Food Ethics Council

Harnessing the power of **food citizenship**

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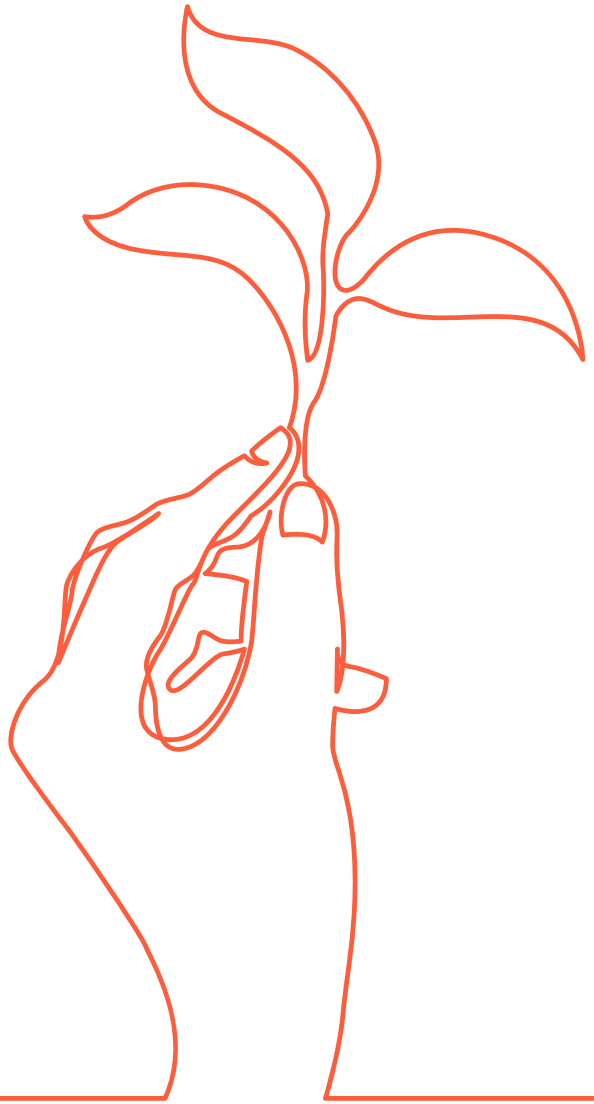

The Food Ethics Council is a registered charity whose mission is to accelerate the shift to fair food systems that respect people, animals and the planet. Our vision is of a world where it is easy to eat well and global hunger is a distant memory; where farmers and food producers make a decent living, animals are treated humanely, and the environment is respected.

For over 20 years we have provided an independent voice and expertise through our Council and networks (across civil society, business and government) to bring ethics to the centre of the food system. We believe in the power of people to drive change. Our role is three-fold:

Firstly, we *nourish* by providing a safe space for honest, meaningful dialogue and develop ethical frameworks to unpack contentious issues.

Secondly, we *challenge* the status quo and accepted ways of thinking.

Thirdly, we *inspire* and promote 'in the round' ethical approaches and share considered solutions.

The Food Ethics Council is an expert body consisting of 19 Council members, leaders in their fields, bringing extensive networks and a range of expertise, from academic research and ethics through to practical knowledge of farming, business and policy.

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Finally, thank you for being interested in food citizenship and – we hope – for embracing the mindset. Thank you to all food citizens everywhere – together we can transform the food system (and the world!) for the better.

"Any vision of a better food system has to be built upon an understanding of what citizens value. It cannot be generated in a vacuum. Citizens will also bring fresh ideas, insights, and energy to the process. In developing a National Food Strategy, we will involve people from all over the country in a national conversation about how we should transform our food system."

Henry Dimbleby
Independent Lead, National Food Strategy

"Food citizenship is much more than having the privilege to choose good food. It is about having individual and collective agency within a society where capitalism, social inequities, and a complex food web intersect. It demands of us a responsibility to be truly humanitarian, to be protectors of nature and to stand for real democracy and human rights. Our food citizenship places us as rights bearers at the heart of the right to food, to hold our government accountable to its duty to ensure all people are able to access culturally appropriate, healthy, sustainable and just food."

Dee Woods
Co-founder Granville Community Kitchen and member of the Food Ethics Council

"The idea of #FoodCitizenship has never seemed more needed."

Sheila Dillon
Food journalist and presenter of Radio 4's The Food Programme

Context

In June 2017, the New Citizenship Project launched its report '**Food Citizenship: how thinking of ourselves differently can change the future of our food system**' at Borough Market, sparking huge interest from individuals working across the UK food and farming system. The question then was how to build a movement that would help the food citizenship mindset grow. Since then, the Food Ethics Council has taken on four key tasks to accelerate the transition from consumerism to citizenship being the dominant mindset in the food system:

Name the food citizenship movement so the pioneers know what they are part of;

Connect those pioneers to one another;

Nourish them with relationships, learning, resources and support;

Illuminate their stories as important examples of the future taking place right now.

Since 2018, the Food Ethics Council has engaged with food citizenship pioneers across the UK food and farming systems, including individuals working in businesses and civil society organisations (CSOs), through discussion seminars, system mapping workshops, in-depth interviews and analysis of different models and strategies of engagement in pioneering organisations.

This report is a synthesis of those conversations and research. It aims to highlight the window of opportunity that is currently opening across the sector for food citizenship to take root. The examples used throughout are all UK based, however it is worth noting that the wave of change is global.

For individuals working across the UK food and farming sector, this report invites us to reflect on how we nurture ourselves as food citizens and how we can engage with others within our organisations and beyond.

This report is an invitation to explore our sense of identity and our relationship with one another.

A new era sets out the vision we want to plant into the food system.

Fertile ground highlights where this vision is already taking root.

Recipes for change is all about actions we can take now to support the growth of food citizenship.

Will you join us?

PART 1

A new era

A new era is emerging in today's UK food and farming sector: the era of the food citizen.

The idea that people are simply consumers at the end of a food chain is being challenged. Our identity, our role in the food and farming sector, our relationship with our food and with nature are all being reassessed, particularly as social and environmental concerns take centre-stage in the public discourse.

As food citizens, we believe in the power of people. We want to and can have a positive influence on the way that food is being produced, distributed and consumed. We are given opportunities to express our care for each other, for our health, for the environment and for animals. Importantly, we share our knowledge and our platforms so others can join us.

The dominant narrative in the UK food and farming sector today is that as individuals we are merely consumers at the end of a food chain. Daily messages tell us that being a consumer is our only source of power to influence society as a whole and, specifically, our food system. Our role is to choose between products and services, not to participate in the systems that provide us with our food. We become demotivated and cut off from the food we eat.

Research[1] shows that exposure to the word 'consumer' significantly decreases our sense of responsibility in shaping the world around us. It also decreases our trust in each other and our belief that we can be active participants in society. We have reduced concern for others. We tend to be more selfish and self-interested. As consumers, those of us with money feel disengaged while those of us without it feel disempowered. Our relationship with food is transactional.

Organisations operating within the food system can see themselves as consumers too, seeking maximum benefit for themselves, and leaving little room to cater for wider concerns for fellow citizens, animals and the planet.

This consumer identity shapes our everyday decisions, which ultimately culminate in the food systems that we have.

Food citizenship challenges the assumption that we're nothing more than consumers. Its impact cannot be underestimated. What we care about and how we feel about our role in society significantly shifts when we are treated as citizens rather than consumers. As citizens, we care about animals being treated humanely, about the wellbeing of the environment, about the livelihoods of those who grow and make our food.

Common Cause Foundation[2] found that most of us care *more* about things like 'helpfulness', 'equality' and 'protection of nature', than we do about 'wealth', 'public image' and 'success.' In fact, their research found that 74% of respondents place greater importance on compassionate values than selfish values.

If that's the case, why is the 'value-action' gap between caring and doing something about it still so wide? The problem is not that we don't *care*, but that we feel *powerless to act*. And when we feel powerless, we are more likely to blame others, shift responsibility onto them and ignore our own impacts. The reason for this feeling of powerlessness? The fact that we're treated as consumers, not citizens.

> **"Show people as one thing, only one thing, over and over again, and that is what they become."**
>
> Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie[3]

Words lead to stories. Stories told many times create new mindsets. By recognising and celebrating the food citizen in ourselves and in others we have an incredible opportunity to change the story.

1 New Citizenship Project (2014) This is the #Citizenshift: A guide to understanding & embracing the emerging era of the citizen [link]
2 Common Cause Foundation (2016) Perceptions Matter: The Common Cause UK Values Survey, London: Common Cause Foundation. [link]
3 The danger of a single story, Ted Talk by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie [link]

What story do we want to tell?

As individuals working in the food and farming sector, we have the chance not just to nurture our own inner food citizen, but to start making the shift within our organisations, and to help our families, friends and neighbours become food citizens too. We can support one another as a community of food citizens who, as participants in the food system, have the power to shape the choices on offer.

