

# Farming and Food: Our Healthy Future

**Delivery Plan for sustainable farming and  
food in the South East and London**



# Acknowledgements

*"It's time to stop the talking. This report shows what the industry needs to do. We have great strengths in the South East, and we need to grasp new opportunities in the market place. Together we can build a sustainable future."*

**John Selborne**  
Hampshire Farmer, and chairman of  
South East Rural Affairs Forum,  
July 2003

This Delivery Plan has been developed from views expressed by farming and food stakeholders in London and the South East region, in the public, private and non-governmental sectors. A large number of people have given their time freely, and have made valuable suggestions during the preparation of the plan. We would like to express our warm appreciation for all the contributions made, without which the Delivery Plan could not have been written. We also wish to thank Westley Consulting and Roger Seed Professional Services for undertaking the task of distilling this information into a series of valuable recommendations around which this Delivery Plan has been built.



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# 1

## Introduction

### Purpose of the Plan

This Delivery Plan comprises a series of actions to put farming and food in London and the South East Region on to a more sustainable footing, economically, socially and environmentally.

Whilst the South East is experiencing many significant problems resulting from lack of profitability in the farming and food sectors as felt elsewhere, the Region has a number of distinctive characteristics. These present some additional challenges but also offer new opportunities, the most visible of which lie in developing the market for local food to London's seven million consumers and meeting tourism and recreational demands, augmented by the Region's excellent landscape quality and features. This Plan addresses the South East and London as a whole, whilst recognising some very specific issues that exist in the capital.

### Link to National Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food

The project is the culmination of the process launched when the Prime Minister set up the Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food under Sir Don Curry. The Curry report<sup>1</sup> emphasised the need to restore profitability, and for farmers to reconnect with the rest of the economy. The Government's Strategy on Sustainable Farming and Food<sup>2</sup> (SSFF) promised that each English region would draw up a Delivery Plan setting out the actions to be taken. It was recognised that these would vary from one part of the country to another, hence the need for a regional approach involving local stakeholders. In addition to this regional approach the Government has established a National Implementation Group chaired by Sir Don Curry. This group has been set up to oversee and assist in delivery of the national strategy and regional plans and its delivery indicators will be used to monitor progress in the South East and London.

The Government's strategy emphasises the need to address the three elements of sustainability relevant to farming and food:

#### Economic

Low incomes and profitability; low and variable productivity; poor investment in capital and people.

#### Environmental

Damaging emissions, water pollution and impacts on biodiversity; waste, particularly from food and drinks packaging.



<sup>1</sup> *Farming and food – a sustainable future. Report of the Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food, January 2002.*

<sup>2</sup> *The Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food. Facing the Future. DEFRA, December 2002.*

## Social

Importance of jobs in agriculture and food; links to other sectors particularly tourism; rural stress; food, diet and health.

This Delivery Plan includes actions that are relevant to all three of these areas.

## Vision for the South East and London

We believe the vision in the Curry report<sup>3</sup> for the future of farming and food in England is fully applicable to the South East Region and London.

To achieve this vision, the Plan has been developed around a set of principles resulting from the views put to us by stakeholders. Our objectives and aims are for a region where:

- Efficient farming and food industries have a profitable and sustainable future.
- Farming methods command public confidence, and maintain or improve the quality of the environment.
- Healthy food is available, affordable and acceptable to all
- A dynamic rural economy provides rewarding jobs for people of all ages.
- Action is taken to support disadvantaged areas and sectors
- The public sector plays its part in the procurement of local food.
- There is full collaboration within and between Government and industry to maximise sustainability.

## Achieving the Vision

The Plan was developed through making the most of the wealth of information and ideas held by a variety of stakeholder groups and organisations. We recognise the positive work that is already being undertaken through a range of initiatives in the Region. This Plan aims to share and promote good practice, to build on and better co-ordinate existing effort to address ongoing concerns and to grasp new opportunities.

A significant number of recommendations resulted from consultation with stakeholders. These will be taken forward by focusing on ten areas for action. For priority tasks under these, a number of key organisations have agreed to lead on implementation – a process that will be overseen by the South East Rural Affairs Forum (SERAF).

In endorsing this plan SERAF recognises the extensive good work that is taking place in the region. There are opportunities to build on that work, and these opportunities must be seized to benefit our rural communities. This plan is the beginning; it will be updated and revised to reflect future developments.

*"We look for a profitable and sustainable farming and food sector, that can and does compete internationally, that is a good steward of the environment, and provides good food and a healthy diet for people in England and around the world."*

**Vision in the Curry Report**

<sup>3</sup> *Farming and food – a sustainable future. Report of the Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food, January 2002.*



# 2

*"Friends farming in the South West and Wales are generally no better or worse off than those of us farming in the South East, but their expectations are different. They live in predominantly rural communities, they socialise within farming groups and many of their children wish to follow in their parents' farming footsteps.*

*For many of us farming in the South East that is no longer the case. Our communities are not predominantly rural, indeed some of them could be described as urban fringe, and because of that we meet a much wider group of people, and not many of our children wish to farm.*

*There are other factors involved, but I do believe that the high level of depression and loss of confidence in South East farmers is to a large extent to do with the relative prosperity of their close non-farming neighbours."*

**Steering Group Member,  
June 2003**



## Methodology and process undertaken in developing the Plan

The work was financed by Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). The Government Office for the South East (GOSE) and the South East of England Development Agency (SEEDA) commissioned consultants to produce recommendations for a Delivery Plan. The South East England Regional Assembly (The Assembly) also contributed funds.

### Process undertaken

A variety of methods were used to engage with stakeholders, including nearly sixty one-to-one interviews and a seminar held at the SERAF conference on 25 March. This enabled existing activity to be identified and mapped for the South East and London, and revealed any gaps or shortfalls. Later stages of consultation aimed to encourage suggestions for recommendations for new work, and included a web-based survey and workshops focusing on the following issues:

- People and organisational issues in farming
- Healthy communities
- Farming – wider issues
- Issues specific to London

These views were then refined to produce a number of recommendations.

Throughout the process, the consultants (Annex iii) were guided by a Steering Group (Annex iv) drawn from organisations in London and the South East Region. It met three times during the project, and provided detailed comments on circulated papers as the recommendations emerged.

SERAF also provided feedback on the emerging recommendations. Further discussions resulted in the production of a set of ten key priorities for the Delivery Plan, which were presented to a regional audience at the Rural Vision Conference in Paddock Wood on 14 July 2003.

The draft recommendations produced by the consultants was further developed into priority tasks and partners have agreed to lead on specific priority tasks. SERAF endorsed the full Delivery Plan on 21 October 2003.

The overall management of this process including editing and plan production was undertaken by the GOSE Rural Team.

# Farming and food in the South East and London – an overview

## 3

### Farm type

The South East of England represents just 7.8% of the UK land area, yet in 1999 it supported 13.6% of the population and contributed 16% of the UK's gross value added (ONS Gross Value Added, November 2002).

There were 23,972 agricultural holdings registered in South East England in 2002, farming 1.14m hectares. This compares with 19,502 holdings in 1990 and reflects the fragmentation of some holdings (small parcels of land being sold with or without property). There has been a substantial increase in 'other' holdings during the last 12 years from 4,464 to 10,369. The description of 'other' implies that (many of) these are sublet under various tenancy arrangements and not farmed by the occupier. Overall the predominant identified farm type remains lowland cattle and sheep. The average farm size is 57 ha with almost 70% of farms being less than 50 ha. Counties where smaller farms predominate are East & West Sussex, Surrey, Kent (and the Isle of Wight). Census data shows that Oxon, Hampshire and Kent would be described as arable counties; dairying features strongly in Buckinghamshire, East & West Sussex and Hampshire; and livestock predominates in East Sussex and is also important in Hampshire and Kent by virtue of their being larger counties. The majority of horticultural businesses are in Kent, West Sussex and Hampshire.

In London there were 472 registered holdings in 2002, farming 12,064 hectares. Similar to the South East Region, there has been a significant increase in unspecified holding types, with a notable reduction in horticultural, dairying and pig & poultry units. As of last year, the London region had just 7 dairy holdings remaining.

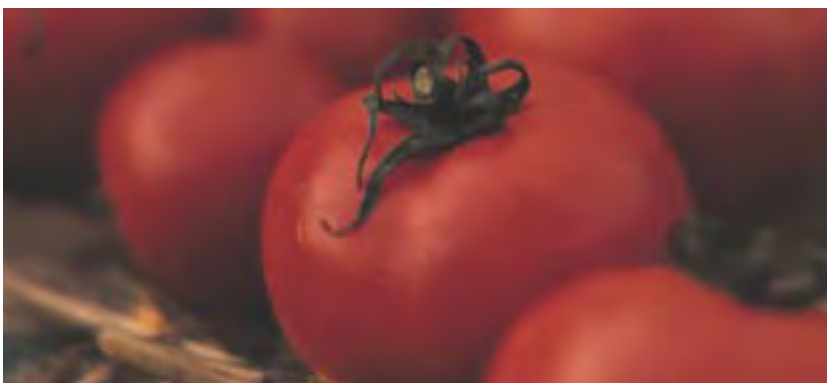


Figure 1

Farm Type

Government Office for the South East Region

2002 and 1990 (DEFRA/MAFF June Census)

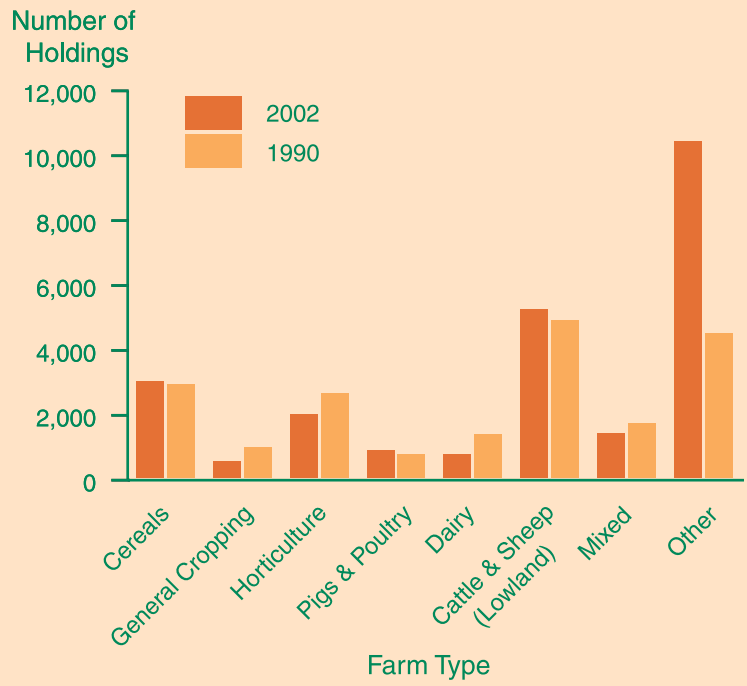
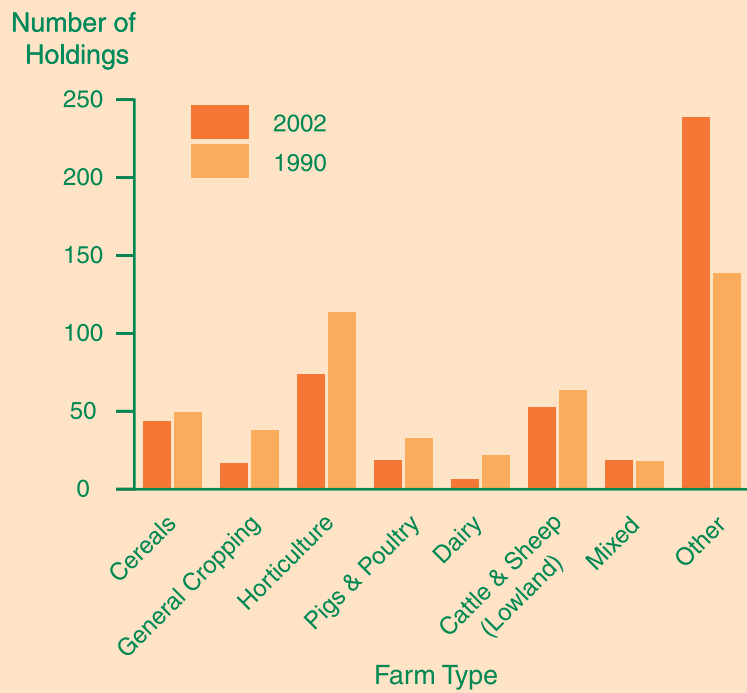


