



Sustainable Food

Cornwall

Good Food For One and All 25th

May 2021

Agenda

- Welcome
- Introduction Sustainable Food Cornwall
- Initial Survey Findings: *headlines, implications & interpretations*
- Q&A
- Breakout: *what are priority actions for the next 6 months?*
- Feedback from breakout groups
- Closing remarks





Introduction to Sustainable Food Cornwall

Matthew Thomson

Team



Matthew
Thomson



Manda Brookman



Emma Pate



Charmian
Larke



Holly Whitelaw



**Emerging results
of the surveys**

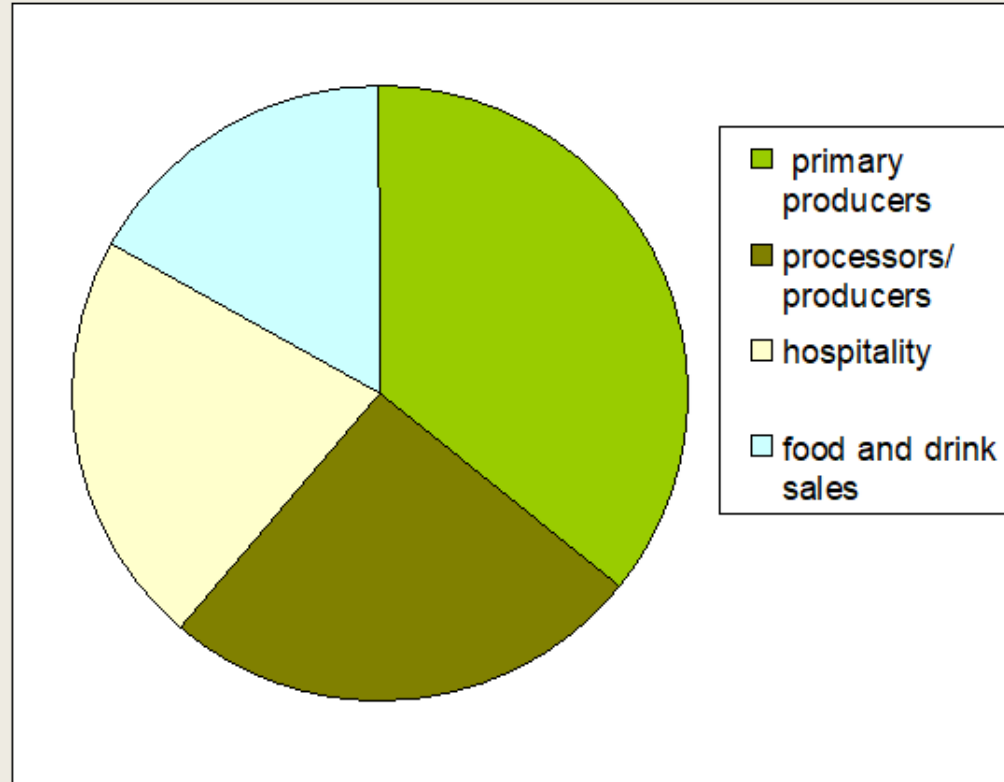
Manda Brookman

Q1 Who responded to the Survey?

FOOD SECTOR

A wide range of respondents:

- 31 Farmers
- 24 Producers and processors
- 21 Hospitality businesses
- 16 Food and drink sales: wholesale & retail



