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Sustainable Food Chains

Briefing Paper 1

Local Food; benefits, obstacles and opportunities

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The Sustainable Food Chains project

Sustain; The Alliance for Better Food and Farming advocates food and agriculture policies and practices that enhance the health and welfare of people and animals, improve the working and living environment, promote equity, and enrich society and culture. Sustain represents over 100 national public interest organisations working at international, national, regional and local level.

This briefing paper is part of an initiative by Sustain, called 'Sustainable Food Chains' to promote sustainable food, including in public sector catering. More specifically, over the next two years our activities will include;

- Establishing contact with interested bodies at regional, national and European level, currently developing, or planning to develop, policy options.
- Developing policy recommendations for the statutory, private and voluntary sectors to support sustainable food economies, with the future publication of 'Local Food: What are the policy options?'
- Organising a national conference to discuss and develop policy recommendations.
- Producing a technical manual on public procurement with case studies. This will include a 'How to do it' guide on buying and supplying local/fair trade and organic food including legal and contractual aspects, supply chain issues, and ideas for catering options.
- Establishing pilot projects. We intend to establish work in tandem with the technical manual and highlight experience gained at local level.
- Producing briefing papers on local food and public sector catering and the potential for sustainable food providing health, farming, and environmental benefits.
- Advising and negotiating with government at European, national, regional, and local level for changes in policy and action to support the public procurement of sustainable food.
- Responding to consultations from national and European government and others on public procurement issues.

'Sustainable food', for the purpose of this paper, refers to food which meets a number of criteria including;

- **Proximate** – originating from the closest practicable source or the minimization of energy use
- **Healthy** as part of a balanced diet and not containing harmful biological or chemical contaminants
- **Fairly or cooperatively traded** between producers, processors, retailers, and consumers
- **Non-exploiting** of employees in the food sector in terms of pay and conditions
- **Environmentally beneficial** or benign in its production (e.g. organic)
- **Accessible** both in terms of geographic access and affordability
- **High animal welfare standards** in both production and transport
- **Socially inclusive** of all people in society
- **Encouraging knowledge and understanding** of food and food culture

Contacts and information

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Other briefings available as part of this initiative include;

Briefing 2 Public Sector Catering; Opportunities and issues relating to sustainable food procurement

Briefing 3 Public Procurement of Sustainable Food; Current, planned, and related initiatives

Briefing 4 The English Regional Development Agencies; What are they doing to support sustainable food economies?

All documents are downloadable from Sustain's website (<http://www.sustainweb.org>) in pdf format.

Hard copies are available at a cost of £5 plus £1 postage and packaging from;

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Introduction

“Local food markets could deliver on all aspects of sustainable development – economic (by providing producers with a profitable route to market), environmental (by cutting down on the pollution associated with food transportation, and by interesting consumers in how the land around them is farmed), and social (by encouraging a sense of community between buyer and seller, town and country).”

The Policy Commission on Farming and Food¹, p.119

The food system appears increasingly directed towards over packaged, over processed and out of season food. Many believe that nutrition, animal welfare, cultural diversity and taste have been sacrificed for uniformity and standardisation.

For the same reason, food now travels from evermore distant parts of the globe; relying heavily upon fossil fuels, creating pollution, increasing the need for packaging and preservation, and often reducing freshness and nutritional content². This, coupled with intensive farming practices³, contributes significantly to the release of atmospheric pollutants and has other adverse environmental and health effects. The foot and mouth crisis has illustrated, once again, the fragility of the current system.

Inequalities in access to food mirror inequalities found in society and contribute to large disparities in mortality rates and health between the ‘haves’ and ‘have nots’⁴. Consumers in general suffer from a lack of traceability in the food system, leading to declining trust in the system. Consumer confidence in food has also been severely dented by successive food crises from salmonella in eggs to BSE.

Farmers too are in crisis with many leaving the industry (DEFRA predicts that 50,000 may quit from 2000 to 2005⁵), squeezed by overseas competition and the supermarkets’ oligopoly in the UK. The average UK farmer earned just £5,200 for the financial year to February 2001⁶. Particularly vulnerable are the small, family farms often taken over by larger, commodity farms or companies. These larger farms and companies are less likely to be part of the sustainable food sector engaged in activities such as ‘pick your own’, box schemes, farm shops, and farmers’ markets.