Figure 2

Farm Type

Government Office for London Region

2002 and 1990 (DEFRA/MAFF June Census)





## Farm incomes

Statistics from Reading University Annual Farm Business Survey demonstrate the levels of income being achieved by different farming types (see below). Covering approximately 190 farms in Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Hampshire, the Isle of Wight and neighbouring counties, the latest report based on data for harvest year 2001 shows a continuing difficult time for farmers financially. Cattle and sheep farms have been under extreme pressure in recent years, and cereal incomes have also been deteriorating.

| Farm Type      | 1997 (£/ha) | 1998 (£/ha) | 1999 (£/ha) | 2000 (£/ha) | 2001 (£/ha) |
|----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Dairy          | 287.2       | 76.6        | -1.4        | -48.1       | 126.5       |
| Cereals        | 21.2        | -36.7       | -5.6        | -16.3       | -52.6       |
| Cattle & Sheep | -167.5      | -182.1      | -174.9      | -197.1      | -207.6      |
| All Farms      | 58.7        | -17.7       | -4.8        | -21.7       | -5.9        |

Nationally pressure on incomes has arisen for a number of reasons including:

- BSE
- The weakness of the Euro
- Low global agricultural commodity prices
- Foot and Mouth Disease
- Rising costs, particularly in the South East

## Food processing and retailing

The South East of England is not a major manufacturing region but it does have a significant food-processing sector employing an estimated 32,000 people (UK Speciality Food and Drink Sector 1999, DTZ Pieda Consulting). Large-scale food manufacturers in The Region include Kraft Jacob's Suchard Ltd. and Van Den Bergh Foods Ltd.

In the South East and London together, the leading supermarket brands have over 600 stores:

- 205 Tesco Stores Ltd.
- 160 Sainsbury's Supermarkets Ltd.
- 152 Safeway Stores Ltd.
- 39 Asda Stores Ltd.
- 86 Waitrose Ltd.
- 36 Co-operative Retail Services Ltd.

Cafes, restaurants, and other food service providers amount to 6,220 across the South East and an additional 7,531 in London itself.

## Management and investment income



# 3

Data from Thomson Pro Business (2002) shows 91 meat wholesalers, 238 food products manufacturers, and 131 food import/export businesses located in the South East outside London.

Mainstream food retailing has a major presence in the Region. Data from Thomson Business Pro reports 1,017 supermarkets (including independents), 992 butchers and 209 delicatessens located in the South East Region outside London.

The food service sector is also particularly significant in the South East with 6,943 public houses and Inns; 1,602 cafes (including snack bars and tea rooms); 3,323 Take-aways and restaurants and 1,148 Fish & Chips and Pizza Shops<sup>4</sup>.

In London there are 27,400 jobs in food and drink processing<sup>5</sup>; 356 speciality food producers<sup>6</sup>; 12,155 restaurants<sup>7</sup>; 5,250 pubs and bars, and 1,200 hotels. Ethnic meals constitute 17% of all sales from over 60 national cuisines.

With a significant area of horticultural and red meat activity and comparatively affluent population (albeit with noteworthy variations), there is major scope for many producers to add value through carefully planned marketing at a local level, retailing speciality and locally produced foods. This sector had an estimated turnover of £430 million in South East England in 1999 involving 392 firms employing over 6,000 people (UK Speciality Food and Drink Sector 1999, DTZ Pleda Consulting). The number of added value producers is continuing to grow, supported by local Food Groups, Farmers Market activities and other enabling organisations. The South East Food Group Partnership now has in excess of 700 members.

## Food consumption and expenditure

There is very significant variation in the quality and type of diet in the South East of England and average figures for the Region do not reflect the diversity of diet at the individual household level. Data from Defra (formerly the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food) demonstrates that, in 2000, households in the South East tended to consume more cheese, lamb, fish, sugar, vegetables, fruit and alcohol relative to households across the UK on average. They also consumed less whole milk, less beef and fewer potatoes. A similar picture exists for London.

## Rurality of South East England<sup>8</sup>

Districts in the South East falling into the lowest performing National quartile of rural areas are Shepway, Isle of Wight, Swale, Dover, Rother, New Forest and Wealden. A substantial proportion of rural households in some peripheral areas have incomes less than 60% of the national median. Large parts of The Region suffer a shortage of affordable housing, particularly in West Kent, East and West Sussex, Surrey, Hampshire, Berkshire and South Oxfordshire which impacts on rural communities.

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<sup>4</sup> Thomson Business Pro, 2002.

<sup>5</sup> UK Speciality Food and Drink Sector 1999, DTZ Pleda Consulting.

<sup>6</sup> *id.*

<sup>7</sup> London First, 2003.

<sup>8</sup> Information from GOSE and Countryside Agency.



One third of the Region's area is designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and a large proportion is wooded. Rural businesses in the Region make up almost one third of all businesses in rural England.

## Social issues in London

London is notable for showing concentrations of both high and low-income households. Polarisation between rich and poor is far more marked than elsewhere. Poverty rates are particularly high for some ethnic groups, and with half the entire GB ethnic population living in London, income inequality has a strong ethnic dimension.

The spatial aspect of deprivation is also strongly marked, with inner London – an area of nearly 3 million inhabitants – registering rates of income poverty for children, working age adults and pensioners that are far higher than in any other region. The recent London Household Survey found that 2.8% of households did not eat fresh fruit and vegetables daily (6.2% among lone-parent households) and 15% of people were fairly or very dissatisfied with local shopping.



# 4

## Existing activity in the Region

A questionnaire was sent to all local authorities in the South East, main stakeholders in the industry and to Government agencies, in an attempt to determine the type and extent of activity already underway in the Region. The responses describe an array of activities tackling the numerous pressures on the rural economy.

Exciting and relevant work exists in many places but benchmarking and the spread of best practice across the Region is poor. There is also clear evidence that several good projects are struggling to develop robust business plans in to the future. Delivery of this plan will ensure that activity is collaborative and sustainable.

The main activities identified are as follows:

- Farmers markets are supported across the Region.
- Food groups are established across the Region.
- Food fairs are established throughout the Region.
- Initiatives to put locally produced meat on to local shelves operate in the Region.
- Healthy eating initiatives have at least started.
- Projects in renewable energy are actively being pursued and good woodland management and the use of wood for fuel are being promoted.
- Schools programmes are operational.
- Training groups for farmers and their staff operate across the Region.
- There are regional projects that are piloting demonstration farms and business management training for rural business people.

Further initiatives are included in more detail within Annex 1 (see p.16).



# Ten key areas for action

# 5

Stakeholders raised a significant range of issues. After discussion with the Steering Group, it was agreed that the areas listed below should be the key areas for action. Associated with each key area for action, priority tasks have been listed that are seen as essential to achieving progress. There are also a number of connecting issues of lower priority that will also be considered.

## 1 Advice and training (see p.16)

Giving farmers the help they need and encouraging new entrants.

| Priority tasks  | Lead organisation(s)   | Connecting issues to be considered   |
|---|--|--|
| Improve information exchange and provision on Rural Business Advice, Training, Finance, Subsidies and Regulations | SEEDA, RDS, Consortium of land-based colleges and BLOs.                            | Help grant applicants draft better business plans; signposting to sources of development capital; benchmarking; accreditation of business advisers; networking on rural stress; improving IT skills; food chain training strategy; demonstration farms; self-help campaign to improve confidence; promotion of broadband |
| Set up mentoring and leadership training for new entrants, and link up with potential leavers                     | Consortium of land-based colleges<br>Industry organisations;<br>NFYFC; Defra, BLOs |  |
| Promote the importance of training for managers and staff throughout SE industry                                  | SEEDA; LANTRA; Training providers; Industry organisations, BLOs                    |  |

## 2 Countryside access (see p.21)

Promoting and seizing the benefits of increased public access.

| Priority tasks                              | Lead organisation(s)                    | Connecting issues to be considered  |
|---|---|---|
| Promote rural access and use of countryside | GOSE, Industry organisations, FC and CA | Food/conservation/ tourism initiatives in new national parks; tourism intelligence service; woodland access |



# 5

## 3 Environmental stewardship (see p.23)

Promoting sustainability through whole-farm planning, soil and water management.

| Priority tasks  | Lead organisation(s)   | Connecting issues to be considered   |
|---|--|--|
| Promote environmental stewardship within the context of whole farm environmental management | Environment Agency, RDS, Defra                                   | Regional action on organic action plan; positive use of floodplains, adaptive planning for climate change. |
| Promote better soil, water and pesticide management and the appropriate use of floodplains  | Industry Organisations, SEEDA, Environment Agency, RDS and Defra |  |

## 4 Farming mainstream (see p.27)

Improving returns through collaboration and adding value.

| Priority tasks   | Lead organisation(s)  | Connecting issues to be considered   |
|--|---|--|
| Promote added value, local produce and exports in mainstream agriculture | Producers, with support of Industry organisations etc..., RDS, SA and Defra | Regional sourcing; standards for food group members; updated strategy on red meat; food group collaboration; SE co-ordinator for EFP; programme to explain CAP MTR; promotion of innovation and product development; maintaining farming in the urban fringe |
| Increase farmer collaboration  | Industry organisations, with support of EFP coordinator, SA, BLOs and SEEDA |  |



# 5

## 5 Non-food diversification (see p.30)

Overcome barriers to non-food diversification market-based action on industrial and biomass crops, wood fuel and tourism.

| Priority tasks   | Lead organisation(s)                         | Connecting issues to be considered             |
|--|--|--|
| Overcome barriers to market-based action on renewable raw materials and wood fuel. | SEEDA, GOSE, FC and Industry Organisations   | Promote whole farm approach to diversification |
| Establish a tourism intelligence service for rural businesses                      | TSE, Defra, RDS, CLA, NFU, TFA, FC and BLOs. |  |

## 6 Food chain reconnection (see p.33)

Securing better integration and understanding between farmers and customers.

| Priority tasks                            | Lead organisation(s)                                    | Connecting issues to be considered                      |
|---|---|---|
| Promote reconnection along the food chain | SEEDA, EFFB, BL, Industry organisations, GOSE and SEEDA | Network to keep SMEs abreast of food chain developments |

