



NATIONAL FOOD SERVICE

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FOR A
GREEN
NEW DEAL



National Food Service

The [Committee on Climate Change](#) estimates that agricultural production accounted for 9% of the United Kingdom's domestic greenhouse gas emissions in 2017 and 77% of land use in 2018. This agricultural land use and associated agricultural practices are a central driver for habitat and biodiversity loss in the United Kingdom, one of the [world's most nature-depleted countries](#). Further, domestic food production only accounts for [55% of the food consumed](#) in the UK. The 45% of food imported from abroad links British citizens to the global environmental damage which industrial agricultural production is causing worldwide in the form of methane emissions, deforestation, air and water pollution and soil erosion. At the same time, in 2020 it was estimated that 8.4 million Britons experienced some form of food poverty. People up and down the country from all walks of life struggle to regularly access healthy, affordable and sustainably produced food in their local area. The challenges provoked by our broken food system are enormous and systemic issues that require ambitious action on an unprecedented level: action like a Green New Deal.

Key policy

Establishing and championing a National Food Service that links communities with sustainable food producers to ensure everyone has the right to sufficient and healthful food whilst offering a fair deal to farmers.

A National Food Service explained:

- A GND would legislate for and finance the establishment of a National Food Service and an associated 'Universal Food Framework' which acknowledges everyone's right to food and works to establish resilient, localised food infrastructures within and between urban and rural communities.
- The idea of a National Food Service has two central pillars. Firstly, it would empower communities to establish grassroots institutions that ensure everyone in the local area has access to nutritious and culturally appropriate food. Secondly it would work to create spaces that use food and the shared experience of eating to bring communities together in publicly owned social eating spaces with communal cooking facilities.
- Further, the National Food Service can be linked to a ['Universal Food Framework'](#) that would give local government the powers and resources to facilitate resilient and sustainable food chains.

- This framework would connect local people, schools, hospitals and more with sustainable food producers through the facilitation of cooperatively run food hubs, logistical operations and processing facilities. It would also allow for the establishment of urban and community-supported agricultural projects and provide support for sustainably-oriented food producers looking for a fairer deal than currently offered by the supermarkets and corporate food giants.
- This must be linked, in turn, to a programme of transformation in the UK's agriculture sector. We need a programme that moves beyond the [emerging post-Brexit agricultural policy framework](#) that will allow some food producers to focus exclusively on profitability at the expense of environmental commitments. Agroecological farming is an alternative way of producing food that looks to transform both on-farm practices and the broader food chain. It encourages farmers to take a whole farm approach that works with rather than against nature through methods like integrated pest management and agroforestry. Simultaneously it looks to empower citizens to build more resilient food chains starting at the farm gate.

Examples:

- Local Government in cities like [Brighton](#), [Bristol](#) and [Middlesbrough](#) are working, in conjunction with third sector organisations, to develop local food policies, food councils or food partnerships that seek to build resilient local infrastructures of sustainable and healthful food provision. Projects like this must be empowered and financed to push further in addressing the issues and inequities in the British food system.
- Integral to this is linking the development of local food networks to broader transformative change in the agricultural sector towards agroecology from the ground up. Organisations like [Land Workers' Alliance](#), the [Ecological Land Co-op](#) and the UK's other campaigners are already working to bring this into being and lessons must be learned from their example. However, in a European context, so far only France has sought an [explicitly agroecological national food policy](#) which looks to promote and financially support agroecological education, training and transitions whilst tackling issues like pesticide and antibiotic usage. The UK has an opportunity to take the principles even further and embed them at the heart of a combined, transformative food and agricultural strategy.

Campaigns:

- The [National Food Service](#) campaign has established community eating spaces from Falmouth to Glasgow.
- [Sustainable Food Places](#)