

Feeding the Olympics

How and why the food
for **London 2012** should be
local, organic and ethical





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Introduction

FOOD AND THE OLYMPICS: THE OPPORTUNITY OF A LIFETIME

This report is the first step in a campaign to ensure that the food associated with the London 2012 Games matches the values enshrined within the Olympic Charter, and the promises made in the London bid for the “most sustainable games ever”. Specifically, the bid promised “to support consumption of local, seasonal and organic produce”.¹ With this report we hope to strengthen the resolve to meet these promises by providing both a rationale and a practical plan of action for making the London 2012 Olympic Games the first Games to serve sustainable food. In this context, we understand ‘sustainable food’ to mean food that is mainly fresh, local, seasonal and organic, with a large proportion of food from plants and a low proportion from animal sources.

“The message was loud and clear – that London 2012 incarnated the aspirations of the youth and of the multicultural century that lies ahead.”

Alain Danet, International Olympic Committee (IOC), Singapore July 2005²

Between July and September 2012 London will be the focus of world attention.³ An estimated global audience of four billion people will watch more than 10,000 athletes participate in the 30th Olympiad. 8.6 million tickets will be available for the Olympic Games, with another 1.5 million for the Paralympic Games⁴ and 300,000 tourists are expected to travel to the Games from outside the UK.⁵

The planning, construction and running of the event will require £2.3 billion in investment⁶ – but over the longer term the Government hopes that it could boost the UK’s visitor economy by up to £2 billion⁷ and the London economy as a whole by £5.9 billion between 2005 and 2016.⁸

London 2012 will also set the scene for the biggest urban regeneration project in Europe, and a new town of 40,000 homes will be created,⁹ 9,000 new

homes will be built within the Olympic site itself. The Games’ organisers hope to bring 12,000 new jobs, improved transport links and green space to one of the most deprived parts of the UK.¹⁰ More than any previous Games, the bidders for London 2012 emphasised in the bid regeneration, sustainability and legacy. Sold as the greenest Games in modern times, the organisers promised to inspire future generations with the Olympic ideal¹¹ and promote healthy living for generations to come.

Because of their iconic nature, the Olympic and Paralympic Games are an opportunity to create changes in culture and policy – and the London bid was successful precisely because it was both visionary and ambitious.¹² Now, those ambitions and promises must be met. With the eyes of the world upon London, it is imperative that the 2012 Olympic Games uphold the promises of sustainability and the promotion of healthy living in *all* aspects of the Games – throughout the construction period, during Games time itself, and in the legacy that is left behind.

Provision of food is a particularly important factor in sustainability. The environmental and social effects of providing about 1.3 million meals to construction workers and 14 million attendees during the Games can be either negative or positive, but will be very significant in either case. The longer-term impact of a sustainable approach to food provision for the communities, created for the legacy stage, will be even greater. This report therefore focuses on three key aspects of food for the Olympic and Paralympic Games: provision of food during the Games time itself; food for construction workers and the legacy of the Games.

As a part of the bid for a truly ‘green Games’, Great Britain promised “to support consumption of local, seasonal and organic produce”.¹³ This report sets out how the Games organisers can take steps to fulfil that promise.

Summary

This report is a call to action for everyone involved in catering for the London 2012 Olympic Games, to ensure that the food served before, during and after the Games is local, seasonal and organic as was promised in London's bid.

The London 2012 Olympics offers a unique opportunity to mark the relationship between physical fitness and healthy food, to transform the food available at all major events, and to showcase the benefits of local, seasonal and organic food on a world stage.

The Olympic movement recognises that it has a special responsibility to implement sustainable development. While other Olympic Games have attempted to be 'green Games', London 2012 is aiming to be "the greenest Games in modern times". The London bid uses the concept of a 'One Planet Olympics' – recognising that continuing unsustainable practices would in effect mean that we would need three planets to support our current way of life. A strategy was created in order to achieve this, which was submitted with the London 2012 bid. One of the ten principles relates to food, and pledged to "support the consumption of local, seasonal and organic produce".

Feeding London 2012 is a significant but achievable challenge. For example, around 1.3 million meals could be required over the four-year period of the construction phase. Over the 60 days of Games time approximately 14 million meals will be needed – equivalent to around 2% of the number of school meals served in the UK over a year.

Research is already demonstrating what an important role our current food system is playing in causing climate change, and how better food choices could significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Around 20% of the UK's contribution to greenhouse gas emissions are caused by our food and drink. A growing body of evidence is showing that emissions from the food sector can be reduced if we all shift towards eating organic, local, seasonal food, and less but organic meat and dairy products. The Games could also raise awareness of the crisis in

worldwide fish stocks, and ensure that imported food meets Fairtrade standards.

Food systems have changed profoundly since the Olympics was last held in London in 1948. As public unease over food scares, and levels of obesity have risen, a second food revolution has begun: organic food has moved into the mainstream, and there has been a rise of interest in local and sustainable food initiatives amongst the general public and policy makers.

Most of the food at major events and tourist attractions in the UK, particularly food aimed at children, is currently poor quality – with low nutritional, environmental, animal welfare and social standards. Given the London 2012 emphasis on inspiring the young to embrace healthy living and physical achievement, it is particularly important that the Games sets a good example. Despite the poor standards of much food at tourist attractions, there are plenty of examples of good practice, serving healthy, local, and freshly produced food. Many schools across the country are already meeting the Soil Association 'Food for Life' standards of 50% local, 30% organic, and 75% unprocessed food.

It is important that local food businesses are included within the Games, so that the much hailed regeneration benefits can be gained. Previous Games have shown that this will take a great deal of effort to achieve. However, there is real potential for small businesses, run by people from a diversity of backgrounds, to work together to supply catering for the Games if they are helped with the relevant information and support to enable them to bid for contracts. The Games also provide an opportunity to provide training for local people, to fill the skills gap within the catering trade.

The legacy of the Games offers significant opportunities to the boroughs that will be most affected by the Games, which are amongst the poorest in London, and which have been identified as suffering from food poverty. Though significant development for the area has been planned, there are fears that the reality will not live up to the ideals

of sustainability and regeneration, and there has been criticism of a lack of community consultation. Specific promises about access to healthy food for the new communities that will be developed, and the sustainable food that would be available as a result, were made in the 2012 bid. There have been few signs that these pledges are going to be honoured. Indeed the most significant food development so far is the loss of the Manor Garden allotments site.

Two of the key sponsors for the Games are McDonalds and Coca-Cola, which have extensive rights to operate outlets within the Olympic village and park. The companies aim to associate their brands with the ethos of the Games. All caterers for the Games should be required to 'promote local, seasonal, healthy and organic produce', and the sponsors must take the lead in doing this.

London 2012

A GREEN GAMES

“The starting point of sustainable development is the idea that the long-term preservation of our environment, our habitat as well as its biodiversity and natural resources... will only be possible if combined simultaneously with economic, social and political development particularly geared to the benefit of the poorest members of society. In view of its universal nature, the Olympic movement accepts that it has a special responsibility to share in the implementation of this concept of sustainable development.”

International Olympic Committee (IOC), 1999¹

“There is a real opportunity for London to push the environmental agenda much harder than any previous Games, and to put in place the kind of robust, transparent monitoring that help future host cities learn from our best practice.”

London Assembly, May 2007²

The idea of a ‘green Games’ is not new. The 1994 Winter Games in Lillehammer, Norway, the first Games to take place after the 1992 United Nations Environment and Development Conference in Rio (the ‘Rio Earth Summit’), adopted environmental principles. Soon after, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) brought environmental issues into the bidding process and adopted the environment as the ‘third pillar’ of the Olympic Charter, together with sports and culture.³

The progress towards a more sustainable Games, however, has not been smooth. Atlanta 1996, dubbed the ‘Coca-Cola Games’, made little if any effort to be sustainable; Sydney 2000 – another ‘green’ Games – did much better, with a focus on energy use, waste and transport; on the other hand, Athens 2004 was roundly condemned by environmental groups for failing to meet environmental promises.⁴

The bid for London 2012 raised the bar once again. Using the concept of a ‘One Planet Olympics’, the bidding team promised to use opportunities to:

“minimis[e] the potential impact of the event itself, to increase public awareness of the positive links between sport, environment and healthy living, and to create sustainable legacy communities”.⁵

The promise to run a sustainable Games, that would stimulate regeneration of a massively deprived part of the country and inspire young people into more healthy lifestyles, has been acknowledged by the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) as one of the central factors that led to the success of the bid.⁶ London 2012 has been promoted by the Chief Executive of the ODA as the “greenest Games in modern times”.⁷

A SUSTAINABLE FOOD GAMES

The ‘One Planet Living’ approach, on which the concept of One Planet Olympics is based, involves ten principles for sustainable living. The sixth of these relates to food, and specifically to “transform food supply to the point where it has a net positive impact on the environment, local economy and people’s well-being”.⁸

The One Planet Olympics strategy, developed in collaboration with WWF and Bioregional, and submitted with the London 2012 bid, pledged to “support consumption of local, seasonal and organic produce, with reduced amount of packaging and animal protein”.⁹ This commitment was further refined into the promotion of local, seasonal and healthy food during the Games and the creation of a sustainable food legacy following the Games (see Table 1, overleaf).