## 7 Health (see p.35)

Driving forward action on food and nutrition for healthy eating and living.

| Priority tasks   | Lead organisation(s)                         | Connecting issues to be considered  |
|--|--|---|
| Maximise SE activity on healthy eating, food and nutrition | GOSE Public Health Group, SEEDA, SA and DfES | Develop SE regional food and health action plan; co-ordinated approach to development work with schools; training and advice to teachers; local food and outdoor exercise in new developments; new fitness initiatives in rural areas |



# 5

## 8 Local food (see p.37)

Building the market and empowering South East suppliers to exploit it.

| Priority tasks                      | Lead organisation(s)                      | Connecting issues to be considered  |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| Strategic development of local food | SEEDA, SEFGP, RDS, GOSE and TSE           | Support outlets for local products; toolkit for local food groups; logistics/ distribution for local food |
| Support for local food              | SEFGP, Industry Organisations, FFB, Defra |   |

## 9 London (see p.40)

Developing food strategy to benefit the people and economy of London.

| Priority Tasks   | Lead organisation(s)                  | Connecting issues to be considered  |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| Develop and promote food and farming strategy for London       | LDA, GOL, GLA and other London bodies | Appoint co-ordinator to oversee food strategy; encourage London boroughs to build food issues into policies; feasibility study of London food event; renewable energy in new developments;  |
| Action to promote local food in London                         | LDA, GOL, GLA and other London bodies |   |
| Maximise London activity on healthy eating, food and nutrition | London Regional Public Health Group   | support city farms, gardens, allotments; shorter food chains into London; map food-related businesses and organisations; set up London food producers group; develop London regional food and health action plan; co-ordinated approach to work in London schools |





## 10 Public procurement (see p.47)

Identifying the opportunities and linking in South East suppliers.

| Priority tasks  | Lead organisation(s)  | Connecting issues to be considered  |
|---|-----------------------|---|
| Identify opportunities and link local suppliers into public procurement | SEEDA, SEFGP and GOSE | Link local producers with public procedures; promote local food in private sector |

Annex 1 (see p.16) contains the detail behind each one of the priority tasks, including existing work, why more is needed, what should be done, who should be involved, timescale and outcomes.

5



# 6

## Monitoring and Review

SERAF will be the responsible body in the Region to monitor and review the implementation of this action plan and to ensure that points in the plan are delivered. The SERAF Secretarial Support Group (SSSG) will oversee the delivery of the plan's contents, including lead and partner organisations identified against each activity.

The SSSG, in association with relevant lead partners, will make use of the headline and delivery indicators determined by the National Implementation Group for the SSFF to report on progress to SERAF throughout the year. SERAF generally meet on a quarterly basis and the National Implementation Group will receive reports concurrently.

This Delivery Plan will be reviewed at least annually. Lead partners will work alongside stakeholders to review their areas of responsibility and ensure that the plan remains realistic and relevant. Proposed changes and updating the plan will be presented to SERAF for endorsement.



# Annex 1 - Priority task details

## 1 Advice and training (see p.10)

Giving farmers the help they need and encouraging new entrants.

### Priority task 1

Improve information exchange and provision on Rural Business Advice, Training, Finance, Subsidies and Regulations.

#### Existing work

Financial and business advice available through BLOs, FBAS, Finance SE, Business Angels.

The Rural Business Advice and Training (RBAT) project has worked to achieve coverage across the region through the network of colleges and training providers. It has begun to create a signposting website for advice and training and has established the necessary server, software and site that could help meet the needs of the proposed web-based communications hub.

RDS Farm Diversification Newsletter identifies opportunities for developing rural businesses and where to go for guidance and support.

The ERDP VTS offers grants for training that contributes to an improvement in the occupational skills of people involved in forestry and farming activities.

Common Cause/Plumpton College have set up the Netherfield Centre for Sustainable Food and Farming.

NFU, CLA and TFA developed the Oxfordshire Rural Advice Directory.

DEFRA have carried out a Knowledge, Skills & Learning review.

Soil Association's The Organic Pathfinder Program (TOPP) in the South West.

Legal Service Partnerships.

#### Why is more needed

Rural businesses want to improve their financial, business and technical skills.

Need straightforward and impartial guidance as to the most suitable and competent sources of advice.

Advice needs to be joined up and consistent. It should cover business advice, legal training and sustainability.

Many enterprising businesses are unaware that there are financial/funding sources available other than traditional loans for business growth.

## Advice and training

*The VTS offers grants of up to 75% of eligible costs for vocational training that contributes to an improvement in the occupational skills of people involved in forestry and farming activities.*

*The scheme provides grants for training in the following categories:*

- *Information and communications technology*
- *Business skills*
- *Marketing*
- *Conservation and environmental skills*
- *Diversification*
- *Resource management*
- *Personal development for managers and staff*
- *Looking at new ways of working*
- *Technical skills in agriculture, horticulture and forestry*

*To date 39 VTS projects in the region have received support, and recent improvements to the scheme include a free online Training Needs Assessment, no minimum limit on the number of training days for an application, and a streamlined appraisal process that means a grant could be awarded within a few days after submitting an application.*



## Advice and training

The provision of information is often construed as providing advice, which is not the case. Training and advising require different skill sets.

### Action needed

Set up web-based communications Hub to signpost rural businesses to the most suitable sources of business, technical and regulatory advice. The elements of this work should be:

- A web-based platform for the Hub. Links to other relevant sites
- A register of business advice and training providers. Providers should pay to be included on the register, as with the Business Links National Register of Consultants.
- Accreditation of providers' competence through interview, examination of written work and following up references. Cost borne by providers as part of their registration fee.
- Regulatory advice on a whole-farm holistic basis.
- A 'funding map' indicating sources, contacts and approaches for debt and equity finance.
- Widespread publicity for the work of the Hub through all available industry channels.
- A non-electronic version of the information on the hub for those farmers and other land managers who do not have access to the web.

Integration with, and promotion of, the advice services already available via BLOs.

### Who should be involved

Consortium of land-based colleges in SE region (RBAT) should set up the Hub.

They will need detailed input from other organisations providing advice and training, or representing such advisers – LANTRA, BLOs, BIAC – or accrediting them – SFEDI. Also link to Environment Agency, RDS and English Nature, and to work on LaMIS.

Funding sources/advisers should include Business Links, Legal Service Partnerships, SEEDA and Finance South East.

Ancillary sectors could provide input on their sectors of the market.

### Timescale

The Hub should be set up by end 2004.

Coordination and collaboration established within the first year.

Promotional materials developed and distributed by mid-2005.

### Outcomes and monitoring progress

Increased awareness and uptake of best business advice, and information on sustainability.

Hub management should monitor usage and report to SEEDA.

Increased entrepreneurial activity in SE food sector – SEEDA to monitor.



## Priority task 2

Set up mentoring and leadership training for new entrants to farming and land management, and link up with potential leavers.

### Existing work

NFYFC are seeking to establish mentoring.

LANTRA have grant from LSC to develop mentoring and clustering

The RBAT project had initiated a network of Business Links, local training providers and employers' focus groups that could help identify potential mentors.

E-mentoring for farmers pilot project, delivered by Business Link Surrey on behalf of Defra.

### Why is more needed

Potential new entrants are going into other occupations or into farming elsewhere because of the economic pressures in the SE.

Mentoring by existing producers would show them how to succeed in the region, and help improve recruitment.

Leadership development will improve industry self- confidence in the future.

Some farmers want to leave the industry but cannot afford to do so.

### Action needed

Find willing mentors in every county of SE region. Set up database of mentors and potential new entrants, and broker contacts between them.

Provide guidance on mentoring.

Promote mentoring through farming and educational channels. Support new entrants with tailored farm business advice.

Set up leadership training for new entrants at college and afterwards.

### Who should be involved

Farming organisations (NFU, CLA, TFA or collectively with others as FRIG) and BLOs should help to find the mentors.

NFYFC should provide guidance on mentoring, and local young farmers clubs could make the introductions.

Colleges and farming organisations should promote mentoring and signpost to leadership training.

### Timescale

Ongoing – start as soon as possible.

### Outcomes and monitoring progress

30 new entrants involved in mentoring per year: farming organisations should monitor.

30 new entrants taking up leadership training per year: colleges to monitor.



Increase in number and quality of new entrants coming into farming in SE: Industry organisations to monitor.

### Priority task 3

Promote the importance of training throughout SE farming industry.

#### Existing Work

The RBAT network has begun to establish core provider and employer focus groups to help identify training priorities and promote the awareness of services provided across the region.

RBAT has produced a directory of training providers for the South East region and has established a forum for training providers to meet and build an understanding about the benefits of collaborative working relationships.

SEEDA and RDS have run workshops to improve understanding of business planning.

BLOs provide farmers and rural businesses with 1-to-1 advice re business planning, product development, marketing etc.

Local produce Training Courses to tourism businesses in AONBs- Business Link Surrey in partnership with TSE using SEEDA cluster funding running four such courses.

#### Why is more needed

Training needs should be assessed across the industry.

Farmers, land managers and food SMEs need to be helped to see training as a continuous process, not a once-for-life event. They need to recognise that it is an investment for their future, not just a cost to be avoided.

Diversification requires new or enhanced skills.

#### Action needed

A study of key training needs across the food chain should be mounted, concentrating on the issues to be covered, and the most effective training styles.

Small business-friendly materials on the benefits of training to be produced.

Develop a programme for mentors/coaches for individuals and businesses in the rural sector.

Industry organisations and local food groups to promote the benefits as an investment for the future. They should encourage farmers and food SMEs to develop a Value for Money approach – what exactly do I really need? What am I going to get out of this course/event? How am I going to get ongoing benefits?

Importance of training should be brought out as one aspect of business planning.

#### Who should be involved

SEEDA should commission study of training needs in partnership with LSCs in food chain sectors where recent studies have not been conducted.



## Advice and training

LANTRA should prepare promotional materials on long-term benefits and issues. Rural Business Advice and Training project could support.

Material should be made widely available by training providers and industry organisations.

Industry organisations should set up local self-help groups in partnership with training providers- this could be facilitated and promoted via existing channels e.g. NFU local meetings, BLO events, Growers Associations etc.

### **Timescale**

Study of training needs in 2003-04.

Implementation ongoing thereafter.

### **Outcomes and monitoring progress**

Study will provide context for ongoing work.

LANTRA should survey volume of training in the region.

30 rural business people coached per year.

Industry organisations should monitor their members' attitudes towards training.



## Countryside access

*Farming And Countryside Education (FACE) is the joint NFU/Royal Agricultural Society of England's education programme.*

*More than 30 industry bodies, agricultural societies and countryside organisations support it.*

*FACE provides a one-stop shop for educationalists, with two education coordinators working in the South East.*

*FACE helps teachers to undertake tailor-made study visits to farms and horticultural units for pupils of all ages.*

*Advice is provided to host farmers on health and safety issues.*

*Its website [www.face-online.org.uk](http://www.face-online.org.uk) is the gateway to free curriculum-linked resources on food and farming.*

*Records show it has 13,000 users each month.*

*Resources are aimed at youngsters from nursery age to further education students.*

*FACE is a stakeholder in the Government-led Access to Schools project ([www.farmsforteachers.org.uk](http://www.farmsforteachers.org.uk)) and the Forward Farming Partnership*



## 2 Countryside access (see p.10)

Promoting and seizing the benefits of increased public access.

