

September 2005

London Development Agency Better food for London: the Mayor's Draft Food Strategy

Summary and Questionnaire for public consultation



The London Food Strategy is supported by:



Strategy prepared by Brook Lyndhurst

Public consultation administered by Sustain/London Food Link

Foreword from Ken Livingstone

Food is such a normal part of everyday living that its effects can easily be overlooked. Whether eating at home or dining out, Londoners benefit from a complex food system that daily meets the capital's enormous food requirements. This draft strategy sets out how – through the co-operation of all those involved – we can enhance our health, increase our pleasure from eating and dining, enrich further our experience of London's cultural diversity, and ensure a more sustainable future.

London's extraordinary social and cultural diversity is reflected in over 60 different cuisines provided in over 12,000 restaurants – more than half the nation's total. This variety and vibrancy extends to London's food retail outlets, with exciting well-known markets like Borough and Walthamstow alongside major supermarkets and independent corner shops. 'Food tourism' is an increasingly vital element of London's attraction for visitors. It has many of the best restaurants in the world, and an unparalleled choice of cuisine. Ensuring this diversity is enhanced and quality continually improved will add to the attractiveness of London as a place to live and do business.

However, there are also significant challenges. Obesity and diet-related illnesses account for a huge number of premature deaths in London, with many on low incomes suffering disproportionately. In many parts of London, people struggle to access affordable, nutritious food. Many of those involved in the food system are barely benefiting from it economically and the environmental impact of the food system is considerable.

There are many features of London's food system that we need to improve if we are to meet my vision of a sustainable world city. I believe there is much that can be done by both organisations and individuals. This draft Food Strategy sets the strategic context and outlines a plan of action to help us all make better and healthier choices. It celebrates our vibrant and successful food culture, seeks to maximise new opportunities and tackle and overcome areas of weakness. Your opinions will help shape this strategy and ensure that we address these issues in a way that is meaningful and relevant for London. I would like to thank London Food and all those who have helped to produce this draft Strategy and look forward to hearing your views on its contents.



Ken Livingstone
Mayor of London

Foreword from Jenny Jones

This draft Food Strategy for London is ambitious yet practical. It sets out a framework and actions to help deliver a food system that is consistent with the Mayor's objective that London should be a world-class sustainable city. It does this by building and encouraging best practice, whilst tackling and overcoming areas of weakness. It will help improve food in London's schools, hospitals and other public institutions, and will offer people on low income better access to healthy and affordable food.

The draft strategy also addresses the negative impact on local and global environments of high levels of food imports. It seeks ways to support local, regional and organic producers, and help connect them to London markets and consumers. This is important to ensure a safe and secure supply of food that will also reduce London's ecological footprint.

I should like to thank the board members of London Food for their vital contribution towards this draft sustainable Food Strategy for London. The wide practical knowledge and expertise which they have brought to the drafting of the strategy has put a sustainable food system for London within our reach. We have been well supported by the London Development Agency, the Mayor's agency for business and jobs.



Jenny Jones
Chair London Food

Background

'London Food' is a partnership that advises on the future of food and farming in London. Set up by the Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone, it aims to help improve the health of Londoners and look at ways of making London's food healthy and sustainable. London Food was launched in November 2003 to help make the strategic links for food policy in London.

The body is chaired by London Assembly Member Jenny Jones and co-ordinated and funded by the London Development Agency, the Mayor's agency for business and jobs. It brings together representatives from the food industry, agriculture, community groups and government.

London Food works closely with the Mayor, London Development Agency, Government Office for London, Department of Health and other regional and local organisations in taking forward the recommendations from the Government's delivery plan for Sustainable Farming and Food in the South East Region which includes London. London Food meets quarterly and comprises of 25 members covering all aspects of the food system.

Deadline for responses to consultation:
7th December 2005

Full draft strategy is available –
www.lda.gov.uk/londonfood

We have an exciting new vision for food in London – what do you think?

The Mayor is developing a Food Strategy for London that will co-ordinate efforts to improve all aspects of London's food system by 2016. Better health, less environmental impact, improved working conditions and more local food – these are some of the things that the strategy will propose. **All of them will affect you in some way, so read on and then tell us what you think.**

'How can we make school meals better? Do you agree with Jamie Oliver's recent campaign?'

'How can we get organic food that everyone can afford?'

