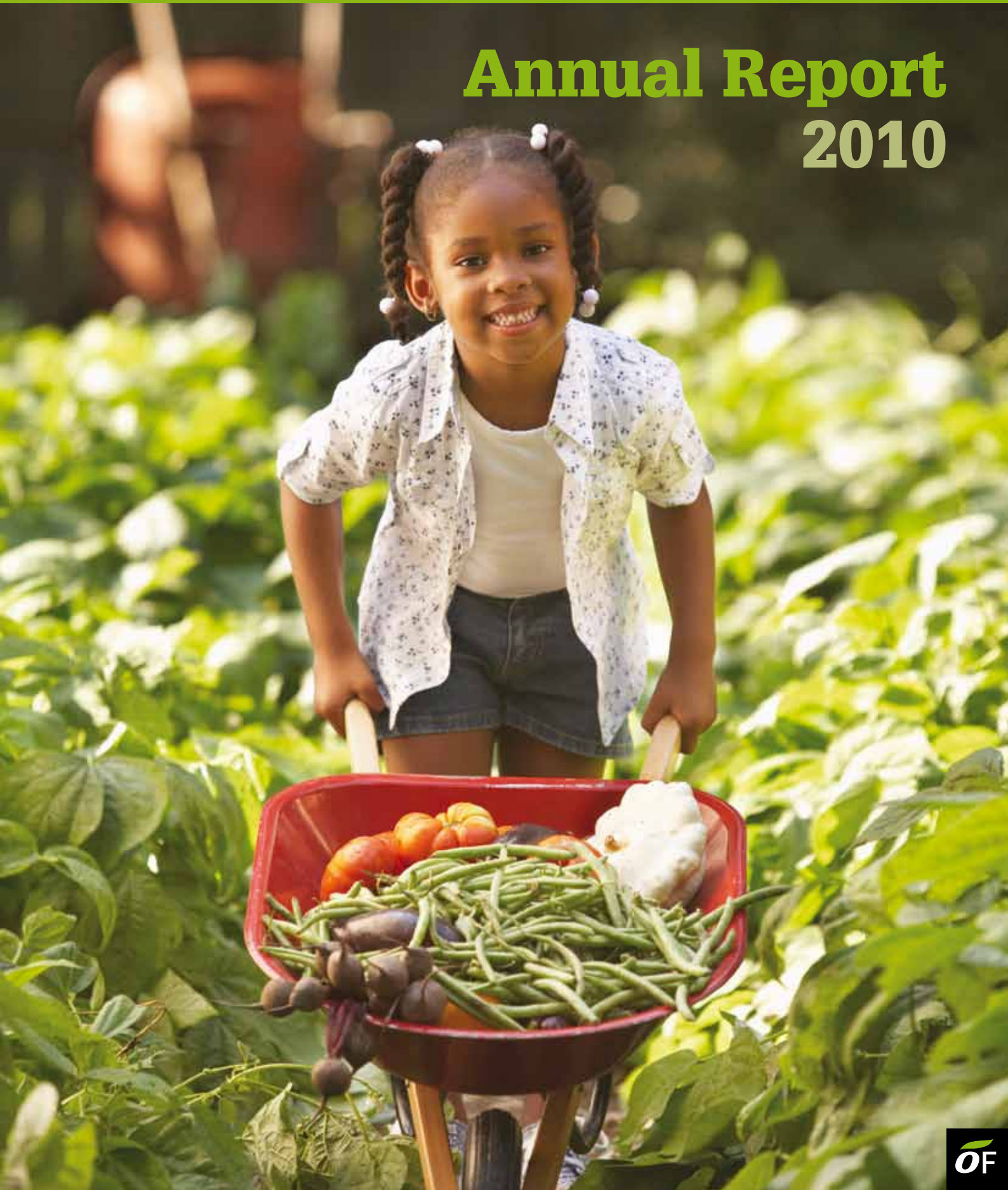


Good food, healthy children

Annual Report 2010



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Introduction



What the Organix Foundation does

The Organix Foundation's (OF's) overall goal is to improve the quality and safety of the food that children eat and to support all those who offer advice on how children can be enabled to eat well. We sponsor a range of projects, from laboratory based analysis of foods, to expert working party reports on topics of interest to campaigning. In addition we support students in their first steps into independent research and we provide equipment and support for nursery projects.

