

Organic Heroes

'Going organic' is becoming increasingly popular - and it's little wonder with so many fabulous new products on the market. **Kate Ennis** looks at the individuals behind this blooming movement . . .

PHOTOGRAPHY THE SOIL ASSOCIATION, VISIT WWW.SOILASSOCIATION.ORG

WHEN YOU consider that the first Organic Food Festival only took place at the turn of the millennium, it's encouraging to see how quickly our appetite for all things organic has grown as the event comes round to its seventh year. Yet this phenomenal growth is not down to faceless multinational corporations but thanks to the dedicated individuals who have built successful businesses from their true passion for organics. To find out more about the people behind the movement, we took a closer look at six companies who represent just some of Britain's many inspiring organic heroes. They come from all walks of life but what they have in common is a clear vision paired with the enthusiasm and determination to see it through. They not only promote organic but also go that extra mile to highlight ethical and environmental issues that can really make a difference . . .

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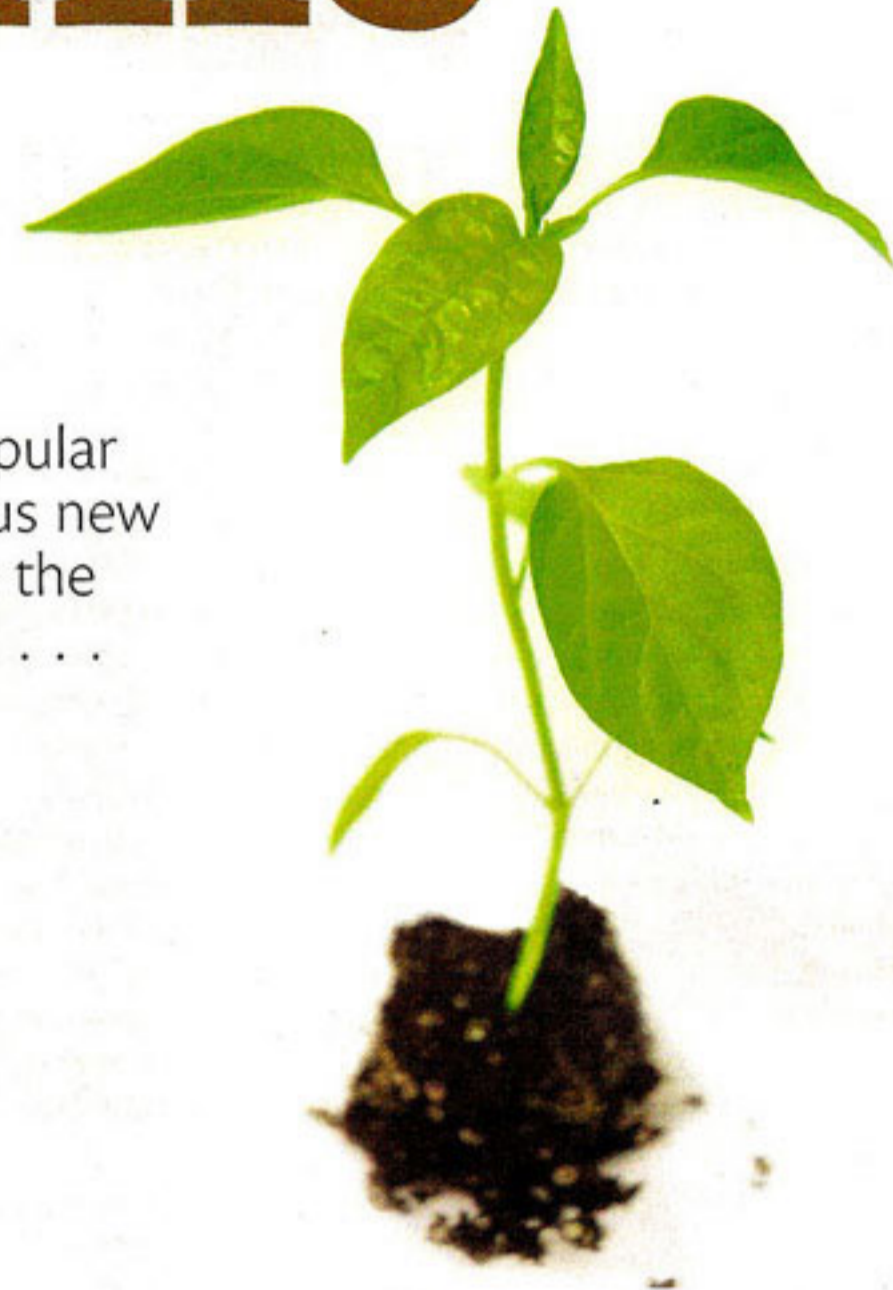
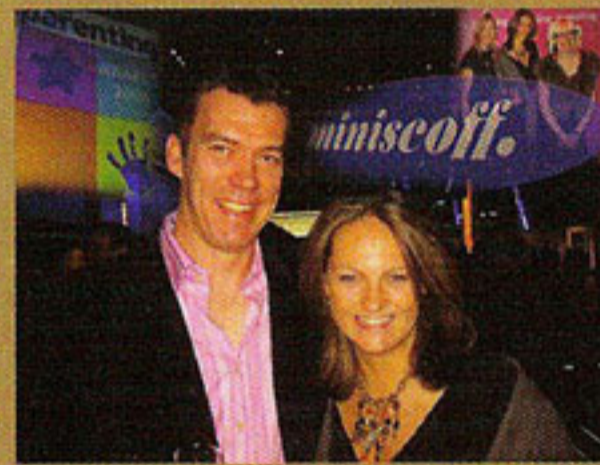


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Scoff central

Busy parents Angus and Shoo Oliphant started their children's organic ready meals business from the tiny kitchen of their London flat just six years ago, initially supplying 10 London delis. They now employ 11 people at Scoff Central, in Wiltshire to make their award-winning 100% organic meals. Creating dishes aimed at children

aged from 12 months to two years, Miniscoff supply over a hundred restaurants, including Center Parcs and the Rainforest Café, as well as independent retailers. They put their success down to the support of family and friends, plus total conviction in what they are doing, producing good honest food that children will really enjoy.

For the Oliphants, organic means food as nature intended. "You won't make food any healthier or tastier by mucking about with it," says Angus. "Natural is good, but organic is natural certified, so it's more controlled and less prone to abuse or shameless spin," he says. That said, Angus does feel that being organic alone is not enough to succeed. "Ethical values are great to have but, if you are going to do anything effective with them, they need to be marketed in an engaging and relevant fashion to the consumer at large," he says. The success of Miniscoff also relies on the consistent availability of excellent ingredients. Angus says: "Organic doesn't guarantee 'quality', so we must maintain that standard just as vigorously". Looking to the future, Angus and Shoo plan to expand the business but without making things too complicated, with the use of regional kitchens to keep things strictly to small batches. Yet most importantly, they intend to stick to their guns and continue to make food that's honest and simple.

For more information on Miniscoff Organic Children's Meals, call 01225 783221 or visit www.miniscoff.co.uk.

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