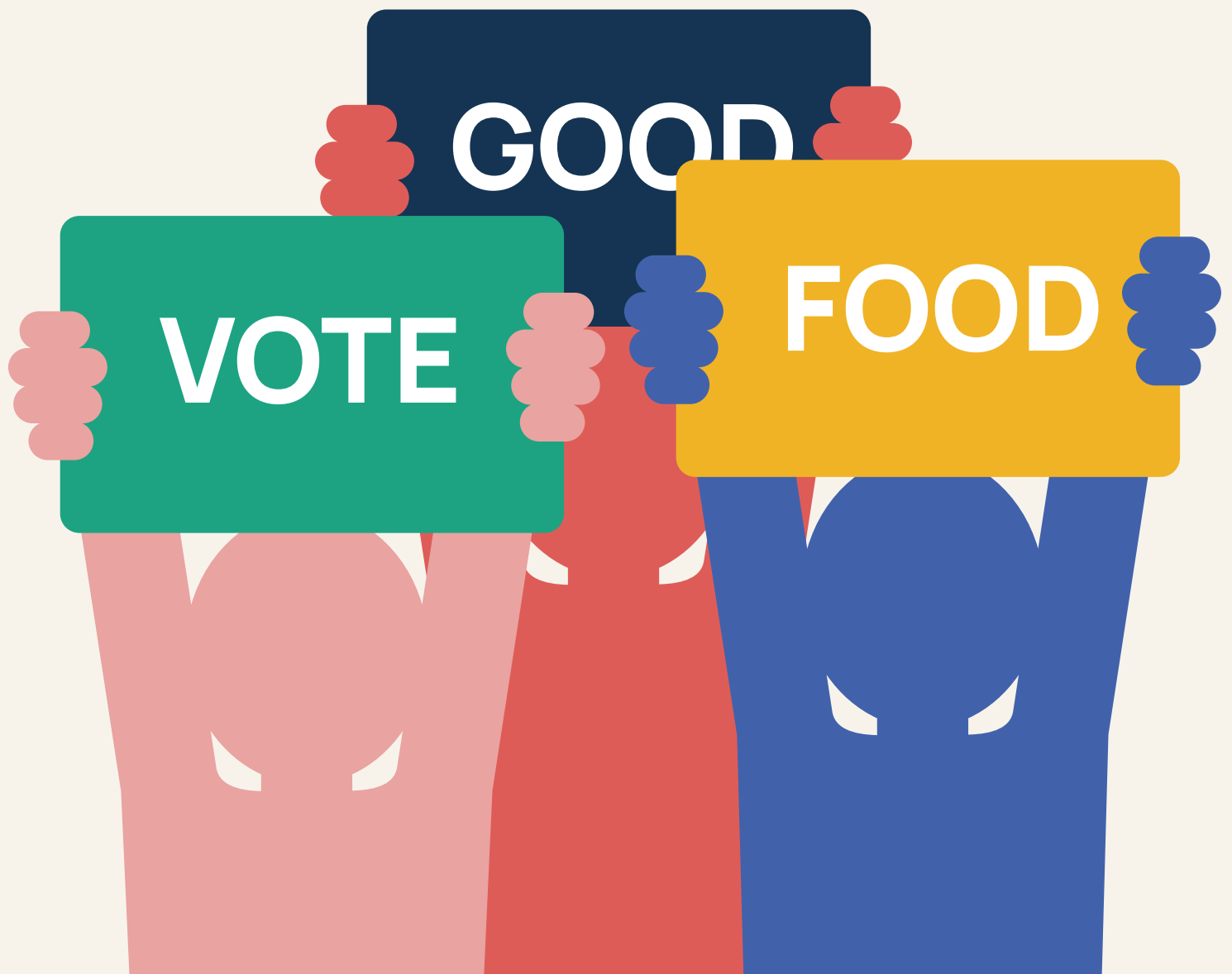


Vote Good Food

A London Food Link report on the
London Mayoral Election 2021



London Food Link

London Food Link is part of the charity Sustain: the alliance for better food and farming. We bring together people who grow, make, cook, sell and eat good food in the capital to help create a healthy and sustainable food system for all.