2010 has been an exciting and rewarding year for us. We are working closer than ever with all the projects we sponsor to ensure we maximize the great work that they do. Each one receives support and guidance from a sponsor trustee here at OF, to help to make sure the project's goals are being achieved. Caroline Child joined us this year as our Scientific Officer, and is doing a great job of keeping in contact with projects and new applicants.

This year we have been particularly excited to see the Caroline Walker Trust's Children Eating Well (CHEW) project coming to fruition. CHEW's photo cards and guide books help all those who provide for and support children and young people to eat well by offering practical support on portion sizes, recipes and meal and snack ideas. This is exactly the kind of project we love to support: rooted in scientific evidence, and making a positive impact on the health and well-being of children and young people.

We are also bringing to fruition our long standing support for the production of the UK's first comprehensive review of the whole area of flavourings in food - especially as it relates to children. This will cover the range of flavourings in use in the UK, their toxicology, regulation, and dietary impact. This report will be published in early 2011, a pertinent time given the current EU changes taking place in this area.

This year we have improved our application process. The initial application stage is now much quicker and simpler, and gives us the basic information we need to know whether a project is relevant for us. We're looking for work that fits with our goals, will benefit children all over the UK, represents good value for money and which we feel confident will be completed on time and to brief.

If an application ticks these basic boxes, we spend time learning more about the project. We ask the applicant to set out a series of milestones, which will correspond to funding segments from us. We've found that this helps us understand the goals of the project and make sure they are achieved.

We are here to support committed, competent people who want to improve the quality of food that British children are eating. If you have a project you would like to discuss with us, please visit our website and send us an email.

www.organixfoundation.org



Projects Recently Completed

Campaigning for improved action and regulation on risky food additives - Action on Additives

What is this and what has been achieved?

The Action on Additives (AoA) campaign for the removal of known risky food additives from the food supply started in November 2007 and was the first grant made by OF. At that time the University of Southampton had just published research showing the risk to child health of 6 specific food colourants and one food preservative. The AoA campaign was created because campaigners feared that the government, via the Food Standards Agency (FSA), would not take sufficient action to ban these additives from food on sale, thereby not reducing the risk to child health.

Action on Additives:

- Created a campaign website with information on over 1000 foods that contained the additives
- Kept the campaign in the public eye
- Contributed to thinking that resulted in changes to regulation.



What has happened since this campaign started?

Since the April 2008 'voluntary ban' suggested by the FSA, the European Parliament has voted in favour of labelling foods containing the six food colours with the words "may have an adverse effect on activity and attention in children."

AoA highlighted several weaknesses in the FSA approach. A voluntary ban will not be monitored effectively, changes on labels were delayed to 2010, and are unlikely to be effectively policed, and no action has been suggested for catered foods that are not labelled. In addition there has been insufficient work done to ban the preservative sodium benzoate (E211) despite the FSA pledge to act on the results of the research linking this additive to children's health.

AoA has kept up the pressure, directly on the FSA and via working with parents, families and schools. They also produced a report on the use of food colours in meals, snacks and drinks sold by large catering outfits which provide no information to consumers about their content.

What is happening now?

In 2010 the AoA campaign published a report on the lack of transparency about the colours used in foods from take-away outlets and this received some press coverage. The Food Commission who ran AoA has now closed, but it is hoped that after the report on food flavourings is published in early 2011 the AoA campaign will incorporate campaigning around greater transparency on food flavours alongside continued campaigning around food colours. OF would be interested to have expressions of interest from charities or NGOs who would consider taking this work forward in 2011.

Projects Recently Completed

University of Teesside: Fluoride content of infant milks and foods

In 2008/9 OF funded a research project to determine the fluoride content of infant food and drinks in the UK. It was conducted by the School of Public Health & Social Care, University of Teesside and The School of Dental Sciences, Newcastle University, by Dr Vida Zohoori, and Dr Paula Moynihan.

Why did OF fund this project?

Health professionals suspect that fluoride can cause a health problem both when there is not enough present in the diet, and when there is too much. But there was no recent information about the fluoride content of commercial baby food and infant formula that would allow estimation of the fluoride intakes of infants and children in different parts of the UK.

What did they do?

The fluoride content of 200 foods and drinks was analysed. The team found considerable variation in the fluoride content of foods and drinks themselves, as well as in the level of fluoridation in different

areas. The research was presented to an international dental conference in Budapest, and has been published in the dental journal 'Caries Research' in 2009.

