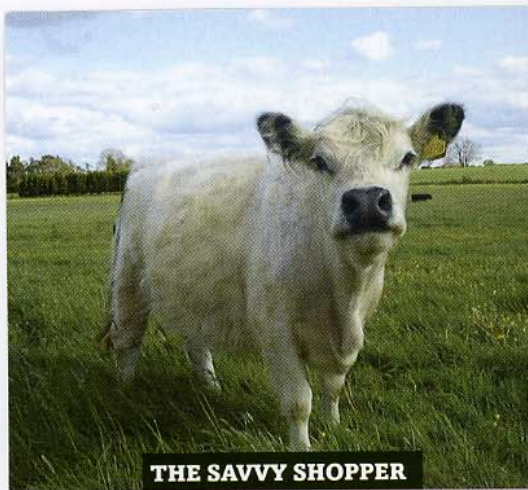


olive



THE SAVVY SHOPPER



Beef and flour

Rose Prince is author of *The Savvy Shopper* (£7.99, Fourth Estate; olive offer, £6.99), a guide to navigating the ethical food-shopping labyrinth. This month, here's how to buy beef and flour – perfect if you fancy a burger in a bun.

In a culture where most farms are divided between three camps – livestock, dairy and arable – it is unusual to find a producer that covers two of these disciplines with outstanding results. Andrew Wilkinson grows pre-World War II species of organic wheat, including the more ancient grain, spelt. Tests carried out have shown that these crops are producing grain with higher than normal levels of protein for an organic crop and vitamin levels that exceed those found in conventionally grown wheat. In spite of using no nitrates, pesticides or chemicals, Wilkinson is finding these old breeds are healthy. They are also taller – a genetic characteristic – and have shocked his neighbours at the way they stand tall during rough Northumberland summer weather. The flour itself is in direct contrast to the fiercely milled type containing synthetic vitamins. The spelt is remarkable, reacting to yeast in the most enthusiastic way – the dough hardly needs to be kneaded. All the flour is produced in the farm's own, recently built mill, and is available by mail order. Wilkinson's wife, Sybille, also plans to open a bakery.

The farm's herd of White Galloway cattle are fed organically and all feed is grown on the farm. The dark-coloured, mature beef from these animals has a deep, savoury flavour needing barely a grain of salt. Neat butchering and an efficient service mean that you can order your burgers and buns to arrive on the same van.

Gilchesters Organic Farm, Hawkwell, Northumberland (01661 886119; gilchesters.com)