

Sustainable food

A guide for hospitals



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Foreword



I welcome the timely publication of this guidance to our hospitals.

The quality, nutritional value and sustainability of food has an increasingly high public profile and will become one of the factors by which patients exercise choice when selecting their healthcare providers. Healthier, more sustainable food in our hospitals may help

to speed patient recovery times and can encourage positive lifestyle changes outside hospital for both patients and staff, leading to a positive impact on our health and well-being, as well as on our environment.

However, our hospitals are faced with a plethora of food initiatives and assurance schemes as well as regulation relating to both food and sustainability. This guide is intended to help hospitals navigate the various food schemes and to illustrate good practice by means of a number of case studies.

I hope you will find the guide to be a useful tool in improving the quality, healthiness and sustainability of your food services.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ben Bradshaw'.

Ben Bradshaw
Minister of State for Health

April 2009



Executive summary

This guide describes why the sustainability of food is important, provides guidance on what hospitals can do to improve the sustainability of the food they provide to patients, staff and visitors, and advises on how hospitals can assure the sustainability of their food service provision.

The guide provides practical guidance, signposting and uses case study examples to illustrate some of the initiatives currently being taken by the health sector. It highlights cross-governmental initiatives around public sector food and anticipates the forthcoming Healthier Food Mark, a voluntary assurance scheme for all public sector organisations that provide food.

The guidance it contains will help hospitals to respond to a range of government, departmental and third sector food policy and strategy initiatives relating to healthier, more sustainable food.

The guide is aimed primarily at catering and procurement staff, but will also be of use to facilities directors and commissioners when planning service developments.

It is recognised that not all of the guidance given will be relevant to every situation, and that many hospitals will have already taken steps to improve the sustainability of their food services.

It is also recognised that there will be times when the clinical needs of an individual patient require alternative dietary provision. In such cases, food service provision must reflect clinical decisions.

There are three sections to the guide:

Section 1 provides an overview of sustainable hospital food

Section 2 provides details of assurance schemes, together with seasonal food tables

Section 3 is a reference section listing useful links and websites, along with summaries of published reports relating to sustainable food.

The guide draws upon case study information from the following organisations, and key facts from each are included in the relevant subsections. A profile of each organisation follows:



The Primary Care Trust commissions services that promote healthy lifestyles for its local population and that provide fast, convenient health services when needed, as well as directly providing adult and social care services for mental health, older people, physically disabled and sensory impaired.

NHS Barnsley serves three community hospitals in the area and the catering service is provided in-house, preparing meals for patients, staff and visitors.



The Darlington Memorial hospital provides major acute services as part of the County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust, and was awarded Trust of the Year in the 2008 Dr Foster Hospital Guide in the large acute category.

The catering service is provided using a cook-chill system from a central production unit based on site, where in excess of 20,000 meals are produced weekly.



Great Ormond Street Hospital is a specialist children's hospital taking patients from around the world.

Catering services are provided in-house with food prepared and cooked on site for patients, visitors and staff. There are 10 chefs preparing 2,100 patient meals and 4,500 staff/visitor meals per week.



Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust comprises Nottingham City Hospital (NCH) and Queen's Medical Centre (QMC), and is one of the largest acute trusts in England.

NCH has its own kitchen and all meals are prepared on site by a total of 12 chefs producing 28,000 meals per week. QMC has an outsourced solution. There are plans to construct a new kitchen at NCH to provide on-site cooking for both sites, producing 56,000 meals per week.



Sodexo provides outsourced food and facilities management services to the healthcare, education, defence and corporate sectors, employing 43,000 people at over 2,000 locations in England and Ireland.



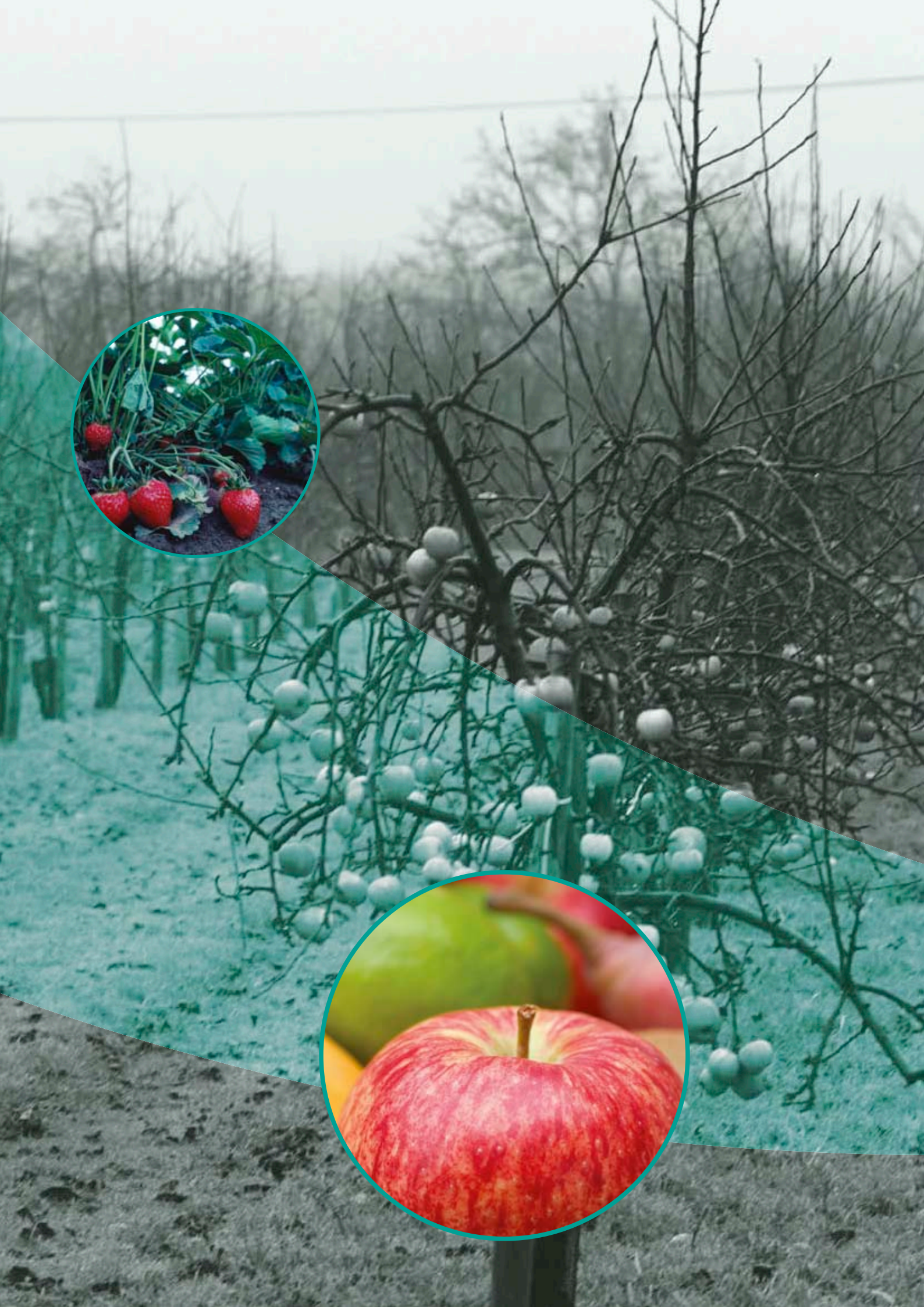
St Andrews is a charitable organisation providing mental health and learning disability services to users in Northampton, Essex and Birmingham. St Andrews Healthcare aims to be a national leader in providing sustainable food for service users and staff.

St Andrews Healthcare Northampton transformed its catering services to move food production as close to service users as possible. Although two kitchens were ready, seven other locations were identified as local kitchens, which required refurbishment and one rebuild.



The Trust covers a large geographical area, providing acute services from four separate hospital sites. The Trust has been named as one of the top ten for patient safety by the National Patient Safety Agency.

Each location has its own kitchen, with meals cooked on site either directly to plate or to bulk and served to plate at ward level. The Trust has 33 chefs preparing 18,750 patient meals and 19,500 staff/visitor meals per week.



Section 1

Overview

Why is sustainable food important?

Sustainable development can be defined as 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs', Sustainable Development Commission (SDC).