### Priority task 4

Promote rural access and use of countryside.

#### Existing work

A range of private and public sector initiatives to promote farm visits.

CROW Act requires local highway authorities to review and publish plans for improving rights of way.

NFU Lambeth Show.

SE AONB tourism project.

FACE Project (NFU and RASE sponsoring 2 education coordinators in the region).

Demonstration Farms.

AONB Management Plans.

NFU's Friendly Farm Club.

East Sussex CC PSA target work.

The Blean, Kent, landscape area approach.

#### Why is more needed

Reconnection requires people to see farms at first hand.

Rights of way are usually the starting point for the public to visit and understand the countryside, but they are not always well designed or maintained for this purpose.

Landowners and land managers should look on greater public access as an opportunity, not a threat.

#### Action needed

A web-based directory of information about farm visits, and of learning material about the countryside, farming and the food chain, to be assembled.

Barriers to arranging more visits (resources, transport, health & safety, insurance etc) should be reviewed, and solutions identified.

Regional standards on quality of rights of way should be drawn up. Local initiatives should be linked into wider regional and national paths and routes.

Industry organisations should encourage members to see how they can exploit greater public access. Opportunities include:

- Action at village or individual farm level.
- Signboards welcoming visitors, explaining farming operations, points of interest and the link between town and countryside, and reminding people to follow the Country Code.



- Websites to present similar information in an attractive format.
- Co-ordinated leaflets
- Commercial operations – catering, shops, tourist activities, accommodation.

Tourism organisations should promote benefits of outdoor pursuits and exercise for health and recreation.

#### Who should be involved

GOSE should provide overall leadership in partnership with:

- Industry organisations, FC, GOSE Public Health Group and DfES staff, YHA and Sport England on farm visits for children.
- Highways authorities, tourist boards, CA and industry organisations on rights of way.
- Industry organisations, local authorities, AONBs, GOSE Public Health Group and Sport England on promoting the benefits of countryside access.

#### Timescale

Work should be launched as soon as possible and reviewed by December 2005.

#### Outcomes and monitoring progress

More structured programme of farm visits, leading to better-informed children and public.

Better standards of rights of way – highways authorities should monitor.

Significant increase in number of farmers taking positive action to exploit increased access by the public.

## Countryside access

*that sprang from the Policy Commission on Farming and Food.*

*www.friendlyfarmclub.com This NFU online resource is a child-friendly web club about food and farming.*

*It appeals to youngsters of four to 14 and there are links to the FACE education site for teachers.*

*The Friendly Farm Club site is alive with animated graphics, quizzes and competitions to ensure that children learn as they navigate.*

*The website is promoted heavily during the summer via the NFU's outreach work with its touring Food and Farming Roadshow.*

*The site can receive 60,000 hits per month.*

*The most recent promotion has been a joint initiative with UK media company Entertainment Rights, which specialises in quality children's television and launches a new series on BBC in 2004.*



## Environmental stewardship

*The Entry Level Scheme (ELS) is a new agri-environment scheme that is being tested in four pilot areas by Defra.*

*Under the scheme, payments will be made to farmers and land managers who agree to continue or introduce beneficial environmental management on their land.*

*The four pilot areas broadly represent four different English farming types.*

*The pilot area in the South East is at Mortimer, near Reading in Berkshire and represents mixed farming.*

*There are 51 agreements in Mortimer with the average area per agreement being 155 ha and average value of agreement being £4,641 per year.*

*The ELS aims to encourage a large number of farmers across a wide area of farmland to deliver simple yet effective environmental management on their farms.*



### 3 Environmental stewardship (see p.11)

Promoting sustainability through whole-farm planning, soil and water management.

#### Priority task 5

Promote environmental stewardship within the context of whole farm environmental management.

#### Existing work

Environment Agency (EA) have published 'Best farming practices: profiting from a good environment' and 'Waterwise on the Farm'.

Soil Association (SA) have published soil management guide.

Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) and Countryside Stewardship Scheme (CSS) payments can be made to conserve traditional features. ERDP contains regional goals for Environmental protection (landscape, habitats, species (bio-diversity), woodland, water, farm practices).

An Environmental Management System for Farms (EMSF) is under development by the EA. It is designed to allow farmers to demonstrate compliance with environmental legislation (not regional).

Projects in the region that:

- Promote agri-environment scheme uptake e.g. Chichester coastal plain.
- Reduce soil and water run-off from agricultural land and subsequent contamination of water by nutrients, pesticides and sediments.
- Pilot the entry-level scheme - Mortimer, near Reading.

#### Why is more needed

Regulation alone will not reduce pollution. The promotion and adoption of environmentally friendly farming practices and incentives are essential to protect and enhance the environment.

If farming in certain areas ceased, it would seriously prejudice the landscape, the environment and the local economy. A healthy environment, rich in biodiversity will encourage visitors to spend more time and money in the region.

Raising awareness of agri-environment schemes and qualifying criteria will enable more successful applications to be made and farmers to realise the cost saving potential and benefits of whole farm management.

Climate change reinforces the need to adopt appropriate farming practices to reduce the risk of soil and water run-off. For example extended growing seasons will increase the potential for diffuse pollution, flooding and requirement for crop irrigation.

In order to comply with changes in CAP.

#### Action needed

Promote awareness, development and implementation of whole farm plans to include issues like soil, nutrient and water

management, crop protection, promoting biodiversity and conservation, adapting to climate change etc.

Provision of consistent best practice advice for all environmental issues ('Best farming practices: profiting from a good environment' summarises key messages).

'Brown' (i.e. soil) as well as 'green' (i.e. biodiversity and conservation) issues need to be taken into account in agri-environment schemes and whole farm plans.

Data sets need to be analysed to evaluate concerns, prioritise areas for environmental protection and enhancement and identify where retaining farming has a wider value to the community.

Incorporate planning for climate change effects into whole farm management practices.

### **Who should be involved**

Environment Agency should collate and evaluate environmental datasets. RDS should analyse data and identify policy and social trends affecting land use and potential detrimental change in land use.

Environment Agency, supported by GOSE/Defra, should raise awareness of the issues, provide information and guidance, and facilitate industry discussion.

RDS should take account of 'brown' issues in applying agri-environment schemes.

The overall messages need to be promoted through partnership work, education, industry and commercial channels facilitated by the Environment Agency.

RDS to evaluate the success of the Entry Level scheme pilot.

### **Timescale**

Ongoing.

### **Outcomes and monitoring progress**

EA should provide an annual report on problems, needs, opportunities and progress through appropriate indicators for instance:

- Number of farms producing whole farm plans (area covered).
- Improved inland water quality.
- Reduced number of agriculture related pollution incidents.
- Reduced flood risk from agricultural run-off.
- Increased biodiversity/habitats.

## **Priority task 6**

Promote better soil, water and pesticide management and the appropriate use of floodplains.

### **Existing work**

Landcare partnership projects, e.g. Rother Valley Project.

## Environmental stewardship

*A scheme implemented across a wide area will help to address particular countryside environmental problems that cannot be completely resolved by focusing on relatively small and isolated areas of the countryside.*

*Depending on the success of the ELS Pilot over the next two years, the Entry Level Scheme will hopefully be rolled out across the whole of England in 2005.*



## Environmental stewardship

Wise Use of Floodplains - InterReg project.

Best Farming Practices booklet produced by the Environment Agency.

Waterwise on the Farm (Environment Agency booklet).

Environment Agency Catchment Flood Management Plans (CFMPs), River Strategies, Catchment Abstraction Management Strategies (CAMS) etc.

Pesticide levels are monitored by EA (ground water) and FSA (food). Voluntary Initiative was developed by farming and agrochemicals industry to demonstrate safe practice, and forestall introduction of a tax.

EA runs POPPIE (Prediction of Pesticide Pollution in the Environment) GIS system.

South Downs Landscape Enhancement Initiative (LEI).

### Why is more needed

Farming benefits from well-structured soil and clean, plentiful water. The importance of good soil and water management needs to be reinforced to minimise run-off, flooding and pollution whilst optimising yields and protecting natural resources.

Flooding is an increasing problem in the region due to climate change, continuing pressure for alternative land uses and inappropriate land and soil management. Climate change will increase irrigation requirements during longer, hotter summers.

Variable climate, high population density and a wide range of water uses puts pressure on water resources at certain times. Good practice will reduce water and energy use, reduce the quantity of dirty water requiring containment and disposal and save money.

Pesticides can render surface and ground water unfit for human consumption and removing them (e.g. on Eastern Yar in the Isle of Wight) requires expensive treatment.

### Action needed

Raise awareness among farmers of the importance of good soil and water management.

Work with agricultural colleges, advisers and agronomists to spread awareness.

Encourage farmers to assess run-off risk on a field-by-field basis and modify farming practices and planning accordingly.

Assess data sources to identify areas with specific problems relating to agricultural soil and water management practises.

Incorporate soil and water management plans into whole farm plans to ensure a holistic approach.

Investigate the potential to develop a regional incentive within the agri-environment schemes to encourage flood avoidance or relief measures as outlined above.



Promote demonstration farms for good soil and water management – organise workshops.

Support existing Landcare partnership projects and encourage and support new ones within identified problem or high risk areas.

Where appropriate, retain rainfall in upper-catchments to ease the flooding pressures downstream by restoring a more natural profile to canalised streams, re-creating wetland meadows, fens, pasture and wet woodland and by appropriate crop, soil and rural land management to reduce run-off from catchment areas.

Develop Catchment Flood Management Plans throughout the Region, engaging all relevant stakeholders.

Investigate geographic options and feasibility of wetland restoration initiatives at the floodplain scale for the region in conjunction with CFMPs, WLMPs, CAMS and BAPs.

Knowledge of the implications of climate change on farming practices for the protection of natural resources needs to be disseminated amongst farmers to raise awareness and assist their planning for the future of their business.

Raise awareness of better pesticide practice through workshops, agronomists, training and the media. Encourage cultural and biological pest control, integrated crop management and the production of crop management plans. Promote uptake of Voluntary Initiative as part of whole farm environmental planning.

### Who should be involved

Environment Agency, GOSE/ Defra, English Nature, Drainage Boards, SEEDA, Local authorities, Farmer and landowner representatives (NFU, CLA), agricultural colleges, agronomists.

Pesticide management should be promoted by EA, GOSE, EN, industry organisations (NFU, CLA, TFA), national management of the Voluntary Initiative, agricultural teachers and advisers, Drinking Water Inspectorate, water companies.

### Timescale

Ongoing.

Regional information on pesticides should be compiled and published from 2004-05 onwards.

### Outcomes and monitoring progress

Progressive reduction in diffuse pollution of river water, flood risk, sedimentation of rivers and loss of topsoil.

CFMPs, River Strategies, CAMS, WLMPs, BAPs

Sub-regional floodplain strategies

Incorporation of flood risk management into Local Plans under sustainability criteria.

Outcomes on pesticides include:

- Decreased use of active ingredients, and more widespread use of alternative methods.
- Reduced levels in surface and ground waters.
- Increased number of farms producing crop protection plans.
- Compliance with published targets for Voluntary Initiative.