In short, the way that most food is produced, distributed and consumed is unsustainable in every sense of the word, contributing to:

- **Unsustainable economies:** The global food economy is heavily reliant upon non-renewable resources and using the environment for waste disposal⁷. This cannot be maintained indefinitely without experiencing a decline in the quality and quantity of ‘services’ provided by the natural world and thereby reducing the ability of the economy to deliver a similar standard of living to future generations.
- **Environmental damage:** Food transportation, which comprises 25% of our road traffic⁸, uses up scarce fossil fuels and causes pollution. The vast majority of organic waste is land-filled, using up land, generating methane and leaking pollutants into groundwater⁹. Much of our food is genetically uniform and is grown using an array of chemicals, undermining the richness of the natural world¹⁰.
- **Ill health:** Rich people are less likely to die from diet related diseases than poor people. Many on low incomes cannot afford fresh produce and live on housing estates with no, or inadequate, food shops.

¹ The Policy Commission Report on Farming and Food, 2001

² A Jones, Eating Oil; Food supply in a changing climate, Sustain, 2001

³ Organic food and farming –myth and reality, Soil Association/Sustain, 2001

⁴ Food Poverty; What are the policy options? National Food Alliance, 1998

⁵ DEFRA, www.defra.gov.uk 2001

⁶ How bad is the crisis in farming, www.nfu.org.uk, National Farmers Union

⁷ Eating Oil; Food Supply in a Changing Climate, Sustain, 2001

⁸ SAFE Alliance, A Feast Too Far, SAFE Alliance, 1995

⁹ City Harvest; the feasibility of growing more food in London, Sustain, 1999

¹⁰ Organic food and farming –myth and reality, op cit

They may have to depend more on processed, fatty and sugary foods which are cheaper per calorie than fresh, wholesome food¹¹.

- **Exploitation:** Many workers in both agriculture and the food sector are poorly paid and work under adverse conditions. The exploitation of migrant and refugee labour is a particular problem in heavily industrialised and large scale ventures operated by large producers and multi-national corporations¹².
- **Powerlessness:** A MORI survey of 8-11 year olds found that a fifth did not know that cheese comes from milk¹³. Celebrity chef shows may top the TV ratings, but many people have forgotten how to cook food, let alone grow it, and now depend upon food manufacturers for their basic needs. The decline in cooking and food growing, particularly among young people, has eroded important life skills and contributed to a culture of dependence and powerlessness.

As a response to these problems of the current food economy and culture, people are becoming increasingly aware of, and involved in, different aspects of sustainable food economies. A recent Food Standards Agency survey¹⁴ of consumers showed that there was a great deal of interest in, and desire for, more sustainable foods.

What are local food economies?

'Local (food)' does not have a legal definition, unlike the term 'organic', although the Soil Association has developed the following definition to describe a sustainable, local food economy;

'A system of producing, processing and trading, primarily of organic and sustainable forms of food production, where the physical and economic activity is largely contained and controlled within the locality or region where it was produced, which delivers health, economic, environmental and social benefits to the communities in those areas'.

The Foundation for Local Food Initiatives (f3), in its 'Local Food and Sustainable Development' conference report¹⁵ identifies four areas within the local food sector;

- **Mainstream food businesses** – made up of the hundreds of thousands of producers, processors, distributors, and retailers. These operate within the 'globalised' food system but may be buying local products not because of any conscious decision but simply by default.
- **Community food initiatives** – these include home produce, allotments, community gardens, food co-ops, and community cafes. They often have an emphasis upon leisure and recreation, promoting healthy eating and community development.
- **Local food pioneers** – these include farmers' markets, box schemes, farm shops, and community supported agriculture schemes. f3 describe these as being driven by the need to increase the added value of their products because of the decline in world commodity prices.
- **Support and development projects** – these may include initiatives in the voluntary, statutory, and private sectors such as local food link organisations and networks, health action zones and regeneration initiatives, and marketing programmes by farmer cooperatives.

The diagram below, developed by Tim Crabtree of West Dorset Food and Land Trust, has been used to illustrate the economic framework for strategic interventions and different determinants of the supply and

¹¹ Caraher M, Dixon P, Lang T, Carr Hill R, Access to Healthy Foods: Barriers to accessing health foods: differentials by gender, social class, income and mode of transport, Health Education Journal, 1998.