The economy, the environment and society are inextricably linked: activity in one area will cause an impact in another, either positively or negatively. The impact of greenhouse gases on the climate shows that there are environmental limits to economic growth, and economic activity that exceeds these limits is clearly unsustainable.

By paying attention to sustainable development, we can begin to balance the impacts of economic activity with its effect upon society and the environment. The provision of food has a complex relationship with health and the environment, and hospitals have a significant opportunity to create benefits for their patients and staff.

There is no single agreed definition of sustainable food, but the following examples illustrate the key areas of concern that need to be addressed as part of a sustainable food strategy:

Sustain defines sustainable food as food that should be produced, processed and traded in ways that:

- contribute to thriving local economies and sustainable livelihoods – both in the UK and in producer countries
- protect the diversity of both plants and animals (and the welfare of farmed and wild species)
- avoid damaging natural resources and avoid contributing to climate change
- provide social benefits, such as good quality food, safe and healthy products, and educational opportunities.

The SDC describes sustainable food as food and drink that:

- is safe, healthy and nutritious, for consumers in shops, restaurants, schools, hospitals etc
- provides a viable livelihood for farmers, processors and retailers, whose employees enjoy a safe and hygienic working environment whether in the UK or overseas
- respects biophysical and environmental limits in its production and processing, while reducing energy consumption and improving the wider environment
- respects the highest standards of animal health and welfare, compatible with the production of affordable food for all sectors of society
- supports rural economies and the diversity of rural culture, in particular through an emphasis on local products that keep food miles to a minimum
- meets the needs of less well-off people.

Economy

The NHS spends over £300 million on food and £500 million on catering overall each year (National Audit Office, *Smarter Food Procurement*, 2006).

The entire UK food chain employs 12.5% of the UK workforce and accounts for 8% of the economy (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), *Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food*, 2002).

Environment

Production, distribution and consumption of food in the UK account for 22% of total greenhouse gas emissions (Defra, *Securing the Future*, 2005).

The NHS accounts for 25% of all public sector carbon emissions and 3.2% of total carbon emissions in England (NHS Sustainable Development Unit, *Saving Carbon, Improving Health*, 2009).

Food miles

Life Cycle Assessment studies indicate that the distance food has travelled from farm to plate makes a less significant contribution to the environmental impact of a product than other factors (see Defra, *Environmental Impacts of Food Production and Consumption*, 2006).

However, reducing food miles will have economic and social benefits in terms of reductions in traffic congestion and accidents, together with improvements to air quality.

Having an on site kitchen reduces the overall carbon footprint of the meal. Our new kitchen, planned for completion in 2010, will be a sustainable building with a green roof and rain water recycling.

Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust

To reduce food miles, potatoes, fruit and vegetables are sourced from one supplier, and chilled goods are now delivered with frozen goods.

University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Trust

By consolidating our product portfolio, we reduced the number of suppliers by a third and deliveries by a quarter, saving 96,000 food miles.

With 11 on site production kitchens, a central food store facilitates bulk purchase of local and organic food, as well as accepting all deliveries from external suppliers, minimising HGV traffic.

St Andrews Healthcare

We are a carbon-neutral Trust and all staff are encouraged to be environmental prefects, with a responsibility to the environment and for ensuring good practice within the Trust.

The Trust has consolidated deliveries to ensure that the maximum amount can be delivered at one time, reducing the total number of deliveries received.

Great Ormond Street Hospital

Society

Almost two-thirds of adults and a third of children in England are overweight or obese, leading to increasing risks of diabetes, cancer and heart and liver disease (DH, *Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives*, 2008).

Food transportation carries significant economic and social costs in the form of traffic congestion and accidents.

By spending in ways that promote sustainable development, the NHS can create stronger local economies, maximising its contribution to the health and well-being of local populations.



Summary

The sheer volume of NHS food services provides a significant opportunity for the NHS to alter its approach to the sourcing of ingredients and the production of food, leading to improvements in the health of patients and staff, while reducing environmental impacts.

St Andrews aims to become a national leader in sustainable food by:

- procuring locally sourced and organic food for service users and staff
- preparing and cooking food as close to the service users as possible
- involving service users and staff in creating a greater understanding and ownership of the health benefits of good food.

St Andrews Healthcare

The Trust holds a monthly food forum, with membership from parents, staff and others with a vested interest. The forum covers healthy food, cultural and religious food, and the environment.

We sell fruit at cost in the retail catering outlets, encouraging visitors to consume '5 a day'.

Great Ormond Street Hospital

By 2010, the Trust will be supporting the local economy with an annual spend of £6 million, of which £2 million will be spent on local produce.

Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust



What can hospitals do to improve food sustainability?

What can hospitals do?

Sustain offers seven principles of sustainable food, which are to:

- use local, in-season ingredients where possible, to minimise energy used in food production, transport and storage
- specify food from farming systems that minimise harm to the environment, such as certified organic produce
- ensure that meat, dairy products and eggs are produced to high environmental and animal welfare standards
- exclude fish species identified as most at risk by the Marine Conservation Society, and only choose fish from sustainable sources, such as those accredited by the Marine Stewardship Council
- choose fairly traded products for foods and drinks imported from poorer countries, to ensure a fair deal for disadvantaged producers
- avoid bottled water and instead serve plain or filtered tap water in reusable jugs or bottles, to minimise transport and packaging waste
- promote health and well-being, by cooking with generous portions of vegetables, fruit and starchy staples such as whole grains, cutting down on salt, fat and oils, and cutting out artificial additives.

Training

To achieve improvements in the sustainability of food in hospitals, training should involve caterers, managers, procurement staff, and front-of-house staff. For caterers and managers, training may focus on how high quality fresh food can be prepared, served and ultimately disposed of, to maximise health and sustainability benefits. For procurement staff, training may cover environmental and nutritional principles, and how these can be supported through contracts. For front-of-house staff, training may cover the information that patients, staff, and visitors may need to choose high quality, sustainable food.

At present, training provision varies region by region. At a national level, the sector skills councils are becoming increasingly interested in tailoring training to support better health and sustainability, although no national qualification yet exists. Hospital staff may be able to get nutrition training from their local dietetics department. The Caroline Walker Trust publishes a range of useful guides on food and nutrition for people in cared-for situations.

In the southeast, the London Development Agency as part of implementation of the London Food Strategy has since 2007 sponsored a project to train over 1,000 public sector staff in London in the principles and practice of healthier and sustainable food in the public sector. The project is being run by the Greenwich Cooperative Development Agency with Sustain.

Menu planning

Perhaps the most significant element of any sustainable food strategy is the menu. Appetising food is more likely to be eaten, so it is important to develop a menu that on the one hand is appealing to patients and staff, while on the other hand being high in both nutritional and sustainable value.

Menu planning drives the choice of ingredients required, so it is important to design a menu that reduces the use of ingredients that have high environmental and health impacts.

Increasing the provision of fresh fruit and vegetables will help create both health and environmental benefits.

Hospitals can redefine their specifications for ingredients to ensure that, where relevant, food is sourced with lower levels of salt, sugar and unsaturated fat, and with higher levels of fibre and wholegrain.

Sodexo is increasing the amount of under-used fish species on its menus. Recipes are being developed to include species such as gurnard (replacing cod), and these are available on Sodexo's recipe database.

Gurnard is found off the coast of Devon, Cornwall, the North East of England and Scotland, and won the Billingsgate School Sustainable Seafood Award 2008.

Gurnard is one of a number of under-used UK species that Sodexo and its supplier are promoting, helping to ease the pressure on other North European stocks by increasing their range of species that have been certified for sustainability by the Marine Stewardship Council.

By refusing to sell endangered species and taking the initiative to help customers understand the issues and the alternatives open to them, Sodexo is helping to slow down overfishing.

Sodexo



Seasonal food

Hospitals can consider aligning menus with seasonal production and harvesting cycles.

Increasing the use of seasonal ingredients will reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Fruit, vegetables and salad crops

Although many types of fruit, vegetables and salad crops can be sourced all year round, this can often only be accomplished by growing food in heated glasshouses, using low-temperature storage, or importing food. All three options increase the environmental footprint, so care should be taken to source such products when they are in season.

Section 2 contains tables showing the seasonal availability of fruit, vegetables and salad crops, reproduced with kind permission of the North East Improvement and Efficiency Partnership.

