Sustainable Food Communities

Annexes to the main report

Creating a virtuous circle between food education, practical engagement and consumption to drive significant changes in food culture.

Better Organic Business Links
an Organic Centre Wales project

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Acknowledgements

The completion of this project would not have been possible without the significant help and support received from numerous individuals and organisations, including the BOBL team at OCW, project lead partner organisations and all those who developed and delivered such a breadth of innovative local initiatives.

The Better Organic Business Links (BOBL) project, run by Organic Centre Wales, is a four year project designed to support the primary producer in Wales and grow the market for Welsh organic produce in a sustainable way.

The aim is to develop markets for organic produce whilst driving innovation and promoting sustainable behaviours at all levels within the supply chain, to increase consumer demand and thence markets for organic produce, especially in the home market, and to ensure that the primary producers are aware of market demands. The project provides valuable market information to primary producers and the organic sector in general.

Delivery of the project is divided into five main areas of work:

1. Fostering innovation and improving supply chain linkages
2. Consumer information and image development of organic food and farming in Wales
3. Market development
4. Providing market intelligence to improve the industry's level of understanding of market trends and means of influencing consumer behaviour
5. Addressing key structural problems within the sector.

In all elements of the work, the team are focused on building capacity within the organic sector, to ensure that the project leaves a legacy of processors and primary producers with improved business and environmental skills, able to respond to changing market conditions, consumer demands and climate change.

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1 Introduction

The final report on the Sustainable Food Communities (SFC) project was published to the Organic Centre Wales website in July 2012 and is available online. This annex to the report is based on the final reports of the activities funded by the SFC project. They are presented as case studies and a source of inspiration to anyone who wishes to support or initiate such activities in the future.

The SFC project supported activities in four areas, Cardiff, Pembrokeshire, Gwynedd and Newtown.

2 Cardiff Riverside

2.1 Cardiff’s pop up shop – Get Fresh,

The Riverside Mobile Farm Shop (RMFS) makes local fresh vegetables from the Riverside Market Garden and other local sources available directly to people in communities all over Cardiff, some of which can be described as ‘food deserts’. The combination of competitive pricing and convenience makes the RMFS a real alternative to corner shops and supermarkets for people who might not think of themselves as ‘foodies’, and so potentially have the most to gain from accessing fresh produce.

2.2 Cardiff Food Charter Brochure

The overall aims of the Cardiff Food Charter process are:

- To better integrate local food and urban farming related projects and initiatives in and around Cardiff in order to increase the scale and sustainability of their impact and to drive a transformation in food culture;
- To promote awareness of the health and environmental benefits of organically produced food;

2.3 Cardiff Orchard

There is a huge resource of unharvested fruit trees in Cardiff, and this project has been designed to increase public awareness and enjoyment of ‘urban fruit’. This is especially important at a time when food prices are rising (especially the cost of imported items - and 90% of the fruit eaten in the UK is imported), and awareness of the importance of eating ‘5-a-day’ is increasing.

3 Newtown – Mid Wales Food and Land Trust

3.1 Cob in a Cob

The ethos of the project was to take young people right back to the roots of food and production – back to ‘real’ food production as a means of raising the profile of organic food and its significance in our cultural heritage.

The project worked with staff and pupils to design and build an earthen cob oven within the school grounds to provide a permanent outdoor learning resource for the school. To conclude the project the MWFLT worked with pupils to plan and cook a ‘celebratory’ meal
(using the cob oven) to which parents and other members of the school community were invited.

3.2 **Growing for the Box**

The project focused on raising awareness and understanding of organic food production. The issues affecting local food production, supply and distribution, and awareness of seasonality and environmental factors affecting crop supplies into the local food economy. The project used the school-based growing project as a mechanism for reaching parents through their children’s work and enthusiasm.

The project helped to increase demand for organic box deliveries at the local level through the increased awareness, increased local availability of supply, there is an opportunity for the school to supply the Cwm Harry box scheme in future years through the trading relationships developed.

3.3 **The Big Apple**

The project focused upon raising consumer (the consumers of today and the consumers of the future) awareness and understanding of local, chemical-free foods, the production and distribution issues affecting local food production and distribution, and awareness of seasonality and environmental factors in relation to the annual apple harvest.

The project increased awareness of the Welsh apple and apple products industries, and understanding of the potential for apple production and harvesting in the context of the local climate.

4 **Sustainable Gwynedd**

4.1 **Glaslyn Leisure Centre allotments**

Datblygu’r rhandir i gynyddu ffitrwydd pobl drwy weithgareddau corfforol, ac annog bwyta’n iach a dysgu’r pwysigrwydd o fwyd maethlon drwy ffrwythau a llysiau, a defnyddio egwyddorion organig ble’n bosib. Gwella iechyd corfforol a meddyliol. Mae modd hefyd i dyfu coed ffrwytha ar dir wrth ymyl y rhandir ac i gydweithio ar hyn gyda’r Ffederasiwn Ffermydd Dinesig a Gerddi Cymunedol

4.2 **Gwynedd Food Charter**

Mae bwyd yn ganolog i fywoliaeth, diwylliant a iaith pobl Gwynedd. Mae mwy o angen nag erioed am fwyd naturiol, lleol, iach y gall pawb ei fforddio, ac a gaiff ei gynhyrchu i’r safon uchaf o diogelwch ac ansawdd. Yr ydym angen cynhyrchiant bwyd a gweithgareddau fydd yn cyfrannu at iechyd a llês pobl y sir. Rhaid i gynhyrchiant bwyd fod yn gynaliadwy. Yn economaid, rhaid sicrhu ei fod yn creu swyddi ac yn cadw yr arian yn lleol. I sicrhau hyn, rhaid cael y sector breifat a chyhoeddus i gyd-ffoedig yda chymunedau mewn gwir barteriaeth. Mae’r rhai a anwyddodd y siarter hwn wedi ymrwymo i hyrwyddo a gweithio i fi wyd da yng Ngwynedd.
5  Pembrokeshire - Caerhys Organic Community Agriculture (COCA)

5.1  **COCA Ysgol Bro Dewi**
The Primary Food Coops used COCA as a Community Supported Agriculture project to deliver two primary school vegetable cooperative schemes, in the schools of Croes Goch and Ysgol Bro Dewi. The aim is for the children to learn both entrepreneurial skills and foster a basic understanding of organic food production. Through the provision of certified organic vegetables grown on the farm, key support staff enabled the primary school children in years five and six to run their own food cooperatives; taking orders for veg from parents, taking payments and distributing the veg. As a core part of this, the pupils regularly visited Caerhys farm to learn how veg is grown.

5.2  **Ysgol Wdig – The Growing Zone**
This is an educational project focusing on organic growing of vegetables and fruit, healthy eating habits, environmental and economic benefits of local produce. The project ran courses in organic gardening and cooking and to deliver those created a new growing area and improved an existing fruit growing area and compost area. The project was aimed at the Foundations phase pupils, Year 6 pupils and the local community.

The first phase was the creation of the new area and improvement of the fruit and compost area with the help of members of the school community and Year 6 pupils. The second phase was a six week gardening course aimed at parents and relatives gardening with their children; covering topics such as growing from seed, food miles, going organic, organic pest control, harvesting and composting. The third phase, a 6 week cooking course used some of the produce grown and also locally sourced, organically produced vegetables, fruit and meat.