When we are treated as food citizens, our compassionate values build a shared sense of belonging and community which means we are more willing to join with others, and more likely to find the courage to take action. It is our power as a co-ordinated and motivated collective with shared values that will eventually change the food system and influence the economic and political dynamics at play. That power is growing.

- What if we, as individuals, could fulfil our need to have a positive and meaningful contribution to making society better for ourselves and our communities?
- What if those of us working in branding seek the involvement of our audiences, not just the money in their pockets?
- What if we in civil society work together to celebrate the food citizen movements already happening, and enable the people we reach to become participants in the food system, not just consumers?
- What if we, as educators, empower our young people as well as educate them, providing the emotional resilience to the inevitable setbacks of life, connecting them to the natural world, bringing communities of students, teachers and families together, embracing the values that we want to see manifested in the world and in future generations?
- What if we in the media reflect what we truly care about as a society, and provide a platform for people to become ambassadors of those values, rather than selling a consumerist idea of people as simply passive readers?
- What if we in governments could run national conversations on the future of food – so people become policymakers, not just voters?

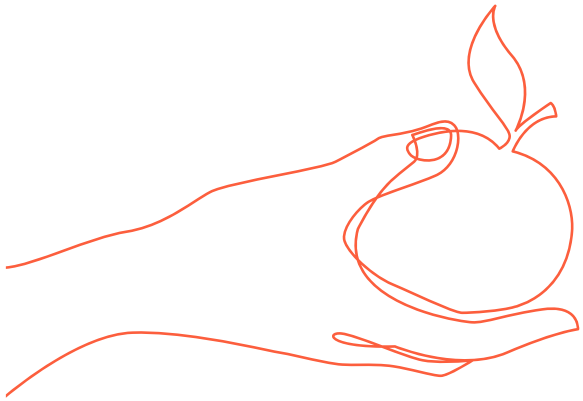
This report is a window into the world of food citizenship in the UK food and farming sector today, and highlights where and how individuals and organisations are transforming the sector towards food citizenship.

This is the story of food citizenship…

PART 2

Fertile ground

Our food and farming systems are constantly changing and evolving and so are the way that we interact with them. Many elements of food citizenship are not new or unusual, but the rate at which they are appearing across the system has, in recent years, significantly increased. This new wave is gathering momentum and if we support it, it will cascade us into a new status quo, where individuals and organisations are best understood as citizens rather than consumers. Businesses and CSOs in the food and farming sector are also beginning to reflect this change, aligning themselves with what we as individuals care about.



The world of business is transforming

There is a growing challenge to the business narrative of profit at all cost. More organisations are shifting towards alternative purpose-led business models such as members' co-operatives, community interest companies (CIC), community-owned, employee-owned or crowdfunded businesses.

Certified B corporations – "*businesses that meet the highest standards of verified social and environmental performance, public transparency, and legal accountability to balance profit and purpose*" – are growing in popularity both in the UK and overseas.

All these models place a greater importance on the connection between the people running the business and the people benefiting from its products and services. They also create an opportunity to treat their stakeholders, from supplier to employees and customers, as food citizens, inviting everyone to work together to create a system that benefits us all.

Customer-owned structures include **The Co-op**, whose members all have a say in how the business is run, deciding on everything from the products it sells to the causes it supports, and farmer-owned business **Divine Chocolate**, which is 44% owned by the cocoa farmers who supply the raw material.

Rebel Kitchen is a B-Corp that's disrupting the status quo by encouraging us all to be rebels and redefine our relationship to health. **HISBE** is a purpose-led social enterprise that wants to ignite a food revolution. **COOK** nourishes relationships. **SoleShare** builds a community of fish-loving cooks and British fishers.

These businesses are building and nurturing a set of values and a community around them. Increasing numbers of organisations are making similar changes both internally and through partnerships.

As business and organisational structures evolve, the roles of employees, customers and shareholders are being redrawn, with employers acknowledging that they can all give us a sense of purpose and of contributing to society. **Riverford**, the organic veg box supplier, has **recently moved 74% of its business to an Employee Trust**. Meanwhile, **Tony's Chocolonely**, a Dutch chocolate brand whose aim is to raise awareness of and tackle slavery, engages its customers in many ways, from co-creating new flavours to providing lobbying resources for communities of interest to fight against modern slavery.

Photo: HISBE

HISBE – redefining the supermarket

Our pilot store has shown that there is an alternative model to the way big supermarkets do business, that is better for people and community. In our first five years of trading, £6 million went through our tills and we're proud to have passed £4.1 million of that on to our suppliers. We're proud to have kept more than half of that £6 million in Brighton's economy by spending more on staff wages and prioritising local suppliers and services.

HISBE Food is a new type of supermarket, built and run on a purpose-led social enterprise business model, for the benefit of local people, local economy and local community. Our store offers the same range and product categories that people would find in a traditional supermarket, selling food that everyone can recognise, although not the big brands that people are most familiar with. Instead we work with small values-led suppliers and focus on making good, fair, sustainable food more accessible and affordable.

Find out more:
www.hisbe.co.uk

The investment landscape is shifting

Interest in ethical investments is growing, and the case for investing in companies that benefit the environment and wider society gaining in strength. The **UK Sustainable Investment and Finance Association** mentions a rise in concerns over climate-change risks from fund managers, although this is not yet always translated into meaningful action. Initiatives such as the **CDP** (formerly the Carbon Disclosure Project), the **Access to Nutrition Initiative** and index, and **FAIRR** (Farm Animal Investment Risk and Return) are responding to increasing demands for transparency and accountability in investments.

If there's a shift in focus for investment managers, there's also a shift in the way businesses raise funds. The co-ownership, small-scale shareholder and crowdfunding models are increasing in popularity. Brewer **BrewDog** has 9,700 'Equity Punks' (individual shareholders). More businesses are turning to crowd funding to raise seed funding. **Farmdrop**, the online ethical grocer, has raised more than £17m to date through crowdfunding.[4] And it's not just businesses that are turning to these novel funding sources. **Life Kitchen** is a charity initiative that helps anyone who has survived or is still going through cancer learn recipes designed to help mitigate changes in taste that result from treatment. It raises a significant amount of its funding from **crowdfunding**. Becoming a member, shareholder or crowdfundee is one way many of us can act as a food citizen, actively participating in and changing our food and farming sector for the better.

4 Butler S (2018) 'Ethical grocer' Farmdrop raises £10m to expand home delivery service. The Guardian [link]

Image: Food Manifesto Wales

The Wales Food Manifesto – Shared values and citizenship

When the idea of a Food Manifesto for Wales was suggested by Jane Davidson, former Welsh environment minister, it posed a challenge. How do you find common ground amongst such a huge variety of organisations involved with food – supermarket staff, school catering services, surplus food distribution projects, farming unions, environmental groups, community gardens, dieticians and many more?

The answer came through an action research project called Food Values, a collaboration between food educators and researchers, led by Aberystwyth University and the Public Interest Research Centre. Working around Wales, we brought together various groups of people over a shared meal. From pensioners and school children in Gwynedd, to church members and refugees in Cardiff, some very simple messages came through. There was concern about keeping food skills alive, building local culture and being sustainable. Most strongly we heard, "We want everyone in Wales to have good food."

It was clear that for most people, food was more than a commodity – even for supermarket managers, serving the local community was an important part of what they did. Could it be that a simple human concern for the wellbeing of our communities is in fact something we all share, and a sufficient basis for a Manifesto? It may be an act of faith, but it has political backing from the Well-being of Future Generations Act. This calls for Welsh public bodies to take a long view and to work in new ways with business and the community.

It can be difficult to stay focused on the core values of the Manifesto. It's obvious how, in a business context, the language of money, jobs and efficiency dominates and makes it harder to talk about health and happiness. But CSOs often compete with each other for funding and membership, and that can get in the way of good human connection too.

The Manifesto is a big idea, but a small project run by volunteers. We curate a website which anyone can write for, we run workshops at events, and we take part in research and engagement projects to bring the Manifesto thinking to life.

Find out more:
foodmanifesto.wales

The way we talk about food is evolving

Food is increasingly viewed as a connector – it connects us with other people, with where our food comes from and with the natural environment – particularly by younger generations. Over the past 20 years, campaigns about wonky veg and the rise of fairly traded, organic, free-range and sustainably sourced food have been having positive impacts on the general public's awareness of issues around food that go beyond their own health. More of us are questioning the status quo and demanding a more ethical offering from the system. There is raised awareness and concern about the environmental impacts of food, in addition to health and animal welfare, with climate impacts of livestock production an increasingly important driver of reducing meat consumption.[5]

Citizen-led action is growing

There is a growing energy of people-led initiatives. From **Extinction Rebellion** and Greta Thunberg, to David Attenborough's call to arms on plastics, our society is being presented with a clear set of values and a clear challenge to long-standing institutions. These social movements are proud to shout about how much we, as a society, care about each other and the planet. Seeing younger generations having a renewed energy to voice their concerns – so powerfully illustrated by the Climate march in London on 15th February 2019, and subsequent actions – is deeply encouraging.

