and reduce costs.

## new trial house to help improve production

As part of our ongoing commitment to developing our production systems, we've established a new trial house to research ways to improve performance and reduce production costs.

One of our production houses has been converted into a dedicated research building housing 24 replicate pens each holding 100 ducks. The new trial house will be used to evaluate the affects of different nutrition or feed regimes as well as look at other things such as mineral requirements, incubation profiles, breeder performance and management procedures.

"Relinquishing commercial facilities in favour of research and development represents a considerable investment for us and highlights our commitment to raising productivity and reducing costs," comments Stephen Urwin. "I look forward to keeping you updated on how the findings of this work will be incorporated into production systems as the research progresses."

## rotamatics arrive at Redgrave

Our Redgrave factory in Norfolk has recently been installed with two new Rotamatic machines for packing our whole duck and crown products.

As Dennis Petersen explains: "These two new state-of-the-art machines will enable us to pack whole duck and duck crowns in an innovative Cryovac format. This new and improved packaging format is already benefiting Tesco and Asda, following its launch earlier this year."



# gressingham's got the MIDAS touch



William Buchanan, left, presents Mike Jeffery with the City Bar Dining award

As sponsor of the City Bar Dining category at this year's Menu Innovation and Development Awards (aka MIDAS), we were especially thrilled to present the accolade to one of our long-standing supply chain partners and fellow Suffolk companies, Greene King.

Bury St Edmunds-based Greene King beat off stiff competition from some of the country's top bar and pub chains to win the coveted award, with its winning menu – featuring Gressingham duck products – wowing the competition's mystery-diner judges.

Gressingham's William Buchanan presented Greene King's food and development manager, Mike Jeffery, with his award at a dinner held in London recently. As part of his prize, Mike will embark on a five-day foodie tour of Chicago courtesy of the Menu Innovation Network, accompanied by William.

**"Gressingham Foods is committed to the food service sector and, as such, we were proud to sponsor the MIDAS Awards for the second consecutive year. And as a key supply chain partner and fellow Suffolk company, we were particularly thrilled to see Greene King scoop this award. Congratulations on their winning menu" – William Buchanan.**

## new DAS scheme set to raise standards

Gressingham Foods has played a pivotal role in the newly launched Duck Assurance Scheme (DAS), which has been developed by the British Poultry Council (BPC) to empower producers to show their products' provenance and high standards to consumers.

Complementing other poultry meat schemes, such as Assured Chicken Production and Quality British Turkey, DAS guarantees high standards of food safety, animal welfare and environmental protection in all areas of duck production, from breeding and rearing to slaughter and table eggs.

The scheme is owned and administered by the BPC and managed by an independently chaired technical advisory committee. Having campaigned for the scheme's introduction for the past seven years as a key committee member, Gressingham's Stephen Urwin welcomes its launch.

**"Not only will this new initiative give both retailers and consumers increased confidence in the duck products they buy, but it will also help raise industry standards as more and more duck producers sign-up to its wide-ranging measures," says Stephen. "It is something that has been close to my heart for some time, so I'm delighted to see it here at last."**

DAS members are annually audited by an independent accredited certifying body, SAI Global. Membership is open to all duck producers who can meet the standards.

For more information on the DAS or to request a copy of the standards email [das@poultry.uk.com](mailto:das@poultry.uk.com).



## people news...



### NVQ SUCCESS FOR FARM WORKERS

Congratulations to our farm workers studying for their NVQ Level 3 in livestock production. All passed with flying colours, which is no mean feat given English is not a first language for some.

Other members of the team have passed their NVQ Levels 1 and 2 and are now looking forward to working towards their Level 3 qualifications.

And we're also impressed to see so many of our employees from overseas embarking on ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) courses to improve their language skills.

### STAFF RESEARCH PROJECT

In other training and development news, sales administrator Sarah Wolton, right, has just completed a fascinating research project on duck health at Northfield Farm in Debach. Forming part of her four-year degree in animal management, the main aim of Sarah's research was to find out how access to bathing troughs affects duck health by looking at mortality rates, water quality and bird condition. As Sarah explains:



"During the course of the seven months of data collection, I scored a random selection of 50 birds in the duck sheds once a week on the cleanliness of their eyes, nostrils and feathers, with these scores enabling me to compare the physical condition of ducks in a number of flocks. Water samples were also taken from the bathing troughs on a daily basis (thanks to Northfield's Frazer Harvey) and sent to a lab to be analysed for harmful bacteria.

"The condition results show that eye and nostril condition is better in ducks provided with access to bathing water, while the water analysis indicates that duck health decreases when bacterial levels in trough water are high. I'm very pleased with the project's findings – it's developed my understanding of duck production and made me more aware of the processes involved, from the farm to the processing plant, which will help me in my sales role too. Many thanks to all at Northfield and Gressingham who helped."



### WHAT'S 'THE WORD' ON GRESSINGHAM?

As part of our continued investment in our brand, we're pleased to tell you that we've recently appointed The Word to handle an exciting new public relations campaign on our behalf.