Meat and poultry

Although less seasonal than fruit, vegetables and salad crops, meat and poultry follow predictable and reliable trends as their popularity varies throughout the year.

Sea fish

Defra has identified sustainable fish as a red risk area in its review of food security. By excluding fish species most at risk, and only using wild species that are accredited by the Marine Stewardship Council, hospitals can contribute to the sustainability of fish stocks. It is important, when using wild-caught fresh fish, to ensure that it does not feature on the menu during the spawning season.

The hospital has redesigned its menu to allow for seasonal food supply, and 'chef's specials' have been introduced to provide flexibility to vary the menu so as to accommodate more seasonal food.

Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust

The Trust has summer and winter seasonal menus with seasonally themed dishes.

University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Trust

Local food

There is no widely accepted definition of local food, especially in the context of global supply markets. In the absence of an accepted definition, this guide proposes that local food be defined as food that is grown or reared and prepared within the region or neighbouring county to the hospital supplying the food.

This definition is used by the Soil Association's Food for Life catering mark.

Care should be taken to ensure that food sourced from local suppliers meets this definition, as the local supplier may have sourced produce outside the definition.

The NHS Choices website features a video, made at Royal Brompton Hospital, showing how locally sourced, fresh produce can improve hospital food.

www.nhs.uk/video/pages/medialibrary

Sourcing more food locally:

- should reduce the environmental footprint of hospital food service provision, although care should be taken when assessing the relative environmental footprints of local versus non-local food
- will retain more expenditure within the local economy, thereby promoting local employment, and in turn possibly reducing demand for healthcare, as wealth is a determinant of health.

Hospitals must ensure that they comply with EU procurement regulations when sourcing food, as specifying local food is not allowed. Further advice can be found under 'Procurement'.

Products are purchased through three routes: some direct from local suppliers, some through local intermediaries and others through national contracts.

Ham joints are bought locally and cooked on site in preference to pre-cooked meat.

In 2006, NCH spent around £400,000 on local produce, set to rise to £700,000 (40% of food expenditure) by the end of 2009.

Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust

Cakes, bread rolls and other morning goods are supplied by a small local bakery situated 12 miles from the hospital.

Darlington Memorial Hospital

The hospital has set a target to increase the proportion of food sourced from Northamptonshire or surrounding counties. Between April and December 2008, the percentage of total food expenditure sourced within a 50-mile radius of the hospital was increased from 8% to 28%, an increase of £214,000.

The hospital is encouraging four local farmers to trade as a federation of small businesses to supply local and organic meat to the hospital, and is supporting Nottingham farmers in creating a cooperative.

St Andrews Healthcare

Over 20% of food, including fresh produce such as meat, fish, fruit and vegetables, pre-packed sandwiches and bakery items, is sourced from central London, with a further 30% from within Greater London.

Great Ormond Street Hospital

The number of food suppliers has fallen from 28 to a handful, with only two that farm, produce or deliver from outside a 200-mile radius.

Beef and lamb come from two Cumbrian farmers, via a local distribution cooperative.

Cheese is sourced within Cumbria to provide Lancashire cheese an on the menu.

Potatoes, fresh vegetables, milk and cream are all sourced within Cumbria.

University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Trust

Organic and ethical food

Organic and other accredited farming systems help consumers, businesses and caterers to identify foods that have been grown or reared to higher standards of animal welfare, ethically traded or environmental principles. Fairly traded goods ensure that economic, environmental and social standards are met by food exported from developing countries. Section 2 provides examples of different assurance schemes.

Organic farming is a land-based system that avoids the use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides. Organic farmers are often open to developing new enterprises, new marketing arrangements and collaboration.

Organic systems provide environmental benefits, particularly for biodiversity, and organic farming benefits the rural economy. Mixed farming practices under organic systems contribute to the quality of our landscapes and the beauty of rural areas.



St Andrews has set a target for 20% of its food expenditure to be organic or ethically traded. From April to December 2008, organic food expenditure was increased by £110,000 and expenditure on ethically traded products was increased by £86,000.

St Andrews Healthcare

Organic milk and cream are bought from a local dairy based three miles from the hospital. The contract has been in place for four years and the hospital was the first in the country to supply organic milk to its patients, staff and visitors. Through winning the contract to supply milk, the dairy was able to employ more local workers.

Organic yoghurt is supplied by a local farm situated 20 miles from the hospital. By using this small local farm the hospital has been able to supply a yoghurt that suits the needs of our patients.

Darlington Memorial Hospital

Frozen food

Due to the energy required in the freezing of produce, frozen food may have a higher environmental footprint than fresh food. Frozen food is also more likely to have travelled further, thereby further increasing its environmental footprint.

Conversely, with frozen food there is no need for artificial preservatives, and because products can be harvested and frozen at the peak of their quality, the freshness and nutritional value can be locked in. Due to the seasonality of crops and ingredients, frozen food can offer greater exibility and choice than fresh food.

Hospitals need to strike a balance between fresh and frozen ingredients to minimise their environmental footprint while ensuring a balanced menu.



Production

The environmental footprint of the catering department is a significant element of the overall sustainability of the food chain. When replacing or acquiring new kitchen equipment, hospitals should consider equipment with the lowest possible energy consumption rating.

Hospitals can install check meters in kitchens to enable energy and water use to be monitored and to inform action taken to reduce consumption.

Sodexo is introducing an innovative British energy efficiency device that fits over a food refrigeration unit's thermostat sensor to optimise its cooling cycle, reducing the energy consumed by the unit while still maintaining the correct food temperature.

A trial conducted by Sodexo on two refrigeration units at Stoke Mandeville Hospital delivered a 24% reduction in energy consumption.

Sodexo

Waste

Hospitals should provide facilities to patients and staff for the recycling of used food and drink containers including cans, bottles, cardboard and plastics.

Where food safety will not be compromised, the use of disposable cutlery, plates and cups should be avoided, and milk, condiments and sauces should be served in reusable containers. Where the use of disposable cutlery, plates and cups is unavoidable, recyclable products should be used.

The disposal of food waste to landfill or incineration adds to the environmental cost. As part of a wider waste management strategy, hospitals should consider working with waste management service suppliers that can demonstrate compliance with waste food and animal by-product regulations, using proven technologies such as anaerobic digestion.

Biodegradable packaging is specified by the Trust and we are part of a central Nottingham scheme to implement an anaerobic digester.

NCH specifies better quality products, such as stewing steak, reducing both shrinkage in the cooking process and plate waste from patient dissatisfaction.

Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust

Waste cooking oil is supplied to a local family for their biofuel project, helping the family to gain Environment Agency approval and certification.

University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Trust

The Trust has reduced supplier packaging, buying products in bulk using recyclable cardboard containers. Pre-packed items such as sandwiches use biodegradable packaging and segregated recycling bins are provided in catering facilities.

Recently, we have implemented a new catering tool that includes recipes, so that staff can order the exact quantities required, thereby reducing over-ordering and subsequent waste.

Great Ormond Street Hospital

Sodexo has introduced a pilot food waste recycling programme at a client's call centre, where all food waste, including vegetable peelings, unused cooked food, confectionery, yoghurts, out-of-date food, plate waste and liquids such as milk or fruit juices still in their packaging, is sorted into separate containers in the preparation area.

The food waste is collected weekly by a provider of recycling and process services to the food sector, and taken to the nearest food recycling plant to produce biomass to fuel an electricity generation plant.

In the first month of the trials, 320kg of food waste was collected and converted into the equivalent of 39 litres of biodiesel, sufficient to generate electricity to power 160 homes for an hour.

Sodexo

Healthier Food Mark

Overview

The development of the Healthier Food Mark follows the publication of *Food Matters: Towards a Strategy for the 21st Century*, published by the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit in July 2008.

The vision and objective is to establish a voluntary Healthier Food Mark in the public sector so that food reaches a standard that will make a positive contribution to a nutritionally balanced diet, and improve the sustainability of food procurement. At worst, the mark will be cost-neutral, and at best cost-saving, to both providers and purchasers of public sector food.