Photo: A People's Food Policy (see p15)

The **Food Sovereignty movement** promotes democratic, fair and localised food systems, led by smaller-scale food providers who 'work with nature' to feed the majority of citizens in the world. **Incredible Edible** has over 100 groups in the UK and another 600 globally, galvanising its communities through growing and celebrating local food. **Sustainable Food Cities**' network spreads across over 70 cities.

Meaningful engagement with citizens is improving

New platforms are popping up across the UK to nurture meaningful engagement with citizens, from the creation of **Good Food Nation Ambassadors** in Scotland to the **Food Manifesto** in Wales, or the coming together of over 150 organisations to develop the **People's Food Policy**. They all illustrate what inclusive bottom-up citizen consultations look like and can achieve, and we can all encourage the UK government to learn from them when developing a national food strategy for England.

5 Eating Better (2019) YouGov Survey quick analysis [**link**]

A People's Food Policy – a collaborative vision

A People's Food Policy (PFP) is both a document and a process undertaken in England and created with the aim of advancing the food sovereignty movement in the UK. Our intention was to build networks, increase capacity and to generate a document that could provide the basis for strategic campaigns and actions in the coming years.

We began the process with a visioning workshop at the UK Food Sovereignty Gathering in October 2015, when participants were invited to think about how our food and farming system would look if there were a cross-departmental national food policy, based on the six pillars of Food Sovereignty. The workshop inspired a working group to form and adapt the process to collect the ideas from workshops with another 30 grass-roots organisations, over an 18 month period. In addition, we launched an online questionnaire, based on the visioning workshop, to collect further perspectives and prompt nation-wide discussion among grassroots organisations, CSOs, trade unions, community projects, small businesses and individuals. A collaborative writing and editing process, involving many of the contributing bodies, resulted in a document that is truly grounded in the knowledge of people working across the food and farming sector.

All of this was accomplished with a small donation of under £30,000 and the hard work of a committed group of volunteers.

A People's Food Policy, was launched in June 2017 – a manifesto outlining a people's vision of food and farming in England that is supported by over 90 food and farming organisations. It includes a set of policy proposals related to nine themes[6], and provides a vision for change that is rooted in the lived experiences and needs of people most affected by the failures in the current food system.

The PFP is an important contribution to the debates on food and farming, providing a set of policy proposals within the frameworks of human rights, food sovereignty and agroecology. A People's Food Policy emphasises the interconnectedness between problems such as labour rights, environmental destruction and health, and the need for holistic integrated approaches to achieve food sovereignty. It articulates how these problems arise from a neoliberal and narrow market-led paradigm and it emphasises a shift to a paradigm where the well-being of people, community and the natural world, here and afar, are at the centre of governance.

Two years on from the original publication, the PFP is even more relevant today; unfortunately, there has been very little improvement in food policies in the UK since the publication of the document.

Since A People's Food Policy was published, the PFP continues to be organised by our steering group of committed activists as a platform for action under the banner of People-Food-Power. The group is building and elaborating on the ideas and actions proposed in A People's Food Policy. Recognising that transformative change for true social justice and sustainability will not be possible until social movements, communities, marginalised people and the like gain power and agency in decision making, the PFP steering group emphasises the deepening of democracy and the importance of supporting bottom-up organisation. The PFP connects with international movements that are advancing the ideas of food sovereignty, agroecology and the Right to Food – all of which have gained more traction in national and global policy-making in many countries around the world than they have in the UK.

Find out more:
www.peoplesfoodpolicy.org

6 A People's Food Policy is structured across nine thematic chapters covering governance, food production, health, land, labour, environment, knowledge and skills, trade and finance – each with an in-depth analysis and policy proposals for transforming the food system in England.

Key principles

1. **We are naturally disposed to care, and we need a deeper sense of purpose in our lives.**
2. **We need to have meaningful power in order to sustain that care and purpose.**
3. **We need the support of a community to thrive.**

For me as an individual, this means:

- I have a deeper connection with the natural world and appreciate our collective dependency on it for our wellbeing.
- I believe in my own power to act and have the courage to stand up for our beliefs.
- I support those around me.
- I don't wait for the perfect conditions and do what I can based on my current circumstances.
- I adapt my approach as I learn and grow.

For us working in organisations, this means:

- We provide a platform for people to participate in our work and to help us achieve our organisation's vision.
- We have a clear social and environmental purpose.
- We make it our mission to contribute positively towards the future.
- We support people and look after their wellbeing.
- We care for and protect those who are vulnerable.

For us working across the movement, this means:

- We want to create food systems that are resilient and fair to people, animals, and the planet.
- We support one another, share our insights, celebrate our successes and learn from our failures.
- We are authentic with one another; honest, open, creative, collaborative, inclusive.
- We lead by example, show how much people care and showcase how much can be done to transform food and farming systems for the better.

Together, we are the food citizenship movement

PART 3

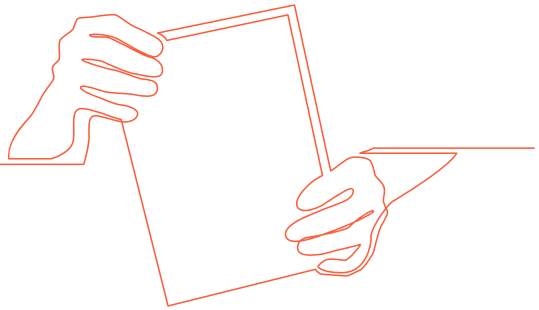
Recipes for change

Over the past two years, we have spoken to many food citizenship pioneers whose life mission is to empower others, create and nurture communities and make this world a better place for people, animals and the planet. They give us hope that the challenge to the consumer mindset is growing louder, and that the conditions for food citizenship are getting stronger.

This chapter gives examples of practical steps we can all take to accelerate the shift towards food citizenship, by creating environments conducive to food citizen action. There are ideas suitable for those of us new to the concept of food citizenship, and for those already on the journey, to help strengthen and focus efforts. We offer them as suggestions intended to inspire and unlock ideas, to be adapted according to your unique situation.

Food citizenship isn't a linear journey. It's a change of mindset that affects how we do *everything*. We've identified three ways that food citizenship pioneers have shifted their mindsets. Together, we can bring the system to a tipping point where food citizenship will become the norm. We can **reframe** the issues and how we see ourselves, **connect** with others and **empower** each other to create a nurturing environment.

REFRAME



Those of us working in the food and farming sector are well aware of the social and environmental issues that we face. We've had both successes and failures in making our food systems better for people, planet and animals. But what would happen if we looked at the issues through a different frame? Never mind the solutions, what would the questions look like if we approached them through a food citizenship frame instead of a consumer one? Shifting our perspectives in this way can help us (re)discover the landscape and stimulate our creativity.

> **"The formulation of a problem is often more essential than its solution. To raise new questions, new possibilities, to regard old problems from a new angle, requires creative imagination"**
>
> Albert Einstein

HOW DOES CHANGE HAPPEN?

Change starts from within. As individuals, we can only think of other people as food citizens if we ourselves are empowered as a food citizen. Within an organisation, whether we work in HR or are customer-facing, whether we talk to members daily or work in finance, we can start shifting the way we relate to others in our immediate environment.

- As an individual, what do I need in order to nurture my inner food citizen?
- What can I easily implement in my immediate sphere of influence?
- Who do I interact with in my organisation on a daily basis?
- How can I start shifting the way I engage with them?

Change can be easy. It doesn't need to be a fight. Change can happen naturally where there is potential. Our first task is not simply to identify *what* we can do, but more importantly *where* conditions are favourable to take us in the right direction. By starting small, we can see how things unfold and create space to reassess and adapt.

- As individuals or within our organisations, where are good things already happening?
- How can I increase the reach or the numbers of these good things?
- What's getting in their way, and how can I disrupt them?

FAI Farms – Change starts from within

[At the Oxford Real Farming Conference in 2018], we talked a lot more about the wider citizen mindset. Our main aim [at FAI Farms] is improving the sustainability of food supply chains. We do this by working with some big food businesses, including Ikea, Co-op, Marks & Spencer and Ferrero Rocher.

So, when I was asked to come back to speak this year, I thought, I will, but I don't know what I've really done. What's actually changed? We haven't actually succeeded in any of those big companies saying they are going to change the way they are going to do things. But I thought about me and what I have changed, and the impact that has had on others around me.

I talk about all the big companies, but actually what I do is I run the FAI farm. We have a sustainability consultancy business, but we also have a 1,200-acre farm. And I realised there has been a lot of change, in my mindset more than anything, affecting everything we are doing on the farm and how we are operating.