What is happening now?

The research team are extending their work with a second grant from OF – see page 6. They are looking at the actual fluoride intake of two groups of children – one resident in a fluoridated area, and the other in a non-fluoridated area.



The Regulation of Pesticides as this relates to child health – Pesticides Action Network, and the Soil Association

In 2009 and early in 2010 funding was provided to a joint project by the Pesticides Action Network and the Soil Association to investigate the role of pesticides in children's health. Funding for this project was completed in 2010 and OF hopes that work in this area will be continued by both organisations in the future.

On-going Projects

Food Flavourings Report – Food Commission



Flavourings are found extensively in food and drink eaten regularly by children.

Since 2008 OF has provided funding to the Food Commission to look at the background and safety of food flavourings and to prepare a summary report with recommendations for campaigners. The aim of the Food Commission's project has been to evaluate the legislative approval processes, usage and safety of flavourings in foods, drinks and medicines.

What is happening now?

In 2009/10 the Food Commission convened an Expert Working Party to look at all the evidence relating flavourings to health and to look at how flavourings are currently regulated and monitored in the EU. The Expert Working Party is made up of a food law specialist, a toxicology expert, a campaigner, a public health nutritionist

and experts in science and technology, with observers from Government.

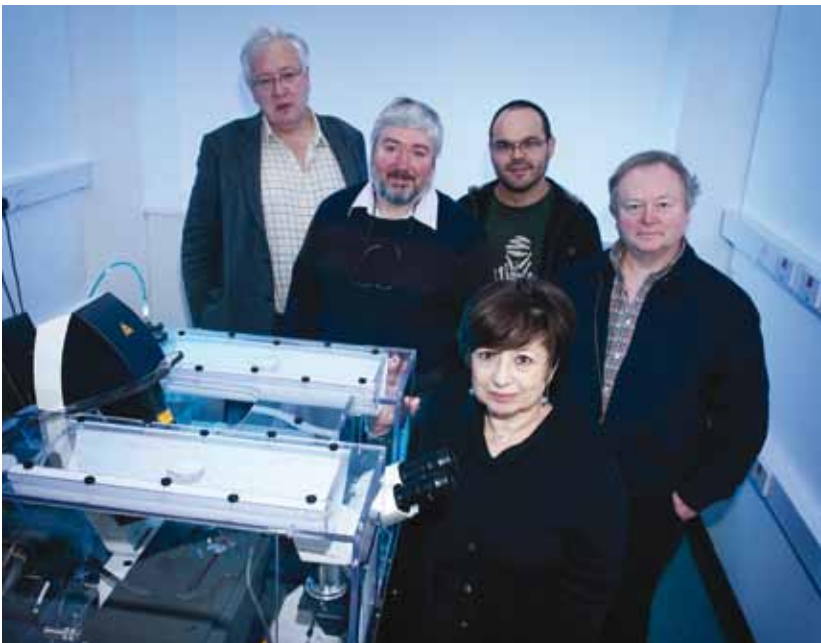
Their report will provide a definitive guide to flavourings in food. It will also look at where further research evidence is required and make recommendations on how consumers can be better informed and protected. The Expert Report is due to be published in early 2011.

The impact of xenoestrogenic pesticides - University of Ulster

Work began at the University of Ulster on the role of specific pesticides on breast cancer development in 2009. The research team is led by Professor C. Vyvyan Howard, Head of the Bioimaging Research Group, working with Professor Ana Soto, Professor of Cancer Development and Professor Stephen Downes, Head of the Cancer and Ageing Research Group.

The incidence of breast cancer have increased dramatically in the last thirty years. There is good evidence that exposure to xenoestrogens (foreign estrogens which mimic the effect of estrogen in our bodies) even in minute amounts can have carcinogenic effects for the fetus through maternal ingestion. It is thought the effects in children may not be seen until beyond puberty.

The University has recently acquired a powerful new microscope (shown here) which will enable the research team to test xenoestrogens using three-dimensional models of human breast tissue rather than through animal testing. Professor Ana Soto is a world expert in this field. The research team is currently recruiting a new post-doctoral research assistant for the project. The new appointment will be sent to Boston USA for training in the laboratory of Professor Soto and ready to start the investigation in 2011. It is hoped the project will be completed in 2012.



