



# Healthy and Sustainable Food for London

The Mayor's Food Strategy Summary  
May 2006





### **Foreword from Ken Livingstone, Mayor of London**

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 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 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.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ken Livingstone". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Ken Livingstone, Mayor of London



### **Foreword from Jenny Jones, Chair London Food**

This Food Strategy for London is ambitious yet practical. It sets out a framework and action 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 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 sustainable Food Strategy for London. The wide practical knowledge and expertise which they have brought to the development 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.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jenny Jones". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jenny Jones, Chair London Food

## **Consultation and Impact Assessments**

Thanks are due to the many individuals and organisations that took the time to comment on the Draft London Food Strategy during the autumn of 2005. Their contribution has strengthened and enhanced the final Strategy.

The final Strategy has also benefited from the results of a Health Impact Assessment, an Equalities Impact Assessment and a Sustainability Impact Assessment. Thanks are due to those individuals and organisations that contributed to these assessments.

For further information on both the outcomes of the consultation process and the three impact assessments, as well as other London Food activities please go to [www.lda.gov.uk/londonfood](http://www.lda.gov.uk/londonfood), or send an email to [londonfood@lda.gov.uk](mailto:londonfood@lda.gov.uk)

### **Copyright**

© 2006 London Development Agency, no unauthorised copying of this document is permitted.

### **Published by**

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

### **Enquiries**

Public Liaison Unit  
020 7954 4500

### **Acknowledgements**

Thanks to the many individuals who contributed to this document; and to Defra in particular for part-funding the strategy development process.



**Contents**

01 The Vision..... 08

02 The Context..... 10

03 The Delivery ..... 14

04 The Next Steps..... 20

# 01 The Vision





## Why does London need a food strategy?

Food and drink are vital to every Londoner, yet it is easy to take them for granted. An extraordinary network of farmers, factories, restaurants and retailers ensures that, every single day, millions of people in London are able to choose from an unprecedented variety of food and drink. But this complex system has its failings, from negative impacts upon health to environmental damage caused by CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. The London Food Strategy has been developed by the Mayor of London and London Food to tackle these problems in a joined-up way while protecting the vitality, vibrancy and diversity of London's food culture.

### Food and drink: a vision for London

Every part of the Strategy aims to embrace the London Mayor's three key priorities: health, equality and sustainable development. The Mayor's vision is that:

"In 2016, London's people, residents, employees, visitors and public, private and voluntary organisations will be:

- taking **responsibility** for the impacts of their food choices and their role in ensuring that food and farming are an integrated part of modern life
- demonstrating **respect** for all the elements involved in the provision of their food, and treating fairly the environment, the people, the animals, the businesses and others involved in providing their food
- conscious of the **resources** being used in growing, processing, distributing, selling, preparing and disposing of their food, and continuously engaged in minimising any negative impacts arising from this resource use
- benefiting from the **results** of this effort, so that all Londoners have ready access to a healthy, affordable and culturally appropriate diet."

The Strategy therefore aims to:

- improve Londoners' **health** and reduce health inequalities via the food they eat
- reduce the negative **environmental** impacts of London's food system
- support a vibrant food **economy**
- celebrate and promote London's food **culture**
- develop London's **food security**

In order to achieve this, the Strategy identifies six areas for action.

1. Ensuring commercial vibrancy
2. Securing consumer engagement
3. Levering the power of procurement
4. Developing regional links
5. Delivering healthy schools
6. Reducing food-related waste and litter

# 02 The Context



Extensive facts and figures about the current state of London's food system are presented in great detail in the full Strategy document. The full Strategy details eight stages of the food system.

**1. Primary production**

Growing or harvesting produce, either for sale or for use in processed food and drink

**2. Processing and manufacturing**

Processing and packing food and drink and manufacturing packaging and machinery

**3. Transport, storage and distribution**

The storage and movement of food between producers, processors and retailers

**4. Food retail**

The sale of food, either directly or through wholesale markets and retailers

**5. Purchasing food**

The purchasing of food or drink for consumption

**6. Food preparation**

The storage and cooking of food ready for consumption

**7. Consumption**

Eating and drinking

**8. Disposal**

The removal and processing of all unconsumed food and drink

Each of these stages is affected by a wide range of factors.

