

GCFN Spring Network Event Discussion Group Notes

Procurement and Supply Chains

A lively discussion with some role playing by Claire?(your friend with the glasses) as catering companies, big business, procurement groups, small to large scale producers helping push ideas forward!

Much was talked about the 'realities' involved in improving local supply chains through public procurement. SRUC student Chris Trolley is working on a study in and outwith Glasgow on this very topic. Smallproducers would require access and knowledge of I.T. platforms, infrastructure and logistics, training in knowledge of payment terms, possible building of co operatives, consortias etc.

The issues of procuring low cost food as a false economy i.e. food lacking nutrition having an effect on productivity through poor health. Supply chains not benefiting local business and the environment. Conversely supply chains with higher environmental and welfare standards would bring highr quality more nutritious healthy food meeting NHS targets, while benefitting the local economy - see the local multiplier effect and SROI. Examples mentioned where put into law in Brazil and Copenhagen with its organic schools.

It was decided we need strategic top down policy for schools, colleges & universities, prisons and hospitals with real targets. Availability of healthy choices e.g. 50% or 70% of menus!?

Public procurement standards need to be raised and be weighed towards higher environmental and welfare bringing benefits to peoples health and the local economy – see the Soil Associations work on Food For Life with Local Authorities across the country. Also Red tractor, Green standards, SALSA, BRC, tie with Healthy Living Awards etc.

Locall sourcing should be included in tendering process and actively pursued including support to the growth of small to medium size producers.

Bottom up we can help bring about 'joined up community procurement' and push councils to break up contracts to let smaller organisations in and incrementally raise their game and build capacity!

Large catering organisations should be encouraged to change their habits to and look at their supply chains more closely. Positive example is Sodexo growing its own food in Edinburgh. We need to highlight and bring these organisations to the table to bring change in the food system through public procurement.