These promises were reflected in the publication, in 2006, of the Mayor’s London Food Strategy, *Healthy and Sustainable Food for London*. This document set out a vision of a more sustainable food culture in London in 2016, and noted that, “The London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games will bring an array of food-relevant opportunities, ranging from meeting the dietary requirements of athletes, through highlighting London’s world city status in terms of the

Table 1

Sustainable food pledges within the London 2012 bid

Extracts from <i>Towards a One Planet Olympics</i> ¹⁰	Extracts from accompanying briefing plans ¹¹
<p>Overall strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting consumption of local, seasonal and organic produce, with reduced amount of animal protein and packaging. 	<p>Overall strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for consumption of local, seasonal and organic produce, with reduced amount of animal protein and packaging.
<p>Games time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of local, seasonal, healthy and organic produce • Promotion of links between healthy eating, sport and well-being • Partnerships established with key caterers, suppliers and sponsors • Composting of food waste as part of Zero Waste plan • Promotion of equity and fair trade as part of procurement and management plans. 	<p>Games time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of links between healthy eating, sport and well-being: information and awareness-raising campaign during preparation for the Games, including at Test Events, and at Games time • Partnerships established with caterers, suppliers and sponsors: work with local producers, suppliers and official caterers, and food and beverage sponsors, to maximise opportunities for provision of local and sustainable food during the Games period.
<p>Legacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased markets for farmers in the region • Markets, catering and retail outlets supplying local and seasonal food • Composting facilities integrated into closed-loop food strategy. 	<p>Legacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will also be a legacy of sustainable catering within the sports and events sectors building on the experience gained from systems developed for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

diverse cuisines available in the city, to the promotion of regional food for spectators at Olympic events".¹²

In 2007 the ODA published a sustainable development policy and strategy for the Olympics, and food was specifically referred to in the section devoted to climate change:

"The Games provide a platform for demonstrating long-term solutions [to climate change] in terms of energy and water resource management, infrastructure development, transport, **local food production*** and carbon offsetting. We aim to minimise the environmental footprint and carbon emissions of the Games and legacy development,

notably by optimising energy efficiency, energy demand and use of low carbon and renewable energy sources."¹³ [*our emphasis]

The paper also contained a number of other statements that are relevant to food, notably under 'Healthy Living', a commitment to: "procuring goods, services and sponsorship sustainably with an emphasis on supplier diversity, fair employment and environmental attributes, as well as other social and ethical attributes."

There is also a generic commitment to: "an increased UK-wide public awareness of... the links between the well-being of individuals and that of the planet".¹⁴

Despite these laudable commitments there is good reason to be concerned that these aspirations and commitments may not be met, as past experience shows. In Athens for example, environmental commitments were abandoned as costs began to rise and deadlines approached. In Sydney, the full extent and complexity of the catering operation was not fully realised until after the 1996 Atlanta Games, resulting in a significantly larger budget for catering than had been expected. Tellingly, in just two years since the bid was won, the budget for London 2012 has already quadrupled from its original estimates.¹⁵

In the maelstrom of activity involved with putting on the Olympic and Paralympic Games, it will be only too possible – even likely – that the promises to support consumption of local, seasonal and organic food are forgotten. Such a development would significantly increase the negative environmental impact of the Games, and reduce the opportunity to put in place a sustainable food legacy.

FEEDING THE GAMES: THE CHALLENGE

Construction phase

Research by the Sector Skills Council has estimated

that 13,000 construction workers and 1,500 electricians and plumbers will be needed at the Olympics site and facilities between now and 2012.¹⁶ The ODA has stated that 9,000 workers will be employed at the peak of construction.¹⁷ Workers are likely to require lunches, but breakfasts may also be needed, as will evening meals for shift workers. According to media reports, an estimated 10,000 workers are likely to be housed in the Olympic village during parts of the construction period.¹⁸ The UK is already suffering a skills shortage for construction workers¹⁹ so it is expected that many living on the Olympic site will be migrant workers with particular cultural food preferences.²⁰

An estimation of the exact number of meals which will be required for construction workers is difficult to make, but if an average of just 5,000 workers need one meal a day for five days a week over 52 weeks a year, then 1.3 million meals over the four year period will be required.

Games time

Catering for the Game time itself will be a significant task. During the Sydney Games a total of 8.65 million meals were served over 60 days (Table 2).²¹ In London, from July to September 2012 up to 14 million meals will be consumed by about

Table 2

Meals consumed by different client groups at the Sydney Olympic and Paralympic Games

Customer group	Customer numbers		Total meals provided (60 events a day)
	Olympics	Paralympics	
Athletes and team officials	15 300	6 000	1 800 000
Technical officials	2 500	1 000	100 000
Olympic/Paralympic families	7 500	1 500	200 000
Accredited media	15 200	2 000	500 000
Sponsor hospitality	15 000	n/a	500 000
Workforce	120 000	20 000	1 500 000
Ticketed patrons	8 000 000	650 000	8 650 000

Source: Sydney 2000 Games Knowledge Management Report²²

20,000 athletes, a vast paid and volunteer workforce, the media, officials, and up to 9 million spectators. To put this in perspective, 14 million is equivalent to about 2% of the number of school meals served in the UK over a school year.²³

It is predicted that the total number of overseas individuals who will visit London in relation to the Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2012 (including competitors, officials, media and spectators) could be up to 300,000 (three times the number of people who visited the 2000 Olympics in Sydney). However, London is a large city, and a global tourism destination. The resident population is about twice that of Sydney and ten times the size of Athens. London has a large tourism capacity. In fact, on a normal day at the time of year when the Games will be held, there would be 425,000 overseas tourists in London anyway, and those visiting the Olympics may well displace many of the tourists otherwise expected to visit London.

The London Organising Committee for the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) have the responsibility for providing food during the Games time itself (see appendix for a more detailed breakdown of responsibilities between the different bodies). Because of the complexity of the operation it is likely that LOCOG will only work directly with individual 'master caterers', who then sub-contract. At the Sydney Games there were eight to 12 master caterers, working with 400 individual caterers²⁴ and 700 catering outlets.²⁵ One of the largest caterers worldwide is Aramark, which has catered for the Olympics on 13 previous occasions. At the Athens Olympics, Aramark served 75,000 meals a day – 45 tonnes of food – to coaches, volunteers and athletes throughout the event period.²⁶ Table 3 illustrates the very significant quantities of food required for Olympic Village catering during the Sydney Games.

While some of these larger caterers, like Aramark, have experience of managing the increased pressure on their supply chains for one-off surges in demand like the Olympics, the challenge for those catering for London's Sustainable Food Games will be to develop supply chains capable of providing the required quantities of fresh, local and organic food.