At **international** level, London's food is grown and processed all over the world and is consumed by people from a huge number of countries and cultures.

London's food supply is also affected by, and subject to, international agreements, from the European Union's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) to the Kyoto Protocol on climate change.

At **national level**, food and farming are mainly the responsibility of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Food Standards Agency (FSA). In 2002, Defra published a national strategy for sustainable farming and food called **Facing the Future**, and has recently published the **Food Industry Sustainability Strategy**. These initiatives aim to "reconnect" consumers with other parts of the food chain, particularly the farmer, and to strengthen regional food economies.

Other schemes, such as the **Public Sector Food Procurement Initiative**, and broader policies such as the **Choosing Health: Making Healthy Choices Easier White Paper**, are also shaping approaches to food at a national level.

The work on **regional** farming and food that came out of **Facing the Future** emphasised the fact that London and its food system function very differently to other parts of the United Kingdom. As a result, the Mayor of London set up the London Food Board to develop this Strategy. The Strategy sits alongside a number of other key London policies and initiatives, including the **London Spatial Development Strategy** (also known as the London Plan). The London Plan affects a whole host of food-related activities, from allotments to local convenience stores. Other London policies with links to food include the **London Cultural Strategy**, the **Economic Development Strategy**, the **Transport Strategy** and the **Municipal Waste Management Strategy**.

The Mayor's Food Strategy also recognises the importance of the regions around London – and in particular the South East and East of England – in supplying the city with food and drink.

At local and community level, partnership with the London Boroughs is essential and it is hoped that the Mayor's Food Strategy will feed into the actions of local councils and other public bodies, such as Primary Care Trusts and Local Education Authorities.





# 03 The Delivery



In order to maintain the positive aspects of London's food system and to address its failings, the Mayor's Food Strategy identifies six key areas for action. These are outlined below, together with a brief description of the sort of specific actions that could fall under each. These actions are not for the Mayor and Greater London Authority (GLA) alone to consider, but for all those who are engaged in the food system in London. A full action plan will need to be drawn up as described under the 'Next Steps' section.

### 1: Ensuring commercial vibrancy

Ensuring the commercial vibrancy of the food sector offers benefits across every aspect of London life. A food sector that is robust and diverse will provide a rich range of employment opportunities, generate income and guard against vulnerability. It will also contribute to some of the other health, cultural and social goals of the Strategy. The long-list of areas for action is as follows.

- Consideration will be given to the role that the public sector can play in helping to facilitate more **producer collaborations** and **logistics and distribution partnerships, to help smaller producers to compete in the market, and to encourage new entrants**
- Consideration will be given to the role that the public sector can play to support market and product **innovation**, and the promotion of 'direct selling' initiatives
- Directing better the existing resources available for business **support for specialist food manufacturers and processors**, particularly on consumer market trends and collaborative working, and particularly for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) that reflect London's diverse communities
- Planning and development support for identifiable and beneficial economic **food clusters** in London, such as restaurant clusters in Brick Lane and China Town, or manufacturing clusters at Park Royal, as well as continued support to London's many town centres
- Balanced use of the **spatial planning system** to support the differing needs of retailers of all sizes, including markets, so as to support the overall objectives of the Food Strategy
- **Better provision of training**, particularly in nutrition and health issues, for food retail and manufacturing employees, particularly across smaller enterprises, where this is possible
- **Better promotion of food tourism and food culture**, domestically and internationally – in particular by strengthening this aspect of London's brand through Visit London's marketing and promotional activity.

## 2: Securing consumer engagement

Without the engagement, enthusiasm and awareness of Londoners, the benefits of an improved food system will not be felt and their considerable influence as consumers will go untapped. Enabling positive behaviour change and promoting consumer choice are a fundamental part of this strategy. Awareness alone does not necessarily lead to sustained behaviour change. Londoners need to be enabled to put their intentions into practice. The long-list of areas for action is as follows.

