

Media Release – April 2016

Food and Farming to the Fore at Hawick's Chisholme Institute

3 day Seminar: 29 April – 2 May 2016

Chairman, Livestock Health Scotland Nigel Miller and award winning organic farmers Denise and Chris Walton of Peelham Farms in Berwickshire, join renowned biologist and writer Colin Tudge at The Chisholme Institute in the Scottish Borders, in a new, collaborative venture involving Chisholme and the recently established “College for Real Farming and Food Culture”

Significantly, the 3-day seminar begins with supper on Friday 29th April, serving locally sourced lamb and other delicious local produce – all cooked in the Chisholme kitchen. With food as the starting point, Colin Tudge, who in 2008 established the **‘Campaign for Real Farming’**, will lead a challenging weekend of talks, discussion and debate focusing on the future of food and farming through the prism of what he calls “Enlightened Agriculture.”

“Enlightened Agriculture”, says Tudge, “has the potential to change the world but it requires a complete re-think of the economics, the politics, the science, the scale and the technology behind current farming practices and who controls them.

Over the course of the weekend delegates will work together to establish a series of actionable steps that can be taken to advance the aims of the College.

Nigel Miller, who will be in attendance on Friday evening welcomes this initiative saying:

“Scottish farming has achieved much in developing sustainable and high welfare systems but still faces real economic challenges in

markets which are at the mercy of international commodity trading. This conference provides an opportunity to think outside the box and question some of the basic drivers in agricultural businesses; that exercise must be useful and perhaps can open up new pathways and strategies for our sector.”

Berwickshire organic farmers **Denise and Chris Walton** of Peelham Farms, will also be contributing their knowledge and experience to this event. Denise says:

“Most recently we won the Scottish Rural Award Agriculture 2016 and it was Peelham’s method of farming which really caught the eye of the judges. Peelham Farm stays true to its beliefs and commitment to quality and is proof for organic mixed farming in every part of the food supply chain”

Throughout the weekend Colin will be highlighting the vital role of such low-input mixed farms. He will explain why, at the same time we need to change the way we eat. He will also argue that an integrated, sustainable approach to food and farming should draw on the wisdom of the great spiritual traditions.

Location and costs – (Booking Essential)

The Chisholme Institute, with its ethos of integrated spirituality, its organic garden, surrounding farmland and tradition of good food, offers an ideal setting for this seminar. **Cost:** £160 including full board and lodging for three nights. Cost: Non-residential option £100 per day. Booking and enquiries: Tel 01450 880 215 secretary@chisholme.org **www.chisholme.org**

Editors

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Further Detail

Cont'd – Course Programme....

Course Programme

Creating a Happier Future for All

**What is “Enlightened Agriculture?” What do we need to do to achieve it?
Where do we start?**

The weekend promises rewards for the body and the mind: fine food, beautiful walks around the Chisholme estate and plenty of mental stimulation. The course structure allows for formal and informal discussion both inside and outside the meeting room and also while enjoying the delicious food for which Chisholme is noted.

Friday 29 April - Supper - followed by:

Lecture 1: The Agrarian Renaissance: An introduction to the weekend’s topics. Sketch and critique of current agricultural practice - agriculture as business; outline of a radically different approach.

Saturday 30 April

Lecture 2: Enlightened Agriculture and Farms: Why farms need to be diverse (polyculture), low-input, skills-intensive and small - and how they should combine with agroforestry and aquaculture to yield proper *agroecology*.

Lecture 3: Enlightened Eaters: EA needs to be complemented by a different food culture. It cannot work unless people want what its farms produce; **changing the way we eat.** Includes a tour of Chisholme garden and estate, presentations by Chisholme’s chef and gardener and a film.

Sunday 1 May

Lectures 4 & 5: Includes presentations by Chisholme’s principal Richard Gault and development officer Hannes Rohtsalu plus a walk on the estate.

Lecture 4: Evolving a Sustaining Society: What sort of society can support and enable EA? Examining the frameworks of government, economics, justice, morality and beliefs.

Lecture 5: Becoming Wise: A deeper examination of the critical role of beliefs; drawing on the perennial wisdom at the heart of all religions.

Monday 2 May

Lecture 6: Creating the Renaissance: Discussing land reform, community action and drafting of the weekend’s conclusions.

The Chisholme Institute: www.chisholme.org

The Chisholme Institute is a retreat centre and school for self-knowledge, firmly rooted in the principle of unity that lies at the heart of all wisdom traditions. A beautiful new solitary retreat facility is now available for visitors to use while a range of courses further enhances the scope of all that Chisholme offers.

‘Chisholme’ is open throughout the year. Courses range in length from a weekend to six months. The educational context is continuous and designed to address body, mind and spirit in a balanced and integrated way.

Ends