¹² European Civic Forum, The exploitation of migrants in European intensive agriculture, ECF, 2002

¹³ MORI, Children's Cooking Skills, research for the Get Cooking! project, 1993

¹⁴ Food Standards Agency submission to the Farming and Food Commission, Food Standards Agency, 2001

¹⁵ f3, Local Food and Sustainable Development, FLAIR Conference Report, f3 –the Foundation for Local Food Initiatives, 2000

demand for local food. More details on supply-side factors can be found in the Local Food and Sustainable Development conference report¹⁶.

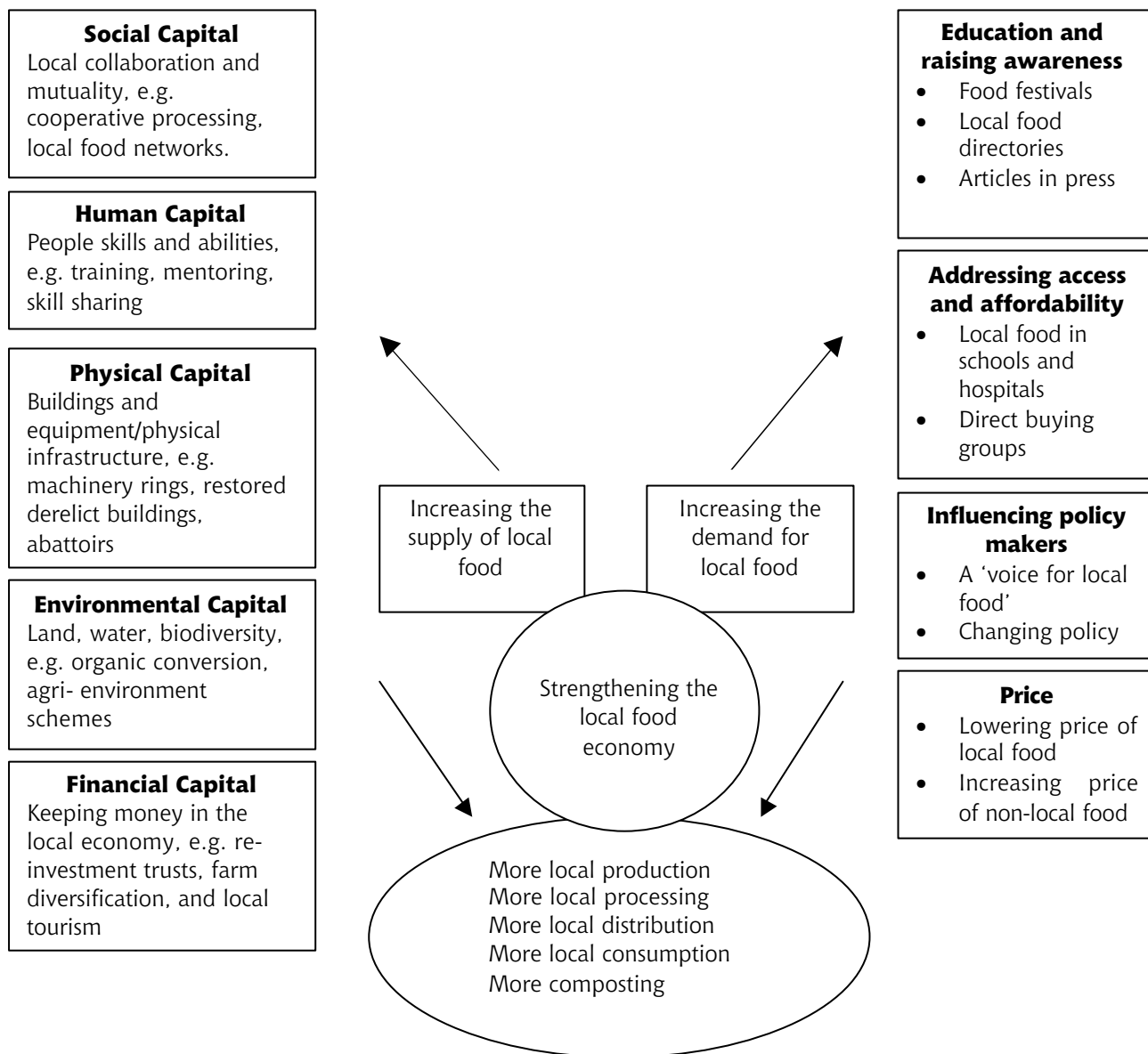


Fig. 1 Economic framework for strategic interventions and determinants of the supply and demand for local food

Below we consider some of the different types of 'community food initiatives' and 'local food pioneers', and some of the support projects in the sector.