We have the same farm, the same animals, the same weather, same budget, but this past year, we were somehow more productive, happier, and all pulling together in the same direction. So instead of having to manage everyone on the farm, tell everyone on the farm what to do and explain why we have to do things a certain way, battling all the time, I find now that I don't have to do that, the farm manages itself, the team gets on with it.

For example, when our shepherd left last year, traditionally I would have put an advert in Farmers Weekly for a new shepherd with "lots of shepherding experience", but we had a guy on the farm who had always been interested in working with sheep and I'd seen that evolving. He was on board with what we are doing and the direction we want to go in. He wanted to give it a go. Supporting him through that process and explaining to him how to worm a sheep or do some of the practical stuff – that's the easy bit. But the big part was his mindset was in the right place to take the sheep flock in the direction we want to go.

[…] we have a charity on site called Farmability for adults with complex needs, including learning disabilities and autism. These co-farmers come and work for us and we provide meaningful activity for them, so that they can up their skillset and have something purposeful to do in the day. They are a big part of the team, and I realised our [job] adverts didn't even mention them.

We would just look for a general farm worker that is able to drive a tractor, work a chainsaw etc., but actually when they get to us, they realise that a large part of the work involves interacting with people with some challenging needs. And if people don't want to do that, it becomes a blocker, and then there is a battle all the time. So, we looked (again) at how we recruited, and now our adverts don't mention much about acres of farm experience, and instead we talk about 'must have a passion for improving soil quality, must be interested in sustainability and food production.' We talk about our charity and what that involves.

I was talking to one of our newest recruits who is from a very traditional agricultural background (all about pesticides, cutting down hedges, making fields as big as possible and efficiency), who went to New Zealand and had an epiphany, and said he didn't sleep for two days after he came to the ORFC conference last year. He said, 'when I saw your job advert, I literally dropped everything, it was the most detailed advert I had ever seen, and I knew it was the job for me'.

So, as I have changed my mindset and [that of the] people around me, through how I recruit people with a similar sort of mindset, it filters out wider than that. My boss thought I was crazy. [But] it is about having the right people.

Clare Hill, Agricultural Strategy Manager

Find out more: www.faifarms.com and farmability.org.uk

Adapted extract from Clare Hill's presentation at ORFC 2019. To listen to the original presentation, check out the Food Citizenship podcast.

WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO

We need to be **clear about our intentions** in our individual actions, in our work, and across our organisations. The clearer we are about why we do what we do, the more we can inspire others to join us and be part of the change we want to see. Alongside this, we need to be **clear about our values**, shifting our narrative from "if only more people cared" to "we care very much and so do our audiences." We can tell our stories in a way that reflects this mindset and encourages our fellow citizens to engage and stand up for the kind of food and farming systems we all want – ones that are fair and healthy for people, the planet and animals.

- As organisations, why do we do what we do?
- Can other individuals or organisations support us achieve that vision?
- How explicitly do we talk to our audiences about our organisational values and intentions, be they our customers, members, suppliers, shareholders or employees?

Here are some examples of food citizenship organisations that make their intentions and values explicit:

INTENTIONS	VALUES
Incredible Edible wants to make it easier for all people to live incredibly.	**Extinction Rebellion** believes in non-violence and promotes reflection, learning and self-organising.
The **Belfast Food Network** aims to promote its thriving food economy, built on healthy, fresh, local and seasonal produce.	**Incredible Edible** believes in being positive, connected and brave.
BrewDog is on a mission to make other people as passionate about great craft beer as they are.	**The Landworkers' Alliance** values food producers and understands food as being produced for people rather than the global commodity market.
Foodchain wants to democratise the food supply chain.	**Granville Community Kitchen** believes in the power of community to empower citizens, with food at its centre.
Extinction Rebellion wants to halt mass extinction and minimise the risk of social collapse.	**The Rural Youth Project** values the needs and desires of young people living in rural areas.
Rebel Kitchen wants to redefine health.	**Unicorn Grocery** follows its five Principles of Purpose: secure employment, equal opportunity, wholesome healthy consumption, fair and sustainable trade, and solidarity in co-operation.
The **Social Gastronomy** movement aims to connect those who are growing, preparing and sharing food in order to co-create an equitable future, inclusive society and healthy planet.	
COOK wants to nourish relationships.	
The **Karma Cola Foundation** wants the communities it works with to benefit from every product sold.	
Jamie's Ministry of Food wants to keep cooking skills alive.	

HOW DO WE SEE OURSELVES?

Reframing how we see and understand ourselves and others as citizens rather than consumers, allows us to approach issues in the food and farming sector in a more holistic manner. It puts people at the centre of change and incorporates their unique experience whether they are our employees, shareholders, colleagues, customers, neighbours or our friends.

As individuals and within our organisations, we can be alert to instances where people are treated as consumers, which unhelpfully disengages and disempowers them. We can challenge the consumerist narrative and suggest that instead, we treat people as engaged and empowered food citizens. When we think of people as food citizens, we unlock the potential for including them in our movement by providing a platform for participation so they can become active agents for change.

- How do other individuals and organisations treat me as an individual?
- Where do I feel empowered and connected, where do I not?
- How does my organisation refer to our audiences?

Food citizenship and the Soil Association

The Soil Association was formed in 1946 to create a better world – one where we farm responsibly, eat healthily and live in balance with the environment. We are – and always have been – a movement of people working together to affect change in the food system. Inspired by food citizenship, and subsequent work of our own, we have made a significant step-change in the way that we think of, and crucially involve people in our work. This is just the start of the journey, but we are excited by what being part of the food citizenship movement will mean for us.

Over the past few years, we have started on the food citizenship journey in much of our work including **'Out to Lunch'** and the **Food for Life** programme. Previously when it came to talking to the broader public we focused largely on growing the market for organic and therefore driving change by driving transactions: getting more 'consumers' to buy more organic products and getting more producers become certified organic, which will ultimately lead to a more sustainable food system.

We realised there was a whole citizen space being missed: an exciting opportunity for many more people to shape the food system beyond consumption. We wanted to explore the opportunity to build our approach, inviting people to move from simply buying organic to buying *into* organic, investing the symbol with meaning and value beyond informed choice.

But we knew that we couldn't do this alone. If we wanted to create a genuine, two-way relationship with people, we needed to work with them to set the terms. So, we did.

Our 'Beyond Consumers' strategy

Working with The New Citizenship Project, we went back to our founding purpose: asking farmers, growers, producers, supporters, the lay public and our own internal teams the question: *How can we, together with people, grow stronger relationships between soil, plant, animals and people*? Through a process of desk-research, interviews with staff, a staff-survey and co-creation workshops we identified a core need – to belong; to each other and to the natural world.

A really exciting outcome of the co-creation workshops was when the groups were asked what they could do. All happily exchanged emails, set up conversations and went away inspired to come together to create change. Our learning? That there is so much happening out there already that we can work with and become a platform for people to do stuff, rather than trying to do everything ourselves.

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Food citizenship in action

The principles that have emerged from this project have underpinned the development of our major campaigns and broader ways of working. The first project we have applied them to has been our flagship campaign, Organic September. Whilst this has been running across the organic world for over 20 years, it had latterly become very much about offers and promotions, losing the sense of celebration of the movement and its role as a call to arms for the whole industry and staff.

For September 2019, we re-imagined the campaign with new creative and calls to action focused on the message 'together we can make a world of difference.' Buying is now just one way that citizens can make a difference – we have also asked people to get involved in growing, food sharing and cooking. Independent shops, as hubs for food enthusiasts and links to wider communities, hosted events to celebrate all things organic, and we're delighted that Organic September stands in Sainsbury's provided the opportunity for people to meet organic farmers. Businesses that certify with us hosted shared lunches, events and workshops. We got our staff involved too, with a series of "Soily Skillz" skill-sharing workshops and talks, alongside shared breakfasts and lunches in our Edinburgh and Bristol offices.

We have also been reviewing our communications channels so that people feel a stronger sense of belonging to a movement. A good example of this was during National Allotment Week, where we talked to and *with* the people who are involved with allotments and growing at ground level. We saw a huge uplift in engagement as a result, with much more user generated content from photos to recipes to celebrity engagement. We've rebuilt much of our web content to make sure we are talking with people as citizens and make sure we have one (citizen) voice.

It's still early days, but it's so exciting to see tangible changes in engagement, none more so than internally where food citizenship and the principles have become common currency with our two comms teams now working as one.

By shifting the starting point for our relationship with the public, from providing information and advice to creating belonging, we have started to build a more participatory approach, instil the Soil Association symbol with greater meaning, and bring together the organisation's work to grow the organic market with work to increase membership and income.

We are continuing to work with people to co-create more and deeper ways of participating, together growing the movement for better food and farming.

Clare McDermott
Business Development Director

Find out more: www.soilassociation.org

HOW DO WE VIEW THE ISSUES WE'RE FACING?