## Farming mainstream

*The Forest Friendly Farming Project in the New Forest aims to unite commoners, farmers, woodland managers (whose work on which The landscape of the New Forest relies) shopkeepers, butchers, visitors and residents, to help them develop mutually beneficial partnerships and to find practical ways of supporting farming in the New Forest.*

*Forest Friendly Farming realise there is much to gain from working together – inspirational landscapes, abundant wildlife, thriving local businesses and fresh, local produce are some of the benefits.*

*By working together they hope to develop and finance initiatives that will support the local rural economy and ensure a secure future for the unique countryside and traditions of the New Forest.*



## 4 Farming mainstream (see p.11)

Improving returns through collaboration and adding value.

### Priority task 7

Promote added value and exports in mainstream agriculture.

#### Existing work

Many individual producer initiatives to develop the product and get closer to the customer.

Specialist export advice from HGCA/BCE, MLC, FFB, OFS and RES

#### Why is more needed

Commodity returns are outside the control of the producer, and are generally low. Exports can provide higher value in some sectors. Producers need to challenge and refocus their business direction to raise and get more control over returns.

#### Action needed

The industry needs to investigate all possible options, including:

- Differentiation. Take product out of mainstream channels, and sell it on the basis of its special characteristics.
- Value added. Work closely with customer to develop a product that offers tangible benefits to the consumer.
- Integration along the supply chain.
- Higher standards of welfare/environment etc.
- Organic production.
- Exports, particularly varieties, storage and handling for grain, and livestock.

Government should give priority in awarding grants (RES/PMG/ADS) to credible regional scale projects aimed at such developments.

A feasibility study should be carried out into the market for organic produce from the region and the infrastructure needed to support it. This could include production, processing, storage, office, distribution and delivery facilities. It should also cover the level of training provision on organic production methods.

Where possible, steps should be taken to use existing facilities for organic food (where this could be done without prejudicing organic integrity). If it is necessary to develop new ones, consideration should be given to these being dual use organic and conventional.

#### Who should be involved

Producers need to take the lead with support of farming industry organisations (either collectively through FRIG or individually e.g. NFU, CLA, TFA etc).

Sectoral bodies (HGCA, MLC/EBLEX, MDC, SA).

SEFGP and other welfare/environmental bodies.

RDS in the region, and Defra HQ (for ADS) and Organic Farming Scheme should publicise priority for grant schemes.

The organic sector should commission a feasibility study from an independent consultant. They should involve local authorities,

Defra, SEEDA and other industry interests as appropriate in the implementation.

## Timescale

Immediate and ongoing.

## Outcomes and monitoring progress

Increased number of farmers involved in added value and export production. Farming industry organisations to monitor number of farmers, and range of products involved.

A report with practical recommendations for an organic action plan. The SA should monitor increased activity.

## Priority task 8

Increase farmer collaboration.

### Existing work

Local machinery rings and informal machinery arrangements.

Farming joint ventures.

Contracting and Share farming.

English Farming & Food Partnerships (EFFP) launched May 2003.

East Sussex Fruit Growers Association.

Wealdon Farmers Network.

Forest Friendly Farming, New Forest.

SA events promoting collaboration.

Demonstration Farms.

### Why is more needed

Many farmers don't recognise the benefits of collaboration.

Many farmers don't understand the implications and consequences of poorly planned or implemented ventures.

Need to change the culture of farming from local competition and isolation, to local collaboration to beat global competition.

EFFP is not resourced to deal with SE region without some help.

### Action needed

- Identify scope for existing machinery rings to expand, barriers to expansion, and scope for new rings and potential leaders; pump prime to overcome barriers.
- Ensure joint venture and collaborative activity are practically promoted within regional demonstration farm network.
- Educate farm advisory sector in the issues, benefits and drawbacks of farmer collaboration; ensure it is fully plugged into EFFP.
- Establish framework and checklist documents for farmers to assess financial and non-financial impact of collaboration.



## Farming mainstream

- Provide one-to-one subsidised specialist advice to farmers considering collaborative activity.
- Create a database of farmers who wish to collaborate and establish an introduction agency to accelerate collaboration in the sector.

Work out job description for EFPF co-ordinator for the region, identify and appoint suitable individual, pump-prime cost for first 12 months.

### **Who should be involved**

Farming industry organisations, including SA for the organic sector, with support of GOSE and EFPF coordinator, NAAC, BIAC, FBAS, SEEDA should appoint EFPF co-ordinator.

### **Timescale**

Machinery ring study by January 2005.

### **Outcomes and monitoring progress**

EFPF co-ordinator in place by early 2004.

Two new machinery rings by December 2005.

50% increase in farmer collaboration by January 2006.

EFPF co-ordinator to provide 6-monthly monitoring reports.





## 5 Non-food diversification (see p.12)

Overcome barriers to non-food diversification and market-based action on renewable raw materials, alternative crops, wood fuel and tourism.

### Priority task 9

Overcome barriers to market-based action on renewable raw materials, alternative crops and wood fuel.

#### Existing work

There are various national initiatives on non-food crops. SEEDA has held a regional conference. South East of England Renewable Energy Conference in December 2003

Significant amount of research work and development activity on wood fuel by SEWP.

#### Why is more needed

Mainstream farmers badly need to find alternative opportunities within agriculture, which provide improved returns. Mid Term Review should leave farmers more free to grow new crops.

#### Action needed

Compile regional handbook on non-food crops that would grow well in the region e.g. agri-pharmaceuticals, oils etc.

Conduct market research into potential opportunities – markets where renewables could substitute for existing materials; expanding markets where there is room for new sources of supply; uses for which novel renewables might offer superior properties.

Evaluate realistic prospects for regional production.

Encourage SE producers to develop production, standards and infrastructure for renewable raw materials.

Encourage large energy users to install clean wood-burning plant when current facilities are upgraded.

Woodland owners should be given advice and training on improved harvesting of thinnings/waste and planting of short rotation coppice.

Keep in touch with national developments, e.g. on taxation of biofuels.

#### Who should be involved

SEEDA, FC, GOSE, industry organisations (NFU, CLA, TFA), and Thames Valley Energy) should work out and implement a programme of action, taking advice from Defra's agri-industrial materials section and national and regional centres of expertise on renewables.

#### Timescale

Action should begin in 2004-05.

#### Outcomes and monitoring progress

Improved knowledge of market requirements on non-food crops particularly renewables and wood fuel.

## Non-food diversification

*Coopers Farm in Stonegate, East Sussex High Weald is a 90-acre farm made up of permanent grassland, traditional coppice woods and supports a herd of Sussex cattle and a flock of purebred Texel sheep.*

*It is farmed with a commitment to animal welfare and countryside stewardship.*

*A number of products such as beef, lamb, honey, charcoal and firewood come from the farm and are sold locally.*

*In 2002 the farm received RES funding towards the conversion of a Grade 2 listed barn into a 2 bedroom self-catering holiday let.*

*Coopers Cottage now offers very high quality self-catering holiday accommodation, rated 5 star with the English Tourism Council and already has numerous bookings.*



## Non-food diversification

Establishment of pilot plants. Numbers of SE farmers and other businesses involved in viable supply. Number of products developed for the market. Industry organisations to monitor.

SEEDA could set targets for regional renewable energy usage. Increase in amount of alternative crops grown in region.

### Priority task 10

Establish a tourism intelligence service for rural businesses.

#### Existing Work

SEEDA funded cluster development.

AONB Sustainable Tourism Project.

Tourism South East (TSE) studies of equestrian tourism and gaps in visitor accommodation along key routes.

The Blean, Kent, landscape area approach (Partners include FC, RSPB, EN, Kent CC).

Directory of land based products for the AONB – hard copy and web-based will focus not simply on food.

Defra RDS ERDP newsletter and promotion campaign.

#### Why more is needed

Tourism information is fragmented and difficult to access, with many organisations being involved.

Rural businesses entering tourism often need to access several organisations and information sources to develop knowledge – many don't know where to turn.

Existing programs are short-term.

Need to feed more effectively into rural advisory and training infrastructure.

#### Action Needed

Set up a rural tourism intelligence service to collate and disseminate relevant information to farming and rural businesses.

To include:

- Market intelligence gathering.
- Market information dissemination.
- Technical advice.
- Signposting service and linkage to the rural business advice and training hub.
- Support mechanisms for appropriate grant schemes.
- Web and conventional promotion, to support the service acting as a knowledge entry point for businesses.

TSE to include rural business advice on their B2B web pages. They will include advice to farmers on diversification and will be used by FBAS and ERDP service providers as source of information to keep abreast of tourism market intelligence to help in their advice to farmers seeking to diversify.



## Non-food diversification

Bring together farms and rural businesses to promote and market their activities more effectively in the tourism sector e.g. local food producer, owners of holiday accommodation, retail outlets etc. and jointly promoting their services.

Promote strategic landscape scale approach. Benefits for farmers as the idea is to get land managers and businesses (including tourism) working together in a landscape area. Make it a place worth marketing as a tourism destination e.g. The Blean, a mosaic of villages, woodlands, farms, local businesses, shops and pubs in Kent all taking part in joint marketing/promotion.

### Who should be involved

TSE, Defra RDS, CLA, NFU, FC, BLOs, LAs.

### Timescale

Establish service framework in 2004.

### Outcomes and monitoring progress

Increased tourism entrepreneurship.

More effective and efficient exploitation of new tourism opportunities.

Extended market for existing tourism activity.

Improved market awareness and knowledge of farmers and rural businesses.



## Food chain reconnection

*The Defra funded Forward Farming Project is looking at how demonstration farm activities can help people in the farming industry to recognise and adopt best practice – technically, economically and environmentally.*

*The Government accepted the Policy Commission on Farming and Food's recommendation to set up a project to establish a pilot network of demonstration farms.*

*The aim of the scheme is to test the effectiveness of different types of demonstration farms and associated activities in improving the economic and environmental performance of farms and their integrating into the food chain and rural economy.*

*To date there are 19 demonstration farms in the South East.*



## 6 Food chain reconnection (see p.12)

Securing better integration and understanding between farmers and customers.

### Priority task 11

Promote reconnection along the food chain.

#### Existing work

Current initiatives (e.g. groups of farmers visiting a customer) are ad hoc and patchy.

Significant customers have been mapped in West Oxfordshire under Leader+.

SEEDA have pursued a livestock revival strategy following a MLC report in 2002.

AONB Management Plans.

Demonstration Farms.

Approximately 90 Farmers' Markets have been established in the SE region.

Local Food guide (produced by Waverley Borough Council, Business Link Surrey et al).

#### Why is more needed

Farmers need to understand supply chain better – upwards and downwards. Reconnection is the central theme of Curry report. Red-meat strategy needs to be more balanced – mainstream as well as alternative market.

#### Action needed

A broad programme of action should include:

- Mapping of significant food chain customers and suppliers within the region as a resource for future work.
- More visits by farmers to customers' and suppliers' premises to promote mutual understanding.
- More talks by customers to explain to farmers what the market wants.
- More visits by food chain customers to progressive farmers in the region.
- More vertical integration initiatives like the Warburtons-Centaur Grain project.
- More marketing awareness programmes by local training groups for farmers and other on-farm decision influencers (agronomists, feed reps etc).