The Word is part of The Works, one of East Anglia's leading full-service marketing communications agencies based in central Norwich. Also encompassing sister company Magic Online Solutions, these three companies work as one to provide public relations, advertising, design and digital media services to a wide range of clients.

For us, The Word will be implementing a dynamic press relations programme in the consumer press to raise brand awareness and make our own-brand Gressingham Duck and Gressingham Foods products as well as our supermarket own-label lines even more appealing to shoppers.

A complementary trade PR campaign will serve to highlight our latest product launches to the retail industry and promote Gressingham Duck and Foods to the food service industry in equal measure.

We have also asked The Works to carry out all our creative and design work, plus Magic will be re-developing our website and creating an e-commerce facility for us.

Visit [www.the-works.com](http://www.the-works.com) if you'd like to find out more.



## speedy bbq gressingham duck steaks

By Vernon Blackmore, resident chef

Fancy throwing something a bit different on the barbie this summer? Our Gressingham Duck makes a deliciously different alternative to your usual barbecue fare, with its skin's naturally high fat content giving an irresistibly flame-licked flavour while its moist, versatile meat lends itself to an array of tasty marinades. Here's a quick and easy recipe to get you hooked on barbecued duck!

### You will need...

Gressingham Duck breast fillets (one fillet will serve two people)  
Freshly ground sea salt and black pepper  
Lemons and/or limes, halved

### Method...

Peel the skin from your Gressingham Duck breast fillets and discard. Lay the skinless fillet on a flat surface, place your hand on top and hold securely. With a sharp knife, carefully cut down the fillet lengthways until halfway through the meat, being sure not to cut it in two. Open the butterflied fillet out flat and season to taste.

Now you're ready to cook. Grill the fillets over medium-hot coals, cooking for approximately two minutes each side. Meanwhile, slice the lemons and/or limes in two, squeeze a little of their juice over the fillets towards the end of their cooking time, before placing them flesh-side down on the grill. Once cooked, rest the fillets for one minute before slicing and serving with the chargrilled citrus as finger food.

For more tantalising recipes go to [www.gressinghamfoods.co.uk](http://www.gressinghamfoods.co.uk)

## doing our bit

Here at Gressingham Foods we like to do our bit for charity, with Geoffrey Buchanan getting us off to a great start this year by running a whopping 56 kilometres (that's about 35 miles) in the Two Oceans Marathon in South Africa this April.

Our Marathon Man completed the Cape Town run in five hours and 26 minutes in spite of the sweltering heat. What's more, he's set to do it all again by running the Edinburgh Marathon around the time we go to press with our current issue!

Geoffrey is raising money for Just42, a Christian charity providing activities and support for Suffolk youngsters. If you'd like to make a donation, pop a cheque made payable to 'Just42' in the post to our address below or visit [www.justgiving.com/geoffrey-buchanan](http://www.justgiving.com/geoffrey-buchanan).

We're also sponsoring the Feeling Foxy rugby team this year, with player Ed Farrell, our new product development manager, and co doing us proud as the reigning champions of the Bournemouth Sevens cup.

The team is aiming to raise £7,000 in support of RFU (Rugby Football Union) children's charity Wooden Spoon, with Gressingham donating some of its delicious Gressingham Duck for a recent fundraising do. If you'd like to donate, please visit [www.justgiving.com/woodenspoon](http://www.justgiving.com/woodenspoon).



Geoffrey Buchanan back, running the recent Two Oceans Marathon



The Feeling Foxy rugby team are aiming to raise £7,000 for charity

## award winning produce and practices



Stephen Urwin and Geoffrey Buchanan show off our Sainsbury's Award

Gressingham Foods was proud to win the Sainsbury's Corporate Responsibility Award 2010 at the supermarket's recent technical conference.

As a key supermarket supply chain partner, we've worked closely with Sainsbury's to convert 100 percent of its chilled and frozen raw duck products to the Freedom Food scheme for higher welfare standards – a phenomenal achievement that will give shoppers increased confidence in the duck they buy.

Having beat off some stiff competition to scoop the award, we were also praised alongside the supermarket's key seasonal turkey suppliers for contributing to its very successful Christmas for the 2009 season by Tina Jeary, head of product technology and development for fresh and frozen foods.

Our technical manager Tony Butcher collected the award from Judith

Batchelar, director of Sainsbury's brand, in front of over 300 of his industry peers at the conference and awards ceremony, with Gressingham thanked for its support and hard work over the last year in helping Sainsbury's achieve its goals.

And in breaking news, we're thrilled to tell you we've won Highly Commended in the Pig & Poultry Marketing Awards 2010 in the Poultry Carcase Utilisation category. Highlighting how producers can eliminate waste while maximising profits, Gressingham was rewarded for its highly efficient use of the carcase across a wide variety of its products as well as its recycling of duck manure to farmland particularly impressing the judges.

## say hello at the Suffolk Show!

We're exhibiting at this year's Suffolk Show on 2 and 3 June at the Suffolk Showground.

If you'd like to learn more about us and our products, please pay us a visit on the Tesco stand number 175 or log onto [www.suffolkshow.co.uk](http://www.suffolkshow.co.uk) for further information and tickets.



come and see us on stand 175!