As a movement, we can collectively reframe all the critical food and farming issues we work on. Food citizenship is more than a mindset. It's a tool to help us unlock potential and to reframe the critical challenges we face today. Is food waste an issue of overproduction or imbalance in power between producers and distributors? Is poverty simply a financial issue or disempowerment?

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- Can the issues that our organisations collectively work on be reframed?
- If the objective is for individuals to be food citizens, what is it about the way the issue is framed that inhibits that potential?

Poverty or disempowerment?

As the New Citizenship Project found in 2017[7], the current *consumer* narrative dangerously frames poverty as *many people unable to afford to eat*, with the resulting question being *how to make food affordable for everyone*.

When the question is framed like this, the answer to the problem is to *make food cheaper*. However, cheap food leads to low wages for people working in the food and farming sector who are often at the sharp end of poverty. Cheap food can also lead to poor nutrition, bad health and further poverty.

As wages are driven down, even cheap food can become unaffordable. This has led to the dramatic rise in food banks and other forms of charitable food aid in the UK. People accessing provisions from food banks and soup kitchens are given food that isn't of their own choosing, leaving them little room for dignity or empowerment. This narrative of 'those in need' versus 'those providing charity' has been linked to an increased fear of being in need, disgust at such vulnerability, and anxiety of the impacts of social need on society.[8]

If we apply a 'food citizen' lens to poverty, we begin to see it as an issue of disenfranchisement – *many people can't afford to be citizens*. Now, the resulting question is *how to support everyone to participate in and shape our food systems*.

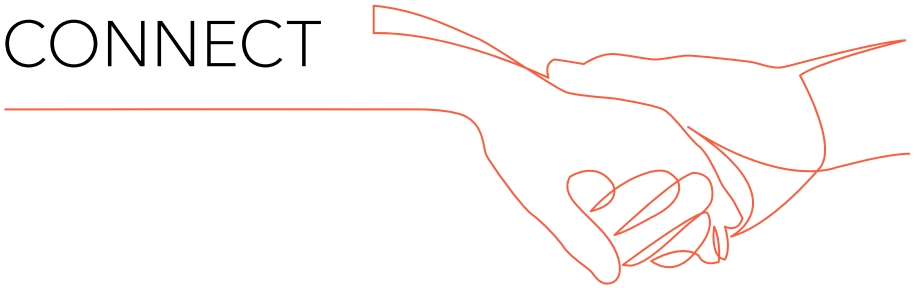
Many people and organisations are coming up with creative answers to this question. We're bringing people together, empowering them and nurturing a shared sense of purpose towards a world that is fairer and more sustainable. This thinking leads to conversations about social justice, rather than charity.

Instead of talking about poverty reduction, we talk of enhancing life. Instead of talking about tackling poverty, we talk of empowerment. Instead of talking about budgeting, we talk of power dynamics. Instead of arguing about what should or shouldn't be done, we develop inclusive, democratised processes for people to decide for themselves. The kind of initiatives that emerge from this thinking help us shift the food system towards one that better reflects what we care for as a society.

Food banks and other types of emergency food aid provision are on the rise. But there is real potential for an alternative to the current model of emergency food aid provision: one that builds resilience, empowers individuals, disincentivises food waste, enables people to eat healthier food, is replicable and can be adapted to local needs. Framing the issue through a food citizenship lens can help us build that model; the task now is to identify the potential and work out how to transition to this new model.

7 The New Citizenship Project (2017) Food Citizenship [link]
8 Unwin J. (2018) Kindness, emotions and human relationships: The blind spot in public policy, Carnegie UK Trust

CONNECT



The communities created through our networks build a sense of belonging and peer-support. When we are surrounded by others who work towards the same goals and values, we feel less alone and can see that what we do as individuals plays a crucial role in transforming the system.

As individuals, we can spend time with peers who motivate and energise us.

We can't do it alone, but we need not fear, because we aren't alone. Food citizenship pioneers all have an incredible story of how they got to where they are, and strong networks to rely on. Whether it's having inspiring role models to look up to, a team supporting them and holding them to account, friends who believe in them and cheer them on, mentors who have walked a similar path before and can guide them, or fellow activists who believe in their cause, the list is long.

There are many networks out there that can support us. For example, the **B-corporation** community has an online platform for different departments to share knowledge, help one another and provide mentoring support for employees of the member organisations. The **Oxford Real Farming Conference**, which takes place every year in January, is an incredible celebration and manifestation of what passionate people can build together and is an inspiring way to start the new year.

What we can learn from our communities goes far beyond information. We can learn to believe in ourselves and feel supported to act. If it takes a village to raise a child, it takes a community to build confident, hopeful and creative leaders and changemakers.

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- Which communities and networks do I belong to make me feel inspired and energised?
- How much time do I invest in looking after my needs so that I have more to give back to my communities?

Nurture the communities our organisations have access to.

This can be as simple as providing a safe space to gather and allow people to connect.

Time and again, food citizenship pioneers tell us about the importance of meeting regularly and in person. This could be an annual AGM, an event at the local school, via a box scheme or weekly meetings at the office. It could be between farmers and board directors like at **Divine Chocolate**, or between chefs and farmers as done by **Foodchain**, or bringing neighbourhoods together around food like **Be Enriched**. Meanwhile, the **Soil Association's Get Togethers** bring people together across generations around a meal, and **Agricology** built a network of farmers and academic researchers to share and explore a wide range of sustainable farming practices.

Participatory City, which provides free space for residents of Barking and Dagenham to create collaborative businesses and projects that make everyday life better for everyone, gives great tips on key principles[9] to use when creating community space. Their journey started in 2017 with two 'shops' as part of their 'Every One, Every Day' initiative. Two years later, four thousand of the borough's 200,000 people had participated.[10]

These initiatives create a level of empathy and relatedness that is hard to achieve any other way, even with the benefits of technology. It also allows for robust and in-depth conversations that lead to more nuanced positions – something that can't be achieved with a tweet.

Where meeting in person isn't feasible, or when trying to coordinate networks online, it is even more important to clearly state the intentions and values of the network. Ensuring there is ongoing support for these to be maintained throughout the community should be a priority.

Whether we think about our employees, shareholders, contractors, customers, members or our local communities, there are always opportunities to bring us together.

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- How does my organisation nurture connections between employees, shareholders and customers?
- How is my organisation nurturing a sense of belonging and promoting collaboration within our communities?
- How are meetings run?
- Which platforms do communities gather on, how accessible are they for my organisation's audiences?
- As an individual and within my organisation, what selection criteria are in place for collaborating with others, for hiring, for being an employee?

9 Britton T and Anderson A (2019) The Illustrated Guide to Participatory City [link]
10 Monbiot G (2019) Could this local experiment be the start of a national transformation? *The Guardian* [link]

Food Teachers Centre – Sharing creative ideas and action

We are a UK based self-help group for secondary teachers founded by Louise Davies in 2013 and supported by experienced associates. We provide a platform to exchange best practice and give advice and support to less experienced teachers, answering practical concerns and keeping them abreast of the latest curriculum changes. It is a one-stop shop for like-minded professionals who seek help and information.

It's free to take part and is facilitated through a closed on-line group, safeguarding the conversations of the teaching staff. This proactive group has a community of nearly 5,000 food teachers taking part, encompassing over 40 different countries worldwide. The Centre uses social media and online learning and is a place of creative and innovative ideas and action, practical solutions and learning and sharing.

Photo: Food Teachers Centre

The Food Teachers Centre hosts regional and national events reaching around 2,000 secondary food teachers each year, works with all the major government agencies (including Ofsted and the Department for Education) and partners with key industry representatives to promote its aim of better food teaching. Ongoing links with other organisations such as Catering and Hospitality colleges provide the opportunity for teacher professional development and to raise the profile of the subject in their own establishments.

Feedback from the group sums up the power of the community and how the Food Teachers Centre supports the busy food teacher. "Loved it and really wish we'd had the chance to stand up and shout a public thank you for each and every person who has shared resources, photos, comments and advice – it is incredible to be part of this community."

Find out more:
foodteacherscentre.co.uk

Collectively, we can inspire one another and hold each other to account.

By sharing our stories, be they successes or failures, we inspire and encourage each. The **Oxford Real Farming Conference** is an opportunity to network, to share highs and lows and learn from others. The event is created by participants who are all invited to submit ideas and develop sessions. Together we create an incredibly rich and diverse conference programme which is a platform for us to come together, feel heard, be inspired and share resources.

Meanwhile, Sustain's **Food Power** conference in June 2019 brought together activists and people with lived experience of poverty to share challenges and innovations. It was also an opportunity to remind everyone of why we do what we do, and of the need for "a little less conversation, a little more action." The open space structure of the event gave participants the freedom to set topics for conversations based on individual needs. The culture of openness created was highlighted by the fact that one of the sessions was all about openly and honestly sharing failures, so we could all learn from them. **Food Citizenship** has its own online platform where examples from across the UK food and farming sector are showcased.