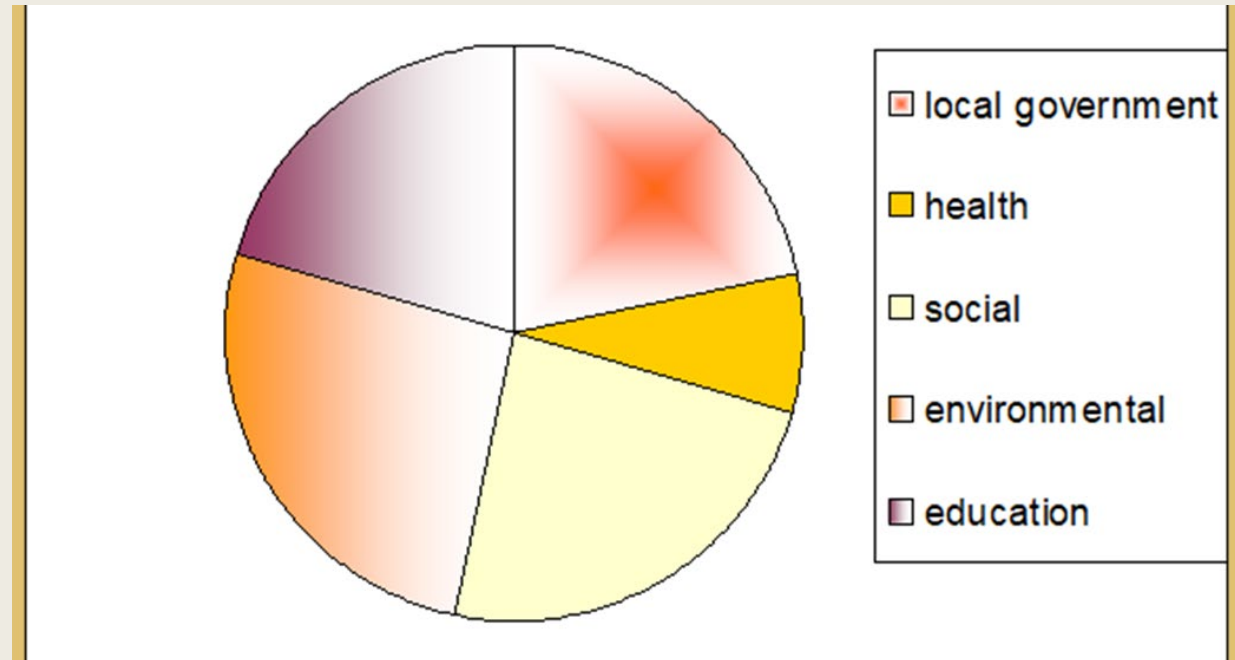
Equal numbers of directly involved and supportive organisations



Q1 Who responded to the Survey?

SUPPORTIVE ORGANISATIONS

- 27 Statutory/public sector: local government and health
- 26 Interested, not directly involved
- 24 Environmental purpose organisations
- 24 Social purpose organisations
- 20 Non food-related businesses
- 19 Education-based
- 7 Unemployed people



Q2: What is the biggest thing wrong with our current food system?

Supermarkets

- The power of the supermarket model making it hard to create another more sustainable approach to local food.
- This power being based on price perception and convenience, including all year round supplies.
- This power is partly enabled by lack of food knowledge and local supply chain difficulties

Pricing

- Too high for poorer people and too low for local suppliers to compete

Food quality and nutrition

- Lack of organic/regenerative/quality food and an overabundance of poor quality, cheap processed food.
- Low awareness of quality and nutrition values
- Low awareness of food preparation, cooking, nutrition and health

Local supplies

- Local food supplies deemed unavailable, expensive or hard to find.

Wider system

- Unsustainable
- Fragility of present system – as shown by Covid
- Fractured

Q3: What do the words " sustainable food" mean to you?

Respondents see food as part of a system which includes the land, power, economics, physical and emotional health, fairness justice and people, not as a single issue, or specific commodity.

For example:

- 92% of respondents agree that it means "a way of growing that improves rather than degrades the soil and land in which it's grown"
- 79% agree that it involves "food that's grown in a way that creates good jobs that respect people as well as the land that they work"
- 66% feels that it involves "healthy food that keeps us well, physically and emotionally"



Q4: On that basis if Cornwall were to become a good "sustainable food place", what would that include?

As in Q3, respondents see the connection between food, people, place, natural systems and economics - ie food as part of a system, not a single issue.

For example:

- 98% of respondents agree that it means *"more locally produced food available to all"*.
- 90% agree that it involves *"food grown in a way that improves rather than degrades soils"*.
- 80% agree that it involves *"fantastic local habitats and wildlife able to thrive"*.



Q5: To that end, what helpful initiatives, programmes, businesses, partnerships etc do we have already in place that we can build on?



Enormous, diverse range of examples of alternative, regenerative, redistributive enterprises and initiatives pointed out, most community based, all incorporating interlinked social, economic and environmental factors. However, there were also many suggestions that people do not know what is available suggesting a major "win" to be had - ie raising the volume on this emerging alternative food system so more know of it, can access it, and participate in it.

