TASTING THE FUTURE
A COMMUNITY OF PRACTITIONERS WORKING TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE FOOD FUTURE
FOOD

TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE?

CREATE MOVEMENT

HOW DO WE

OUR SUPPORTERS
There is no simple solution but there are many great experiments already happening in new ways of producing and consuming food that is good and healthy for people and planet.

We are facing many interconnected challenges that left unresolved will cause much disruption to our food system. The way we consume food in the UK has transformed over the past decades. Global supply chains bring us a wide range of foods in all seasons, yet, this apparent abundance is contrasted with hunger here and abroad. Also, these chains are less ecologically resilient, at risk to disruption, less transparent, and often lack effective environmental oversight.

The current Western diet is neither ecologically sustainable nor good for public health in the long term. In addition, the UK, and other Western countries, face an obesity crisis and an increase in many diet-linked degenerative diseases, such as diabetes, some cancers and heart disease. Tasting the Future is a community that works with practitioners who are already working towards a sustainable food future. We work from the perspective that in order to create a new food system, we need to create and learn together. Launched in June 2010, Tasting the Future has attracted over 600 participants from food retail, food producers, NGOs, community groups, social enterprise and government. Our over-arching goal is one of a culture change, where the way we live creates systems that are life enhancing, including our food system. This is long-term work and WWF-UK, together with our partners the Hara Practice Collaborative, is committed to supporting Tasting the Future over the next five years.

What’s the need for Tasting the Future?

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The Purpose of Tasting the Future is to...


CONNECT
innovators in food, by bringing people together to share stories, ideas and inspiration. We aim to identify and share learning across projects, ideas and experiments for change in the food system. We believe learning cross-pollination and experimentation to be central to creating systemic shifts.

CULTIVATE
skills and capacities of people already creating a new food system to deepen and strengthen their work. We believe that personal transformation and increased consciousness is vital for long-term change. We aim to accelerate ideas and sustainable business models in food by connecting innovators to programmes of support.

CHANGE CONDITIONS
by influencing those who create the wider conditions for change, for example, in government, policy and in finance. We also seek to help innovators in food move towards a critical mass through increasing their interconnections, collaborations and capacities to lead.
How we work

Learn from Living Systems
if we see things as complex and inter-connected, we are more able to tackle the whole as well as the parts.

Create a Culture of Sharing & Openness
we will share our learning and ideas so that together we can progress more quickly.

Learn , Experiment, & Take Risks
innovation requires us to make mistakes and collectively learn from them. We need to not be afraid to fail.

Not Knowing is an important starting point
the issues are so complex that there will be many answers, not one simple solution. In order to have the best chance of finding these answers, we need to collaborate with others on ‘bigger than self’ goals.

Dialogue is a way to Create Change & Movement
when people have generative conversations they can explore ideas and ask questions, rather than debate and hold positions.

‘Planting out...is a creative and humble process. you’re helping things along rather than controlling them. So ... sow more seed. Do it your way ... in the cheerful certainty that there’s no right way at all. Whatever works for you is right. Above all be prepared to get it wrong. Failure is the key to success.’
- Monty Don, Gardener’s World (February 2012)
ASSEMBLIES
Twice a year, we hold large-scale events, which bring together innovators in food to connect, exchange ideas, learn and inspire each other.

KNOWLEDGE SHARING
We host knowledge sharing and story telling seminars to share knowledge and expertise across the community on topical issues such as biodiversity and food, behaviour change and systems thinking.

INCUBATION
We connect people to programmes of support for innovators and entrepreneurs, and partner with organisations that host and deliver support programmes that accelerate alternative business models that connect people, planet and profit.

SKILL SHARING
We host skill sharing workshops where we invite members of the community to share skills, tools and techniques that will support the application and the delivery of projects and ideas.

ON-LINE PRESENCE
We host an online platform for the Tasting the Future community, which currently has over 450 members. Participants use this platform to share information and post reports, videos and events. In addition, we have a Facebook Community page and a Twitter following.

Our Harvest Cycle
We work with people who are ready to connect, learn and share their skills and knowledge about creating a sustainable food future. We aim to support what is growing rather than prove why it should be growing in the first place; the evidence is already there. There is so much experimentation already happening towards a sustainable food system; our role is not to catalyse new ideas but to cultivate existing ideas and support them as they grow.