By treating people as food citizens, we inevitably connect on a deeper lever. We share our values, the things that really matter to us, more explicitly. In doing so, we attract collaborations with others who share our values and beliefs.

- Where can I, as a food citizenship pioneer, gather and share stories?

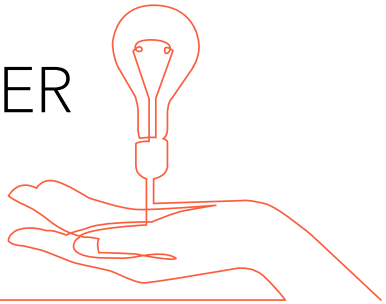
The Open Food Network – A shared online platform

The Open Food Network (OFN) is a growing network of small to medium and community food enterprises, independent producers, retailers and distributors dedicated to building a stronger, fairer food system in the UK. To achieve this, we have developed and host a comprehensive online toolset for local food. Our members can customise online shopfronts (hosted on our secure servers), flexibly take orders, make deliveries, collect payments, connect with producers, distributors and other shopfronts, grow customers, share ideas and develop individual enterprises.

As a network we decide the features we want, and we develop them in collaboration with the OFN initiatives around the world. What we are most proud of is of the sense of empowerment that community groups achieve when they build their own food retail and distribution system from the ground up. We believe that by working together, sharing skills, ideas and resources, we can provide good, nutritious, affordable food to everyone. Food is the ultimate connector. Through food, together we can create real change and Food Sovereignty!

Find out more:
about.openfoodnetwork.org.uk

EMPOWER



Food citizenship pioneers show us we are not born with endless confidence and energy to act. Believing that we can create positive change for ourselves and others is built over time and is nourished by our surroundings. Here are some ways we can nurture that environment for ourselves and each other.

Using supportive language

The language we use has a significant impact on how we define ourselves and others, what powers we think we have and what values we adhere to. For those of us working across food and farming, language also has the power to engage our audiences as active participants, so we can move away from the traditional relationship between the 'producer of knowledge' and the 'consumer of knowledge'. As food citizens, we are all equally knowledgeable; we simply bring different perspectives and ideas to the common cause. Once we have a reframed, short, clear and inclusive purpose that is for the benefit of the collective, we can use it to address our audiences.

Food citizenship pioneers have developed a range of strategies we can use when addressing our audiences.

1. **Avoid the word 'consumer.'** The word 'citizen' is very effective at empowering readers , but there are many ways to help people stop thinking of themselves as consumers. We can use a word that is inclusive and empowering within our unique context. Rebel Kitchen talks about rebels. The Food Sovereignty movement talks about people. Wigan Council's The Deal talks about citizens. What is crucial is to be aware of which frame we find ourselves in, so that we can continue to creatively challenge the status quo of consumerism.
2. **Trigger the collective.** We can choose how our actions lead to others' actions, and remind our audiences that we are not alone.
3. **Use an inclusive, friendly and familiar tone.**
4. **Refer to our readers in the same terms as ourselves.** We are not simply producing knowledge for consumers, we are a community of knowledge sharers.
5. **Connect the reader with their own power.** Using verb-driven sentences and the present tense motivates our audiences to act. We can also reassure people that we believe in their ability to create positive change.
6. **Give room for creativity.** Guiding our audiences rather than prescribing what they could do to support our cause allows people to come up with their own ideas.
7. **Practise what we preach.** If we promote sharing and collaboration, we need to make sure that we're collaborating with others and sharing information freely and openly.
8. **Be as honest about our failures as our successes.** Showing that we all make mistakes creates a supportive environment for individuals to take their own risks.
9. **Ensure our language is consistent across all our communications.**

Food citizenship pioneers also strive to avoid certain language 'traps.'

1. **Categorising people separately.** Focusing on what makes us different rather than what brings us together reduces our sense of belonging and community. We sometimes may need to address different audiences but that does not mean we need to treat them all differently.
2. **Making assumptions about our audiences**, we run the risk of removing free will and disempowering them.
3. **Highlighting the cost and benefit opportunities in a strategy** prioritises transactional and material benefits whilst ignoring the all-important role of human relationships in nurturing our sense of community and the values that underpin food citizenship.
4. **Using dry and abstract language is disengaging and disempowering.** It builds distance between the readers and the issue at hand.
5. **Being too prescriptive** in presenting our ideas and options stifles the creativity of our readers.
6. **Being inconsistent in our language or between what we say and what we do** means people can't trust us.

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- Within my organisation, how do we refer to our colleagues, our shareholders, our suppliers, our members, our customers, the general public?
- What platforms do we have in place for communication, and how consistent is our language across all these platforms?
- What do our audiences have in common?

Listening to the collective

An important way that we can create the conditions for change is to ensure that we feel that all our voices are being heard.

Beneficiaries and interest groups can speak for themselves – so, let's listen to them. The Rural Youth Project[11] engages with 18- to 28-year-olds in rural places throughout the UK (and abroad) to draw comparisons, share learnings and co-create solutions to facilitate the involvement of young people in agricultural and rural activities. Young people can talk about their aspirations, opportunities and challenges through online surveys, vlogs and at an annual Youth Ideas Festival.

Crowdsourcing isn't just for investment – it's for ideas too. Let's tap into the collective brain. Our audiences care about the same things we do and have lots of ideas if we only know how to listen. Foodchain provides an online forum for its members to exchange ideas and collaborate on specific issues, for example how they can collectively tackle food waste.

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- How can we bring in the expertise of everyone involved, rather than acting as if some people have knowledge and some people receive knowledge?

11 Listen to our interview with Janie Craigie from Rural Youth Project on the Food Citizenship podcast.

The Co-op –Listening to members

In 2018, Co-op launched our Future of Food ambition – our recipe for a sustainable food future. The ambition has three chapters:

Chapter 1: Sourcing and creating with care
Chapter 2: Treating people fairly
Chapter 3: Learning & celebrating together

The third chapter is focused on working together with our members to make a difference. To kick off the Future of Food plan, we looked at how we could work with our members on one of the issues they told us they felt most passionately about – taking action on plastics.

Through Co-op's Join In programme, where members can sign up to share ideas, thoughts and shape Co-op's direction, we ran a discussion project focused on recycling, reducing packaging and tackling waste. We wanted to hear members' ideas and suggestions as to how we could do more in these areas and work with them to develop these ideas into tangible things that we can put into place as a food convenience retailer, which we could trial.

We started with a huge survey to members about what issues and frustrations they have with packaging and waste.

Photo: The Co-op

Over three quarters (76%) told us that this issue is absolutely critical for society today, and members believe that food retailers have a clear responsibility to tackle it, with almost half (49%) actually seeing food retailers as having the 'main' responsibility. Initially, 2,204 members told us what frustrates and concerns them about packaging and waste. Following that we asked for ideas for things that we could do to make a difference – and received 700 ideas. We then worked with members and subject-matter experts within the business to work up and develop them into specific initiatives that we could champion, after members had voted on their favourite ideas.

These ideas now feed into our Action on Plastics plan in Future of Food and the conversation continues. In 2019 we have also just kicked off a second waste project through 'Join In' with members on Food Waste.

We believe that if we can provide authentic opportunities for our members to get involved in shaping how we do things, this will create value for both our member and the Co-op.

Find out more: food.coop.co.uk

Creating ambassadors

Our audiences are powerful allies in our mission to shifting towards a UK food and farming sector that is resilient and fair to people, animals and the planet.

First, they can represent those we most want to support. The recent **Children's Future Food Inquiry** prioritised children's own experiences and voices. Eleven of these children decided to become Food Ambassadors for the Inquiry and presented their report back to parliamentarians in January 2019.

Second, people can also become ambassadors of our message and vision. From employees and shareholders, to customers and members, people can reach much wider audiences than our organisation alone could..

The Good Food Nation Ambassadors – Listening to the collective voice

The Scottish Food Coalition is a network of organisations working together in recognition of the connections between our most fundamental social and environmental challenges: food, and our broken food system. The Coalition is made up of organisations interested in all aspects of food, from health, to social justice, to environment and animal welfare, and represents both large and small organisations, from major trade unions and CSOs to smaller organisations and community groups.

In Scotland and beyond, we are facing multiple, urgent challenges which stem from the way that we produce, process, sell, consume and waste food. For the environment, around a quarter of Scotland's greenhouse gas emissions come from agriculture and related land use. Food production is one of the greatest pressures on nature; some species like kestrel, curlew and lapwing have declined by more than half since 1994, and there are large declines in insects, including pollinators. It is estimated that our soils will be able to support fewer than 100 harvests. Unless we stop our food production from mining the earth's resources without giving something back, we will be very vulnerable to major environmental crises. These will in turn undoubtedly affect our food security.

