

Taste



CHECKOUT
Elaine Reeves

Taking it to the streets

tasty bits

REMEMBER the smart-alec answer to parents who told you to think of the starving children in Africa when you refused to eat your dinner — that the children in Africa could have it?

On a wider scale, how often have we been told there is enough food for everyone in the world, it's simply a matter of righting the distribution?

How to match a farmer's surplus of caulis with those in need of cauliflower cheese; how to get what was not ordered at a restaurant tonight to people who will go without lunch tomorrow; and how to get the tired vegetables supermarket customers won't buy to the people who can turn them into soup for the homeless?

This is the role Melbourne service SecondBite has taken on — collecting the excess food businesses do not have time to deliver and taking it to the services who provide food for the needy but do not have the time or resources to pick it up.

The food-rescue service cooks no meals and runs no kitchens but does have a coolroom, refrigerated vans, a paid staff of six and volunteer brigade of 220 with the know-how to organise the distribution.

Janelle Kava, who co-ordinates Loui's Van for the St Vincent de Paul Society, serving sandwiches and soup to 50 Hobart people a night, is among those very happy that SecondBite is coming to Tasmania.

Kava said Loui's Van was very grateful for donations of food but not knowing if was about to receive a box or three pallets of produce was a problem.

Getting help with food donations would also save the \$8500 a year spent on food to give away.

SecondBite expects to be operating in Hobart, as the precursor to the entire state, by the end of the year. Already more than 50 local organisations have put their hands up to use the service.

At the end of this month SecondBite executive director Katy Barfield, food program co-ordinator Russell Shields and office manager Lisa Shaw will come to Hobart to seek volunteers and donors, and to raise money.

As it saw through the Civil Liability Bill 2008, which makes it possible for food vendors to donate to SecondBite in good faith without the risk of being sued, the Tasmanian Government gave \$10,000



GIVING TO THE GIVERS: SecondBite executive director Katy Barfield samples Tasmanian produce with food program co-ordinator Russell Shields.
Picture: JAMES KERR

to the charity, and Victorian business and individuals already have donated \$20,000 for the Tasmanian service.

"It's a chicken-and-egg situation," said Barfield. "We can't raise funds in Tasmania because we have no presence there, we need someone on the ground so we can raise the funds, but we have no funds to have someone there..."

When they arrive for a week on October 27, the group will have three goals.

One is to "meet the people who are able to get this thing in motion down there with some advice and help from us", said Barfield.

The second is to talk to the Government and "organise some proper funding" and the third is to find a refrigerated van and a coolroom.

Barfield says everything in the Melbourne operation is donated. "The desks and computers in the office, the coolroom — nothing is bought," she said, but stresses the look is not downbeat second-hand. "People who come in here cannot believe it is all recycled." The printers, for instance, are new — the IT equivalent of a free set of steak knives.

By the time the group arrives in Hobart, Shields will have a list of potential food donors to approach — growers, wholesalers, restaurants and retailers. Collection from stallholders at Salamanca Market is already slotted in.

Barfield says SecondBite will

not be duplicating the services of Loui's Van, Bethlehem House, the Salvation Army or Colony 47 who "know their clients, know the cultural mix".

SecondBite's expertise is in logistics and safe food handling. "We train the volunteers in what to throw out and what to keep, how to sort the food-grade containers, the information to get from the people donating the food and the information to give to the people receiving it," she said. "It is a very simple, very economical model."

The idea for SecondBite came to two former Victorian Liberal politicians over dinner in a restaurant in 2005, and by the following year it was operating with an entirely volunteer staff. Now it moves about 16 tonnes of food a month.

A new service being developed is putting educational packs together to give people the tools to make low-cost, seasonal menus for themselves.

Barfield expects the coming hard times to bring about an increased demand for SecondBite's services and a decrease in its resources as we all bring waste-not want-not practices into play.

The arrival of the service still will not enable you to make good threats about donating the uneaten perishables on a child's dinner plate, however. It is not about the scrapings from the plate. Restaurants in Melbourne often make food especially for SecondBite, such as 20 litres of soup or black bean sauce.

■ See SecondBite at www.secondbite.org.au Email Russell Shields at russell@secondbite.org or speak to him on (03) 9376 3800.

■ Next week is Anti-Poverty Week. See www.antipovertyweek.org.au for details of national and local events.

Ben of the great outdoors

BEST known for his *Surfing the Menu* TV series, Aussie chef Ben O'Donoghue stays in the open air in his new book *Outdoor* (Hardie Grant \$49.95), an exploration of the barbecue. Meadowbank is hosting a lunch featuring recipes from the book and a chance to meet O'Donoghue on October 21. The lunch of three courses with matching wines costs \$75 and begins at 12.30pm. Book on 6248 4484.



Ben O'Donoghue.

Good cause

GIVING'S a pleasure at a G&T lunch. Hobart women get together six times a year to eat for a good cause and learn something. The lunch for Anti-Poverty Week is next Thursday, October 16, at Henry's at the Henry Jones Art Hotel. It costs \$40, half of which will go to Anglicare, which is providing guest speaker Jo Flanagan. Her subject will be poverty in Tasmania. The lunch starts at 12.15pm. RSVP to Louise Mills 0418 371 229.

Gluten-free delight

SHORTBREAD traditionally contains rice flour, so is a stand-up for conversion to a gluten-free version. Shortbread specialist, the Old Colonial Cookie Company in Victoria has replaced wheat flour with maize and tapioca for a gluten-free version of its Butterfingers shortbread. It's crisp and buttery and if you weren't told you wouldn't know the recipe has been tweaked. The shortbread is also Kosher and Halal certified. Butterfingers costs \$4.40 for 175g in the natural foods section at Woolworths.

Buffet at old haunt

HADLEYS Hotel is ready again for the ghosts that come out on All Hallows night. On October 31, Hadleys has a Halloween buffet dinner on the theme and a ghost tour of Hobart. Dinner is from 7pm for 7.30pm and the guided walking tour leaves at nightfall. It costs \$48 per adult, \$24 for a child. Book on 6223 4355.

Jamming flavours in

FAMOUS Australian brands Goulburn Valley, SPC and IXL also have new ranges. Goulburn Valley's is five Premium Blends, including mango with peach and pear and mixed berry. They are \$4.39 for 700g plastic jars.

SPC has fruit sorbets that you keep in the pantry and put in the freezer overnight before you want to eat them. The strawberry, raspberry, mango and lemon flavours are sold in 120g pots in packs of four for \$4.79.

IXL's All About Fruit range is sweetened with fruit juice instead of cane sugar. Strawberry, apricot, forest fruits or marmalade cost \$2.99 for 270g.

ELAINE REEVES

Marque iv
New Spring Menu has arrived
Don't Forget:
Brings back the Classics Lunch Menu
Monday 13th October
Moss Wood Degustation \$135 p/p
Lunch Wed - Fri
Dinner Mon - Sat
"A taste of spring"
"Cinnamon and Smoked Paprika Calamari, Mandarin Salad, Beetroot Dressing"
Elizabeth Street Pier, Hobart
P 03 6224 4428
F 03 6224 4429
info@marqueiv.com.au

Come and meet
Chef Ben O'Donoghue
over a delicious lunch at
MEADOWBANK ESTATE
Tuesday 21st October
3 courses with matching wines
12.30 pm start
\$75.00 pp
For Reservations call
03 6248 4484
Sample some dishes from Ben's wonderful new cookbook **OUTDOOR**
Ben will be signing copies after lunch
699 Richmond Road, Cambridge