Left: The new Leica STED super-resolution light microscope with (L to R) Prof Stephen Downes, Dr George McKerr, Dr Kurt Saetzler, and Prof Vyvyan Howard with Prof Ana Soto in the foreground.

Photo Resources to help children eat well – the Caroline Walker Trust



In 2009 OF funded the production of photo resources which show the types and amounts of foods and drinks, that children need to meet average energy and nutrient requirements. These resources were prepared and piloted and in 2010 a further grant was given to allow the resources to be reformulated, designed and printed, a website to be set up to support the resources, and 800 copies printed for distribution.



Why did OF fund this project?

The resources received excellent feedback on piloting, but work was needed to make them more accessible by dividing them into 4 distinct age groups (first year of life, 1-4 years, 5-11 years and 12-18 years). Working with full colour resources and photographs to create the resources also required additional funding and up front print costs were required to ensure that the work could be disseminated widely. The dedicated website set up (www.cwt-chew.org.uk) has allowed tailored information about the resources to be made widely available.



What happens next?

By the end of 2010 all four sets of resources will have been made available and used to support a number of policy initiatives at both national and local level. Evaluation of the resources will be undertaken and work is on-going looking at how the resources can be made simply and cheaply available to as wide an audience as possible.



New Projects in 2010

Healthy Sustainable Diets for young children - City University, London

Considerable discussion is underway within government and academic arenas to evaluate the impact of farming and food choice on climate change. This has led to discussions and recommendations for more sustainable diets for all.



A short report outlining how food service can be more sustainable in early years settings can be downloaded from <http://www.cwt.org.uk/publications.html#sustain>

Children under 5 are much more reliant on meat and dairy foods for essential nutrients than older children and adults, and no work has yet been done which investigates in detail the potential impact of dietary change to the diets of young children in the UK.

A 3 year grant has been given to City University to support a full time PhD studentship, looking at healthy sustainable diets for children under the age of 5 years.

Investigation into dietary fluoride intake of infants – Teesside University



Left: Dr Anne Maguire (Newcastle University, School of Dental Sciences),
Right: Dr Vida Zohoori (Teesside University, School of Health and Social Care).

Who is doing the research?

This project is being carried out at the School of Health and Social Care at Teesside University by Dr Vida Zohoori in collaboration with Dr Anne Maguire, Senior Clinical Lecturer in Child Dental Health and Professor Paula Moynihan from the School of Dental Sciences, Newcastle University.

Why did we fund this?

It is well known that fluoride protects against dental caries especially in young children; however, exposure to excessive fluoride during tooth formation can result in dental fluorosis (mottling). The critical period for development of fluorosis in primary teeth is from 4 months in utero until 11 months of age. Little is currently known about the amounts of fluoride infants living in the UK receive. Also, within the UK approximately 12% of the population receives fluoridated water, either naturally or artificially.

This project aims to measure the actual fluoride intakes of two different groups of infants in areas of fluoridated and non-fluoridated drinking water. This data will provide valuable information for future work in fluoride research, and may help to develop recommendations for programmes to reduce dental decay in children.

What has been achieved?

The project began in May 2010. During the first two months the preparatory work involved obtaining ethical clearance to carry out this investigation; recruiting a post-doctorate student and creating the various tools necessary for the dietary information collection and recruitment of parents.

What is happening now?

From July 2010 the project team have been recruiting parents to take part in the study. The sample size will consist of twenty infants (aged 0-12 months): ten from an area with fluoridated drinking water (Newcastle) and ten from an area of non-fluoridated drinking water (Middlesbrough). The parents will be given training and asked to record the dietary intake of their infants over a three day period to include everything their infant consumes as well as dentifrice amounts. Samples of the meals will also be submitted for analysis of the fluoride intake. The data will be collected from August to January 2011 and analysed to prepare for a final report in April 2011.



The Organix Foundation offers bursaries for up to £5,000 over 3 months for final year BSc or MSc students who have been studying for an accredited nutrition qualification. This allows them to continue work on their dissertation project or to prepare a paper that relates to an area of interest to the Foundation.

Completed Student Grants



Andrea Zick from the University of Roehampton investigated the nutritional content of children's meals in 22 restaurants, sub-divided into fast-food and table service restaurants.

What did she find?

- That two-thirds of the restaurants did not offer nutritional information on the menus.
- Fast food restaurants were cheaper and had smaller portions than table service restaurants but also provided fewer portions of fruit and vegetables, less carbohydrate, iron and vitamin C.
- All meals were low in iron, zinc, calcium, vitamin A and folate.