More specific action should be taken in appropriate sectors such as red-meat:

- Review regional implications of MTR as soon as position clarified.
- Review farmers' needs for improved efficiency, and publicise the support already available through EBLEX/BPEX and RMIF.
- Investigate ways of improving mainstream efficiency.

- Carry out research into specific issues (e.g. public procurement, supply to London).
- Review progress and confirm approach on upgrading facilities at core network of medium-sized abattoirs.
- Review need for improved cutting facilities.
- Continue with the state aid application.
- Support local marketing/branding where a clear market outlet has been established.
- Publicise the updated strategy and organise industry events to secure buy-in from local stakeholders.

### Who should be involved

Industry organisations (NFU, CLA, TFA) and local farmer groups should take the lead with reconnection activities, and to contact other stakeholders who may be willing to participate (support from FBAS and BLOs).

GOSE could encourage large companies to respond positively, by contacting Food and Drink Federation (FDF), United Kingdom Agricultural Supply Trade Association (UKASTA), Dairy Industry Federation (DIF) etc.

SEEDA should update its red-meat strategy on lines suggested, with input from MLC. Organisations consulted should include the land-based (NFU, CLA and TFA), SA, County Councils, livestock and meat sector (AIMS, NSA, NBA, Wool Marketing Board). Large retail and foodservice customers should be invited to participate.

Local authorities (parish, borough and county) should support, promote and develop Farmers' Markets in their area.

### Timescale

Ongoing from winter 2003-04.

Food chain mapping in 2004-05.

### Outcomes and monitoring progress

Increased coherence and understanding along food chain. Industry organisations should report annually to SEEDA on steps taken and members' awareness of other links in the chain.

Updated red-meat strategy by end 2003. MLC to provide 6-monthly progress reports to SEEDA on red meat.



## Health

*The National School Fruit Scheme is part of the 5-a-Day programme to increase fruit and vegetable consumption. Under the Scheme, all four to six year old children in state schools will be entitled to a free piece of fruit or vegetable each school day (currently either an apple, banana, pear or satsuma).*

*This will eventually entail distributing around 440 million pieces of fruit to over 2 million four to seven year olds in some 18,000 schools across England each year.*

## 7 Health (see p.12)

Driving forward action on food and nutrition for healthy eating and living.

### Priority task 12

Maximise the South East activity on healthy eating, food and nutrition

Existing work.

Several DH programmes on food/nutrition/exercise including National School Fruit Scheme and Five-a-Day.

DH launching National Food & Health Action Plan autumn 2003. DH/DfES Healthy Schools programme.

Sustain's Grab 5 programme, promoting whole-school approach.

East Sussex Food and Health Partnership.

#### Why is more needed

National arrangements need to be tailored to the South East circumstances.

Co-ordination will maximise effectiveness of effort by different agencies.

Planning needed to ensure success when School Fruit Scheme rolled out in SE region in spring 2004.

New parents/parents of young children need targeting to develop healthy habits for life.

Co-ordination needed to improve food access in deprived areas. Physical activity needs to be boosted to promote health and reduce obesity.

Schools are a target to provide information to young people and influence lifestyle.

Teachers need to be better equipped to explain complexities of farming and food.

#### Action needed

Development of Regional Food and Health Action Plan.

Development of a co-ordinated approach on education in schools around food/nutrition.

Provide balanced material to teachers on agriculture and food production, and its place within the rural and UK economy.

Mapping underway to assemble database of existing activity and key players.

Workshops to bring together key players and develop joined-up working at local level.

Development of a communications strategy.



Business Plan on School Fruit Scheme, promotion of breastfeeding and launch of welfare food scheme.

### Who should be involved

GOSE Public Health Group should lead and co-ordinate all actions.

Healthy eating work will involve GOSE rural team, SEEDA, CA, SEPHO etc.

Regional Food and Health Action Plan will involve Defra, SEEDA, CA, SA etc.

Schools/nutrition work will involve, CA, SA, Local Food Works etc. and require links to governors, DH, NHS, DfES and Ofsted.

### Timescale

Regional F& H Action Plan:

- Spring 2004.

Food/nutrition:

- Mapping, autumn 2003.
- Workshop, summer 2004.
- Action Plan implemented 2004.
- School Fruit Scheme, 2004 implementation.

### Outcomes and monitoring progress

DH to monitor roll-out of School Fruit Scheme.

SERAF to monitor delivery of business plan on SFS and SMART objectives for Regional Food and Health Action Plan.

Ofsted to monitor progress on schools and nutrition.



## Local food

*The South East Food Group Partnership (SEFGP) is an umbrella organisation, which has been set up to support local producers and consumers in the South East of England. Local food groups, the Countryside Agency, South England Development Agency and Food from Britain, support them.*

*Their objectives include:*

- To prepare bids on behalf of the local food groups on trade development, consumer awareness and tailored training programmes for local producers.*
- To provide support with applications to farmers and food producers wishing to bid for funding under the ERDP.*
- To encourage networking with all food-related bodies and organisations which support food businesses in the South East of England.*

## 8 Local food (see p.13)

Building the market and empowering South East suppliers to exploit it.

### Priority task 13

Strategic development of local food.

#### Existing work

CA and SEEDA have established a Local Products Network.

Local food groups are funded largely on an annual basis, and SEFGP has only limited resources for co-ordination.

Eat the view, CA (completed October 2003).

FFB Regional Support Package.

ERDP RES Trade Development Tools - Budget for production of producer portfolios (ends March 2004).

ERDP VTS - Trade Development and Food Hygiene Training (ends March 2004).

SEEDA - Regional Development Project from October 2003.

#### Why is more needed

Putting SE products on the map would return added value to producers, and provide interesting options for customers.

Need to spread the benefits of farmers markets and develop new formats.

Logistics coordination would improve efficiency and customer service.

Techniques to be tried out on public procurement could give local suppliers a fair chance also with private sector workforce catering.

There is no regional updating service to update SMEs on policy, industry developments and services in the region.

A stronger foundation for local food groups would enable local food to be better promoted.

#### Action needed

Baseline survey of regional producers, products and large customers.

Establishment of key competences needed by suppliers to large customers, and provision of guidance on meeting them.

Identify critical success factors from farmers markets, and encourage new formats (e.g. farmers supermarkets on permanent sites, in-town farm shops open 5 or 6 days a week) building on them.

Develop Local Food Works networks throughout the region.

Map logistics operations, capacities and needs. Investigate possibility of not-for-profit collaboration on logistics.





Include private sector workplace catering in baseline survey, and see whether customers' procurement practices could be modified to give local food a fairer chance.

Examine degree of interest, feasibility and funding for a regional network on lines of Foodfen.

SEFGP should manage funding bids for groups; collaborate with NAFM/FRA to provide advice on retailing; run more consumer campaigns; work with tourism authorities to promote local food in tourism businesses.

PCT initiatives on healthy eating should be linked in.

SEEDA to provide facilities for product development etc.

### **Who should be involved**

SEEDA should co-ordinate and lead this activity, with support from SEFGP and industry organisations.

Others to be involved in specific areas include producers and groups, RDS and Defra HQ re grants, CA, SA and local authorities re Local Food Works, logistics organisations, local authorities, CBI and FDF re workplace catering, GOSE Public Health Group and tourism authorities.

### **Timescale**

Background work by March 2004.

Regional network up and running by December 2004.

Logistics report by December 2004.

Review of progress on local outlets by December 2005.

### **Outcomes and monitoring progress**

SEEDA should monitor number of producers and products supplying large customers.

SEFGP should monitor number of outlets recognised as selling local food.

Practical proposals for more efficient logistics.

Practical recommendations for suppliers and customers on workplace catering.

Numbers of small businesses involved in regional food network.

SEFGP to monitor food group activities, and volume of local food sold through them.

## **Priority task 14**

Underpinning for local food.

### **Existing work**

Four foods are registered in the region with EU Protected Food Names.

NFU publishes periodic reminders about UK food in season.

Horsham District Food and Drink Festival.



## Local food

Surrey Farm and Village Week.

Hampshire Local Food Week.

### Why is more needed

Consumers more likely to pay more if added value is demonstrated. Legal and economic benefits of EU protection are being missed.

Returns should improve if consumers encouraged to buy goods in season.

HACCP and food hygiene standards should be embedded into producers' operations.

### Action needed

Toolkit to help local food producers understand consumer motivations, consider how their product can meet them, develop suitable presentation, and apply continuous improvement.

Regional campaign to explain benefits of EU Protected Food Names, involving user-friendly material, case studies and workshops.

Development of calendar of SE food seasonality and promotional material, and targeted promotion to foodservice and retail customers.

Consumer education into the benefits of seasonal and local food.

Minimum standards covering food hygiene, HACCP and possibly environmental issues should be introduced for SE food group members.

### Who should be involved

All issues should be co-ordinated by SEFGP with support from:

- Defra and FFB on the toolkit.
- Defra, existing beneficiaries and industry organisations on protected food names.
- Industry organisations and local food groups on seasonality.
- Local food groups, local authorities, SE Health Protection agency on standards.

### Timescale

Calendar and promotional material by early 2004.

Toolkit by March 2004.

Minimum standards by December 2004.

### Outcomes and monitoring progress

12 new producers using toolkit per annum by December 2005  
– local food groups to monitor.

2 new protected food names per annum by December 2005  
– SEFGP to monitor.

Increased sourcing by foodservice and retail customers of SE goods in season – local food groups to monitor.

70% of food group members to demonstrate minimum standards by December 2005.



## 9 London (see p.13)

Developing a food strategy to benefit the people and economy of London.

### Priority task 15

Develop and promote food and farming strategy for London.

#### Existing work

Food-related work in London is widespread but piecemeal.

Sectoral events akin to London Fashion Week.

Government support for local renewable energy projects. Some local authorities already involved.

Various publications have supported the need for a food strategy including reports by Best Foot Forward and GLA Economics on London's ecological impact and the LFL-LDA report on local food.

London First are carrying out further assessments of the footprint, including food, which is the second greatest impact.

GLA commissioned 'Food Access and Social Inclusion in London' report, March 2002 (Leigh Rampton).

'City Limits – A resource flow and ecological footprint analysis of Greater London' (Best Foot Forward, 2002).

'Local Food – World City: analysing elements of London's food economy', a draft report by London Food Link to LDA, 2003.

Mayor's statutory strategies (Transport, Economic Development, Culture, London Plan, Biodiversity, Air Quality, Noise, Waste) and additional non-statutory strategies (e.g. Energy) contain some policies and references to food and farming.

#### Why is more needed

Sustainable farming & food economy requires links to be rebuilt between production, distribution, consumption, health, environment, social enterprise etc. Will happen only slowly if activities are handled separately without co-ordination, and without integration with wider policies, especially planning policies.

A London Food Event could become a national showcase for British food developments, and provide wide benefit to local economy.

More action is needed to promote climate change targets; energy crops less prone to vandalism in urban fringe.

The cross-sectoral nature of both London's food problems and the initiatives aimed at addressing them requires strong strategic direction: food issues are not well addressed by current strategies and policies.