CSA schemes

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) schemes come in a number of different forms, for example;

- Subscription – The farmer 'recruits' consumers to buy (normally a box of) produce on a regular basis. The farmer is paid 'up-front' guaranteeing them a predictable income for the year.

¹⁶ f3. Local Food and Sustainable Development, FLAIR Conference Report, f3 –the Foundation for Local Food Initiatives, 2000

- Farmer Co-operatives – A collaborative effort by a number of farmers to supply and market their produce. Usually they can offer a greater variety of produce and individual farmers can specialise in the most appropriate production for their farm.

For more information on CSA schemes see '*A Share in the Harvest*', Soil Association, 2002.

Box schemes

These can be CSA schemes as above although they are not necessarily so. They often supply organic produce and 300 are registered with the Soil Association. Box schemes can be run by the farmers themselves, or consumer groups, or they can simply be distribution/marketing companies supplying anything from local to imported produce.

Consumer co-ops

Consumer co-ops can be informal or formal groups who come together to purchase food collectively, enabling them to benefit from cost savings and/or improved quality of food. They can be effective in improving access to, and affordability of, better food and many operate distribution schemes to disadvantaged people.

Producer co-ops

This is where farmers come together to supply and market their produce, where collective bargaining may bring a better price for their produce. They often follow a CSA model but can sometimes be large-scale bodies such as the Organic Milk Suppliers Cooperative.

Growing your own – gardens, allotments, and community gardens

Many people grow some of their own food, either in back gardens, on allotments, community gardens, or unused land. This gives their families a supply of fresh, seasonal produce which would often be expensive or unavailable at retailers. Most gardeners grow food for the sheer enjoyment of it but an added benefit is greater household food security and saving money.

Local shops

Many local shops will stock local food as this contributes to a sense of community, supports the local economy, and is easy to do.

Farm shops and 'pick your own'

Farm shops and 'pick your own' provide one of the most direct links between consumers and producers. Farm shops can buy a certain proportion of goods on sale from outside the farm but this proportion is regulated by trading standards.

Farmers' markets

Farmers' markets are specifically set up for farmers and the local community. They only sell farm produce from within a certain distance from the market (usually 50 miles but rising to 100 miles in large urban areas). There has been a rapid growth in the number and scale of farmers' markets since the first one started in Bath in 1997 and there are now over 300 operating in the UK.

Food link organisations and support projects

A number of national projects and campaigns have sprung up in the voluntary and statutory sectors to promote a more sustainable food system, varying in their range and remit. The following is just a small sample;

Countryside Agency's *Eat the View* project

Council for the Protection of Rural England's, *Sustainable Local Foods* project

Friends of the Earth's *Real Food and Farming Campaign*

Foundation for Local Food Initiatives' *Food and Local Agriculture Information Resource (FLAIR)* project

International Institute for Environment and Development's *Race to the Top* initiative

New Economics Foundation's *Plugging the Leaks* project
Sustain's *Sustainable Food Chains* project and *Organic Targets Bill Campaign*,
Soil Association's *Food Futures*, *Local Food Works*, *CSA project*, *Eat Organic Buy Local* campaign,
Transport 2000's *Wise Moves* project

There has also been a growth in the number of local and regional networks to support and develop local food economies. Some of these are housed within a local authority or a local voluntary group, whilst others are independent, they include;

Bristol Food Links	Herefordshire Food Links
Community Action for Food and the Environment (CAFE) (East Sussex)	London Food Link
Cornwall Food Links	Leicestershire Food Links
Devon Food Links	Nottingham Food Initiatives Group (FIG)
Doncaster Local Food Network	Oxfordshire Food Links
East Anglia Food Link (EAFL)	Powys Food Links
Forest Food Links	Skye and Lochalsh Food Links
Forth Valley Food Links	Somerset Food Links
Gloucestershire Food Links	West Dorset Food and Land Trust
	Wiltshire Food Links

There is increasing political support for development of the local food sector as seen in the *Organic Targets Bill*, signed by over 250 MPs, which states '*the responsible authorities shall have regard for the desirability of promoting local or regional food economies*'.