- Explore the feasibility of a **London 'Reward Card' scheme** that encourages healthy and sustainable food choices
- In partnerships across the public and private sector, conduct a **high profile campaign** aimed at Londoners, based on research into the most effective communication methods. This should be public health-led, aimed specifically at promoting healthy foods, safe drinking and preparation methods and possibly linked to the 5-A-Day programme. The campaign should also incorporate food quality, tourism, enjoyment and the promotion of existing London success and will need carefully to take account of the needs of London's diverse communities
- Engage the **large London retailers to promote healthy eating choices** that offer them market opportunities
- Promote and **expand opportunities for small-scale food production** for individuals and communities through gardens, orchards, schools, allotments and parks and open spaces
- Promote and **support London food events and festivals** that celebrate the quality and diversity of food in London and ensure that food plays a stronger role in the wide range of other events and festivals held across London every year
- Provide **support for pregnant mothers and those with infants** as part of a wider health advice package by engaging GPs, Sure Start schemes and piloting personal health advisors

## 3: Levering the power of procurement

The public sector in England spends £1.8 billion on food and catering services. Providing appropriate services to increase the opportunities for domestic producers to compete for this business has the potential to support London's food economy, to reduce the environmental impact of London's food system and to contribute to the improved health of Londoners. Although the needs of the private and public sectors are very different, the scale of the potential positive impact is such that both must be involved. The long-list of areas for action is as follows:





- **Develop public procurement support services and tools** for both procurement officials specifying food-related contracts and those organisations seeking to access the contracts
- Encourage **exemplar procurement practices within the GLA family** on food issues
- Continue to **increase the amount of organic and local food provided through public sector services** in London in response to growing consumer demand
- **Improve smaller producers' access to public and private sector contracts.** The ability of producers to engage in greater collaboration and co-operation is important and networking events between producers and procurement officials in London should also be developed.



#### 4: Developing regional links

London has a strong regional, and indeed national, presence and role. There is a need to recognise and improve the ability of producers and manufacturers from all over the UK to access the London market. Reconnecting producers with consumers in London will not only provide environmental benefits but will also provide regional and national economic benefits. This will require **demand** for products from outside of London, the ability to **distribute** those products and the **retail opportunities** to facilitate their sale to Londoners. The long-list of areas for action is as follows.

- **Encourage innovation among producers** to meet the demand from London's consumers through, for example, product diversification (such as ethnic foods), organic food production, ensuring high standards of production and quality and promoting biodiversity
- Encourage **producer collaboration and cooperation** in order to share ideas, marketing costs, fund product innovation and enable access to public and private sector procurement contracts
- Research the feasibility of developing a **secondary food hub** that operates in parallel to the mainstream distribution network and enables smaller farms to share resources in order to access the London market. This research should take account of London's existing wholesale markets at New Covent Garden Market, Billingsgate, Smithfield, Spitalfields and Western International

- Encourage, co-ordinate and broker – as appropriate – **local and sub-regional logistics partnerships**
- **Promote opportunities for producers to sell into the London market**, through a mix of direct selling; selling to London's restaurants and independent stores; and, crucially, sales to the major retailers.

#### 5: Delivering healthy schools

Schools have a fundamental role in the food system in London: they have the opportunity to provide pupils with healthy meals at least once a day; they can educate children about food, nutrition, healthy eating and the environment; they can equip children with the skills they need to make informed choices and prepare their own food and they can enable children to educate and pass on knowledge to their parents and peers. The long-list of areas of action is as follows.