Meanwhile, for people, many households cannot afford to eat according to recommended guidelines. One in 10 in Scotland are living with food insecurity, and this is higher within certain groups, for example among single parents. At the same time, two-thirds of adults and one-third of children are overweight or obese, and diabetes is the single biggest budget area for the NHS. While many struggle to afford food, farmers and crofters also struggle to make a living. Food sector jobs are some of the most insecure and poorly paid, with food service workers often experiencing food insecurity themselves. And poor animal welfare practices remain, while 45% of antibiotics administered in the UK are given to livestock.

And these problems are connected and stem from the food system itself; you cannot solve one of them without considering the others. At the Scottish Food Coalition, we have long been campaigning for the Good Food Nation Bill, a transformative piece of legislation to tackle these interlinked and complicated challenges.

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The Scottish Government opened a consultation on the Good Food Nation bill from December 2018 to April 2019 inviting the public to share their views. In Autumn 2018 we recruited 35 volunteers from across Scotland who were keen to work within their communities to encourage people to respond to the consultation to raise their voices on the food issues that matter to them. The volunteers are known as 'Good Food Nation Ambassadors'.

We recruited these volunteers through online advertising and our Coalition networks. Ambassadors were selected based on their connection to their local communities, as one of their core responsibilities is raising awareness and engagement with the Good Food Nation campaign. Ambassadors were also selected from a range of locations across Scotland and represented varied backgrounds of ages and areas of interest. Some of the Ambassadors were particularly passionate about allotments, others were involved in community meal initiatives or climate change activists.

We provided a full day's training covering the main issues in the food system, the potential for change, and a session on political procedure aimed at increasing Ambassadors' confidence to engage with their elected representatives and with otherwise opaque government process.

The Ambassadors were able to arrange around 60 events across Scotland, and attend public meetings, use social media and alert their local press to raise awareness. It was through their efforts that around 1,500 people in their communities engaged in the consultation, either through responding to an online e-action, submitting their own individual responses or as part of a larger group response.

We have been supporting the Ambassadors keeping them updated with the Good Food Nation's Bill progress and giving them tools to help them raise awareness and speak about the many complicated issues. These tools included the guide to responding to the consultation, campaign videos and infographics.

Photo: Scottish Food Coalition

We've learned how impactful the grassroots activity can be – we know that the actions of the Ambassadors made a huge difference to the consultation responses, and people that had never before engaged with government consultations were empowered to have their say with the support of our Ambassadors. I wish that we had more ambassadors in rural Scotland, the majority of our Ambassadors stay around the central belt. Budget permitting, we would love to go out to more rural areas to invite those communities' views on their hopes for the future of the food system.

Our aims are:

- To join people from all sides of the food system to work together.
- To empower people and communities to have a say in the future of our food systems
- To influence and deliver a wide-ranging, cross-cutting Good Food Nation Bill.
- To achieve join-up and coherence across policy-areas related to food.
- To ultimately transform the food system and reorient it to play a significant role as a solution to social and environmental challenges.

Find out more
www.foodcoalition.scot

Tony's Chocolonely – Fighting slavery

Right now, there is slavery on cocoa farms in West Africa: 2.1 million children work illegally, and more than 30,000 children and adults are victims of modern slavery in Ghana and Ivory Coast as a result of the unequally divided cocoa chain. Tony's Chocolonely exists to change this. Our vision is 100% slave-free chocolate – not just *our* chocolate, but all chocolate worldwide.

We started in 2005 when a team of Dutch journalists discovered these issues in the cocoa supply chain and became determined to put it into the global spotlight. When we couldn't get support from the big chocolate suppliers, we decided to change the industry from within and show the world that chocolate can be made differently – in taste, packaging and the way that you treat cocoa farmers. This remains our focus almost 15 years later.

Support from retailers and chocolate eaters is essential because we can't achieve our mission alone. Alone, we can make our own chocolate slave free. But only together with customers, retailers, government and other big chocolate companies, can we make all chocolate 100% slave free.

Photo: Tony's Chocolonely

There are lots of ways that choco fans can help us share our chocolate and share our story. If you are a big Tony's fan and advocate of our mission, you can graduate to be a Serious Friend by signing up on our website. In the Netherlands this will give you access to our Serious Friends Toolkit. Through here you can watch our documentary, put on your own screening or download posters and materials to host your own Tony Talk about the problems in the chocolate supply chain.

We also host open house afternoons where you can come and hear from one of Tony's Teams about their contribution to our mission – from our Impact team who work on the ground in Africa, to our Movement team who lobby governments for legislative change globally. And there are easy fun ways to spread the word too.

In the Netherlands you can create your own bespoke Tony's bar through our website to send as a gift (or keep for yourself). All of this helps to empower you as chocolate eaters to spread the word for us and grow the ripple effect of change. As we grow in the UK, we will launch the Serious Friends Toolkit and be offering fun ways to get involved with our mission.

At Tony's it is important that we are also having ongoing open conversations with other chocolate companies. Our end goal is that they join our 'Open Chain' and adopt our five sourcing principles as a big step toward making their supply chain 100% slave free. This change won't happen overnight, but we have already seen big retailers such as Albert Heijn in the Netherlands make the big decision to source cocoa according to our principles for all its own-label Delicata range of bars. So, we are making progress, and we won't stop until we have achieved our goal. Together we'll make slave-free the norm in chocolate.

Find out more:
tonyschocolonely.com

We are all food citizenship ambassadors

It's not just our audiences that are ambassadors. As individuals who buy, cook and eat food, who work in the food and farming sector, and engage in the wider movement, we *all* have the potential to be food citizenship ambassadors by:

- spreading the message that we are better understood as citizens than we are as consumers;
- challenging others, including government and key organisations in other sectors, when they refer to people as simply consumers;
- leading by example, treating others as equals and welcoming them into our work;
- believing in the power of people and reaching out to others as a food citizen, helping them become food citizens too.

Finding and becoming a mentor

All food citizenship pioneers we spoke to had either been mentored, acted as mentor to others, or most often both. Mentors can provide tailored guidance both practically (in relation to our work) and personally (to motivate and encourage us).

When a direct relationship with a mentor isn't available or possible, we can seek role models to play a key part in inspiring, motivating, and strengthening our confidence in taking action. The benefits are not just in knowing *what* can be done, but sometimes simply that *something* can be done.

COOK's **RAW Talent initiative** supports people who may have spent time in prison or are without secure housing and a full-time, permanent job. As part of the programme, RAW Talents are partnered with a 'work buddy' for extra support. **Food Power** is another organisation that links peer mentors[12] with members to help them overcome challenges, support on-going development and build upon success.

- Who can I turn to when I feel stuck?
- Who inspires me and how can I relate to their experience?
- Who can I speak to about my career and my personal development?
- Who can I support and inspire around me?
- Where can I share my experience and inspire others?
- How can I nurture peer-to-peer support in my organisation?

12 Sustain (2018) Food Power welcomes five new peer mentors [**link**]

Climate Change Coaches – Helping change stick

The Climate Change Coaches help people to rediscover their climate mojo and get into environmental action. Through workshops and coaching, we give people the skills to empower themselves and others to act more decisively for our planet. Our team of lively, inspiring coaches will reignite your belief that action on climate change can be not just practical but enjoyable.

In order for us to act for the environment, we must first foster the belief that personal action and systemic change is possible. But belief is hard to maintain in the face of such an immense challenge.

Too often when we talk to others about this issue, we either join them in feeling powerless or adopt a 'telling' approach that alienates, leading to frustration not action. Instead, we need to listen as much as speak, help people with anxiety, and challenge our doubt. The Climate Change Coaches teach easy coaching skills that are non-judgmental and proactive. We help participants move from feeling powerless, frustrated and anxious back into being creative, tapping into deeper motivations and values and connecting these to everyday actions so that change sticks.

At the core of our mission is the belief that climate change is as much a human behaviour problem as it is an environmental one. Nowhere is behaviour change trickier than in relation to food.

The carbon footprint of our modern food system is under-recognised. Yet with every interaction we have with the food system we are voting for the future we will leave for future generations. A coaching approach can be really valuable here, where often our identity is connected to what we eat and where change is more challenging.

At the Climate Change Coaches, we help people to reimagine their relationship with food and help practitioners to have more successful conversations about the type of food system we want, the consequences of our food choices, and our connection with the planet and its resources.

Find out more:
www.climatechangecoaches.com

Investing in people

Investing in people can take many forms including training, supporting, upskilling and empowering. Every investment we make – either as an individual or at an organisational level – multiplies the potential for positive change.

Flavour School helps children (and adults!) learn about the senses, taste and flavour, in order to give them more confidence and curiosity to try new things.

The **Pret Foundation Rising Star Programme** supports people out of homelessness and poverty and provides them with the skills they need to be independent. The programme offers three-month job placements to the homeless, providing a livelihood whilst covering expenses such as food, travel and accommodation. Around 75% of Rising Stars graduate after three months and almost half stay with Pret for more than a year.