For example:

- Over 80% of all survey respondents offered a response, showing an extremely wide range of examples.
- 20% of those said that they did not know what already existed, but wanted to, suggesting an appetite for much greater awareness of initiatives and models
- High proportion of responses included multiple examples, suggesting knowledge of one initiative might increase the chance of knowing about others

Q:6 What else do we need to create/change to make this happen?

Despite widespread good awareness and understanding of all the diverse positive food action going on in Cornwall, the overwhelming majority of respondents (97%) felt more action was needed, suggesting actions addressing everything from fair competition and access to land to training and education and visible leadership



For example:

- 75% respondents wanted to level the playing field for small producers competing with supermarkets, and for there to be appropriate business support to enable them to do that.
- 74% respondents identified access to land for small producers as a key issue that needs sorting – and to take into account the need to live on the land when working it when doing so.
- Over 2/3 (71%) respondents wanted Cornwall's decision-makers to make a clear commitment to a sustainable, healthy fair food system.

Q:7 What would help you/us all eat and drink more healthily and at home?

Information, education and access were clear priorities and were seen as needing improvement across the board (ie for me, for my community, for others).

For example:

- 86% want better, easier access to affordable healthy and sustainable food.
- Not surprisingly packaging was a hot topic with 85% wanting less of it.
- 41% want better information on where to get healthy food; and notably, a similar percentage wanted there to be easier access to cooking lessons and kitchen kit.



Q:8 What would help you/ us all eat and drink more healthily and sustainably when not at home?



75% of respondents want to see an increased access to and availability of better, healthier and more sustainable food when eating out of the home.

For example:

- “Better labelling on restaurant and take away food including highlighting menu items where some or all ingredients are sourced locally.”*
- “Pubs and restaurants gradually realising that people want healthy, local, seasonal food, that is still affordable. It's becoming easier to find decent menus, but there is still some way to go...”*
- “Healthy food at hospitals and schools - not vending machines!”*
- “Training provided for all schools (teach the teachers)”*

Q:9 How does the way food comes to you personally affect you, or your community?

The two standout concerns:

- 80% agreed food miles are too long
- 64% said *“my family can manage but I know others who can’t”*
- 26% said *“ the people I work with cannot access good food”*
- 26% said *“not being able to buy good food is making my community ill”*
- And ...
- 67% said that *“other people are suffering from lack of access to good food”*



“People are in deep poverty. We need to see that the environment and social justice are connected: without one we can not have the other.”

Q:10 How would you like to be involved in a new collaborative effort to make things better?

A hugely positive response, with 90% of respondents letting us know how they wanted to be kept updated or involved.

- 24% of respondents told us that they actively want to take part in the decision making and in driving this change
- 50% of the 220 who responded wanted to be involved in some way.
- Many suggested meeting over food ...many offered to bring and cook (sustainable) food!

...“There are examples of how to do this all over the UK and the world. We shouldn’t try to re-invent the wheel but just seek out excellent ideas from elsewhere.”



Farmers and Growers Survey

“Large companies control too much of the market and over-processing of food is stripping its nutrient value. More information on the nutrient density of food would be good for the consumer”

- Confusion, fear and anger due to the changing weather & payment system and it was noted that supermarkets are paying them less than ever for veg.
- Increased use of regenerative techniques is increasing resilience to changing weather but still massive deficit in knowledge around soil biology, regenerative technique benefits and current available payments
- Desire to sell locally but not easy: need
 - - 'easily accessible supply chain
 - - large investment into refrigerated transport, market development, manufacturing and processing infrastructure.

SUGGESTION – ‘Post farmers a friendly looking, useful leaflet to help them now.’



Community Food Survey

We need 'Reduction of unhealthy food - better education - access to cheaper healthy alternatives. There is currently a lack in co-ordination of surplus food'.



- Food banks etc help reduce food waste but because of the availability of cheap, poor quality food there are people in Cornwall with malnutrition and some have low motivation or skills to cook from scratch. More fresh produce and less processed food is required.
- There is a need for more meals on wheels services, as much of Cornwall isn't supported but most can't even afford £6 for a hot meal delivered.
- Food banks etc often lack sufficient space and sufficient food and there is a need for better networks between surplus food providers and food banks and between the food banks also.