There is also strong support in the Policy Commission on Farming and Food's report for local food and shortening the food chain. The report states: "*We believe that one of the greatest opportunities for farmers to add value and retain a bigger slice of retail price is to build on the public's enthusiasm for locally produced food, or food with a clear regional provenance.....*".

Benefits of local food economies

There is a great deal of anecdotal evidence to suggest that sustainable food economies have numerous economic, social and environmental benefits including:

- **Sustainable economic development:** Sustainable food economies can create fulfilling, environmentally sustainable jobs and training in a range of sectors including; food production, processing, retailing and catering, as well as composting, tool manufacture and other enterprises. A study by the New Economics Foundation¹⁷ found that for every £1 spent on an organic box scheme, £2.40 was contributed to the local economy through the multiplier effect whilst only £1.20 was generated from £1 spent at a supermarket.
- **Environmental improvement:** Local production and consumption of food can reduce the environmental damage caused by food transport. Sustain's report, *Eating Oil; Food Supply in a Changing Climate*¹⁸, found that the CO₂ emissions of products purchased at a farmers' market (Lorry + Car) was only 187 grammes of CO₂ per kilogram product, compared with 431 grammes of CO₂ per kilogram product from New Zealand (Ship + Articulated Lorry + Lorry + Car). Sustainable food economies can also reduce the environmental damage due to waste, through composting and reduced packaging.
- **Better health:** The role of fruit and vegetables in disease prevention is widely acknowledged. Sustainable food economies can increase the availability, diversity, and affordability of good food that is fresh, less processed, and likely to have improved nutrient levels due to a reduction in transport and storage time. Local, organic crops are produced without the use of pesticides,

¹⁷ Plugging the Leaks, New Economics Foundation, 2001

¹⁸ Eating Oil; Food Supply in a Changing Climate, A Jones, Sustain, 2001

residues of which are often found on non-organic produce¹⁹. Sustainable food economies can also provide a means of promoting healthy eating especially to nutritionally 'at risk' groups.

- **Community interaction:** The common experience of growing, cooking and enjoying sustainable food can break down barriers across age, ethnicity, class and gender, and stimulate a sense of 'ownership' of, and pride in, the local environment. Traditional varieties and regional, seasonal recipes can enhance food culture and develop connections with the local community.
- **Educational opportunities:** Some schools are incorporating sustainable food activities into core curriculum teaching and into practical, hands-on health and environmental education. Sustainable foods provide a great opportunity for children and adults to learn, not just about the food or curriculum subjects, but about local landscapes, traditional production methods, rural lifestyles past and present, the importance of a good diet, people's lives elsewhere in the world, and regional specialities and recipes.
- **Sustainable land use and landscapes:** Sustainable food economies can help reinvigorate urban and rural areas, support small retailers and street markets, and combat the trend towards large scale, out of town food retailing. Sustainable food is often produced in a way that helps conserve the distinctive characteristics of local landscapes²⁰.

Obstacles to more local food

The following outlines a number of obstacles to the development of local food economies;

- **Supply-side factors:** The absence of the necessary infrastructure at a regional level is a significant obstacle to more local food. For example, the decline in the number of abattoirs in the UK has meant livestock is travelling further and further distances to slaughter and to retailers. This means that potentially local food cannot be considered to be so. Other structural and economic factors include the lack of 'downstream' enterprises in the food processing and distribution sectors operating specifically on a local and/or regional level.
- **Trade and development policy:** The World Trade Organisation's Agreement on Agriculture (AOA) has advocated a model of food production for export in less developed countries, in turn encouraging specialised and high external-input production of cash crops in these countries²¹. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank's Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs) have also encouraged export-oriented economies to maximise foreign export earnings - leading to a shift away from food production for local consumption to a dependency on cash crops for export. The resulting oversupply on global commodity markets has resulted in dramatic falls in world prices – the resulting falls in the value of produce affecting farmers in both developed and less-developed countries²².
- **Regulations:** Planning regulations can, in some instances, inhibit farm diversification into on-farm processing and production for local markets. Producers may need to invest in small-scale processing and retail facilities for activities such as cheesemaking, wineries, and farm shops. Other regulations, which apply equally to small food enterprises and large enterprises, may be obstacles to more local food. Health and safety, food hygiene, labelling, and environmental health regulations incur costs which may be disproportionately higher for smaller enterprises.
- **Economies of scale:** Related to all of the above are the relative sizes of both local food enterprises and the local food sector itself, compared with large multi-national food companies and the global food economy. Larger food companies have a lower average cost of production

¹⁹ MAFF, PSD, HSE Annual Report of the Working Party on Pesticide Residues 1999. Supplement to the Pesticides Monitor 2000 Pg.17

²⁰ f3, The FLAIR Report, The local food sector: its size and potential, f3, 2002

²¹ A Jones, Eating Oil; Food supply in a changing climate, Sustain, 2001

²² A Jones, Eating Oil, op cit

than small companies, due to economies of scale, often giving them a competitive price advantage in the marketplace.