Table 3

Olympic Village catering, Sydney 2000

Milk	75 000 litres
Eggs	19 tonnes
Cheese	21 tonnes
Bread	25 000 loaves
Seafood	82 tonnes
Poultry	31 tonnes
Meat	100 tonnes

Source: Sydney 2000 'games info' archive website²⁷

Sustainable food: the time is now

Food shopping in Britain changed profoundly in the second half of the 20th century. The last time the Olympics was held in London, in 1948, we bought only a fifth of our food from supermarkets.¹ Today, it is more than 60%,² and the 'weekly shop', where we purchase packaged and processed food from supermarkets, has become the norm. The UK now imports just over 40% of its food.³

Cultural expectations – about what food is, where it comes from, and how it is prepared and eaten – have changed a great deal in a short time. And this process of change continues. In the wake of the BSE crisis in the early 1990s, the furore over the introduction of genetically modified foods exposed great public unease about key aspects of the food system. More recently, public debate has focused on rapidly increasing levels of obesity and the recognition that our eating habits are leading to a public health crisis. A House of Commons report in 2003 stated that obesity had grown by 400% in the preceding 25 years.⁴ In 2005, the British Medical Association predicted that by 2020 over one quarter of children will be obese and that today's generation of children will be the first for over a century to have a shorter life expectancy than their parents.⁵

In response to these concerns, a second food revolution has begun – a revolution to reverse 50 years of decline. The public is deeply suspicious of genetically modified foods. Organic foods, dismissed just ten years ago as a 'niche product' suitable only for the affluent and anxious, have rapidly gone mainstream. Some 25% of people now regularly shop for organic food and four out of ten people buy organic products at least once a month.⁶ The market is increasing by £2.3 million a week – the fastest growing sector of agriculture.⁷ Results from the UK's largest supermarket Tesco, in April 2007, revealed that sales of organic foods are growing four times faster than other ranges and that the largest part of this growth is amongst less affluent consumers.⁸

Whilst the dominance of the multiples has grown, so has interest in the purchase of local, seasonal food and in the increase in number and profitability

of local food initiatives such as organic fruit and vegetable box home delivery schemes.⁹ The appalling standards of school dinners, highlighted by the Soil Association's *Food for Life* report,¹⁰ and many years of campaigning by health and environmental organisations, inspired TV chef Jamie Oliver to make a television series and the resulting publicity and a mass public petition led to an overhaul in regulations governing school food. As Justin King, Chief Executive of Sainsbury's recently put it, "We are in the middle of a sea-change in customers' attitudes towards quality."¹¹

The changes detailed above have been both reflected in and driven by changes in government policy. In the aftermath of the foot and mouth disease disaster in 2001, the Government convened a commission on the future of farming and food, chaired by Sir Don Curry. The resulting report called for a profound shift in the food and farming system and for a reconnection between producers and consumers.¹² Many activities to support local and sustainable food have been launched or reinforced as a result.

Since 2002, for example, the Government's Public Sector Food Procurement Initiative (PSFPI) has helped many public sector buyers move towards more sustainable food procurement, including encouraging tenders from small local producers, reducing environmental damage from food production, and increasing consumption of healthy, nutritious and organic food,¹³ in recognition that public money can be used to stimulate establishment, growth and long-term security for businesses operating to high environmental and social standards. Some public sector caterers have also included sustainability specifications in major contracts.¹⁴

Over the last few years a proliferation of voluntary initiatives has demonstrated the enthusiasm for better eating around the country. Increasing numbers of schools around the country now comply with the Soil Association's *Food for Life* school meal targets of 75% unprocessed, 50% local and 30% organic food. By working with local suppliers, the Royal Brompton Hospital in London and Royal Cornwall Hospital, St Michael's Hospital and the West Cornwall Hospital

have all significantly increased the proportion of organic and local food in their routine catering. Sustain's Good Food on the Public Plate project has shown that healthy and sustainable catering can be both achievable and cost-effective in the hospital sector.¹⁵

However, despite all of this good progress, the use of sustainable food is still restricted to "islands of good practice in a sea of mediocrity",¹⁶ often led by government, charitable organisations and individuals championing the cause. We still lack the fundamental shift that would make healthier and environmentally sound purchases the norm, and a great deal more work still needs to be done. This will require business, government and customer support and, crucially, high-profile opportunities to demonstrate what can be achieved. One such opportunity is the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

FOOD AND CLIMATE CHANGE

The progress of the environmental agenda within the Olympics movement reflects the ever growing awareness of sustainability issues. For example, climate change, with particular respect to energy use and transport, is high on the political and cultural agenda – so much so that it would be practically impossible for the organisers of London 2012 to ignore it.

However, the relationship between the food system and climate change is still to emerge fully into the public arena. Although 'food miles' is a relatively well-understood concept, the level of emissions from the production and consumption of food, although very significant, is hidden within the climate policy debate. More research is still needed in order to assess the full environmental impact of the food system in detail. However, several authoritative studies and government-sponsored reviews have concluded that the food system is a very significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. The figures are startling. Briefly:

- The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) has calculated that, globally, agriculture generates 30% of total man-made emissions of greenhouse gases, including half of methane emissions and more than half of the emissions of nitrous oxide^{17 18}
- In the EU, over 30% of the greenhouse gases from consumer purchases come from the food and drink sector¹⁹
- Latest conservative estimates from the Food Climate Research Network in the UK suggest that almost one-fifth of the UK's total greenhouse gas emissions are associated with our food and drink²⁰
- The 2002 City Limits report estimated that food is responsible for 41% of London's ecological footprint (greenhouse gases plus other environmental effects) – in comparison to 10% from energy use and 5% from transport.²¹

Such figures, and further analysis now emerging, demonstrate that whilst it may just still be acceptable in 2007 to run a major event like the Olympics that does not take into account the large impact of the food consumed on climate change and the environment, by 2012 this will not be the case.

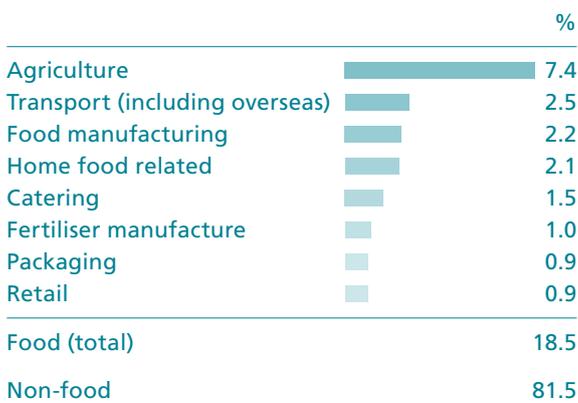
20% of the UK's total greenhouse gas emissions are caused by our food and drink.²² The emissions come not just from the transport of food, but from every stage of the chain – the conversion of land to agricultural use, the energy used to make fertilisers, pesticides and farm machinery, the impact of agriculture on the soil (a natural carbon store), food processing, transport, refrigeration, retail, domestic use of food and waste from all the different stages.

These are complex problems with no single solution. A growing body of evidence, however, indicates that emissions from the food sector can be significantly reduced if we were all to shift towards eating:

1. Organic

Organic production methods are less energy-intensive than industrial agriculture. They avoid the use of artificial fertiliser, which takes an enormous amount of energy and water to produce²³ and results in emissions of the powerful greenhouse gas nitrous

Figure 1
Greenhouse gas emissions from the UK food chain



Source: Food Climate Research Network, 2007²⁴

oxide.²⁵ A nine-year study of four arable farming systems by Michigan University concluded that organic arable farming has a global warming potential of only 43% of that of conventional methods on a per unit yield basis.²⁶ A recent Australian study supports this figure, showing organic farming in Australia to have less than half the greenhouse-gas intensity of 'conventional' farming.²⁷

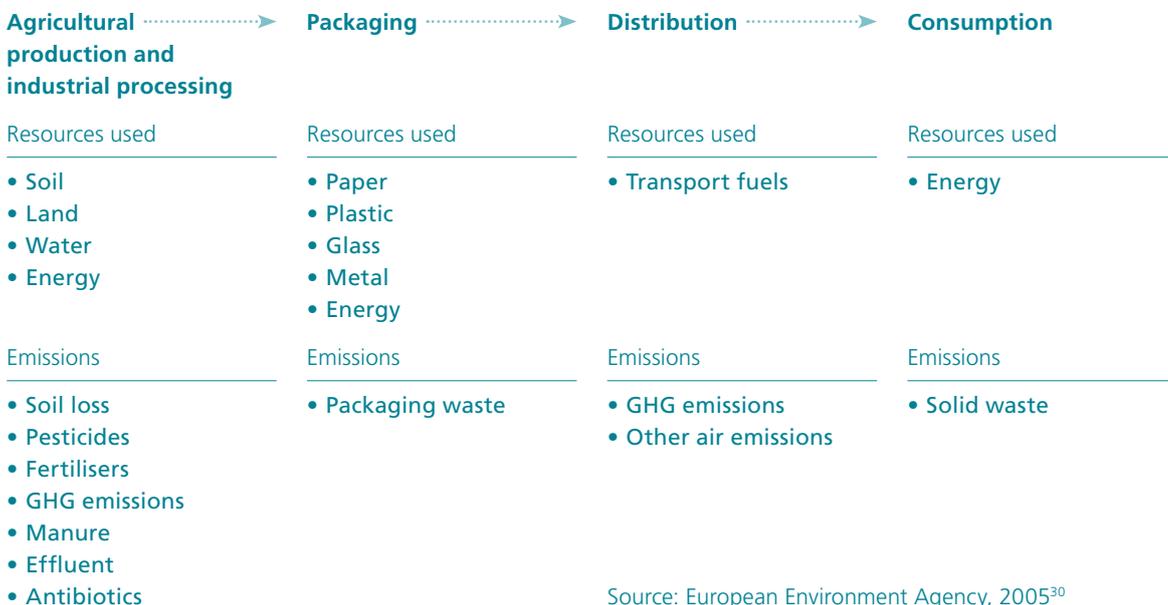
2. Local

Locally grown and prepared food cuts down on fuel use in 'food miles' and makes it easier to identify and support environmentally benign food production methods. Buying UK produce also means that the food is less likely to be associated with the greenhouse gas caused by recent land conversion.²⁸