SUGGESTION – give cooking packs to people- eg oil, spices, etc, so that it is easier to cook from scratch. This worked well in Penzance, ref WAC.



Q&A



**What are our
priority actions for
the next 6 months?**



Sustainable Food Cornwall

Thank You!



Event outputs

Key priorities for the next 6 months...Peter's group

	Priority	Rating
1	Engage the supermarkets – sell ~80% of food bought by the public – e.g. seasonal food aisle, aisle for local food	
2	Raising awareness of what is going on already (and celebrate) – general public and groups/organisations - Increasing collaboration between food and finances – debt advice, financial services, information about local food systems, available benefits	
3	Educational issue to address – public, primary schools, advertising, cooking skills	
4	Co-ordinating food waste	
5	Cornwall already producing lots of food, needs to be made available to the public – local distributors and wholesalers to be encouraged to set up separate chain for local food, made available to food hubs, restaurants, local shops, schools etc., so that choosing local food is easier	
Others	Supporting existing groups Co-ordinating with CSAs and Landworkers Alliance – lobbying government, championing sustainable growers, food access Skills map – what can each organisation contribute? E.g. cooking skills Create a link between people with land and those who want to use it	

Key priorities for the next 6 months...Matthews group.

	Priority	Rating
1	Make more social eating spaces and community kitchens	11
2	Improve infrastructure to support more fresh food within foodbank system	9
3	Not for profit supermarket organization for Cornwall	8
4	More support for small/ mid scale growers & new entrants: farm co-ops for machinery & tools	8
5	Increase availability of nutritious food	5
6	Get more larger growers producing organic veg for market	4
7	Network and list of local ecological suppliers widely available and promoted to consumers	3
8	Losing the junk food from education & health establishments	2
9	Enable buildings for larger scale organic production	
10	Recognise the specific needs of the newly poor	

Key priorities for the next 6 months(Manda's group)

	Priority	Rating
1	Community growing schemes that are very inclusive	
2	Accessibility – removal of the elite thing and changing the narrative (social and physical access)	
3	Formal (school) and informal (community) education thro resource and campaigns	
4	Strategic: collaboration not duplication (there are multiple groups right now) – need clarity and direction	
5	Need an overall understanding of which food banks provide what, and how this can key into the issue of where fresh produce is available (diverse needs, diverse responses). Mapping that isn't mapping..?!	
6	Communication and co-operation between comm food distribution orgs, and food banks – happens in some places, not at all in others.	
7	Education and information still needed – despite campaigns to date	
8	Strategic hub collaboration – to make sure the right food gets to the right place at the right time	
9	Practical ability to cook – if people don't have the kit, they cannot cook or eat – immediate understanding of what people do not have that could be easily rectified – including temp circumstances – such as social housing (better co-ordination)	

Key priorities for the next 6 months....Emma's Group

	Priority	Rating
1	Define what does sustainability really means for us all ?	15
2	Can we have a directory of small producers/producers where they are and what they are selling to support individuals to have access.	18
3	Keeping it local all the time ...getting local suppliers to link with local communities increase the awareness	2
4	Make it convenient for individuals....how do we do that ?	12
5	Building networks for local food , shared delivery routes across Cornwall an organized distribution routes (a WhatsApp group exists currently which some producers/ growers are part of) what we don't want is lots of food miles.	11
6	CSA in every neighborhood(longer than 6 months to achieve) access to land is an issue	10
7	Grow awareness of what is available as produce becomes available...use social media.	2

Key priorities for the next 6 months...Charmian's group.

	Priority	Rating
1	Set up a leadership organisation – to be a wide supportive partnership of many types of stakeholders and to include the Council, but not run by them. With the aim to carry out the activities and mainly to co-ordinate activity throughout Cornwall	1 massively in front agreed by all
2	Raise awareness of the existing lists of local suppliers Possibly website, list of lists – get masses of publicity onto it	2
3	Increase awareness raising actions in local schools – use pester power to increase demand for local food. Assist work of NFU and Royal Cornwall Show	
4	Get more farmers' markets/local produce sales locations in population centres towns and villages	
5	Set a target to reduce food waste by half by set time	Lesser strength of feeling on this