We run and support policy initiatives, campaigns, and practical projects to improve the food system. We also provide information, events, and advice for our supporters, who include food producers, retailers, policy makers and citizens in London.

This report was created by London Food Link and supported by the Food Foundation, Feedback and the Orchard Project.

www.londonfoodlink.org

Did you know you can join London Food Link?

Show your support for our campaigns and initiatives, as we work and campaign for a healthy and sustainable food system for all Londoners.

London elections 2021

In recent years, London has made great strides in promoting healthy and sustainable food, and while great progress has been made in many areas, the last mayoral term faced new challenges, compounded by the Covid-19 pandemic where the importance of food was recognised across our city.

London's next Mayor will be elected on the 6 May 2021 and we are calling on the next Mayor to put good food policies at the heart of the capital's recovery plan, creating opportunities to bolster employment and local economies, protect and improve health of Londoners, create a robust safety net and support the Right to Food, while also seizing the myriad of opportunities to confront the climate and nature emergency, through action to reduce the large impact of our food and farming system.

London Food Link: our actions to date

London Food Link has taken several actions to put food on the agenda of the mayoral candidates during this campaign including:

- Working with partner organisations to produce a manifesto of our top asks for the mayoral candidates.
- Contacting all the major party candidates asking them to make good food one of their top priorities for London, to outline our priorities and asking the candidates to include them in their manifesto.
- Meeting with some of the major party candidates or their closest political advisors to discuss how they can make food in London healthier, greener and fairer for all.
- Requesting a position statement from candidates and analysing their track records on food.
- Vote Good Food campaign – asking London Food Link supporters and partners why they want to vote good food.



Phili Denning, Naked Larder and London Food Link Supporter



Amy Vernon, Feedback Eco Talent Intern

London Food Link: vision for food in the capital

Below are specific policy asks for the next Mayor of London to adopt in their manifesto and once they are in office. We also call for a commitment to maintaining the London Food Board and the Greater London Authority's Food Policy Team, and to support London to 'go for gold', which is the highest award given by the Sustainable Food Places initiative, which recognises progress to improve food across a number of policy areas outlined in our manifesto.

Improve children and adult health by ensuring all Londoners live in a healthy food neighbourhood

All Londoners, particularly children deserve to thrive, no matter where they live. Yet London has some of the highest diet-related disease rates including childhood obesity, in Europe, with deprived areas most affected. The Covid-19 pandemic has laid bare the risks that health inequalities and obesity pose to our national resilience. It is now time to make sure every London neighbourhood offers a healthy food environment where good and affordable food enjoys a starring role.

- Ensure all Londoners have access to healthy food by virtue of living in a Healthy Food Neighbourhood
- Keep junk food out of the spotlight
- Ensure all Londoners can grow their own food via community food gardens, orchards and school gardens

Secure Good Food for all Londoners

London's already high levels of food insecurity have risen dramatically during the pandemic as many individuals and families reach breaking point. As the crisis continues to unfold, we risk seeing worsening food poverty in 2021 without decisive action. More should be done to stop the institutionalisation of food banks and to enable Londoners to access good food with dignity and ensure a robust safety net. Policymakers must work with communities, families, and individuals to ensure all Londoners can access healthy, affordable and culturally appropriate foods locally and with dignity.

