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THE PEOPLE FIXING OUR FUTURE

Case studies of innovation, determination and environmental stewardship

BRISTOL FOOD NETWORK

A COMMUNITY INITIATIVE AIMED AT CONNECTING PEOPLE WITHIN THE CITY TO GOOD, HEALTHY, SUSTAINABLE FOOD OPTIONS

THE PROBLEM

The world has a problem with its food system. Intensive farming, transportation and importing food from other countries is not sustainable and creates substantial emissions.

In the UK, standards for the appearance of fruit and vegetables mean that a massive amount of waste gets discarded a few hours after it has been harvested.

All this has created an unsustainable food system which cannot support future generations.

THE SOLUTION

What if you could reduce food waste and encourage local produce?

Bristol Food Network started to help businesses influence the food system with the aim of promoting ‘good food’.

By linking people with local famers focussing on locally-sourced produce, they are connecting people back to the roots of food. They increase knowledge through the community and are actively helping to tackle the food crisis.

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THE BRISTOL FOOD NETWORK

THE PROBLEM:

UNSUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS

The ever increasing global population has created an urgent demand for more food, produced cheaply and quickly, resulting in food that often damages our environment and lacks nutritional content.

To meet demand, intensive farming has increased. This results in the clearance of habitats across the world to make space for huge farms where animals can graze. Intensive farming also uses chemical pesticides and fertilisers leading to pollution and damaging our ecosystems further.

The UK imports a lot of food from farms like this.

When forests are removed, a carbon sink is also removed, meaning that we lose an important system that helps to regulate our climate.

46% OF OUR FOOD WAS IMPORTED IN 2021

FOOD WASTE CONTRIBUTES TO 10% OF ALL GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS (THAT'S MORE THAN ALL THE AEROPLANES IN THE WORLD)

Food waste is also a big problem.Supermarkets often demand that food looks a certain way before they sell it, meaning a lot gets wasted before it is sold.

When food waste goes to landfill, it decomposes, releasing harmful greenhouse gases particularly Methane which is significantly more harmful than Carbon Dioxide.

THE BRISTOL FOOD NETWORK

A COMMUNITY EFFORT



COMMUNITY FRIDGE

To solve these problems, the community came together to install a community fridge. This is where people, shops and cafes can donate their unused food. They keep it in a safe space with shelves and a fridge where anyone can come and take what they need. This prevents food waste and makes surplus food accessible anytime to those in need, offering a cheaper, sustainable alternative to buying new.

A SUSTAINABLE FOOD CITY

The community are using many ways of ensuring a sustainable food system across the whole city. These include:

EDUCATION

Teaching young people to cook from scratch, grow their own food, and eat more food which is seasonal, local, fresh and organic.

Educating people about how good food, nutrition and lifestyle are important for everyone.

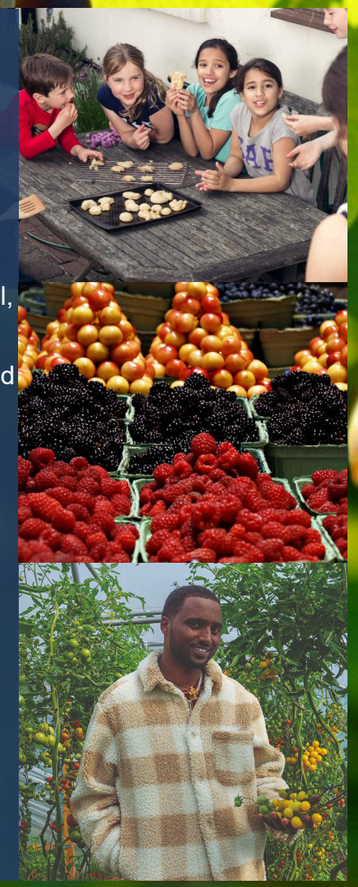
LOCAL

Encouraging people to use their local and independent food shops instead of larger supermarkets.

GROW

Encouraging sustainable food growing practices across Bristol and surrounding area.

Get Growing Trail helps bring awareness to people growing their own and shows how anyone can do it.



Images: Courtesy of Bristol Food Network

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THE BRISTOL FOOD NETWORK

ACHIEVEMENTS



- Food waste going into black bins has reduced to 10%.
- Local individual food growing has increased.
- An online hub linking people and organisations to sustainable food practices.
- 4 Food Festivals.
- Gold Sustainable Food City Awarded.

OTHER BENEFITS

With rising food prices, lots of people are struggling to afford food, so a project called ‘Good Food 2030’ has been launched to make healthy and tasty food accessible and affordable for everyone in the city.

This helps the environment, animal welfare, and helps local businesses and communities.

As a result within the city of Bristol, the food system is becoming more future-proof. Less food is being wasted, more food is being distributed, local growers are being championed and farms are growing food for residents of the city. More people are cooking from scratch, and more people have access to good food.

THE BRISTOL FOOD NETWORK

A BLUEPRINT FOR OTHER CITIES

The Bristol Food Network is one of many community based initiatives being set up across the world in the wake of high food prices and lack of access to fresh foods. People are beginning to become aware that eating locally and seasonally is good for our health, our communities and the environment.

These initiatives will help people become more aware of where our food comes from and the importance of valuing our food systems and those who produce it.

Bristol Food Network hopes that other cities will follow their lead and create networks where people can access important information on their local food hotspots.



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