Rebel Kitchen – Food citizen employees

We are all becoming increasingly aware of the environmental impact that our consumption has. We are tuning into how we need to look at health holistically, and understanding the symbiotic nature of the mind and body, so it made no sense to me to be a progressive purpose-based business, without taking that concept right through to how we operate as a team, treat our employees and also redefine the vision of what 'good business' looks like.

There is an old definition which says that the role of a CEO/MD is to maximise 'value' for a company's shareholders, but I fundamentally disagree. If you are setting out with that mentality, you are bound to make decisions along the way which do NOT support your employees and they are the ones that are ultimately responsible for the success of your business. A CEO should in my opinion be responsible for the employees' physical, mental and emotional wellbeing. Work is the most time-consuming thing that we do in a week, so if we are not doing that, how can you expect them to give their best and what type of culture/business/organisation do you expect to create?

That's why at Rebel we have a heap of policies that aim to not just put people first, but support and encourage them to actively grow and learn. To find more about and within themselves.

Amongst things like flexi time and unlimited holiday, we ensure that everybody has a weekly 1-2-1 where they can talk about anything that is going on for them. We always start this with 'personal' items and allow the employee to drive the agenda. Come the bi-annual reviews we use a wheel of life to discuss all areas of life and explore the inter-relationship of them to how they have been able to perform. It's not a typical KPI review tick box activity that does not explain any of the 'why.' Together with this, we encourage people to make mistakes and fail forward. We are agile enough to pivot if something isn't working and are all willing to jump in and help one and other as a 'family' would do. We do not blame; we learn, and we move on.

You cannot expect good results from people if you see them as nothing more than a number, but if you understand the person, you can always understand the problem. Similarly, we are also proud to be a B-corp which means that we are legally required to consider the impact of our decisions on our workers, customers, suppliers, community, and the environment. By signing up to be a B-corp we have committed to the highest standards of verified social and environmental performance, public transparency, and legal accountability to balance profit and purpose.

Find out more:
rebel-kitchen.com

Making room for mistakes

When we see failure as a positive experience, we are better placed to overcome challenges. Our food citizenship pioneers told us about countless 'failures,' from products being a flop to meetings where everything goes wrong. What unites them is their acceptance of failure, and their ability to fail and bounce back.

Celebrating success is important, but experiencing setbacks, seeing mistakes as opportunities to learn, grow and readjust, and hearing about others' mistakes are all key to building resilience. When we're less anxious about failing we have a more positive attitude towards risk, giving us the creative freedom to grasp opportunities when they arise.

When a staff member at Hawksmoor in Manchester accidentally served a £4,500 bottle of wine instead of the £260 one that had been ordered, the restaurant demonstrated its positive attitude towards mistakes. Its response, which went viral on **twitter**, was simply: "*To the customer who accidentally got given a bottle of Chateau le Pin Pomerol 2001, which is £4500 on our menu, last night – hope you enjoyed your evening! To the member of staff who accidentally gave it away, chin up! One-off mistakes happen and we love you anyway.*"[13]

If the organisations we work in provide us with a safe space to experiment with new ideas and learn new skills, we will feel empowered. And if we encourage our audiences to test and explore their own ideas, they too will feel empowered.

Giving room to test ideas through small pilot projects can be a safe way to experiment. For example, Morrisons ran a 10-month trial rolling out plastic-free fruit and vegetable aisles in three of its shops.[14] This allowed them to test the idea, assess what worked and what didn't, and have the confidence to expand the programme to a further 60 stores.

Sharing power

If everyone in our organisation has room to make autonomous decisions, everyone can contribute towards making positive changes to our shared purpose and values. That's because employing the collective brain of an organisation is a more powerful strategy than relying on a few people to come up with ideas. If we share power more widely, we can invite people outside our organisation to share our ideas, our toolkits, campaigns and purpose.

There's often a nervousness that comes with letting go of this power. But giving all the stakeholders in our organisation an opportunity to have a say in how we do things is not risky if our purpose is clear and our core values and intentions have been set.

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- Does my organisation have the flexibility to allow me to make my own decisions– or are there procedures in place that prevent me?
- Is everyone in the organisation given room to create positive changes?
- Is my organisation open to inviting our audiences in to participate even more closely in our work?

13 Brennan A (2019) Hawksmoor promotes manager who gave away £4,500 bottle of wine by accident. Evening Standard [link]
14 Quinn I (2019) Morrisons to roll out plastic-free fruit & veg aisles in 60 stores. The Grocer [link]

Riverford: an employee-owned adventure

When I first asked our staff about employee ownership in 2003, with the suggestion that it could be financed by them forgoing their annual profit share for 20 years, they told me where I could stick it. Perhaps they saved us from another Animal Farm.

Soulful musings among the cabbages rarely prove good guidance for business practice. Ideas for radical change need to be challenged, rethought, and challenged again to avoid the dangers that come with all ideological dogma.

We spent the intervening years, and particularly the last four, researching, consulting and challenging each other – until we were sure what we wanted and why, understood the gulf we needed to cross to get there, and had planned how to cross it. Particular credit goes to our people director Charlotte Tickle, managing director Rob Haward, co-owner council and external trustees, who methodically developed the governance and culture to turn my dreams into a working reality.

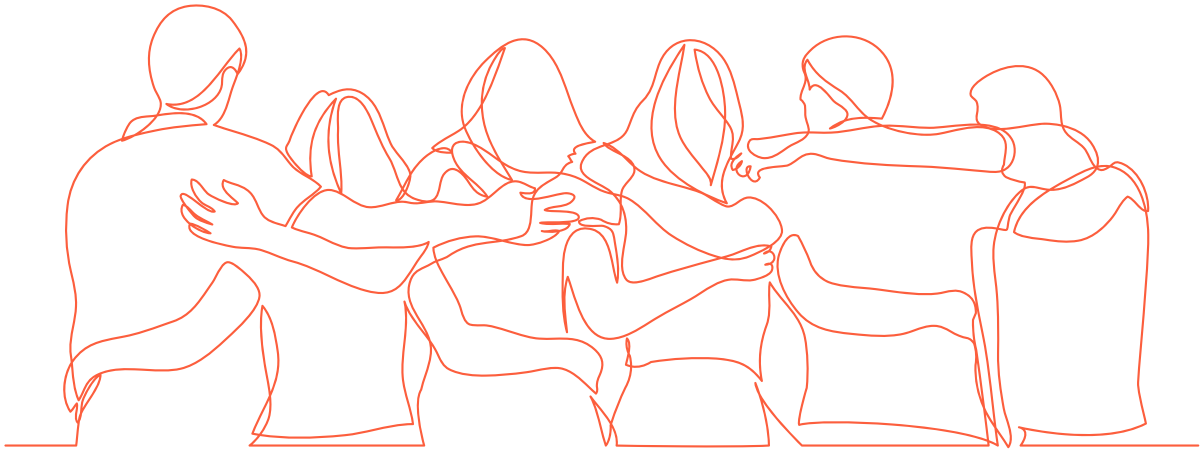
On June 8th 2018, Riverford became 74% employee owned. It was the happiest and proudest day of my life. As one co-owner councillor, Scott, said: 'we are creating a microcosm of the world we've always wanted to live in'.

Photo: Riverford

The last year has shown what an incredible job we made of such a massive and challenging transition. I see it on the faces of co-owners every day; I hear it in the engagement, pride and dignity that comes with being able to influence your own daily life and destiny, and share in the spoils of your work; I see it in the personal, often challenging, growth that many co-owners have undertaken, sometimes surprising themselves.

So far there is no sign of unduly cumbersome consultative decision-making. Our sales, cost controls and margins have never been better, providing evidence for my long-held belief that conventional ownership, and the cynical management that too often accompanies it, wastes huge amounts of human potential.

Guy Singh-Watson, farmer and founder of Riverford



The seed of food citizenship is beginning to sprout, and we can all play our part in nourishing it. Sometimes the weeds threaten to smother it, but with tender care we can give it the light and space it needs to transform from a small sapling into a mighty tree.

First and foremost, let's start with our own journey and give ourselves the best chance to nurture our inner food citizen. Once we are secure in our own values and purpose, we can focus on our immediate sphere of influence, be it in the organisation where we work and its audiences, or among our own wider circle of family, friends and neighbours. Finally, let's trust in our collective power to create positive change.

If we've learned anything from food citizenship pioneers, it's that we're not alone and we don't have to do everything ourselves. In the moments where we may feel overwhelmed by the scale of the task we can simply reflect on that knowledge, and ask ourselves:

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- **Why do I do what I do?**
- **Where and when can I bring people together?**
- **How do I make people part of our vision?**
- **How can I give people a voice and space to act?**

Do you have a story to tell?

Do you have questions?

Would you like to be part of the movement to accelerate the shift towards food citizenship?

Join us: **foodcitizenship.info**

Food Ethics Council