- Ensure all school-aged children access a healthy lunch by supporting every London borough to provide universal free school meals (UFSM) to ensure all children have at least one nutritious meal each day
- Commit to the London Children's Right2Food Charter and a wider Right to Food
- Support and promote the take-up of Healthy Start across London
- Pledge to ensure every older and disabled Londoner can access at least one good meal every day



Barbara Crowther, Children's Food Campaign



Jed Coiley, Jellied Eel Magazine

Create a thriving food economy that creates good food jobs and skills

A good food economy with a mix of diverse food businesses providing access to healthy and sustainable food - not only makes healthy, sustainable food more accessible, but creates jobs and prosperity while regenerating high. The Covid-19 pandemic has exposed fragility in our food supply chain but also showed smaller-scale and localised food supply chains are resilient and can adapt to demand and support the emergency response. These enterprises can help to build back better in our city and safeguard the city's unique food culture. Specific actions include:

- Set up a good food and farming investment fund to create 1000's of good food jobs, paying the London Living wage, building skills, and kickstarting businesses to support green economic recovery and a low-carbon economy
- Develop a London-wide good food retail strategy to stimulate small and medium enterprises to sell healthy, sustainable food and accept Healthy Start Vouchers, to support access to good food for all. This could be based on the Scottish Healthy Living scheme
- Continuing to advocate for the LLW in the food sector, particularly larger food employers

Address London's food-related environmental impacts to tackle the Climate and Nature Emergency

The way we grow, catch, process and transport food is one of the greatest threats to the health of our planet and in turn people, but with swift action we can change this. In the UK, 30% of greenhouse gas emissions arise from the food system and food related land use change, with 10% attributable to agriculture. A city like London has a considerable 'food footprint' that is impacting nature. Addressing this would include:

- Remove factory farmed meat and dairy along with reducing overall consumption of meat and dairy by 50%
- Encourage councils to include the reduction of food waste into local climate action plans, in line with SDG 12.3
- Champion ten new nature-friendly farms on existing agricultural land and other sites in the urban fringe
- Champion water only schools



Ruth Westcott, Sustainable Fish



Maryrose Ojobo, Bite Back Youth Leader

London Mayoral Candidates vision for food

The four main party candidates were asked for their food vision for London, should they be elected. Here are the replies we received.



Shaun Bailey
Conservative Party

It's essential that we understand that access to healthy food and childhood obesity are linked. Children in our most vulnerable communities eat less healthy food and are hit hardest by the childhood obesity epidemic. All while 2 million tonnes of good food are wasted every year. My opponents have talked tough on the problem, but last year Sadiq Khan allotted just £494,000 to help tackle childhood obesity. As your mayor, I will give London a fresh start in how we tackle this problem by implementing the Amsterdam model, along with a massive 790% increase in funding to tackle childhood obesity. I will create a fund to ensure that every borough has infrastructure to better store and distribute healthy food to schools and charities. And we'll rollout City Hall programs to intervene in the areas most affected by food poverty. We will intervene in schools to teach about healthy ways of living, and support vulnerable families from day one, providing them coaching and education about cooking healthy food too. Not just for a few months, but the first two years of their child's life.



Sian Berry
Green Party

The crisis has infiltrated every aspect of our city including our food security. But people faced challenges before the pandemic. Rising inequality and poverty, small shops and markets under threat all reduce our ability to grow our own food and access what we need. As Mayor I will implement policies which protect everyone's right to healthy, affordable food. For example, I will extend and ensure the nutritional quality of meals on wheels and free school meals, introduce standards so that new homes have space to grow food, support farmers and create London living wage employment opportunities through growing locally.

Greens in City Hall follow in the footsteps of former Green Assembly Member Jenny Jones, whose advocacy led to the formation of London Food, of which she became the first Commissioner. If elected, I will strengthen this role and integrate it more closely with the public health work of the Mayor and boroughs.



Sadiq Khan

Labour Party

I believe every Londoner should have the right to healthy, affordable and sustainable food no matter who they are or where they live.

Despite being one of the wealthiest cities in the world, London has deeply ingrained inequalities that the pandemic has further exposed and exacerbated. I provided nearly £10 million to the London Community Response fund for voluntary and community organisations, including providing ongoing support to low-income Londoners, and £150,000 to support food partnerships across London to take action to address food insecurity.

I continue to lobby the Government for the funding to provide healthy free school meals to all primary school pupil and was proud to support Marcus Rashford's campaign for free school meals. My London Food Board has been working with Sustain's London Food poverty campaign to provide support and funding across boroughs and to local community groups to address food poverty during the pandemic.