- **Currencies and fiscal policy:** Currency markets influence the prices of imports relative to the prices of domestically produced goods. The strong pound in the last few years has favoured food imports over domestic produce. Favouritism by governments towards the airfreight industry, through zero tax rates on aviation fuel, means the taxpayer, in effect, is subsidising the cost of transporting food imports by plane.

For obstacles to more public procurement of local food, see Sustainable Food Chains, *Briefing Paper 2, Public Sector Catering; opportunities and issues relating to sustainable food procurement* at <http://www.sustainweb.org>

What needs to be done?

An integrated approach is needed with consumers, the farming and food industries, and government working together towards overcoming the obstacles outlined above and nurturing the growth of a more sustainable food economy and culture.

Consumers can make a big difference by buying local, seasonal food, or buying fair trade products, asking retailers whether they have a sustainable purchasing policy, setting up or joining a community supported agriculture scheme, and asking government for clearer origin labelling on food. Of course, not all food is available locally and some produce cannot be grown in the UK, such as tea and coffee. Local food is not about restricting access only to products from a certain area but about buying local where possible, and when it isn't, buying the next best option for environmental and social sustainability, for example regional or national produce, fairly traded, and organic.

Farmers need to consider adopting different approaches to producing and marketing the food they produce as well as working cooperatively with others. Ironically, the foot and mouth crisis has presented an opportunity for farmers to diversify production for local markets, and introduce more value-adding of food on the farm or at shared processing and distribution facilities. By cooperating with others, farmers will go some way towards renegotiating the balance of power between themselves and the supermarkets.

Food retailers and processors need to change their purchasing policies to use more local and fairly traded foods, avoid air-freighted produce, encourage sustainable forms of transport, and promote greater regional diversity. They also need to participate willingly in labelling schemes which show where food has come from, introduce reusable packaging schemes and provide financial incentives to encourage consumers to take part in them, and encourage the development of regional infrastructure including more local abattoirs.

Local authorities can do a lot to help develop a more sustainable food system through their own purchasing policies and practices (See Sustainable Food Chains, *Briefing Paper 2, Public Sector Catering*). Local authorities could also introduce fiscal measures such as graduated business rates favouring businesses which buy a proportion of their food locally, planning policy encouraging and revitalising local shops and town centres, and specific initiatives to develop farmers' markets and community supported agriculture and fair trade schemes.

Devolved, national, and European governments need to address the current obstacles to a more sustainable food sector which their policies have helped create, encouraged by the supporters of 'free trade' and administered through international agreements. Measures need to be introduced which internalise the external economic costs of production and transportation. Agricultural support policies also need to be shifted towards sustainable food production and localised food sourcing and processing, along with fiscal measures to encourage the public and private sectors to buy more sustainable food.

More specific, priority measures needed include;

- **Improving the supply and demand** of local foods through increased production of appropriate foods for local markets, improved infrastructure such as abattoirs and small scale food processing facilities, establishing farmers' co-ops and joint marketing initiatives, and encouraging public and private retailers and caterers to stock/use more sustainable foods.
- **Conducting further research** into local food and the local food economy. Although there is some information on the size and potential of the local food sector outlined in documents such as f3's FLAIR report²³ and others²⁴, a detailed picture of the current state and trends within the local food sector, both nationally and regionally, has not been fully determined, nor has the benefits of local food been rigorously quantified.
- **Educating people** about local and regional food specialities and recipes. Raise awareness of the benefits of healthy, local foods and provide the means by which people can learn about growing, processing, storing, preserving, and cooking seasonal, and regionally distinctive foods.
- **Developing appropriate national, regional, and local strategies** to support the development of sustainable food economies. Each level of government needs to develop strategies covering the entire food chain which will benefit sustainable food economies.
- **Adopting appropriate trade and development policies** which benefit local communities rather than multi-national corporations. The UK government needs to review its contradictory policy of advocating development of the local food economy whilst supporting increased free-trade of food within European and global markets, controlled by a relatively few large companies.
- **Improving regulations** in health and safety, food hygiene, environmental health, and labelling so that they do not disproportionately affect smaller producers and enterprises over larger ones. Changing planning regulations to encourage local food and put local food producers on a level playing field with non- local producers.
- **Providing finance and funding** to the local food sector through grants and low rate loans for capital costs, training, and other services to develop the supply and marketing of local foods. Lowering of the current thresholds for some grants would make them more accessible to small-scale processing and marketing activities.
- **Improving traceability and labelling regulation** to incorporate mandatory availability of information of the origin and journey of food. The recent example of beef being labelled as Scotch beef when in fact the animals had been borne and raised in England (and then 'finished' in Scotland) illustrates the inadequacies in traceability and the current labelling legislation.