'Is it OK to eat fresh fruit that has flown half way around the world?'

'How can we get a better deal for consumers, small businesses and people working in food businesses?'

London's got a lot to be proud of.

- World-class cuisine and restaurants.
- Half of the UK's restaurants.
- 60 different cuisines, reflecting a great diversity of food cultures.
- 31,000 jobs in food manufacture alone.
- A dynamic food economy – £1.6 billion of consumer spending.

But there's room for improvement.

- Healthy, affordable food is not easily available to all Londoners.
- Growing obesity.

- Poor diet linked to ill health – for example, 30% of coronary heart disease is diet linked.
- There is too much waste – approximately 70% of household packaging waste is food related.
- The food system has significant negative environmental impacts.

From 'growing it' to 'throwing it' – the food system

It takes a lot to get the food onto your plate. All of the following stages, are interlinked and are key to our food system. For example, what people want to buy helps determine what farmers grow.

Examples of relevant stakeholders

Producing & growing	Farms, allotments, community growers, cooperatives and market gardens.
Processing	Food manufacturers, small processing companies, processors, packaging companies.
Transporting & storing	Distribution companies, logistics companies including supermarkets.
Selling	Supermarkets, independent shops, catering companies, box schemes.
Buying	Consumers, public bodies like schools and hospitals.
Cooking	Individuals, restaurants, caterers.
Eating	Individuals, public sector, restaurants, businesses.
Throwing away	Households, markets, businesses, local authorities.

Our vision

We want to see a food system that helps make London a world-class sustainable city:

- **where a vibrant food economy offers healthy food which is accessible and affordable to all**
- **which celebrates the capital's diversity, minimises environmental damage and ensures a secure food supply.**

We believe that London's food system should operate with respect for all involved from animals and our countryside to employees, consumers and businesses.

People, businesses and organisations should be aware of the impact that our food system has and take responsibility for improvements.

Making it happen – putting the Vision into practice

In order to achieve this vision by 2016 and make London's food system truly world-class and sustainable, we have identified a wide range of specific activities that are needed. In particular, we think that action should be focused on six areas.

These priority areas are:

Supporting a strong economy – an economically strong food system will be more likely to provide the health, cultural, social and environmental benefits that we are aiming for. A healthy, diverse food economy will also generate both income and employment better equipping us to cope with unexpected disruptions. Some of our proposals to help make this happen include:

- promoting food tourism and culture
- additional business support and advice for specialist food manufacturers and small businesses
- appropriate training for manufacturers and caterers (e.g. on marketing)
- supporting independent shops like grocers, butchers and bakers.

Involving consumers and helping them to improve their diet

– what people decide to buy and eat has an effect on the whole food system – for example, helping determine what producers grow, influencing their own health and affecting how much packaging waste we produce. Involving consumers and supporting them to make changes to their habits will be key to improving food in London. Some of the specific suggestions include:

- high profile advertising campaigns, based on successful similar campaigns, including healthy foods and safe drinking
- testing a ‘reward card’ scheme or other incentives to encourage healthy and environmental friendly food choices
- creating more opportunities for people to grow food
- involving large retailers in promoting healthy eating choices
- reducing the amount of food packaging.

Improving food purchasing in the public and private sectors

– the public and private sectors spend large amounts of money on food. This puts them in a strong position to influence suppliers, support the London food economy and reduce the wider environmental effects of the food system. Purchasing choices could also make a significant difference to opportunities for healthy eating. Proposals for action include:

- encouraging flagship procurement practices on food in the Greater London Authority family
- improving access to public and private sector procurement opportunities for smaller businesses
- applying lessons across London from a pilot scheme on procurement in hospitals
- improving food procurement support services for the public and private sector.

Developing stronger links between regional and UK producers and the London market

– London represents a huge, diverse, market for food. Improving access to this market for producers and manufacturers in and around London, and the UK more widely, could provide multiple benefits. These include economic benefits, improving access to fresh produce for Londoners, reduced food miles and other environmental damage, and greater national food security. Some specific proposals include:

- encouraging changes in production to meet the specific demands of the London market (e.g. more local production of ethnic food where possible, reflecting London’s diversity)
- encouraging producer collaboration to share marketing costs and help access procurement contracts
- researching the feasibility of helping smaller suppliers to share distribution mechanisms.

