

PRESS NOTICE

HARROGATE'S FOOD SAFETY CARD GAME INITIATIVE DEALT WINNING HAND AT NATIONAL AWARDS

26 October 2004

Harrogate Borough Council has been rewarded for its creative and innovative approach to communicating food safety messages by winning the runner up prize at the prestigious foodlink Communicating Food Safety Awards. Run by the Food and Drink Federation, the Awards recognise and reward the nation's top environmental health and infection control teams for their imaginative approaches to communicating often deadly boring but vitally important food safety messages.

Harrogate was pipped to the post by Westminster City Council and Westminster Primary Care Trust, which collected the top prize.

The inventive awareness raising activities by Harrogate included creating a fun but informative cross-contamination card game for small children. The game, asking children to identify which picture cards show items which might have bacteria on them, and which shouldn't, was introduced to pupils as part of 25 practical workshops at 19 primary schools in the Borough. The workshops, developed in conjunction with the Infection Control Nurse from the area's Primary Care Trust, also demonstrated the consequences of poor hand washing by using agar plates showing the growth of bacteria. Here

each pupil was encouraged to create a finger print in their own agar plate which was sealed and incubated, then returned a couple of days later so they could see how the germs on their hands had grown.

Commenting on Harrogate's success, Director of the foodlink campaign, Martin Paterson said:

"It can be extremely challenging to deliver serious food safety messages in fun and memorable ways to children. We are delighted to reward imaginative activities, which do so much to raise awareness of the importance of food hygiene issues at grass roots level. By showcasing this excellent work we hope to inspire others to continue to spread important food safety messages far and wide.

Councillor Les Ellington, Cabinet Member for Environmental Health for Harrogate Borough Council, said:

"I am delighted that our team has taken one of the top prizes in this event. Their enthusiasm, dedication and sheer inventiveness has been justly rewarded. We would have liked to have won, but to be just pipped at the post by an authority like Westminster means we were certainly worthy of our place at the top of this year's entrants."

The 3rd annual conference and awards ceremony were chaired by Professor of Bacteriology (Emeritus), Hugh Pennington, and included speakers from Government - the Food Standards Agency; academia - the University of Wales Institute, and industry - The British Hospitality Association.

For more information contact Kate Snowden on 020 7420 7132.

Editors Notes:

food**link** is organised by the Food and Drink Federation in association with the Food Standards Agency, the Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland, the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, the Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS), the Departments of Health,

Food and Education, the National Farmers Union, the British Retail Consortium and the British Hospitality Association.

Other organisations supporting National Food Safety Week include: the Design and Technology Association, the Institute of Food Science and Technology, the Health Protection Agency, the Society of Food Hygiene Technology and the Infection Control Nurses Association.

Visit the foodlink website www.foodlink.org.uk for more information on the Conference and Awards.