3. Seasonally

Seasonal food need not be imported, does not require energy-intensive conditions such as heated greenhouses, can be produced organically, and reduces the likelihood of energy-intensive methods of storage and transport such as refrigeration and air-freighting.²⁹

Figure 2
Environmental effects of food and drink consumption



Source: European Environment Agency, 2005³⁰

4. Less meat

Products from farmed animals – meat and dairy products such as milk and cheese – are among the most energy-intensive and greenhouse-gas intensive food products of all. According to latest figures from the United Nations, animal farming globally causes more greenhouse gas emissions than all of the cars, lorries and planes in the world put together, and the impact is increasing.³¹

Although the detailed understanding of these issues is relatively new, the potential for change is impressive. An ecological footprint study carried out by the Stockholm Environment Institute for the Welsh Assembly, showed that the food footprint of Wales (responsible for 30% of the overall ecological footprint for Wales) could itself be reduced by 30% by increasing the efficiency of supply chains and changing diets towards more organic food and less meat.³² In terms of reducing overall environmental impact, attention to food issues should be seen as a relatively 'easy win'.

certification programme, permitting those fisheries that work to strict environmental standards to promote their fish using an MSC logo. Availability of MSC-certified products is rapidly increasing, with major food distributors and supermarkets adopting many new lines during 2006/07, and several (such as Sainsbury's and Asda) setting an aspirational target of 100% MSC-certified marine fish over the next five to ten years.³⁸

The 2012 Games could play a major role in raising awareness of the crisis in fish stocks worldwide, and specifying use of MSC-certified fish in all catering contracts. For the 2012 Games to sell any fish classified by the Marine Conservation Society as being in danger of extinction could seriously undermine the aspiration of being the greenest Games in modern times.

SUSTAINABLE FISH

One final consideration, which also has major environmental and health implications, is the issue of sustainable fish. International concern for fish stocks has been provoked by reports from several leading organisations,³³ and startling statistics such as:

- 70% of the world's commercially important marine stocks are fully fished, overexploited, depleted or slowly recovering³⁴
- Contemporary fishing practices kill and waste 18–40 million tonnes of unwanted fish, seabirds, sea turtles, marine mammals and other ocean life annually – one-third of the total world catch.³⁵

The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC)³⁶ and Marine Conservation Society³⁷ are two organisations that promote practical action for consumers, food suppliers and catering businesses. The Marine Stewardship Council runs a sustainable fishery

No medals for 'business as usual'

HEALTH

"A parent on the look-out for a piece of fresh fruit at Flamingo Land, New MetroLand, Great Yarmouth Pleasure Beach or Camelot Theme Park needn't bother: there's none to be found."

Soil Association, Real Meal Deal, 2006¹

In 2006, the Soil Association undertook a survey of the food available at the 14 most visited tourist attractions in the UK. With the exception of the Tower of London and the Eden Project, the results were depressing – hot dogs, burgers and chips dominated the food on offer and in eight of the 12 attractions fresh fruit was either not available, or took at least an hour to find. Fizzy drinks and branded 'juice drinks' with minimal juice content were heavily promoted (often through associated sponsorship deals), whilst healthy drinks (including free water) or milk were difficult or impossible to locate at most of the attractions.²

Will London 2012 follow the same pattern? Given the emphasis of the 2012 Games on the ideals of inspiring the young to healthy living, the question is particularly relevant. At a rough estimation, at least two million meals will be served to children at the 2012 Games.³ Will those children have access to healthy, fresh, unprocessed foods?

It is recommended that on a normal day children consume six to eight glasses of water.⁴ At previous Games, controversy has resulted from visitors being prevented from bringing any food or drink at all onto the Olympic site.⁵ So it is clearly vital that free fresh water and healthy food choices are widely available at all Olympic venues.

ENVIRONMENT

The consumption of heavily processed, industrially produced foods has a significant impact on the

environment, as shown in the previous chapter. According to studies already outlined, food is responsible for about one fifth of our personal greenhouse gas emissions and for up to 41% of Londoners' overall ecological footprint. Researchers at the University of Cardiff recently carried out one of the few analyses of the environmental impact of a sporting event, in an ecological footprint analysis of the 2003/04 FA Cup Final in Cardiff. The study found that the food consumed had the second largest effect after transport, and that the food 'footprint' of each visitor (measured in terms of energy use) was four times their footprint on a normal day.⁶

This figure gives only a snapshot of the enormous potential impact of food consumption from the Games – an impact which, as identified by the Stockholm Environment Institute at York University, could be significantly mitigated by serving more local food, more organic food, less meat, and reducing wastage.⁷ LOCOG is currently intending to undertake a thorough food footprint analysis of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Given the importance of food and the myriad effects from the different stages of the food chain, LOCOG should follow the example of the Stockholm Environment Institute and the Carbon Trust in undertaking a full international lifecycle assessment.

SOCIETY

"The five Olympic Boroughs believe that genuine and sustainable regeneration will only happen if local firms and local people benefit from the development work."

The Economic Development, Culture, Sport and Tourism Committee, GLA⁸

"Objective: To create new employment and business opportunities locally, regionally and nationally. London 2012 will provide new employment and business opportunities during the construction phase of the Games, during deconstruction and within the legacy uses of the site. The ODA seeks

to work with partners to create new employment and business opportunities, particularly for communities surrounding the Park, to facilitate the achievement of overall regeneration aspirations."
ODA, Sustainable Development Strategy, 2007⁹

A comparison between Atlanta 1996 and Sydney 2000 highlights the need for vigorous effort if local businesses are to be engaged in supplying the Games. Atlanta was nicknamed the 'Coca-Cola Games' because such a large proportion of the publicly funded contracts was awarded to multi-nationals. In contrast, after specifically focusing on addressing this imbalance, 20% of the Olympic contracts were awarded to local businesses at the Sydney Games.¹⁰ The inclusion of local businesses is of particular relevance to food because it greatly increases the chances that benefits will flow to the local economy.¹¹

Various different bodies have already expressed concern that, without energetic efforts being made, small and medium-sized enterprises from East London will be excluded and the much hailed regeneration benefits will be lost.¹²

These concerns are of particular relevance to the provision of food for construction workers. The bulk of the construction process is due to start in the summer of 2008. Because of the complexity of the operation, the ODA will be contracting 10 to 12 different contractors to construct the Games site, each of which will be organising its own catering. The most important of these contractors will be announced in the autumn of 2007.¹³ Unhelpfully, the ODA's Procurement Policy does not mention food, nor address the specific measures to ensure that sustainable food will be provided by each contractor.¹⁴

When the contracts are available, they will be advertised on the London 2012 website.¹⁵ The impression gained by local business and interested non-governmental organisations (NGOs) so far is that, despite its pledge to "support consumption of local, seasonal and organic produce, with reduced

amount of animal protein and packaging", the ODA has a limited interest in sustainable food issues. It is not known whether the reference to the freshness, healthiness or sustainability of workforce food will be included in the ODA's contracts with site contractors.

"I support London's aim to achieve Fairtrade City status, and welcome the progress made in the campaign so far. London is doing well but we have a lot more to do in order to meet the criteria that will make us a Fairtrade City. By choosing Fairtrade, London's consumers can have a real impact on the lives of many farmers and communities in the developing world."
Mayor Ken Livingstone, Fairtrade London website¹⁶

Food purchased for the Games will also have an international social impact, on the farmers and distributors supplying food from other countries. If imported food were to meet ethical trade standards, such as those embodied by Fairtrade certification, the Games could enhance the international solidarity that the sports activities already set out to demonstrate.