Creating healthy schools – schools have a fundamental role in the London food system, providing meals for children and educating them about food. Better school food is high on the agenda and has strong public support, following the recent publicity and campaign about school meals by Jamie Oliver. Help for schools, building on the existing Healthy Schools programme, should include:

- encouraging and supporting more cooking and food education in schools
- improving the quality of school meals, targeting barriers such as lack of training, facilities, political support and inadequate budgets
- improving access to healthy food; for example healthy vending machines, expanding school breakfast clubs, and changing the nature of advertising aimed at children to promote more healthy eating
- providing easy access for children to fresh drinking water throughout the school day.

Reducing waste – food-related waste from households, businesses and other organisations can cause significant damage to the economy, environment and health. Ways to reduce this impact could include:

- continuing to expand and improve recycling services in London, including schemes for major markets
- researching into food waste behaviour and look at the potential for incentives to make a difference
- establishing kitchen waste collection schemes
- testing initiatives with major retailers in London to reduce packaging, including charging for plastic bags.

These are the outline areas for action. A full and realistic action plan will be developed with partners during the consultation phase and incorporated into the final strategy. Actions will need to be prioritised, their costs estimated, budgets and sources of funding agreed.



Food stalls at Borough Market

Next steps

The deadline for responses to the public consultation of the draft London Food Strategy is 7th December 2005.

Full draft strategy is available –
www.lda.gov.uk/londonfood

The final strategy will be published in 2006.
To ensure that your comments are incorporated into the consultation, please send your response to either one of the following.

a) Postal responses to be sent to:

Food Unit
London Development Agency
Freepost Lon18875
LONDON
E1W 1BR

b) Electronic questionnaire can be completed online at www.lda.gov.uk/londonfood

For further information on the consultation process and events, as well as other London Food activities, please go to www.lda.gov.uk/londonfood, or send an email to londonfood@lda.gov.uk

The results of this consultation will be summarised in a report that will be available on the London Food website when completed.



Other languages and formats:

A summarised version of this document is also available in large print, braille, on disk, audio cassette and in the languages listed below.

For a copy, please contact the LDA Communications Team:

**London Development Agency
Devon House
58-60 St Katharine's Way
London E1W 1JX**

Tel: 020 7954 4500

Email: communications@lda.gov.uk

Arabic

إذا أردت نسخة من هذه الوثيقة بلغة، الرجاء الاتصال برقم الهاتف أو الكتابة الى العنوان أدناه:

Bengali

আপনি যদি আপনার ভাষায় এই দলিলের প্রতিলিপি (কপি) চান, তা হলে নীচের ফোন নম্বরে বা ঠিকানায় অনুগ্রহ করে যোগাযোগ করুন।

Chinese

如果需要此文档的您的母语拷贝，請致電以下號碼或和下列地址聯係

Greek

Αν θα θέλατε ένα αντίγραφο του παρόντος εγγράφου στη γλώσσα σας, παρακαλώ να τηλεφωνήσετε στον αριθμό ή να επικοινωνήσετε στην παρακάτω διεύθυνση.

Gujarati

જો તમને આ દસ્તાવેજની તમારી ભાષામાં પ્રાપ્તિની કૃપા કરવી હોય તો, કૃપા કરીને નીચેના નંબર પર ફોન કરો અથવા નીચેના સરનામે સંપર્ક રાખો.

Hindi

यदि आप इस दस्तावेज़ की प्रति अपनी भाषा में चाहते हैं, तो कृपया निम्नलिखित नम्बर पर फोन करें अथवा दिये गये पता पर सम्पर्क करें।

Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਦੀ ਕਾਪੀ ਆਪਣੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕੀਤੇ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ ਜਾਂ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕੀਤੇ ਪਤੇ 'ਤੇ ਕਾਬਲਾ ਕਰੋ।

Turkish

Bu broşürü Türkçe olarak edinmek için lütfen aşağıdaki numaraya telefon edin ya da adrese başvurun.

Urdu

اگر آپ اس دستاویز کی نقل اپنی زبان میں چاہتے ہیں، تو براہ کرم نیچے دیئے گئے نمبر پر فون کریں یا دیئے گئے پتے پر رابطہ قائم کریں۔

Vietnamese

Nếu bạn muốn bản sao của tài liệu này bằng ngôn ngữ của bạn, hãy gọi điện theo số hoặc liên lạc với địa chỉ dưới đây.

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