Spring 2009 - Started to explore the need for Tasting the Future
June 2009 - Sweden publishes climate-friendly food guidelines
Autumn 2009 - Exploring evidence for change in the food system
January 2010 - UK government launches Food 2030
Spring 2010 - Building partnerships for Tasting the Future
June 2010 - First assembly: testing the need
July 2010 - Launch online community
September 2010 - Stewards workshop
November 2010 - Denmark applies a ‘junk food tax’
December 2010 - First innovation meetings
January 2011 - Launch of Hugh’s Fish Fight
January 2011 - Publication of WWF’s Live Well report
February 2011 - Second assembly: building on innovation domains
March 2011 - Innovation meetings
June 2011 - Mapping food workshop
July 2011 - Biodiversity and food workshop
July 2011 - UnLtd® Future launch
August 2011 - Hugh’s Eat More Veg campaign begins
September 2011 - Friends of Tasting the Future workshop
November 2011 - Third assembly: connecting innovations
At our first assembly, participants collectively identified where change is most needed to shift our food system towards sustainability. These are the innovation domains they identified:

New Business Models
One Planet Diet
National Conversation
Changing Consumption
Changing Cultural Norms
Consuming Better
Reducing Food Waste
Supply Chain Innovation

‘...food is more than itself. It is not everything, but it is touched by almost everything: memory, weather, dirt, hunger, chemistry, the universe...It is identity, and culture, and history. It is science, and nature, and botany. It is the earth. It is our family, our philosophy, our past. It is the most important matter in our lives...It is transcendent.’
Building on these innovation domains, a number of Tasting the Future-supported innovations and independent associated innovations now form part of the Tasting the Future community:

**Hackney City Farms**
A city farm in the London Borough of Hackney, established in 1984 as a community resource and to give the people, particularly young people, of the borough experience of animals.

**UnLtd* Future**
A programme of support for social entrepreneurs who are creating alternative business models that connect people, planet and profit. It is a collaboration between UnLtd*, Shirlaw’s Coaching, Tasting the Future and the Finance Innovation Lab.

**Live Well**
A WWF-led project that asks ‘what does a sustainable diet look like?’ It also provides ideas and practical guidance for people interested in pursuing a sustainable diet.

**Mapping Food Projects**
Led by Geovation, this project is testing the appetite and potential for using mapping tools to support local food initiatives.

**Barriers to Collaboration**
A research piece that looks at the barriers to retail and corporate collaboration and how they may be overcome.

**True Cost of Food**
An ADAS-led research project that explores the concept of pricing food in a way that reflects the impacts that its consumption and production imposes on society, communities and the environment.

**Biodiversity and Food**
An innovation led by Green Growth International, ADAS and WWF to develop a Biodiversity Impact Quantification standard to measure the impact of food business on biodiversity.

**West Lexham**
A developing community hub and education centre in rural Norfolk that is an example of a systemic approach to sustainability.

**Influencing Policy**
A research piece that asks what might be the collective influencing power of people and organisations innovating in food and how could that influence be supported?

**Buy One, Share One™**
This sustainable, ethical spin on Buy One, Get One Free, sees cost and profit shared through the supply chain creating shared value. An innovation of The People Who Share, Buy One, Share One™ will address two pressing issues – food poverty and food waste.

**Sustaination**
An innovation that makes it easy and profitable for food businesses to find each other, talk, and trade. Enables small businesses to create local and regional food networks which have the efficiency to compete whilst creating livelihoods and preserving regional identity.

**Common Cause**
A research and innovation area to explore how values represent our guiding principles: our broadest motivations, influencing the attitudes we hold and how we act.
We want to work with people who are developing the seeds of a new food system. WWF-UK is hosting the process underpinning Tasting the Future in partnership with the Hara Practice Collaborative. Please get in touch with us if you want to know more.

People

We are very grateful to everyone who has contributed to the growth and development of Tasting the Future. We look forward to continuing the collaboration!

We have been joined by a number of different organisations and individuals to deliver this work to whom we are very grateful. These include: Maria Scordilos, Sarah Whiteley and Vanessa Reid, The Living Wholeness Institute; Mark Ainsbury, Greater London Authority’s Food Team; Vanessa Sturman, ADAS; Rob Moore, Behaviour Change; Chris Parker, Ordnance Survey’s Geovation; Oscar Westra van Holthe and Manuel Sturm, ModelMinds; Luke Concannon; Hendrik Tiesinga, Natural Innovation; Tim Merry, Myrgan Inc; Stephanie Ward and Tim Burns, Waste Watch; Alan Hunt, Newcastle University; Gustavo Montes de Oca, Hackney City Farm; Penny Walker; Adam Faruk, Changing Consciousness; Adrian Jevans, VISION Culture; Janice Astbury, University of Manchester; Helen Steer and Peter Boyce, City Farmers.; Thanks to Tina Santiago, Patrick Keenan & Matt Keenan for the creative inspiration and design behind this publication.

Hara Practice Collaborative

Linda and Simone are part of the Hara Practice Collaborative, which brings experience of social innovation, participatory approaches and collaborative leadership that create impactful systemic change. Their practice is mainly based on the experience of the global Art of Hosting network and the Living Wholeness Practice and includes incubation and facilitation of urban and rural social innovation spaces, communities of practice and change with different sectors and around the world.

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Stay in touch

GETTING INVOLVED
Join the Tasting the Future community via assemblies, learning seminars and innovation groups. To keep up to date with the latest activities, join our online community at www.tastingthefuture.ning.com

BECOME A SUPPORTER
We are always very grateful of offers of help such as resources, time, meeting spaces, expertise, knowledge etc for Tasting the Future and/or the innovation groups. This helps expand the collaboration and sharing at the heart of Tasting the Future. Please contact niamh@tastingthefuture.org.uk