London is already working to become the world's largest Fairtrade City. Across the capital, local campaigns have been established bringing together community groups, local authorities, businesses, schools and individual campaigners. The London campaign is supported by companies and organisations including The Co-operative, Divine Chocolate, Cafédirect, KPMG, the GLA, Oxfam, London Food Link and the Fairtrade Foundation. The London Boroughs of Camden, Croydon, Kingston, Lambeth, Lewisham, Hammersmith and Fulham, Hounslow, Greenwich, Richmond, Islington, Tower Hamlets, Southwark, Sutton and Waltham Forest have achieved Fairtrade status. A further 14 local campaigns are underway. It is expected that London will meet its city-wide targets to declare Fairtrade status by the autumn of 2008. This provides a valuable springboard for the inclusion of Fairtrade products not only in the

official Olympic sites, but also for visitors staying in any part of London.¹⁷

As well as Fairtrade coffee, tea, fruit, juice, sugar, chocolate and other products, where imported food is used, the Games could encourage sponsors to consider Fairtrade ingredients in their internationally recognised products. McDonald's, for example, already offers Fairtrade certified coffee in over 600 outlets in the United States of America, but has not yet made this commitment in the UK. The 2012 Games could play a high-profile role in publicising such positive steps, as well as establishing ethical trading relationships as part of the social legacy.

Going for gold: towards a more sustainable food games

CONSTRUCTION PHASE

The provision of food to contractors working on the Olympic site has the potential to be a public and long-running demonstration that the Olympic authorities are serious about their commitments to health and sustainability. Such provision will also send a strong message about the importance of sustainable food to a wider audience.

The advantage of using the construction phase of the Games to provide sustainable food is that the four-year construction period will give small and medium-sized enterprises in the locality a chance to get involved. This could give a genuine boost to the local economy, as promised in the ODA documents.

Unlike LOCOG, the ODA is a public sector body. This means that the ODA is subject to EU regulations on procurement, and, for example cannot directly specify that food should come from a 'local' source. This does not mean, however, that specifications for fresh, healthy, unprocessed and organic food cannot be included (see Appendix for more details), as has been proven by experience of working with public sector caterers in, for example, the school and hospital sectors as part of the Government's Public Sector Food Procurement Initiative. These specifications must be included in the contracts with construction companies who will ultimately be responsible for the catering during this phase.

GAMES TIME

- **Promotion of local, seasonal, healthy and organic produce**
- **Partnerships established with caterers, suppliers and sponsors: work with local producers, suppliers and official caterers, food and beverage sponsors to maximise opportunities for provision of local and sustainable food during the Games period**
- **There will also be a legacy of sustainable catering**

within the sports and events sectors, building on the experience gained from systems developed for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Commitments made in London 2012 bid, 2005¹

Despite the abysmal standards of food currently evident at most tourist attractions in the UK, exceptions like the Tower of London and the Eden Project in Cornwall prove that it can be done. These hugely popular destinations manage to provide healthy, local and freshly produced food every day to thousands of customers from diverse backgrounds.²

Many schools around the country are already adopting – and exceeding – the Soil Association's Food for Life targets of 75% unprocessed, 50% local and 30% organic food. Millfields Community School in Hackney, for example, is now buying 95% unprocessed food, containing over 40% organic ingredients.³ This is in 2007 – by 2012 the Olympic and Paralympic Games should be able to achieve the food for life targets at a minimum. What may seem like a high target now will not look as daunting by 2012. Despite concerns about the ability of the UK market to keep pace with demand,⁴ the organic market is growing at an enormous rate – as is interest in buying locally and healthily. The 'healthy' fast food chain Leon, which aims to use only seasonal and unprocessed ingredients, currently has four outlets across London. By 2012 the chain is confident that it will have 60 to 70 restaurants across the country.⁵

Events catering – particularly for such a special case as the Games – does of course present a specific set of challenges, not least the need to provide a large amount of food in a very short time. This is a task which large catering companies are understandably best set up to achieve. In order to achieve the Food for Life targets championed by the Soil Association and already achieved by a growing number of catering operations, LOCOG would need to work with these suppliers to build new contract stipulations into the tendering process. Many of the suppliers will already have systems set up specifically for the Olympic and Paralympic Games – suppliers of the Olympic village, for example, are required to provide

a detailed nutritional analysis for all the meals they provide for athletes.⁶ Achieving further change would undoubtedly take some concerted work within the catering industry. An event of the stature of the Olympic and Paralympic Games however, could provide the impetus needed to make this happen – to “create a legacy of sustainable catering” as committed to in the London bid.

It is timely that the British Standards Institute (BSI) is currently developing a sustainable events management system, which they are hoping the 2012 Games will work towards.⁷ This guidance is designed to provide good practice requirements for planning and managing sustainable events of all sizes and types, encompassing the complete range of events from large-scale business conferences and one-off events such as the 2012 Games, to music festivals, air shows and amateur fundraising events. When finalised, this will help organisations to demonstrate publicly their commitment to sustainability. The standard should provide a route map that explains sustainability in event management as well as how to develop and measure this capability in organisations. Although the draft standard does not currently contain specific reference to food, the BSI has told us that they are very interested in developing a set of criteria for sustainable food, recognising the environmental impact, and potential environmental benefits associated with different food choices.

Although not in a position to provide all the food for the Games, the potential for small and medium-sized enterprises, social enterprises and local wholesale markets should not be ignored.⁸ In a recent study by the Social Enterprise Institute, 80% of respondents from social enterprises said they would be happy to join a consortium bid with other enterprises to provide goods and services for larger contracts that they might not otherwise be able to bid for. Small and medium enterprises and social enterprises do, however, need access to information about bidding processes and emerging opportunities in order to participate and demonstrate their capabilities.⁹ LOCOG is intending to employ a catering manager at the beginning of 2009.¹⁰ Considering the complexity of the operation as a whole, it is likely

that a post specifically focusing on liaison with small and medium-sized suppliers may also be necessary.

THE LEGACY

“[East London is often seen as] the embarrassment on the doorstep of the richest square mile that exists in the world... you only have to take one step beyond that and you can see some of the greatest deprivation in this country.”

Hackney Mayor, Jules Pipe¹¹

“London 2012 will be a major catalyst for change and regeneration in East London... leveraging resources, spurring timely completion of already programmed infrastructure investment and leaving a legacy to be valued by future generations.”

London 2012 bid documents, 2005¹²

“These applications lack a clear analysis of how the area should function in legacy in urban design terms... largely designed to suit the running of the Olympic Games rather than providing the necessary highway and servicing infrastructure to support the future development of these areas.”

Newham Council objection to the ODA planning application, 2007¹³

The five boroughs directly affected by the Games are Greenwich, Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest. The most significantly affected is Newham, which will house 60% of the Olympic site.¹⁴ Newham is the poorest borough in London and one of the most ethnically diverse. Less than half (44.3%) the population is ‘white British’ and some 100 different languages are spoken locally.¹⁵ Newham has been identified as an area which suffers from food poverty, defined as a difficulty by low-income households in obtaining affordable healthier foods. Research has shown that low income has a direct impact on food choices across Hackney, Newham and Tower Hamlets, and that low-income households spend 1.5 times more on

food as a proportion of their income than the national average.¹⁶

The planning process

Significant promises have been made by the Olympic authorities about the legacy of the Games for regeneration. According to the strategy, the Olympic Park and facilities will be designed “for legacy”, forming the basis for future development of new residential and mixed-use neighbourhoods. The ODA aims to “create new, safe, mixed-use public space, housing and facilities appropriate to the demographics and character of the Lower Lea Valley, adaptable to future climates”¹⁷ and “a world-class example of urban regeneration”.¹⁸ In all, 40,000 new homes will be constructed in legacy mode, 9,000 of them within the Park site itself,¹⁹ in addition to a new Olympic Park.

A major part of the new development is Stratford City, being constructed just to the east of the Olympic Park. Costing £4 billion, Stratford City will create more than 100 new shops, three big department stores, cafés, schools, hotels, parks and health centres.²⁰ The shopping centre created will have over 139,000 square metres of retail space – the same as the Bluewater Development in Kent.²¹ It is not intended that the development will be a major destination for food shopping, although the John Lewis group, owner of the supermarket Waitrose, has already been signed up.²²

Planning permission for the Stratford City development was granted in 2004, but was superseded when London won the bid in 2005. Responsibility for the planning process was passed from Newham Council to the ODA, and the planning applications for the Olympic Park and its legacy transformation were submitted by the ODA in February 2007. The application consisted of 15 volumes and 10,000 pages,²³ covered 246 hectares of land and was one of the largest planning applications in European history.²⁴

Despite the laudable ideas behind legacy planning for the 2012 bid, the fear is that the reality will not live up to the ideals of sustainability and regeneration.