Process and timing

The Department of Health is working, in consultation with a cross-government working group, towards establishing the criteria (both nutritional and sustainable) for the Healthier Food Mark in spring 2009 and piloting it across the public sector (including a number of hospitals) in summer 2009. A full consultation process will follow the evaluation of the pilot stage in 2010, with a view to a possible launch later that year.

Scope

The Healthier Food Mark will be awarded to participating organisations that achieve specified standards for their catering services. Guidance will be issued to assist participating caterers in the application of the standards.

Though initially the Healthier Food Mark will be available to all public sector organisations, there is no reason why it could not in time be extended to private sector organisations, given that many private sector commercial catering companies provide catering facilities within public sector organisations.

Key requirements

The draft framework for the Healthier Food Mark is a three-tier structure with bronze, silver and gold levels. The bronze level has criteria that have been designed to be achievable in the short term by the majority of public sector organisations, and which are broadly aligned with good practice and the various voluntary agreements in place between government and industry. The silver level is for progressive organisations who may already have achieved the bronze level. Finally, the gold level has been set at a sufficiently high standard for those organisations that may aspire to much higher levels of nutritional provision.

The Mark will also seek to align with other initiatives in the field, such as the nutritional standards in schools, the Department of Health's *Improving Nutritional Standards Joint Action Plan*, the developing Food for Life work and the sustainability agenda.

Arrangements for accreditation will be considered during the piloting phase.

How can hospitals assure sustainable food service provision?

Assurance

There are numerous schemes in place for the assurance of various food groups. Produce can be aligned with more than one scheme and be eligible to join others; for example, organic produce meeting Soil Association standards could join many other assurance schemes.

The most pressing issues in relation to animal welfare are intensively farmed chickens, caged hens and pigs. Organic food farming systems provide the highest levels of animal welfare standards, and organic food has the highest proportions of beneficial minerals, essential amino acids and vitamins.

Section 2 provides an overview of the following schemes:

- Pork Quality Standard Mark
- Red Tractor
- RSPCA Freedom Foods
- LEAF Marque
- Lion Quality eggs
- FAIRTRADE
- Rainforest Alliance
- Marine Stewardship Council
- UTZ certified
- Various organic certification schemes.

The Soil Association's Food for Life Catering Mark is an accreditation scheme that provides a step-by-step route to sustainable catering. Open to caterers in both the public and private sectors, the Mark has three tiers, bronze, silver and gold, with the gold standard requiring the caterer's menu to be 75% freshly prepared, 50% local and 30% organic.

Hospitals can provide assurance to their own stakeholders by:

- providing information on menus to show the origin of fresh produce
- providing information on menus to show conformity with applicable assurance scheme standards
- incorporating food waste into their wider waste management plan
- developing and publicising a food policy and action plan
- implementing an environmental management system certified to ISO 14001, either across their organisation or within the catering facility.

NCH purchases products certified by the Rainforest Alliance, chosen for its ecological aims.

In 2009, NCH was awarded the Soil Association's 'Food for Life' catering mark bronze award, the first hospital in the country to achieve the mark. The launch event, hosted by HRH The Prince of Wales, was held at the hospital in recognition of this achievement.

Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust

St Andrews was the winning finalist in the Sustainable Procurement and Suppliers Delivering Sustainability categories of the Health Service Journal Sustainable Communities Awards, 2009.

St Andrews Healthcare

Office of Government Commerce

In response to the National Audit Office report *Smarter Food Procurement*, the Office of Government Commerce (OGC) and the Department for Children, Schools and Families launched a collaborative food group from the major public sector procurement organisations to consider how to take the report's recommendations forward.

The group has developed a food strategy that can achieve value for money gains as well providing a quality food offer for service users that fulfils the aims of the Cabinet Office *Food Matters* report.

The food strategy sets out to deliver a collaborative framework for public sector organisations to work together. It builds on current food procurement excellence and provides direction and guidance for the public sector procurement of food and drink; it identifies opportunities to improve value for money, quality of service, sustainability and the meeting of service user requirements.

Further details can be found at the OGC food procurement web page at www.ogc.gov.uk/collaborative_procurement_food.asp which includes:

- information on food procurement:
 - demand management
 - regional and local engagement
 - sustainability
 - communications
 - social procurement
- recommendations and guidance on:
 - food quality standards publications
 - fairly traded products
 - food waste
 - minimum food standards.

A sustainability workstream is led by Defra; as a cross-cutting issue, this provides advice and guidance to other workstreams on sustainability issues, covering food and related processes including waste management, energy use and water use, as well as socio-economic issues.

Regulation

The preparation, distribution, delivery, handling, serving, storage and disposal of food must be carried out in accordance with food safety legislation, including the Food Safety Act 1990 and the Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2006.

From 1 January 2009 a new European regulation for organic food (834/2007) provides a clear statement of the objectives and principles of organic production.

The Care Quality Commission includes food-related criteria in its assessment regime. Healthcare organisations where food is provided must have systems in place to ensure that:

- patients are provided with a choice, and that food is prepared safely and provides a balanced diet (this includes providing choices that reflect the religious and cultural requirements and preferences of service users)
- patients' individual nutritional, personal and clinical dietary requirements are met, including any necessary help with feeding and access to food, 24 hours a day
- the prevention, segregation, handling, transport and disposal of waste are properly managed so as to minimise the risks to the health and safety of staff, patients and the public, and to the safety of the environment.

NHS Carbon Reduction Strategy *Saving Carbon, Improving Health* (2009)

This strategy has been produced by the NHS for the NHS and reflects the outcome of extensive consultation. The strategy was developed in response to the need to take action on climate change.

The strategy includes a key delivery area on procurement and food, with four key actions on food, namely:

- the NHS should take every opportunity to manage its operations and procurement efficiently, thereby minimising wastage and carbon emissions from the outset
- the NHS should work in partnership with suppliers to improve sustainable and low-carbon procurement
- local procurement, whole life cycle costs and the environmental impact of financial decisions should be considered by all NHS organisations, in preparation for the use of carbon as a currency
- the promotion of sustainable food and nutrition throughout the NHS should become the norm.

Every organisation should become carbon-literate and carbon-numerate, and ensure appropriate investment to meet the commitments required to become part of a low-carbon NHS and in preparation for a carbon tax regime. Partnership working will be required to deliver appropriate incentives, economies and training to support this shift in culture and the local economy.

Public Sector Food Procurement Initiative

Led by Defra, the Public Sector Food Procurement Initiative (PSFPI) is an initiative supported by the Prime Minister. Launched in August 2003 to deliver the Government's Sustainable Farming and Food Strategy, PSFPI aims to deliver a world-class sustainable farming and food sector that contributes to a better environment and healthy and prosperous communities.

The public sector spends an estimated £2 billion a year on food and catering. This buying power clearly has a significant economic, social and environmental impact which the Government is committed to using to help deliver a sustainable farming and food industry.

The six priority objectives of PSFPI are:

- promote food safety, including high standards of hygiene
- increase the consumption of healthy and nutritious food
- improve the sustainability and efficiency of production, processing and distribution
- increase tenders from small and local producers and their ability to do business
- increase co-operation among buyers and producers and along supply chains
- improve the sustainability and efficiency of public food procurement and catering services.

Further details of the PSFPI can be found on the Defra web page www.defra.gov.uk/farm/policy/sustain/procurement/, which includes case studies, guidance and information on:

- raising awareness
- fairly traded
- health and nutrition
- selling to primary suppliers
- selling to the public sector
- environmental performance
- sustainable farming.

Included on the above web page is the Catering Services and Food Procurement Toolkit, which contains guidance on how to incorporate the aims of the PSFPI into catering and food supply contracts, and includes sample tender documents, specifications and model contract clauses.

The Defra website includes details of contacts within each of the regional Government Offices who can provide further advice to hospitals on PSFPI. www.defra.gov.uk/farm/policy/sustain/procurement/pdf/psfpi-contacts-rev081212.pdf

Procurement

All public sector procurement is governed by the Public Sector and Utilities Procurement Regulations 2006, which implements the EU directives in UK law.

These regulations are complex and non-compliance can expose public sector organisations to potentially damaging risks. Advice should be sought from your local or regional procurement team before commencing a procurement exercise with suppliers.

Under the procurement regulations, buyers cannot specify 'local food', as this is discriminatory against 'non-local' suppliers from the UK and EU member states. However, there are criteria that can be written into the procurement specification and used when evaluating offers. Please refer to the practical tips for further details.