²³ f3, The FLAIR Report, The local food sector; its size and potential, f3, 2002

²⁴ The Health Education Board for Scotland (HEBS) are researching the local food sector in Scotland and Friends of the Earth (FOE) are researching the local food sector in Northern Ireland. The research reports are expected to be published later this year (2002)

Web Contacts

Big Barn <http://www.bigbarn.com>

Bioregional Development Group <http://www.bioregional.com>

Calderdale & Kirklees Food Futures <http://www.foodfutures.co.uk>

Common Ground <http://www.commonground.org.uk>

Also see <http://www.england-in-particular.info>

Community Food Security Coalition (US) <http://www.foodsecurity.org>

Compassion in World Farming <http://www.ciwf.co.uk>

Council for the Protection of Rural England <http://www.cpre.org.uk>

Countryside Agency <http://www.countryside.gov.uk>

Department of Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs <http://www.defra.gov.uk>

Devon Food Links <http://www.devonfoodlinks.org.uk>

Dumfries and Galloway Food Futures <http://www.foodpartnerships.fsnet.co.uk>

Durham Local Food

<http://www.durham.gov.uk/DurhamCC/usp.nsf/web/pages+with+sections/Sust+comms+-+Promote+Local+Food>

East Anglia Food Link <http://www.eafl.org.uk>

Eat the View <http://www.eat-the-view.org.uk>

Farmers Weekly <http://www.fwi.co.uk>

Farm Retail Association <http://www.farmshopping.com>

Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens <http://www.farmgarden.org.uk>

Food in Newcastle <http://www.newcastlefood.co.uk>

Food Standards Agency <http://www.food.gov.uk>

Foundation for Local Food Initiatives <http://www.localfood.org.uk>

Friends of the Earth <http://www.foe.co.uk>

Local Food; The Global Solution conference report <http://www.go-local.org>

Grab5 (promoting fruit and veg to pupils) <http://www.grab5.com>

HDRA –The Organic Organisation <http://www.hdra.org.uk>

Health Education Board for Scotland (Local food in Scotland research)

<http://www.hebs.com/research>

International Society for Ecology and Culture <http://www.isec.org.uk>

Local Government Association <http://www.lga.gov.uk>

London Farmers Markets <http://www.lfm.org.uk>

London Food Link <http://www.londonfoodlink.org>

National Association of Farmers Markets <http://www.farmersmarkets.net>

National Farmers Union <http://www.nfu.org.uk>

National Federation of Sub-Postmasters <http://www.subpostmasters.org.uk>

National Society of Allotments and Leisure Gardeners <http://www.nsalg.demon.co.uk>

New Economics Foundation <http://www.neweconomics.org>

Nottingham Food Initiatives Group <http://www.foodfig.org.uk>

Oxfordshire Food Links <http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/food>

Permaculture Association <http://www.permaculture.org.uk>

Slow Food <http://www.slowfood.com>

Sustain <http://www.sustainweb.org>

Somerset Food Links <http://www.somersetfoodlinks.org.uk>

Soil Association <http://www.soilassociation.org/>

The National Trust <http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk>

Village Retail Services Association <http://www.virsa.org>

WI Country Markets Ltd <http://www.wimarkets.co.uk>

Women's Environmental Network <http://www.wen.org.uk>

World Health Organisation (European Nutrition and Food Security Web Site) <http://www.euro.who.int/Nutrition>

Wyecycle <http://www.wye.org.uk/business/directory/wyecycle.htm>