Considerable criticism has focused on a lack of community consultation.²⁵ Residents were given just six weeks to respond to the 10,000-page planning application.²⁶ The pages were impossible to download because of technical glitches; cost £500 in hard copy; and were available in libraries only in incomplete form.²⁷ The Royal Institute of British Architects (Riba) pointed out that the energy-efficiency targets for the new communities (Olympic village will be 25% more energy efficient than buildings built today) “lag worryingly” behind the Government’s national targets (namely that all new housing should be 44% more energy efficient than today’s standards by 2013, and carbon-neutral by 2016).²⁸ In February 2007 Newham Council formally objected to the plans,²⁹ arguing that housing planned for ‘development platforms’ within the Olympic Site were too vague and would not meet the needs of Newham’s communities; that the Legacy Park planned was a “mere shadow” of the one originally envisaged, and that carbon dioxide emissions reduction targets were too low.³⁰

A high-level political strategy group, including ministers from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the Department for Communities and Local Government, the London Mayor and senior planning officers from the relevant boroughs, was initiated on 19 July 2007 to guide the legacy planning process.³¹ The strategy group will provide guidance for the Legacy Masterplan, which will be developed by the LDA.³²

The food legacy

As for food, the bid for the Games pledged that in legacy mode the communities created would have:

- Markets, catering and retail outlets supplying local and seasonal food; and provide
- Increased markets for farmers in the region.³³

There are as yet few signs that these two pledges are going to be honoured, or that provision will be made for the support of independent stores within the Stratford City development or the surrounding residential areas. On the contrary, the most significant

development to date is the loss of the Manor Garden allotments site. The tenants of the allotments, which were established in the 1920s, were granted an alternative site only after they initiated judicial review proceedings.³⁴ At a time when demand for allotments is increasing³⁵ and the supply is declining,³⁶ the inability to integrate Manor Park allotments into the development and reluctance to grant them an alternative site showed a worrying lack of commitment to deliver on the promise to support consumption of “local seasonal and organic produce”.³⁷

This apparent lack of vision is in stark contrast to the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympic Games, where a motion has been passed by the City Council to create 2,010 new growing plots in time for the Games. Vancouver is committed to ensuring “the most advanced sustainable Olympic Games to date in which meaningful, lasting legacies for Vancouver are created that relate to environmental stewardship, social responsibility and liveability”, in which “urban agriculture is a priority area of focus”, contributing to the overall goal of “creation of a just and sustainable food system for the City of Vancouver”.³⁸

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

- **Promotion of links between healthy eating, sport and wellbeing: Information and awareness raising campaign during preparation for the Games, including at Test Events, and at Games time**
- **Promotion of links between healthy eating, sport and well-being.**

Commitments made in London 2012 bid, 2005³⁹

“There are so many ways that young people can get into sport, and on the following pages you’ll find out how I’m working to inspire and motivate young people into leading a more active lifestyle... As a part of my role I visit schools and events for teachers and young people up and down the country.”

Website of Dame Kelly Holmes, National School Sport Champion, 2007⁴⁰

A green Games would provide an unparalleled opportunity to promote the links between healthy eating, sport and well-being – and the involvement of figures such as British Olympic gold-medal-winning athlete Dame Kelly Holmes has the potential to inspire young people into changing their lifestyles and their eating habits. Similarly, initiatives such as the ‘Olympics Roadshow’⁴¹ could easily be used to promote the ideas behind sustainable food and healthy living.

The experience from the Soil Association’s Food for Life project is that the schools that adopt a ‘whole school’ approach – consulting and involving catering staff, pupils, parents and the wider community – have the greatest success in transforming school meals.^{42 43} A ‘whole organisation’ approach has also been key to the success of integrating sustainable food into routine hospital catering as part of Sustain’s Good Food on the Public Plate project, involving procurement, catering and management staff as well as nurses, doctors and patients and their families.⁴⁴ On a different scale, the same principles will apply to London 2012. Publicity around the efforts being made to make the Games’ food supply sustainable will not only pay dividends for the organising authorities, but will also significantly increase interest in and uptake of sustainable food at the event itself.

The Games time also provides an ideal opportunity to run a food-related event to interest and inspire people visiting the Olympics or Paralympics. A food festival, for example, could be used to promote seasonal, quality food at the height of the UK fruit and vegetable season. Cooking demonstrations could also celebrate the food heritage of the diverse communities within East London. The first Children’s Food Festival, run by the School Food Trust in July 2007, was a runaway success, with many hands-on activities for children involving them in making, eating and enjoying healthy food.⁴⁵

In a recent publication, the GLA emphasised the need to invest in training for local people involved in the Games, matched to the need of the Games itself and the skills need of the population post Games.⁴⁶ Recent media articles have pointed to the ‘skills gap’ in the

UK and the problem this will create for the Games. This problem is particularly acute in the catering trade, where demand for qualified chefs is currently up 6%, but numbers have dropped 10%.⁴⁷ Recognition of such concerns has led to catering training as a key activity for the School Food Trust, to support implementation of new nutritional standards for school meals.⁴⁸ Several of London's leading catering colleges in London have also told us that they are developing training modules in using fresh and seasonal food, for trainees from the public and private sectors;⁴⁹ and the London Development Agency (LDA) has recently commissioned a major sustainable catering training programme for London's public-sector workforce and others, working with over 1,000 people in London to improve their food skills.⁵⁰ Cooking unprocessed foods requires more skill than using processed products, and designing sustainable menus requires special attention to seasonality and relationships with producers. If, for example, significant investment was put into training chefs from East London, it could have a positive impact on the local community, on the quality of the food produced for the Games, and in the public interest in the idea of a 'sustainable food Games'.

MAKING SPACE FOR FOOD

- **Increased markets for farmers in the region**
- **Markets, catering and retail outlets supplying local and seasonal food**
- **Composting facilities integrated into a closed-loop food strategy.**

Commitments made in London 2012 bid, 2005⁵¹

"The 2012 Games are the perfect platform to demonstrate how high sustainability standards will help transform London into an exemplary, sustainable world city."

London Mayor Ken Livingstone, 2007⁵²

The One Planet Living initiative aims to "...transform food supply to the point where it has a net positive

impact on the environment, local economy and people's well-being". It is also pledged that by 2020, at least 25% of food by weight should be local, from low environmental impact farming, within a radius of 50 to 100 kilometres from the centre of the site.⁵³ The same standards should be adopted for the legacy communities of the Olympic site.

To reach these targets, what may seem like relatively small changes may have major benefits. At the One Planet Living community in Brighton, for example, opportunities are being created for on-site food growing in a space-constrained urban site through innovative building design. Facilities and initiatives to encourage the consumption of local and seasonal produce are being initiated, and mini-allotments have been incorporated on an area of the house rooftops.⁵⁴

In a recent investigation the GLA heard from Denise Jones, leader of Tower Hamlets Council, of the need for social housing in the new developments associated with the Games; and from Newham, Mayor Sir Robin Wales of the need for mixed communities, with houses of the appropriate size with gardens, incorporating both social housing and shared ownership.⁵⁵ In addition to this, healthy, affordable food should be made available within easy walking distance (good practice for London boroughs being 500 metres of any residence⁵⁶). The new developments should not rely solely on the central development at Stratford City but ensure that the infrastructure for local stores and markets are in place throughout the residential development of 40,000 homes.

One traditional and effective way of providing accessible, local food is through provision of space for market gardens and allotments. According to the LDA, the last major survey of allotments, carried out in 1997, "revealed that plots across England were disappearing at a rate of 9,400 per year. It also found that the number of people waiting for an allotment site had more than doubled since 1970". Within London, there are over 36,000 allotments, in 737 different sites, of which almost 31,000 were in outer London. There are currently over 4,300 people on waiting lists for allotments across London, which is

3,000 more than a decade ago, and there is a 10-year wait in some boroughs. Out of London's 737 allotment sites, 79 are in the five boroughs affected by the Olympics. Three of the five boroughs affected by the Games (Hackney, Newham and Tower Hamlets) have fewer than 10 allotment sites each. Low Hall Farm Allotments in Waltham Forest has the most ethnically diverse allotment user group in London, whilst there was significant public opposition when it was announced that Manor Garden Allotments in Newham were to be demolished to make way for the Olympic Park. According to the GLA Environment Committee report *A Lot to Lose*, allotments provide social, health, environmental, financial, community and diversity benefits to local communities. Investment in more allotments would benefit communities across London, and the provision of more allotments could play an important part in providing more sustainable food in these three boroughs.⁵⁷

The remit of the Commission for a Sustainable London 2012 – established to monitor sustainability across the development, staging and legacy aspects of the 2012 Games⁵⁸ – includes a commitment to ensure a legacy which has “minimal impact on climate change”.⁵⁹ Given that food accounts for around one fifth of consumers' greenhouse gas emissions, it is essential that food in legacy communities is included as a key part of this assessment and that it is not just possible, but easy to obtain sustainable food within these communities. This could be achieved by provision for food growing, local food businesses and diverse retail and market outlets. If this is achieved, London 2012 will be on its way to creating a “legacy to be valued by future generations”⁶⁰ as promised in the bid documents.