When procuring food, hospitals should ensure that suppliers meet the relevant UK/ EU standards for food safety, traceability and production which can be achieved by ensuring that suppliers are accredited by any of the assurance schemes that are EN45011-compliant.

Environmental footprint

The environmental footprint of a product is the sum total of the measured environmental impacts associated with each stage of its life cycle. For food this includes:

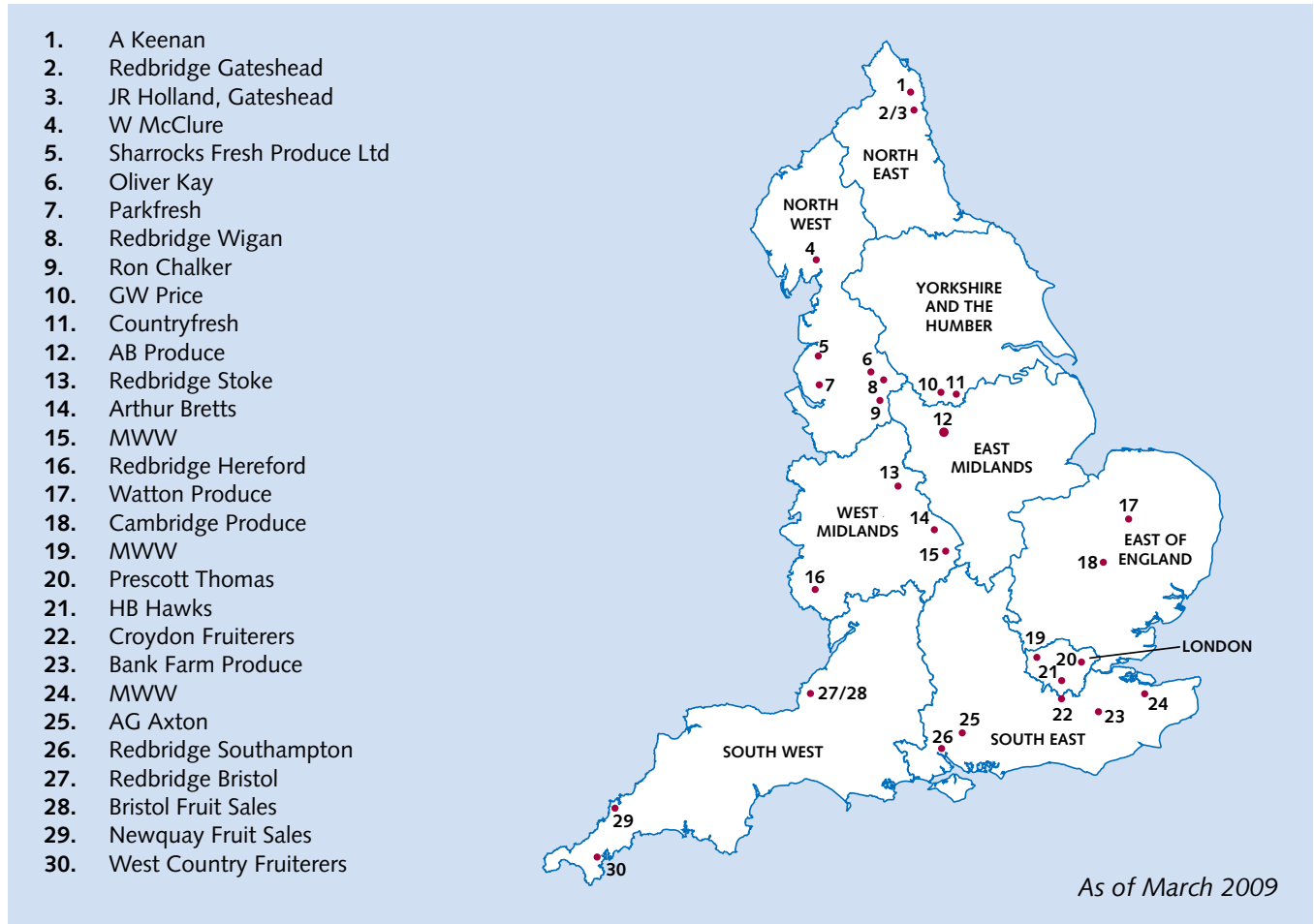
- production
- processing
- packaging
- transport
- cooking
- consumption
- disposal.

Life Cycle Assessment is the technique used to calculate an environmental footprint. It is important to understand what has been included in any given calculation, as many calculations will focus on CO₂ and ignore other, often more significant, forms of greenhouse gases that are emitted during the production, distribution and consumption of food.

Getting started

The Really Simple Guide to Buying More Sustainable Food is a five-step guide towards improved food sustainability aimed at caterers, chefs and food buyers working in the public sector. It can be found at www.sustainweb.org/pdf/SEFGP.pdf

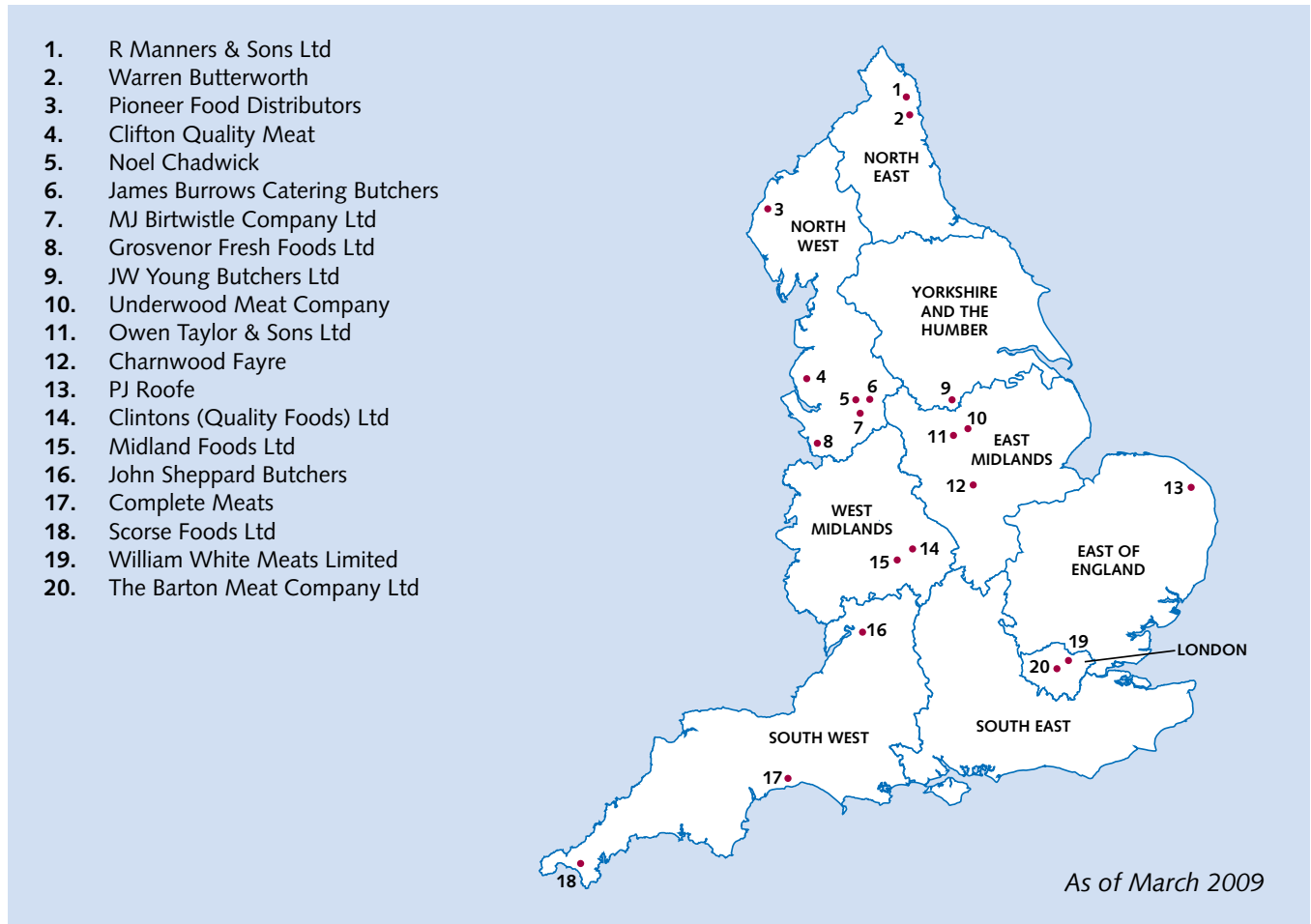
NHS Supply Chain fruit and vegetable contracted suppliers



NHS Supply Chain

The NHS Business Services Authority (BSA) is part of the NHS, providing various support services to the NHS. The BSA oversees the NHS Supply Chain service, which is operated under a 10-year contract awarded to DHL to provide end-to-end supply chain services, including procurement, logistics and e-commerce solutions to the health sector.