#### Action needed

Draw up food strategy to integrate social, environmental and economic implications of food and farming in London. Consider needs and opportunities on social inclusion, ethnic diversity, regeneration, land use, infrastructure and sustainability, including

## London

*London Farmers' Markets were first created in 1999 and aim to increase farm incomes, and promote local and seasonal foods.*

*They encourage sustainable agriculture, traditional animal breeds and heritage fruit and vegetable varieties and reduce the gap between rural and urban communities.*

*The small company exists to provide Londoners with fresh local food, and to provide farmers with a good return for their work.*

*Producers come from within 100 miles of the M25 and must raise, grow or bake everything they sell. They run 13 farmers markets in London and estimate that they bring £3 million back to the rural economy each year.*



optimising organic food production. Examine potential contribution of official and private sector organisations. Devise action plan with priorities and responsibilities for implementation. This action plan should be drawn up with close reference to the many national and regional documents that have already been drafted reflecting London's particular food sector characteristics and needs. Other city food strategies should be viewed as opportunities for learning esp. Paris and Toronto.

The strategy should include an approach to tackle food access and social exclusion issues, which includes:

- Influencing key London strategies.
- Building on the strengths of London's diverse communities.
- Generating significant planning gain from London's economic success.
- Maximising the employment potential of the food economy.
- Supporting alternative market and community-based initiatives.
- Promoting the potential economic and social contribution of the food economy for regeneration and neighbourhood renewal programmes.

The strategy should consider whether to appoint individual with responsibility for co-ordinating action on the strategy across London. He/she should keep in touch with all relevant organisations, ensure they understand their role and encourage them to exercise it, keep in touch with developments in SE and Eastern regions, and produce annual report. Additional work is needed to monitor the effect in the sustainable food economy of emerging Mayoral strategies.

Guidance should be prepared for London boroughs to update any of their policies that have a bearing (e.g. UDPs, Local Agenda 21, environment, sustainability, regeneration) to include promotion of sustainable farming and food.

Carry out feasibility into possible London Food Event, seeking precedents and experience from London, such as City Harvest, the Lambeth Show, the Great British Beer Festival and Food Lovers' Fair and elsewhere; considering issues that could be linked in (e.g. sustainability, food miles, eating out, tourism, regeneration, ethnic diversity, women's issues, food access, healthy eating); identifying interested players; and examining organisational and resource implications.

Encourage uptake of renewable energy in significant new developments and urban fringe, particularly district heating for hospitals, schools, leisure centres, industrial units and housing schemes, fuelled by timber, forestry and green waste and purpose-grown short rotation coppice. This is a particular opportunity in boroughs adjacent to the two London Community Forests at Thames Chase and Watling Chase, and meets commitments outlined in the London Plan. Local authorities should promote partnerships between energy user, technology provider and fuel supply.

#### **Who may be involved**

Involvement in production/commissioning of the food & farming strategy, could come from LDA, GLA, GOL, ALG, the London boroughs, London First, food industry interests, London Food Link, CA and London Farmers.



Official bodies should decide on the appropriateness of the appointment of co-ordinator.

London boroughs, GOL, GLA, and food and environmental organisations could work on incorporating food and farming.

Official bodies could potentially commission study into London Food Event. Any researcher would need to consult widely.

Local authorities including London boroughs may take the lead on renewable energy, with input from London Renewables, Countryside Agency, Defra, DTI and renewables sector. GOSE renewable energy group could provide co-ordination.

### **Timescale**

Draw up strategy 2004-05.

Co-ordinator appointed as soon as strategy agreed.

Study into London Food Event – 2004-05.

Renewable energy – ongoing.

### **Outcomes and monitoring progress**

Holistic strategy and co-ordination is key to sustainable development. Strategy will need to include monitoring proposals.

Co-ordinator's annual report should be reviewed.

London boroughs' incorporation of food within their responsibilities should be monitored.

Practical proposals on London Food Event.

## **Priority task 16**

Action to promote local food in London.

### **Existing work**

Farmers markets have been established in London since 1999.

Recent Saphir report on wholesale markets.

London Food Link are mapping London connections for LDA. City farms/gardens/allotments provide experience of animals/food production/growing.

London Food Link/Soil Association project to increase local and/or organic food in 3 London NHS hospitals to start January 2004.

A London Allotment Forum will be established with support for the London Assembly.

Greenwich CDA are already being supplied by local growers and are supplying local businesses as well as food co-ops. Similar schemes in Newham supply schools and Sure Start.

Foodwise a pan-London network of food manufactures has been set up.



Existing work is underway to map parts of the London Food sector, for example as part of a LDA feasibility study for a Food Manufacturing Centre of Excellence in west London.

### Why is more needed

Need to widen the social benefits of local food outlets (e.g. for car-less consumers, those too far from a supermarket, or ethnic minorities).

Need to help food co-ops and access initiatives in deprived areas to become viable and sustainable.

Action needed to link local food production in London & SE with local outlets.

Need sound evidence-base for further development.

Food groups are proven way to support local food producers.

City farms/gardens are under-resourced, and number of allotments has fallen.

'City Limits – A resource flow and ecological footprint analysis of Greater London' (Best Foot Forward, 2002) identifies food as a major contributor to London's ecological footprint (e.g.81% of food consumed in London in 2000 was imported from outside the UK)

### Action needed

The actions priorities and timescale for this theme of work will depend on the outcome of the proposed London Food Strategy but potential actions include:

- Identify the main sub-sectors of the farming and food and ancillary economy in London. It should establish the numbers of businesses in broad terms, their interdependence with others in London and elsewhere, the factors driving change, and the development needs.
- London boroughs to map local food outlets in their area and discourage change of use to non-food.
- Farmers markets should be further encouraged by promotion to consumers by London Farmers Markets, by reissue from boroughs, e.g. over permanent signage. Research should be commissioned to quantify the increased business that Farmers' Markets bring to adjacent shopping centres.
- Wholesale markets could be used at weekends and during the daytime for other food outlets.
- Increase amount of schools based education on food and farming, use school grounds as sites for farmers markets, food co-ops etc.
- Food access initiatives should be further developed in areas of need.
- Links and infrastructure need to be developed for supply of local food from producers in the South East and Eastern regions to customers in London. Involvement of wholesale markets should be considered. Particular attention should be paid to foodservice sector. Opportunities exist to develop a local food centre from the developments that follow the wholesale markets review.
- Promotion of sustainable procurement policies, particularly within the public sector, which would promote access to



healthy and local food, where possible.

- A feasibility study should be conducted into a local London food group, looking at potential support from producers, activities, wider social benefits, organisation and funding.
- City farm managers should consider development potential, in liaison with agricultural organisations, schools and local authorities. Local authorities should recognise the importance of allotments in their UDPs.

### Who may be involved

Commission a mapping exercise, involving LDA, GLA, GOL and industry organisations.

London boroughs could include local food outlets as part of their sustainability and regeneration initiatives.

London Farmers Markets could take the lead on farmers markets. London academic food sector expertise (City University, London Metropolitan University, King's College, South Bank University) should be involved in quantifying benefits.

London food organisations could take the lead on setting up local links, in collaboration with farming organisations, individual producers and potential customers. LFL is doing this.

GLA could take a lead on promoting sustainable procurement within the public sector.

Owners should consider how local food could contribute to viability of wholesale markets and advise on infrastructure and distribution improvements.

LDA could potentially guide work on a local food group, with input from Food From Britain, London Food Link, South East Food Group Partnership (SEFGP), and Business Link.

Federation of City Farms & Gardens could take the lead on city farms. Local authorities could take account of allotments in their UDPs.

### Timescale

This work should follow the production of the London Food Strategy from 2004-05.

### Outcomes and monitoring progress

Clear understanding of connections in the food sector, as basis for further work.

More producers and customers involved in local food: London food organisations to monitor.

Practical recommendations and successful establishment of London food group. Progress to be monitored by SEFGP.

Greater number of visitors to city farms, and better facilities for them.

Greater uptake of allotments.

Actions drawn up for infrastructure improvements.



## Priority task 17

Maximise London activity on healthy eating, food and nutrition.

### Existing work

Several DH programmes on food/nutrition/exercise including National School Fruit Scheme and Five-a-Day.

DH launching national Food & Health Action Plan autumn 2003. DH/DfES Healthy Schools programme.

Sustain's Grab 5 programme, promoting whole-school approach.

Feasibility study being undertaken by East Anglia Food Link on local supplies for the school fruit scheme is being extended to London and the South East.

GLA commissioned 'Food Access and Social Inclusion in London' report, March 2002 (Leigh Rampton).

### Why is more needed

Co-ordination will maximise effectiveness of effort by different agencies.

The cross-sectoral nature of both London's food problems and the initiatives aimed at addressing them requires strong strategic direction:

- Food issues are not well addressed by current strategies and policies.
- New parents or parents of young children need targeting to develop healthy habits for life.
- Co-ordination needed to improve food access in deprived areas.
- Physical activity needs to be boosted to promote health and reduce obesity.
- Schools are a target to provide information to young people and influence lifestyle.
- Teachers need to be better equipped to explain complexities of farming and food.
- Co-ordination is needed to ensure PCT food and nutrition strategies give regard to sustainable food issues.

### Action needed

The London Food Strategy needs to prioritise the potential actions which could involve the following:

- Mapping underway to assemble database of existing activity and key players.
- Workshops to bring together key players and develop joined-up working at local level.
- Development of a communications strategy.
- Business plan on School Fruit Scheme, promotion of breastfeeding and launch of welfare food scheme.
- Development of regional Food and Health Action Plan.
- Development of a co-ordinated approach to work in schools around food/nutrition.





- Provide balanced material to teachers on agriculture and food production, and its place within the rural and UK economy.
- Publication of GLA Food Access Report.
- Conduct food accessibility audits.
- Production of supplementary guidance on promoting food/health issues through the planning system
- Action on public and private sector procurement and supply chains – focusing corporate social accountability work to maximum effect.

### Who may be involved

London Regional Public Health Group could potentially lead and co-ordinate all actions.

Healthy eating work will involve GOSE rural team, and perhaps LDA, Strategic Health Authorities, PCTs.

Regional food and health action plan may involve Defra, LDA, GLA and ALG.

Schools/nutrition work may involve Healthy Schools co-ordinators, Countryside Agency, Sustain, Community Five-a-Day co-ordinators, Community dieticians etc. and will potentially require good links to school governors, DH, DfES and Ofsted.

### Timescale

Mapping by end of 2003.

Regional Food and Health Action Plan, 2004.

### Outcomes and monitoring progress

Needs further discussion among relevant organisations.

Ofsted to monitor progress on schools and nutrition.



## Public procurement

*London Food Link has been awarded grants from the ERDP and the King's Fund to support an increase in local and/or organic food provision in four London NHS hospitals.*

*Starting in January 2004, the funding will enable London Food Link, working together with the Soil Association to:*

- Advise catering managers on setting food supply tenders, which improve chances for producers of local and/or organic food to supply a proportion of the hospitals' catering needs.*
- Connect producer and supply networks with hospital catering managers.*
- Explore London's longer-term local food supply opportunities including infrastructure, social enterprises, food security and distribution.*
- Quantify the economic affect of increased local and/or organic food provision on the rural communities from which the food is coming; as well as the health benefits to patients and hospital staff.*

*The project aims to achieve a level of 10% local and/or organic provision by the end of 2005.*

*The supply chain model and catering administration should be transferable to other public and private sector caterers thereafter.*



## 10 Public procurement (see p.14)

Identifying the opportunities and linking in South East suppliers.