- Support the education system in **increasing the time spent on cooking and food education** in schools, which may include work to revise the National Curriculum as well as specific support for individual schools and teachers
- **Research and promote the positive benefits of nutritious food for children**
- **Improve the nutritional quality of school meals** and the number of pupils eating them, targeting barriers such as training for catering staff, catering facilities, political will and overall budget allocations



- **Improve children’s access to healthy, quality food outside of school meals** by improving the provision of fresh fruit and access to fresh water in schools; support and piloting the introduction of green/healthy vending machines; and establishing/ expanding school breakfast clubs
- **Increase the number of schools taking part in farm/city farm visits**

## 6: Reducing food-related waste and litter

Food-related waste, which consists of both packaging and organic waste, has significant environmental, economic and health impacts. Two areas of intervention are called for – waste reduction/re-use and secondly, recycling. Within these two broad categories, the long-list of areas for action is as follows:

- Continue to **expand and improve recycling services** in London. The Mayor has already committed to promoting home and community composting and exceeding Government household waste targets through the Municipal Waste Management Strategy
- **Establish kitchen waste collection schemes.** This will require further work by the London Boroughs to engage households, expanding collection services and, crucially, installing the infrastructure required to support the processing of such waste
- **Research the attitudes, awareness and behaviours of Londoners** towards food waste and explore the effectiveness of incentives to reduce food waste
- **Encourage composting and/or recycling by London’s major food markets**
- **Pilot initiatives with major retailers in London to reduce packaging** and, in particular, trial charging for plastic bags

# 04 Next Steps



The Food Strategy sets out the long-term objectives for London's food system but it will not achieve those objectives unless its ideals are acted upon. Developing and costing a detailed action plan and securing the resources and stakeholder buy-in for effective implementation will be crucial if the Strategy is to be a success.

A programme of projects to address the Strategy's key objectives is being developed.

The Strategy commits implementation partners to developing:

- a full action plan to address the Strategy's action areas;
- realistic and appropriate targets;
- full engagement with major partners and funders.





## Find out more

For more information on Mayor's Food Strategy, visit [www.londonfoodstrategy.org.uk](http://www.londonfoodstrategy.org.uk)

## Get involved

To express an interest in future Food Strategy projects and initiatives, email: [www.lda.gov.uk/londonfood](mailto:www.lda.gov.uk/londonfood)

## Credits

**Front cover** Apples from Notting Hill Farmers' Market\*

**Page 1** The Mayor of London  
Copyright Lianne Harris

**Page 8** St Paul's\*

**Page 10** Borough Market\*

**Page 13** Locally supplied fruit and vegetables at Lambeth, by Sara Hannat

**Page 14** West Brompton Hospital Kitchen\*

**Page 17** Lambeth College

**Page 17** Neals Yards Dairy – Covent Garden

**Page 18 & 19** Morden Mount Primary School, Greenwich\*

**Page 22** The Food Co-op, Ferrier Estate, Greenwich\*

\*photographs by Josie Macdonald

## Other languages and formats

This document is also available in large print, braille, on disk, audio cassette and in the languages listed below.

### Arabic

إذا أردت نسخة من هذه الوثيقة بلغتك، الرجاء الاتصال برقم الهاتف او 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

中文  
如果需此文檔的您的母語拷貝，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 નકલ તમારી ભાષામાં જોઈતી હોય તો, કૃપા કરી આપેલ નંબર ઉપર ફોન કરો અથવા નીચેના સરનામે સંપર્ક સાધો.

For a copy, please contact the LDA Communications Team:

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

T +44 (0)20 7954 4500

F +44 (0)20 7680 2040

[www.lda.gov.uk](http://www.lda.gov.uk)

### 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 ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਦੀ ਕਾਪੀ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਆਪਣੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਹੇਠ ਲਿਖੇ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਫ਼ੋਨ ਕਰੋ ਜਾਂ ਹੇਠ ਲਿਖੇ ਪਤੇ 'ਤੇ ਰਾਬਤਾ 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

Tiếng Việt  
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.

London Development Agency

Devon House

58 – 60 St Katharine's Way

London E1W 1JX

T +44 (0)20 7954 4500

F +44 (0)20 7680 2040

[www.lda.gov.uk](http://www.lda.gov.uk)