NHS Supply Chain meat and poultry contracted suppliers



NHS Supply Chain has a number of national framework agreements which are broken down by supplier into regional supply areas. The above regionalised maps show current contracted suppliers for meat and poultry and for fruit and vegetables.

The requirements of PSFPI are incorporated into food contracts to ensure that small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are given the opportunity to compete.

For fresh produce, NHS Supply Chain has 22 suppliers that deliver produce across the country, of which only two are not SMEs.

As of March 2008, 70% of food supplied under contracts negotiated by NHS Supply Chain was domestically produced (i.e. grown or reared in the UK).

NHS Barnsley

A pilot project was run by NHS Barnsley for the procurement of sandwiches, milk and meat in association with the Barnsley Fit for the Future initiative, along with other stakeholders including the National Farmers' Union, the Government Office and Business Link.

Utilising the Yorkshire and The Humber Commercial Procurement Collaborative, a procurement process was undertaken. This was as supportive as possible of local suppliers without breaching procurement regulations. The elements included were:

- a 'Meet the Buyer' event
- provision of an extended timescale for all tenderers to complete the paperwork, encouraging inexperienced suppliers to take part
- inclusion of a range of tender evaluation criteria in addition to price, including quality, freshness, delivery and environmental considerations
- provision of a telephone support service to handle queries from tenderers, however minor, throughout the process
- provision of access to one-to-one advice to support any bidders in preparing their tender documentation
- inclusion of a blind tasting session to assess freshness and quality.

As a result of the tendering exercise, eight tenders were received, of which six were from local suppliers, and contracts were awarded to local suppliers for meat and sandwiches, with excellent local supply chains in place for ingredients.

The project was shortlisted last year for the Caroline Walker Trust Awards, which recognise good nutrition in a public context.

The benefits of the exercise are felt to have been:

- fresher/tastier food
- increased speed of reaction in the delivery of extras when required
- reduced food miles and hence an improved carbon footprint
- cost savings of 9% per year
- contribution to the local economy
- wider benefits including positive staff perception of, and pride in, local sourcing and recognition in national awards.

The success of the project has been well regarded by stakeholders from a variety of perspectives, as it has contributed to multiple agendas, ranging from healthy eating to local economic development.

Practical tips for sustainable food procurement

Undertake market research

- understand the supply base, including supplier constraints
- be aware of seasonal produce

Work with small businesses

- promote and undertake 'meet the buyer' events to encourage participation
- educate local, smaller and third sector suppliers on procurement regulations
- collaborate with other public sector bodies and non-governmental organisations
- split your requirements into lots

Contracts

- simplify contract documents
- revise contract periods to obtain the best combination of product and price

Update your specifications to include:

- organic products
- seasonal products
- freshness
- fairly traded products as options
- free range products
- fish from sustainable sources
- recycled or recyclable packaging
- reduced chemical content/use
- Protected Designation of Origin and Protected Geographical Indication certified products or equivalent

Packaging

- avoid individually packaged items
- ask your suppliers to collect and recycle their packaging

Deliveries

- consolidate deliveries where possible
- encourage small groups of suppliers to work together for deliveries
- encourage suppliers to use fuel-efficient vehicles

Supplier relationship management

- work with your suppliers to shorten the supply chain
- encourage your primary suppliers to use local SMEs in their supply chain
- research the provenance of ingredients and develop strategies for local sourcing
- investigate your suppliers' environmental and social policies and practices
- include sustainability in your contract management and build a joint improvement plan

Fairly traded products

Fairly traded products must be procured consistently with value for money and the EU procurement directives. Care should be taken to avoid:

- writing specifications that are framed in terms of fairly or ethically traded
- the inclusion of specific assurance marks, as this is discriminatory.

Steps that may be taken are:

- making clear within the advertisement and tender documents that fairly traded options are welcome
- writing fairly traded options into the contract award.



Section 2

Assurance schemes and food tables

Assurance schemes



Pork Quality Standard Mark

The Pork Quality Standard Mark (QSM) is an independently audited quality assurance scheme for pig meat, which covers all aspects of production, including animal welfare from birth to slaughter. Pork, gammon, bacon, ham and sausages produced under this scheme can feature the distinctive QSM on the pack. EU farmers or producers supplying pig meat to the UK are not legally obliged to meet the UK minimum legal standards which prohibit the use of sow stalls. As a result, an estimated two-thirds of imports are produced in a way that would be illegal in Britain. However, all pork and pork products carrying the QSM meet the UK standards.

www.bpex.org.uk



Red Tractor

The Red Tractor is an independent mark of quality which guarantees that the food comes from farms and food companies that meet high standards of food safety and hygiene, animal welfare and environmental protection.

Backed by the National Farmers' Union and the UK food industry, the logo assures consumers that food has been produced responsibly to meet the Red Tractor standards.

The Red Tractor standards are based on EU/UK legislation, codes of good agricultural practice and expertise throughout the food chain. The standards apply to products including beef, lamb, pork, chicken, turkey, dairy produce, cereals and sugar.

www.redtractor.org.uk



RSPCA Freedom Food

Freedom Food is the farm assurance and food labelling scheme established by the RSPCA, dedicated to farm animal welfare. The standards are for rearing, handling, transport and slaughter and are broadly based on the five freedoms defined by the Farm Animal Welfare Council. There are nine standards in place for various farmed animals, including beef cattle, chickens, dairy cattle, ducks, laying hens, pigs, salmon, sheep and turkeys.

www.freedomfood.co.uk



LEAF Marque

LEAF stands for 'Linking Environment and Farming'. LEAF Marque farmers care for the environment and they are continually assessing the environmental impact of their farming practices.

The LEAF Marque gives consumers assurance that their food has been produced in an environmentally responsible way using Integrated Farm Management (IFM). IFM is a whole-farm, sustainable approach to producing healthy crops and livestock while caring for the environment. The LEAF Marque appears on many different products from fruit and vegetables to dairy products and meat.

LEAF has a directory of producers, wholesalers, processors and other suppliers on its website, where buyers can source LEAF Marque produce and consumers can find out more about the farm where their food was grown.

www.leafmarque.com



Lion Quality eggs

The Lion Quality mark on egg shells and boxes guarantees that the eggs have come from British hens and have been produced to the highest standards of food safety. The Lion Quality Code of Practice includes compulsory vaccination against Salmonella Enteritidis of all pullets destined for Lion egg-producing flocks, independent auditing, improved traceability of eggs and a best-before date stamped on the shell and pack, as well as on-farm and packing station hygiene controls.

www.britegg.co.uk



FAIRTRADE

The FAIRTRADE Mark is an independent consumer label that guarantees developing world farmers and workers a fair price for their produce and an additional sum of money, the FAIRTRADE premium, for community development. The FAIRTRADE standards ensure that sustainable farming practices and decent working conditions are met, and the FAIRTRADE system helps marginalised farmers get a fairer deal and better market access. FAIRTRADE labelling is a helpful way of demonstrating that fair trade standards are being met.

www.fairtrade.org.uk



Rainforest Alliance

The Rainforest Alliance works to conserve biodiversity and ensure sustainable livelihoods by transforming land-use practices, business practices and consumer behaviour.