Andrea concluded that more nutrition labelling in restaurants would help parents to make appropriate choices and more information on portion sizes would be helpful for catering establishments and parents alike.

Personal development

Andrea found that 'to gain first paid research experience after studying Nutrition and Health is often difficult because research posts are very limited and often require previous research experience outside of taught university courses. Therefore I am convinced that this small research grant has allowed me to gain first insights into scientific research, to build my professional skills and as such be now more employable today.'

New Student Grants

Four grants of between £3,000 and £4,000 have been made in 2010 to:



Amanda Moore at Kings College, London is continuing work she began in her dissertation which involved using internet sites such as Mumsnet to investigate the reasons influencing the introduction of complementary foods to infants. The extension of this project will allow her to focus specifically on parents from lower income groups who were underrepresented in her initial study.

Celia Laur from the University of Southampton is investigating the diets of children in a childminder setting with the aim of developing a clear understanding of how the nutritional experience of children could be improved in this environment.

Elina Scheers-Andersson at Queen Margaret's University, Edinburgh is extending her dissertation in which she devised and tested appropriate meals rich in omega-3 fatty acids for children in a nursery setting, to a new nursery in a deprived area of East Lothian in order to develop and evaluate her initiative further.

Natalie Thomson at the University of Glasgow is investigating iodine sufficiency in women of childbearing age in Glasgow. The bursary will allow her to extend her dissertation to increase her sample size and to analyse blood spots she collected for thyroid hormones. Iodine is important for maternal, fetal and infant health.

The Organix Foundation



Lizzie Vann

The Organix Foundation is a grant-making registered charity. It makes funds available for research projects and health promotion projects that focus on the links between food quality and children's health. The research projects can be in any academic field.

The Organix Foundation is funded by annual contributions from the profits of the Organix company, based in Bournemouth, Dorset and from its founder, Lizzie Vann.

Organix Brands Ltd was established by Lizzie Vann in 1992 and produces a range of organic foods for children.

An independent board of five trustees heads OF and decides how the funds should be allocated. The trustees are supported by a Scientific Officer who handles the applications.

The five trustees are:

Lizzie Vann

Lizzie Vann is the founder of the children's food company Organix. Motivated by her own experience of the links between food quality and human health, she has worked for over thirty years to raise the quality standards of foods fed to children.

Dr Helen Crawley

Helen is a registered Public Health Nutritionist and Dietitian with 26 years experience in applied human nutrition, health related research, policy development and teaching. Helen is currently Reader in Food & Nutrition Policy at The Centre for Food Policy at City University and Science Director of the public health nutrition charity The Caroline Walker Trust (CWT).

Ella Heeks

Ella is passionate about business and its power to change the world for the better, something she successfully achieved when she helped shape Abel & Cole to become Britain's leading organic home delivery company.

Diana Hawdon

Diana is a registered Dietitian and Public Health Nutritionist with over 30 years experience in food related subjects including Nutritional Research and Community Health Development.

Previously Diana has worked within London communities, engaging with local people

young and old, setting up nutrition projects and initiatives. Diana has great interest in giving people the knowledge, skills and confidence to help improve their health through good nutritional knowledge and application. Diana has worked extensively with infants and children in a variety of settings and has research interests in weaning practices in multi-ethnic communities and oral health issues among pre-school children.

Diana is currently working with schools, the local authority and caterers to ensure food in schools meets government legislation and to encourage more children to eat and enjoy a school lunch. This work includes delivering nutrition interventions to tackle childhood obesity and supporting the healthy eating strand of the Healthy Schools Programme.

Anna Rosier

Anna took on the job of running the Organix company from Lizzie Vann in 2008. An enthusiast for illustrating the link between food and health, Anna has continued the Organix tradition of recycling company profits into health promotion projects, and pushing the boundaries of knowledge in the important areas of child nutrition and the impact of toxins on child health.

Our Scientific Officer is Caroline Child

Caroline has a Masters in Public Health Nutrition and has worked in a range of settings including universities, public health directorates, charities and schools. Being a new mum herself, she is passionate about parents being able to provide healthy food for their children.



Caroline Child



Dr Helen Crawley



Ella Heeks



Diana Hawdon



Anna Rosier

**Contact the Organix Foundation at:
www.organixfoundation.org Email
info@organixfoundation.org**