Can Coca-Cola and McDonald's really sponsor 'the most sustainable games ever'?

"Next year, in 2007, our sustainability team will focus on developing the guidelines for sustainable food and packaging, and so to do that they will work both with catering suppliers and our sponsors. They will be looking at things... like local supply chains and environmentally farmed produce to make sure that happens and will be looking at minimising waste as part of that whole process."

Paul Deighton, Chief Executive LOCOG, October 2006¹

"Our doors are open to any discussion about locally sourced food as we source locally wherever possible. In fact, last year our UK supply chain spent £420 million working with 17,200 farmers in the UK and Ireland."

McDonald's comment on criticism of its sponsorship of the Games, 2006²

Corporate sponsorship is an established part of the Olympics. About £2 billion is raised, mainly through sponsorship, of which some £530 million come from the IOC's 12 Olympic Partners (known as 'TOP' sponsors).³ Two of the key TOP sponsors for the Games are the fast food restaurant chain McDonald's and the soft drinks company Coca-Cola.⁴ Both of these brands have been associated with the Olympics for many years – Coca-Cola since the company delivered 1,000 cases of Coca-Cola to the US Olympic team at the 1928 Games. McDonald's has been an official sponsor since 1976.⁵ In 1996 McDonald's became the first branded restaurant to operate inside the Olympic village. Coca-Cola created a Coca-Cola World Chorus, ('Can't you feel it?') which was performed at the Opening and Closing Ceremonies of the Winter Games in 1988.⁶

Under the IOC agreement, the TOP sponsors have very extensive rights to operate outlets in the Olympic village and the Olympic Park itself, but they do not necessarily utilise them.⁷ In Sydney, McDonald's operated seven restaurants at Olympic venues, including two serving athletes in the Olympic village, two serving the media, and three catering for the public.⁸ A large variety of other food providers are also used, but McDonald's has an 'exclusion' on branded foods and can prevent other outlets from

selling hamburgers, fries, or other foods (such as egg rolls) that are seen as too similar to McDonald's products.⁹ This arrangement does not, however, affect other food sold that is deemed to be dissimilar to McDonald's products. Coca-Cola has the right to put its company brand on all menu boards at all venues.¹⁰ In 2003 the IOC announced that any planned UK restrictions on junk food advertising (such as those now adopted by the UK broadcast regulator Ofcom, banning junk food advertising to children) would not apply to advertising at the Games.¹¹

As well as gaining international exposure, McDonald's and Coca-Cola also seek to associate their brands with the image and ethics of the Games.¹² For McDonald's this means sponsoring Olympic athletes, and launching public awareness campaigns in association with the IOC.¹³

The contradiction between this situation and the 2012 Games 'healthy' and 'green' credentials are clear and have attracted a good deal of criticism, from politicians, the media and the medical community.¹⁴ A comment piece in the leading medical journal *The Lancet* remarked that the Games' stated aim of inspiring new generations to participate in sport was "an ambition we find difficult to reconcile with McDonald's and Coca-Cola as official sponsors".¹⁵ The piece called for governments to examine the broader effects of such sponsorship deals and attach health-promoting conditions to public funding of sport.

It should be remembered however that the commitments to "supporting consumption of local, seasonal and organic produce, with a reduced amount of animal protein and packaging" and "promotion of local, seasonal, healthy and organic produce" were included in the London bid in full knowledge of the IOC's sponsorship arrangements, and the sponsors were also aware of these clear commitments.

All caterers and sponsors at the Games should be required to meet the standards set out in the bid for "promotion of local, seasonal, healthy and organic produce, with reduced amount of packaging and animal protein".¹⁷

There are precedents for achieving new environmental standards in the relationship between the Olympic organising authorities and the sponsors. In 2000 McDonald's withdrew soft PVC toys from Happy Meals because these did not fit with the environmental guidelines for the Sydney Olympics.¹⁸ For the sponsors, the Games can also be a good opportunity to launch a change of strategy. For example, McDonald's launched a new standard for nutrition information at the 2006 Olympic Winter Games. Changes made at the Games can have a global impact. At the Sydney Games, as a result of a campaign by the environmental pressure group Greenpeace, Coca-Cola committed to changing the refrigerant used in its new vending machines and other coolers, to avoid gases that destroy the ozone layer or have a major impact on climate change. This corporate policy was subsequently rolled out internationally.¹⁹

As the leading food and drink sponsors of the Games, McDonald's and Coca-Cola should take the lead in meeting the same sustainability standards as the other caterers at the 2012 Games, by serving 75% unprocessed, 50% locally sourced and 30% organic food and drink, with a reduced emphasis upon foods of animal origin. Coca-Cola should pay for access to free non-bottled drinking water for all Games visitors. These actions could shift two large multinational food companies permanently towards more sustainable products and practices – a very valuable Olympics legacy in its own right. Sponsors should also fulfil the pledge to provide sustainable, organic and local food by paying for the development of local food on the Games site and in surrounding boroughs, by providing food processing facilities, centralised production kitchens for future public and private sector catering provision, and catering equipment for start-up small- and medium-sized enterprises, complimented by investment in renewable energy infrastructure.

Steps up to the winner's podium

THE VISION

London, September 2012

The London Olympic and Paralympic Games are finally over. Britain celebrates its record tally of 20 gold medals, but almost more important for the feel-good factor is the knowledge that London ran the best Games in living memory. As the Post-Kyoto climate agreement comes into force, binding countries around the world to mandatory cuts in their greenhouse gas emissions, Britain celebrates the first genuinely green Games. An environmental footprint analysis has demonstrated that greenhouse gas emissions were significantly reduced – not least because of the focus on seasonal, organic and local food.

The Games proudly showcased British produce by using nearly all UK-produced fruit and vegetables. Olympic athletes celebrated the link between good food and health. Local wholesale markets provided a good deal of the food and have been significantly boosted as a result. Young people have been inspired by the link between good living, good eating and by the Olympic ideal. The focus on organic food both reflected and stimulated the growing interest in organic produce around the country. Organic restaurants are now burgeoning around London and it has become normal practice to provide information about the origin, method of production and carbon footprint of all food sold in pubs, cafés and restaurants. As work begins on the legacy communities, plans are in place for new allotments and farmers' markets. London's planners are lining up to implement sustainable food considerations in new housing developments and regeneration projects. London is universally acknowledged to have kept its promise to put on a 'green Games'.

THE SUSTAINABLE FOOD 12 STEP PROGRAMME

- during both the construction phase and during the Games themselves
- Food outlets should be encouraged to use 100% UK vegetables and 80% UK seasonal fruit
- 65% of the food sold should be vegetarian or vegan, with meat used sparingly in meat-based dishes; 100% of meat and dairy products should be organic and from the UK
- Only fish from certified Marine Stewardship Council sources should be used
- All tea, coffee, chocolate, fruit and juice (where imported) should be Fairtrade certified
- There should be minimal food packaging, with all waste reused, recycled or composted; 100% composting of organic waste; 100% reuse or recycling of packaging
- Free drinking-water fountains should be installed throughout all Olympic sites
- All possible avenues that would allow local, small and medium-sized enterprises to participate in catering activities during the construction phase and the Games themselves should be vigorously pursued
- Before and at the Games, there should be here should be visible and engaging food marketing, that inspires and informs the public on the merits of healthy eating and its role in sports, an understanding of seasonal, local and organic produce available and the benefits of various eating habits for the local and global environment. This should include high-profile athletes promoting healthy and sustainable food
- All catering staff should be trained in preparing fresh and healthy dishes, and communicating this to their present and future customers, which will provide a sustainable catering legacy in its own right
- As part of the legacy, all residents in the new communities should have access to fresh, healthy and sustainable food within 500 metres. The new developments should provide space for street markets, farmers' markets, food-growing spaces (at ground level and on rooftops) and allotments
- Building on the Vancouver 2010 Games' commitment to create 2,010 new food-growing sites, 2,012 new food-growing spaces should be created across London, including community gardens, allotments and roof gardens.
- The Food for Life targets of 75% unprocessed, 50% local and 30% organic food should be set as a minimum standard for catering contracts

Appendix

Olympic organising authorities: responsibilities related to food

In general terms, the ODA is responsible for creating the Games site and decommissioning it. LOCOG is responsible for putting on the Games themselves.

Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA)

- Responsible for provision of food to construction workers
- Responsible for decommissioning the Olympic and Paralympic facilities to their legacy transformation state, including the remodelling of the Olympic Park.

Process

- The ODA produced a procurement policy in early 2007 – it did not refer to food specifically
- A high-level political strategy group was initiated on 19 July 2007 to guide the legacy planning process. The strategy group will provide guidance for the Legacy Masterplan, which will be developed by the LDA.

London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (LOCOG)

- Responsible for provision of food during the Games itself.

Process

- LOCOG will produce a procurement policy in the second half of 2007, which will be finalised during 2008
- A head of Food Services will be appointed at the beginning in 2009
- Contracts with caterers will be finalised in about 2010.¹

London Development Agency (LDA)

- The land will then be returned to the London Development Agency as the landowner
- The LDA will be responsible for creating and implementing the legacy development.

Process

- The legacy development will be set out in a Legacy Masterplan, developed in close consultation with stakeholders and local communities, to be finalised by 2008.

Specifying sustainability in public sector catering contracts

Contracts must be awarded based on 'Best Value', generally understood as the 'most economically advantageous tender' (MEAT), rather than lowest cost. This provides opportunities for criteria to be used other than price alone, such as delivery arrangements, running costs, quality, environmental and social considerations, and other services provided.

A whole-life cost approach to awarding tenders is recommended. However, as procedural transparency is another requirement of the tendering process, these criteria and the adoption of the whole-life cost approach to awarding contracts must be detailed in the original call for tender.

The following are ways in which a specification can be drawn up to make service provision more sustainable, that have proven to lead to competitive tenders of a high standard. While EU procurement rules do prohibit specification of 'local' food, there are ways to encourage local food, such as:

- Specifying a required proportion of fresh and unprocessed food, and seasonal produce with limited transport time will generally favour more locally produced food without breaking EU rules on discrimination on grounds of geography
- Specifying seasonal produce rather than particular types of fruit and vegetables
- Including in contracts a requirement for the development of seasonal menus; a requirement to keep packaging to a minimum, to recycle and to use biodegradable, re-usable packaging
- Using, in the product specifications for meat, clauses such as "...shall be sourced from suppliers that meet or exceed the legal requirements for food safety, environmental implications of production and animal welfare. As evidence of meeting the production criteria, the food supplied must carry an organic logo or other admissible label, or through other admissible evidence"
- Referring in the contract to preference for sustainable food, and explaining that if they can show evidence of superior sustainability, these will be preferred

- Allowing use of Class II fruit and vegetables to allow for less wasteful production
- Specifying that bidders must demonstrate how they intend to make use of local workers
- Requiring training in healthy eating and cooking skills. Specifying quality standards such as those provided by organic, Leaf-Marque, Freedom Foods and Fairtrade, which guarantee food safety and in some cases higher standards of environmental and social performance and animal welfare
- Requesting tendering organisations to quote a range of prices for providing different amounts of sustainable and intensively produced food (e.g. battery cage, free-range or organic eggs). This will allow sustainability considerations to feature in the contract so that at least some of them can be met (depending on budget) without putting forward such an onerous contract that companies do not tender for it
- Dividing a contract into lots is a way to enable smaller and local suppliers to bid. While this may require a small amount of additional initial work, the increased levels of direct purchasing can lead to cost savings. It is good practice to ensure that smaller bidders are made aware of the contract and the bidding process, by local advertising and working through organisations such as the National Farmers Union (NFU), Sustain, and the Soil Association, as well as local Public Sector Food Procurement Initiative (PSFPI) officers.

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Introduction

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Going for gold: towards a more sustainable food games

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Appendix

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Soil Association

The Soil Association is the UK's leading campaigning and certification (through its certification subsidiary: Soil Association Certification Ltd) organisation for organic food and farming. The Soil Association symbol can be found on over 70% of Britain's organic produce – a guarantee that it has been grown or produced to the highest standards of organic integrity. The Soil Association works to:

- Raise awareness about the positive health and environmental benefits of organic food and farming, with the public, government and non-governmental organisations
- Set standards to ensure the integrity of organic food and other products
- Promote organic food so that people everywhere will have the opportunity to buy and eat organic
- Support and advise the farmers and growers who are building an organic future.

The Soil Association also leads the Food for Life Partnership, working with to inspire students and parents to start growing, cooking, re-skilling dinner ladies, and offering farmers secure markets for local, organic, seasonal and sustainably produced food.

Sustain:

the alliance for better food and farming

advocates food and agriculture policies and practices that enhance the health and welfare of people and animals, improve the working and living environment, enrich society and culture and promote equity. Sustain represents around 100 national public interest organisations working at international, national, regional and local level. Sustain runs a number of projects that work with public and private sector caterers, namely:

- London Food Link, a network of organisations and individuals working to increase the availability of sustainable food in London and to tackle the barriers preventing access to healthy and sustainable food for all Londoners. Work includes practical support for London restaurants (the 'Greener Food' project), private and public-sector catering organisations and ethnic food businesses (the 'Sustainable food in multi-cultural communities' project) to improve the sustainability of their food and operations
- Good Food on the Public Plate, which works with hospitals, schools and care homes in London and the South East to increase the amount of healthy and sustainable food being served as part of their routine catering.

New Economics Foundation (nef)

nef is an independent 'think-and-do tank' that inspires and demonstrates real economic well-being. It aims to improve quality of life by promoting innovative solutions that challenge mainstream thinking on economic, environment and social issues, putting people and the planet first. nef combines rigorous analysis and policy debate with practical solutions on the ground, often run and designed with the help of local people. It also creates new ways of measuring progress towards increased well-being and environmental sustainability. The organisation works with all sections of society in the UK and internationally – civil society, government, individuals, businesses and academia – to create more understanding and strategies for change.

Support the Soil Association

The Soil Association is the UK's leading environmental charity campaigning for a global shift to sustainable, organic food and farming practices.

Founded in 1946 by a far-sighted group of farmers, doctors and concerned citizens, the organisation is dedicated to bringing about change by creating a growing body of public opinion that understands the direct link between farming practice and plant, animal, human and environmental health. Today the Soil Association is an internationally respected authority on sustainable agriculture and recognised

champion of healthy food, which uniquely represents and offers practical solutions to everyone involved in the food chain – farmers, food processors, retailers and consumers.

The Soil Association is reliant on the support of its members, donors and the public to carry out its work. You can help grow the organic movement, by joining the Soil Association you will be part of a dynamic organisation pressing to change the predominant food culture in this country. Single UK membership costs just £24 a year.



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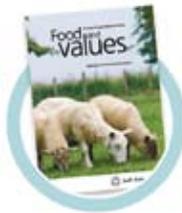
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LOCAL, ORGANIC AND ETHICAL

Tomato

First sown in Britain in the late 16th century, by the mid-1700s the tomato plant was widely grown and its fruit had become a staple part of the national diet. Sadly, in recent years, the UK tomato industry has been decimated as supermarkets have chosen to stock cheaper imports. Organic producers are now successfully growing a wide range of varieties to sell via farmers' markets and box schemes.

Apple

Apples are native to Britain and flourish here, with are over 2,300 varieties. Sadly only a handful of these varieties are readily available in shops today, although a resurgence in traditional local and English varieties is occurring, and a number of major organic orchards have been planted recently which will lead to significant increases in UK supply.

Aubergine

Grown across the globe and used in a variety of dishes, the aubergine is an international favourite. Many varieties of aubergines are grown in gardens and allotments across the country and make an ideal and versatile crop for the hobby gardener. Aubergines contain a range of B vitamins, plus potassium, iron and zinc.

Grapefruit

Although not grown commercially in the UK, the grapefruit is one of the latest items to receive Fairtrade certification. The grapefruit is a traditional breakfast staple, and an excellent source of many nutrients and phytochemicals. There is also evidence that grapefruit seeds have antioxidant properties.

Pear

A native of temperate climes such as ours, pears have been grown for centuries as table fruit and to produce the traditional alcoholic drink of Perry. Traditionally managed orchards containing a range of trees, including pear and apple, are havens for wildlife.