Companies, cooperatives and landowners that participate in this programme must meet rigorous standards that conserve biodiversity and provide sustainable livelihoods.

www.rainforest-alliance.org



Marine Stewardship Council

The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) provides a certification and eco-labelling programme for sustainable seafood. The MSC standards for sustainable fishing and seafood traceability ensure that MSC-labelled seafood comes from, and can be traced back to, a sustainable fishery.

www.msc.org



UTZ CERTIFIED

UTZ CERTIFIED *Good Inside* is dedicated to creating an open and transparent marketplace for agricultural products. Founded in 2002, UTZ has been an innovative pioneer in the field of certification and traceability of coffee supply chains. Based on this success, UTZ is developing sustainability models for other sectors, primarily cocoa, tea and palm oil.

UTZ CERTIFIED's vision is to achieve sustainable agricultural supply chains in which farmers are professionals implementing good practices, industry takes responsibility by demanding and rewarding sustainably grown products, and consumers buy products that meet the UTZ standard for social and environmental responsibility.

www.utzcertified.org

Organic certification

Organic farming is a farming system using no chemical fertilisers or pesticides. Animals have outdoor access and other high welfare standards.

There are nine different UK organisations which can give organic certification. They are:

- Organic Farmers & Growers
www.organicfarmers.org.uk
- Scottish Organic Producers Association
www.sopa.org.uk
- The Organic Food Federation
www.orgfoodfed.com
- Soil Association Certification Limited
www.soilassociation.org/certification
- Biodynamic Agricultural Association
www.biodynamic.org.uk
- Irish Organic Farmers and Growers Association
www.iofga.org
- The Organic Trust Ltd
www.organic-trust.org
- Quality Welsh Food Certification Ltd
email mossj@wfsagri.net
- Ascisco Limited
email DPeace@soilassociation.org

Seasonal food tables

Fruit crops

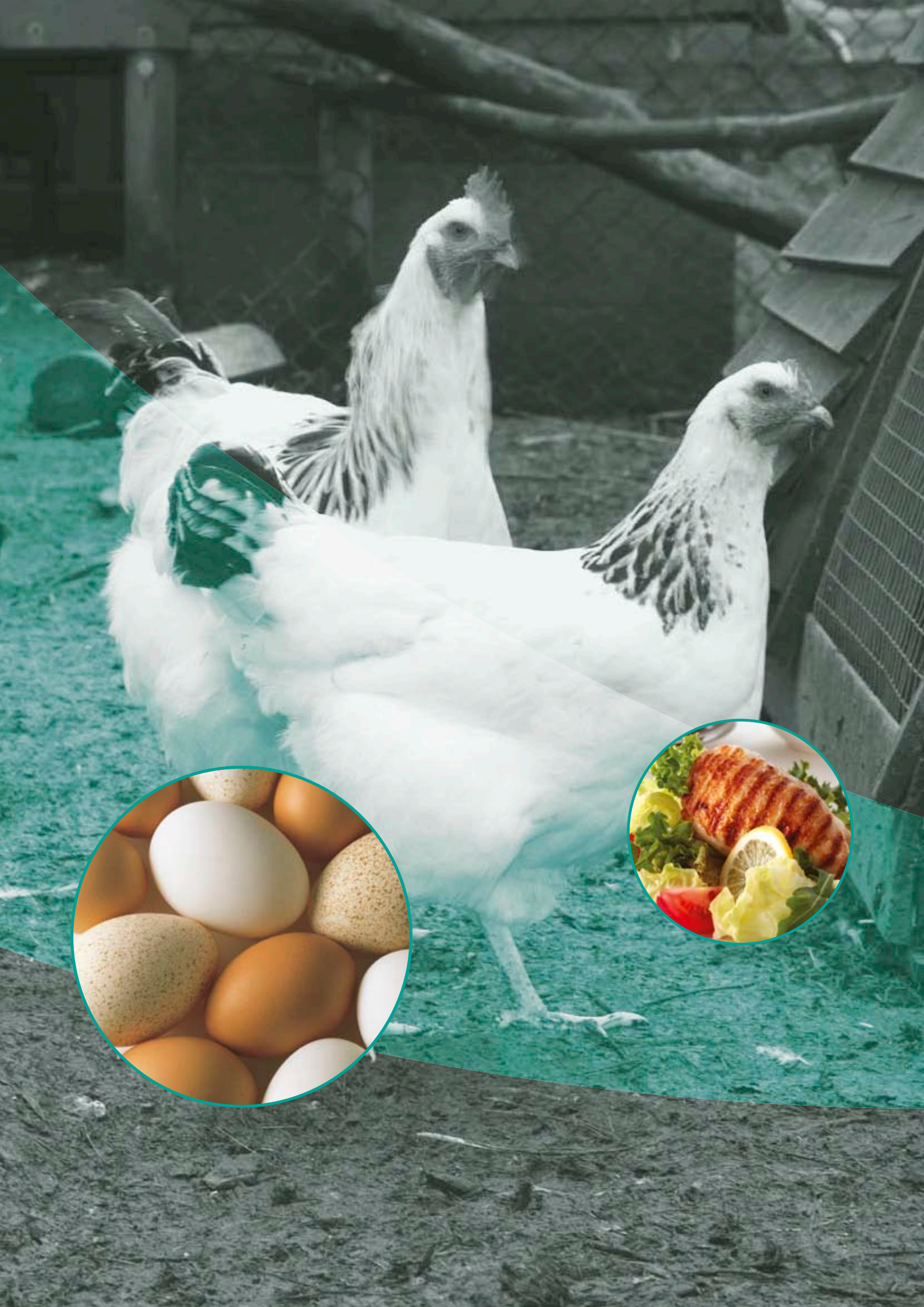
Seasonal availability of UK fruit crops		North East Improvement and Efficiency Partnership											
Fruit crop		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Apples	Bramley's Seedling												
	Cox (various clones)												
	Discovery												
	Egremont Russet												
	Gala (various clones)												
	Spartan												
	Worcester Pearmain												
Blackcurrants													
Cherries													
Gooseberries													
Loganberries													
Pears													
Plums													
Raspberries													
Redcurrants													
Rhubarb	Forced												
	Outdoor												
Strawberries													
Key		Available from store			UK produce available from cold stores; price rises towards end of indicated storage period								
		Available and 'in season'			Optimal purchasing period – prices generally lower, environmental costs of production also lower								
		Available			UK produce available BUT higher production inputs, so higher prices and higher environmental costs								

Salad crops

Seasonal availability of UK salad crops		North East Improvement and Efficiency Partnership											
Salad crop		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Celery													
Cucumbers													
Lettuces	Cos												
	Curly												
	Iceberg												
	Little Gem												
	Round												
Radishes													
Rocket													
Spring onions													
Tomatoes													
Watercress													
Key		Available and 'in season'			Optimal purchasing period – prices generally lower, environmental costs of production also lower								
		Available			UK produce available BUT higher production inputs, so higher prices and higher environmental costs								

Vegetable crops

Seasonal availability of UK vegetable crops		North East Improvement and Efficiency Partnership											
Vegetable crop		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Beans	Broad					Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available		
	French					Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	
	Runner/ at					Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	
Beetroot		Available from store	Available from store			Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available from store	Available from store
Broccoli	Purple sprouting	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available
	Calabrese					Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available
Brussels sprouts		Available	Available	Available					Available	Available	Available	Available	Available
Cabbages	Autumn												
	Red	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store		Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available from store
	Savoy	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available
	Spring green	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available
	Summer												
Winter white	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store		Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	
Carrots	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available
Cauli owers	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available
Celeriac	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store					Available	Available	Available	Available
Chicory	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available
Courgettes					Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available
Endive					Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available
Fennel													
Kale	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available
Kohlrabi							Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available
Leeks	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available
Marrows								Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available
Onions	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store
Parsnips	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available
Peas					Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available
Potatoes	Maincrop	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store
	New					Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available
Pumpkins										Available	Available	Available	Available from store
Spinachs				Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available
Squashes	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store
Swedes	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store	Available from store
Sweetcorn								Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available
Turnips	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available
Key	Available from store	Available from store				UK produce available from cold stores; price rises towards end of indicated storage period							
	Available and 'in season'	Available and 'in season'				Optimal purchasing period – prices generally lower, environmental costs of production also lower							
	Available	Available				UK produce available BUT higher production inputs, so higher prices and higher environmental costs							