### Priority task 18

Identify opportunities and link local suppliers into public procurement.

#### Existing work

Food Procurement Implementation Group (FPIG) established June 2003.

Sustain are preparing a manual on public procurement.

Sustainable Procurement Group reported March 2003.

Local Food in East Sussex Public Sector Catering Conference, March 2003.

Surrey Hills food brand (headed by SQP, a consortium of local farmers) are in negotiation with the local authority (Surrey County Council).

#### Why is more needed

Existing procurement tends to favour large companies, who source nationally and internationally. It does not take account of wider health and environmental issues. There is a need to ensure that regional suppliers have the chance to be fairly considered. Major opportunity when School Fruit Scheme goes live in 2004.

#### Action needed

A regional study is needed to identify the largest public procurement agencies, to examine their sourcing criteria and procedures, and to explore the scope for individual outlets (e.g. schools and hospitals) to opt out of the centralised system. It should consider how procurement agencies could monitor the amount of food obtained from regional sources, and recommend targets for local procurement. The study should also assess the capability of local suppliers to meet the requirements of individual outlets and agencies.

The object is to see whether the position of local suppliers could be improved:

- Either by informing them better about existing opportunities in the system as it stands;
- Or by modifying the procedures to give added weight to considerations of distance travelled, seasonality, freshness and access by smaller companies.
- Or by setting targets, e.g. for procuring a proportion of organic food.
- And by ongoing monitoring of regional sourcing.

The results of this work need to be written up in user-friendly fashion, and distributed through industry organisations and local food groups.

#### Who should be involved

SEEDA should review the Sustain public procurement manual when it is published, and decide whether a specific regional study on the above lines is justified.

The work would need to be carried out in close consultation with GOSE Public Health Group, the NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency, local education authorities and school governors, HM Prison Service, local social services departments, supplier and farmer/producer organisations etc.

SEFGP should take the lead on compiling and promulgating advice to local food groups, industry organisation and the internet. They should be supported by Local Food Works and other organisations with specialised knowledge of local food.

### **Timescale**

Study should be carried out in 2004-05, with the aim of implementation in 2004-05.

### **Outcomes and monitoring progress**

Publication of a report with practical recommendations on improving understanding of public procurement opportunities. See separate recommendation on links with local producers.



## Annex 2 - Members of the consultants project team

### Henry Brown<sup>9</sup>

Westley Consulting, Project Manager.

Henry is a business planning consultant specialising in food, environment and agriculture. He was formerly a senior civil servant advising Ministers on food marketing policy and CAP reform.

### Roger Seed<sup>10</sup>

Roger Seed Professional Services.

Roger has practised as an independent strategic business consultant since completing his MBA in 1999. Before that he worked as an agronomist and farm business management adviser, and then in the international agricultural supply industry.

### Geoffrey Adams

Spent many years in ADAS, where he was regional manager for the South East. Since becoming self-employed he has specialised in Central and Eastern Europe, and provided advice to farmers in the region, often through the Farm Business Advisory Service.

### Alastair Beacon

Westley Consulting, specialises in strategy, marketing and business planning for a range of private and public sector clients. He previously worked in the potato industry in roles from production and processing to sales and marketing.

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# Annex 3 - Membership of steering group

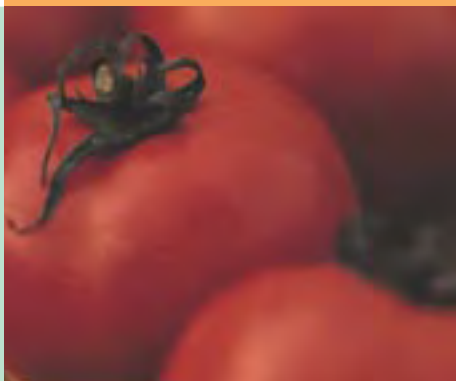
## Membership of steering group

|                       |                                      |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Nick Allen            | MLC                                  |
| Dr. David Barling     | City University                      |
| Jade Bashford         | Local Food Works                     |
| Nick Beard            | South East RDS                       |
| Nick Berry            | Environment Agency                   |
| Rosie Blackburn       | Surrey Business Link                 |
| Terry Bradfield       | Defra RDS                            |
| Penny Bramwell        | Government Office for London         |
| Helen Browning        | Eastwood Farm                        |
| Roger Budden          | Tourism                              |
| Dr. Martin Caraher    | City University                      |
| Valerie Carter        | SEEDA                                |
| Poul Christensen, CBE | Kingston Hill Farm                   |
| David Clarke          | Assured Food Standards               |
| Chris Corrigan        | RSPB                                 |
| Pat Dark              | Dept of Health and Care              |
| Andrew Davis          | CLA                                  |
| Annette Deveson       | TV Energy                            |
| Dougal Driver         | Government Office for the South East |
| Steve Gilbert         | RSPB                                 |
| Mike Gwilliam         | South East England Regional Assembly |
| Lesley Harding        | London Development Agency            |
| Reg Haydon            | TFA                                  |
| Tim Jackson           | Sparsholt College                    |
| Catherine Johnston    | Bucks Community Action               |
| David Jordan          | Environment Agency                   |
| Graeme Kerr           | Countryside Agency                   |
| Prof. Tim Lang        | City University                      |
| Alan Law              | English Nature                       |
| Shaun Leavey          | NFU                                  |
| Jeremy Leggett        | SRCC                                 |
| Duncan Mackay         | Countryside Agency                   |
| Ron Melville          | Government Office for London         |
| Dr. Robert Page       | Wildlife Trusts SE                   |
| Alison Parker         | Government Office for the South East |
| Dr. David Parry       | HRI                                  |
| Henriette Reinders    | SE Food Group Partnership            |
| Keith Richards        | TV Energy                            |
| Julian Sayers         | Lockinge Estate                      |
| Sue Scott             | BL/FBAS                              |
| Lord Selborne         | Blackmoor Estate Ltd                 |
| Bernard Spring        | RHM Frozen Foods Ltd                 |
| Micheal Summers       | HSBC Bank plc - Agriculture Division |
| Jonathan Tipples      | Assured Food Standards               |
| Wendy Tobitt          | Local Food Works                     |
| David Turner          | Bucks County Council                 |
| Adam Vernon           | Sussex LSC                           |
| Bob Waller            | RSPCA                                |
| William White         | NFU                                  |



## Glossary of terms

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| ADAS        | Agricultural Development and Advisory Service  |
| ADS         | Agricultural Development Scheme  |
| AIMS        | Association for Independent Meat Suppliers   |
| ALG         | Association of London Governments  |
| AONB        | Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty   |
| BAPs        | Biodiversity Action Plans  |
| BCE         | British Cereals Export   |
| BIAC        | British Institute of Agricultural Consultants  |
| BLs         | Business Links   |
| BPEX        | British Pig Executive  |
| BSE         | Bovine Spongiform Encephalitis   |
| CA          | Countryside Agency   |
| CAMS        | Catchment Abstraction Management Strategies  |
| CAP MTR     | Common Agricultural Policy - mid term review   |
| CBI         | Confederation of British Industries  |
| CFMPs       | Catchment Flood Management Plans   |
| CLA         | Country Landowners and Business Association  |
| CROW Act    | Countryside Rights of Way Act  |
| CSS         | Countryside Stewardship Scheme   |
| Defra       | Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs   |
| DfES        | Department for Education and Skills  |
| DH          | Department of Health   |
| DIF         | Dairy Industry Federation  |
| DTI         | Department for Trade and Industry  |
| EA          | Environment Agency   |
| EAs Netregs | An Environment Agency website designed to guide small businesses through environmental regulations |
| EBLEX       | English Beef and Lamb Executive  |
| EFFP        | English Food and Farming Partnerships  |
| EMSF        | Environmental Management System for Farms  |
| EN          | English Nature   |
| ERDP        | England Rural Development Programme  |
| ESA         | Environmentally Sensitive Areas  |
| FACE        | Farming and Countryside Education  |
| FBAS        | Farm Business Advisory Service   |
| FC          | Forestry Commission  |
| FDF         | Food and Drink Federation  |
| FFB         | Food From Britain  |
| FRA         | Farm Retail Association  |
| FRIG        | Farming and Rural Industries Group   |
| FSA         | Food Standards Agency  |
| GIS         | Geographic Information System  |
| GLA         | Greater London Authority   |
| GOL         | Government Office for London   |
| GOSE        | Government Office for the South East   |
| Ha          | Hectare  |
| HACCP       | Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points  |
| HGCA        | Home Grown Cereals Authority   |
| HSP         | Health Service Provider  |
| IGD         | Institute of Grocery Distribution  |
| IOW         | Isle of Wight  |
| L or M      | Low or medium  |



|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| LaMIS                       | Land Management Information System  |
| LANTRA                      | The Sector Skills Council for the environmental and land-based sector                   |
| LDA                         | London Development Agency   |
| LSC                         | Learning and Skills Council   |
| MAFF                        | Former Ministry for Agriculture Fisheries and Food (now Defra, June 2001)               |
| MDC                         | Milk Development Council  |
| MLC                         | Meat and Livestock Commission   |
| MTG                         | Meeting   |
| NAAC                        | National Association of Agricultural Contractors  |
| NAFM                        | National Association of Farmers Markets   |
| NBA                         | National Beef Association   |
| NFU                         | National Farmers Union  |
| NFYFC                       | National Federation of Young Farmers Clubs  |
| NHS                         | National Health Service   |
| NHS PASA                    | National Health Service Purchasing and Supply Agency                                    |
| NOF                         | New Opportunities Fund  |
| NSA                         | National Sheep Association  |
| Ofsted                      | Office for standards in Education   |
| ONS                         | Office for National Statistics  |
| PCT                         | Primary Care Trust  |
| PMG                         | Processing and Marketing Grant  |
| RASE                        | Royal Agricultural Society of England   |
| RDS                         | Defra's Rural Development Service   |
| Regional F&H<br>Action Plan | Regional Food and Health Action Plan  |
| RES                         | Rural Enterprise Scheme   |
| RICS                        | Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors  |
| RMIF                        | Red Meat Industry Forum   |
| S Group                     | Steering group  |
| SA                          | Soil Association  |
| SE                          | South East  |
| SEED Fund                   | An organisation that provides technical and financial assistance to upcoming businesses |
| SEEDA                       | South East England Development Agency   |
| SEERA                       | South East England Regional Assembly  |
| SEFGP                       | South East Food Group Partnership   |
| SEPHO                       | South East Public Health Observatory  |
| SERAF                       | South East Rural Affairs Forum  |
| SEWP                        | South East Wood fuel Partnership  |
| SFEDI                       | Small Firms Enterprise Development Initiative   |
| SFS                         | School Fruit Scheme   |
| SMART                       | Specific Measurable Agreed Realistic Time bound   |
| SME                         | Small and medium enterprises  |
| SQP                         | Surrey Quality Producers  |
| SSFF                        | Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food   |
| TFA                         | Tenant Farmers Association  |
| TSE                         | Tourism South East  |
| UDPs                        | Unitary Development Plans   |
| UKASTA                      | United Kingdom Agricultural Supply Trade Association                                    |
| VTS                         | Vocational Training Scheme  |
| WLMPs                       | Water Levels Management Plan  |
| YHA                         | Youth Hostels Association   |





INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



**Further information can be obtained from:**

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