

Drumeen produce local alternative to imported olive oil

BY SEÁN KENEHAN

Drumeen Farm in Kilkenny has Ireland's first organically grown rapeseed and hempseed oil to meet demands Irish alternative to imported olive oil.

In 1976, Drumeen Farm in Kilkenny was established by Ben and Charlotte Colchester. These pioneers started farming organically and producing wholesome certified organic food long before it became fashionable. The oldest existing organic farm in Ireland, Drumeen is where the first Irish organic rapeseed and hempseed oil was grown, cold pressed and bottled.

Rapeseed oil is known to the health conscious for its rich nutritional value. It is an excellent source of the powerful anti-oxidant, vitamin E. Rapeseed is also a great source of omega 3 and omega 6. Rapeseed oil surpasses olive and sunflower oil in reducing cholesterol.

"Growing up, I wanted to be anywhere but on the farm," said proprietress Kitty Colchester, of Second Nature. "Then after a year in Ethiopia doing aid work in refugee and food camps I came home to Ireland in January 2009 obsessed with the idea of making a business out of food - natural, nutritious food that did not cost the land,



proprietress Kitty Colchester, of Second Nature.

the eco system and the people a fortune. So I moved back to my parents farm and did the feasibility study for this pioneering venture between July and September of '09 and within three months our Happy Heart rapeseed oil had won four major awards (Board Bia, Euro-Toques, JFC and Bridgestone). It even made it on to RTE's Six One news!"

Rapeseed is hugely versatile. It is delicious in salad dressings, marinated vegetables, meat, fish and hummus. It can also be used in desserts such as flapjacks, among many other things. Rapeseed oil can literally be used anywhere to replace butter and where olive oil's flavour would be unwelcome.

Organic rapeseed oil is superior to its non organic counterpart as organic oil is free of chemical residues from pesticides, herbicides, fungicides and synthetic fertilizers. Ireland imports €5 billion worth of food each year but €3 billion of that €5 billion could actually be produced here, creating Irish jobs and reducing our carbon footprint.

Second Nature's rapeseed oil offers an award winning Irish alternative to imported olive oil, and is stocked in various stores around Kilkenny including The Good Earth on Kieran