Section 3

Reference

Links and websites

Buying Solutions

www.online.ogcbuyingsolutions.gov.uk

Care Quality Commission

www.cqc.org.uk

Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

www.defra.gov.uk

Food Standards Agency

www.food.gov.uk

Government Office Network

www.gos.gov.uk/national

Hospital Caterers Association

www.hospitalcaterers.org

Local Authority Caterers Association

www.laca.co.uk

NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency

www.pasa.nhs.uk

NHS Supply Chain

www.supplychain.nhs.uk

NHS Sustainable Development Unit

www.sdu.nhs.uk

Office of Government Commerce – food procurement

www.ogc.gov.uk/collaborative_procurement_food.asp

Public Sector Food Procurement Initiative

www.defra.gov.uk/farm/policy/sustain/procurement/index.htm

Sustainable Development Commission

www.sd-commission.org.uk

Food for Change

www.foodforchange.org.uk

Foodvision

www.foodvision.gov.uk

Forum for the Future

www.forumforthefuture.org

Local Food Works

www.localfoodworks.org

Making Local Food Work

www.makinglocalfoodwork.co.uk

Regional Food Alliance

www.regionalandlocalfood.co.uk

Safe and Local Supplier Approval

www.salsafood.co.uk

School Food Trust

www.schoolfoodtrust.org.uk

Sustainable Food

www.sustainablefood.com

Sustain

www.sustainweb.org

The Caroline Walker Trust

www.cwt.org.uk

The Food Chain Centre

www.foodchaincentre.com

The Food Ethics Council

www.foodethicscouncil.org

The Food and More Project

www.thefoodandmoreproject.com

The Soil Association

www.soilassociation.org

Publications

Sustainable Development Unit, *Saving Carbon, Improving Health: NHS Carbon Reduction Strategy for England* (2009)

This document sets an ambition for the NHS to help drive change towards a low-carbon society. The strategy shows the scale of carbon reduction required for the NHS to progress towards the Climate Change Act 2008's requirements, and recommends key actions for the NHS to become a leading sustainable and low-carbon organisation. One area of focus includes procurement and food within the NHS.

Sustain, *Good Food on the Public Plate: Evaluation Report* (2008)

This evaluation report focuses on work with London's public sector to improve the healthiness and sustainability of the food it serves. It documents examples of work being undertaken by catering managers across London to improve the quality and sustainability of the food they serve to patients, children, clients and staff, as well as benefits to farmers, local economies, animal welfare and the environment.

Schools Food Trust, *A Fresh Look at School Food Procurement Efficiency and Sustainability* (2008)

This guidance links the efficiency and sustainability of the food served to children in schools. It provides practical guidance to schools and local authorities, and gives recommendations on implementing a range of local and national Government policies and strategies.

Cabinet Office, *Food Matters* (2008)

This report provides an analysis of the current and emerging food trends in consumer demand. It considers the opportunities and challenges facing the food system, including diet's contribution to health and environmental sustainability.

Department of Health, *Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives: A Cross Government Strategy for England* (2008)

This strategy supports the creation of a healthy society – from early years, to schools and food, from sport and physical activity to planning, transport and the health service. The report focuses on obesity and what employers, individuals and communities can do to promote health and healthy food.

Defra, *Public Sector Food Procurement Initiative: How to Increase Opportunities for Small and Local Producers When Aggregating Food Procurement: Guidance for Buyers and Specifiers* (2006)

This guidance is designed to help buyers and specifiers of food and catering services who are seeking to collaborate with others to aggregate demand, so as to encourage small producers to tender for their business; and to safeguard the delivery of other PSFPI objectives while abiding with UK public procurement policy and the legal framework.

[National Audit Office, *Smarter Food Procurement in the Public Sector* \(2006\)](#)

This report provides data from government, NHS trusts, local authorities and universities. The information ranges from defining the catering model, through food procurement and specification, to sustainability within supply chains and the effectiveness of the PSFPI.

[Food Links UK \(funded by Defra\), *Best Practice in Sustainable Public-Sector Food Procurement* \(2006\)](#)

This paper looks at sharing and disseminating best practice on the implementation of the Public Sector Food Procurement Initiative. It is designed to inform and stimulate those directly involved in enabling more sustainable approaches to public sector catering, as well as providing case study examples.

[Sustain/National Association of Care Catering, *Sustainable Food in Care Catering* \(2006\)](#)

This paper provides an explanation of sustainable food within care homes and outlines the obstacles to and opportunities for sustainable food in care catering.

[Defra, *Securing the Future* \(2005\)](#)

This document reviews the sustainable development strategy produced in 1999 and updates the strategy on dealing with climate change. It concentrates on how to help people make better choices through community engagement, including how to improve sustainable development in the NHS as a whole.

[King's Fund, *Sustainable Food and the NHS* \(2005\)](#)

This paper considers ways to improve both the quality of patient food in hospitals and the nutrition and diet of the general population. It reviews the impact of sustainable food, as well as actions to make food procurement and catering more sustainable, so helping the NHS become a good corporate citizen.

[Sustain, *Getting More Sustainable Food into London's Hospitals: Can It Be Done? And Is It Worth It? An Interim Report* \(2005\)](#)

The Hospital Food Project was established as part of Sustain's London Food Link project, which began in 2002 and works to help producers, consumers and retailers make a positive choice for sustainable local food in the capital city. This document evaluates the project by hospital and products purchased, describing the challenges, progress made and lessons learnt.

[Department of Health, *Choosing a Better Diet: A Food and Health Action Plan* \(2005\)](#)

The action plan brings together all the commitments set out in *Choosing Health: Making Healthy Choices Easier* (2004). It details actions required at national, regional and local levels to improve people's health through better diet and nutrition, including a chapter focusing on NHS promotion of healthy eating.

[Sustainable Development Commission, *Healthy Futures: Food and Sustainable Development* \(2004\)](#)

This publication sets out why food matters and how decisions about food impact on the health and well-being of patients, staff and visitors, as well as on local communities and economies and the environment. It provides a list of government bodies and their actions.

[Department of Health, *Choosing Health: Making Healthy Choices Easier* \(2004\)](#)

This publication reviews how public health can be improved and how government and its organisations (including the NHS) can work to provide more opportunities, support and the information people want to enable them to choose health. It aims to inform and encourage people as individuals, and to help shape the commercial and cultural environment so that it is easier to choose a healthy lifestyle.

[Department of Health, *Securing Good Health for the Whole Population* \(2004\)](#)

This review focuses on prevention and the wider determinants of health in England, and on the cost-effectiveness of action that can be taken to improve the health of the whole population and to reduce health inequalities. It evaluates the government organisations that may have an impact on public health, including the NHS.

[Department of Health, *Food and Health Action Plan* \(2003\)](#)

Phase 1 of this study identifies patterns and trends in nutrient and food intake that impact on health and disease, and key influences on diet and eating patterns. Phase 2 provides solutions and actions identified in phase 1. Individual Food and Health Action Plans are created at the local or regional level and include a framework of actions.

[King's Fund, *Food for Health* \(2003\)](#)

This summary examines the case for more local food purchasing by the NHS. It addresses the promotion of healthier eating and the strengthening of local economies, and suggests that in the long term this approach could release more NHS money to invest in healthcare.

[Defra, *Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food: Facing the Future* \(2002\)](#)

This report sets out how industry, Government and consumers can work together to secure a sustainable future for the farming and food industries, as viable industries contributing to a better environment and healthy and prosperous communities.

King's Fund, *Claiming the Health Dividend: Unlocking the Benefits of NHS Spending* (2002)

The report explores the influence of NHS activities on health and sustainable development, and considers how the NHS can make better use of its resources to help reduce health inequalities, build stronger local economies, safeguard the environment for the benefit of whole communities – and ensure its own long-term viability.

Sustainable Development Commission, *Sustainable Food Procurement in the NHS* (2002)

This document provides definitions of sustainable food and looks at methods of food procurement, including reviewing the numerous contracting authorities, the barriers to and opportunities for sustainable food procurement, and recommendations for the future.

NHS Estates, *Better Hospital Food: Initial Sustainability Guide* (2001)

This document provides a list of objectives to be assessed, along with target dates for completion, in order to increase the sustainability of hospital food.

Sustainable Development Unit, *A Better Quality of Life: A Strategy for Sustainable Development in the UK* (1999)

This publication sets out the Government's initial strategy on sustainable development, including UK priorities and guiding principles of Government policy. A set of indicators is explained, as well as measures for building sustainable development into policies and decisions.



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