If Londoners re-elect me on 6 May I will continue to expand my network of 3,300 water fountains, uphold my ban on junk food advertising across TfL, use new London Plan restricting the opening of new fast-food takeaways within 400 metres of schools, and work with the London Recovery Board to ensure that every Londoner lives in a Healthy Food Neighbourhood by 2025.



Luisa Porritt

Liberal Democrat Party

The Liberal Democrats fully support your Good Food Manifesto. Fair and sustainable food production is one way we can tackle the climate emergency and deal with the serious levels of poverty in our city.

London is at a crucial moment. With Covid-19, Brexit and the climate crisis, we have a once in a generational opportunity to create a London for the future with big ideas and urgent action.

The pandemic has meant that we are all spending more time in our local areas. Liberal Democrats want to reinvent our high streets to make sure that every London neighbourhood is a thriving place to live and work. Supporting markets would really help to make sure healthy food was available and that Londoners were more closely linked to the food supply chain.

Liberal Democrats would also challenge the over-reliance and in some places total dominance of a handful of supermarkets. The Greater London Authority and the wider GLA Group could also do far more to promote the greater take up of Fairtrade products.

Finally, we need to start ensuring that it is far easier for people to grow their own food and that must mean allotments being protected, and where possible expanded. There is huge potential for food planters being used in communal spaces and even on streets.

The last year has shown that London communities pull together to support one another. If we work together, anything is possible.

Candidates' manifesto commitments on food issues

Research on the candidates' manifestos for food and farming related commitments are outlined below.

Shaun Bailey

Conservative Party

No clear commitments made in relation to food and farming.

For more detail, go to: www.shaunbailey.uk/shaun-baileys-plans-for-london

Sian Berry

Green Party

The Sian Berry 2021 London Green Party Manifesto contained extensive commitments to both food and farming, here are a selection:

- Will champion ten new nature-friendly farms on existing agricultural land and other appropriate sites in the urban fringe. This can integrate increased tree cover fruit and other trees that can be used for human consumption and ensure no net loss of high grade farmland.
- Will support farmers and growers to get longer tenancies and access to London's customers and businesses, from farmers' markets and community group box schemes to supermarkets. Locally grown fruit and vegetables can create 1000s of London Living wage employment opportunities, improve food security and support the local economy.
- Will work to ensure that sufficient resources are provided to enable housing associations to effectively deliver plans set out in green infrastructure strategies. Will support initiatives enabling residents and landlords to provide space for producing food and work with social landlords.
- We will encourage councils to include the reduction of food waste in local climate action plans, in line with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 12.3 which calls for a 50 per cent reduction in food waste from farm fork.
- We will promote food redistribution initiatives. Remaining surplus food will be used for animal feed, community composting or sent for anaerobic digestion rather than being incinerated.
- We will campaign for powers for the Mayor to roll out a consistent set of recycling services across London boroughs, and push boroughs to work on common standards and information, so that every home in London has a standardised service for recyclables and food waste collection every week.
- We will lead the way in making London a vegetarian and vegan-friendly city, increasing the availability of plant-based options on menus wherever we have an influence. We will reduce the use of meat and dairy produce in catering procurement decisions across the GLA, influencing the wider London catering industry.
- Animal welfare will remain a concern whenever meat, milk or eggs are used, and we will bring in policies across the GLA for the use of only organic, higher welfare products.
- A Green Mayor will strengthen the role of the current London Food Board, and integrate it more closely with the public health work of the Mayor and boroughs.
- A Green Mayor will confirm London's commitment to the C40 Good Food Cities declaration and Milan Urban Food Pact, Greens will take every chance to improve food resilience and the contribution a better food system can make to address the climate and ecological crisis.
- A Green Mayor will commit to the London Right2Food charter, which includes supporting London councils to provide universal free school meals to school- aged children.
- A Green Mayor will develop and implement a London-wide good food strategy to stimulate small and medium enterprises to support access to good food for all.
- Will develop a co-ordinated and strategic response to food poverty in London, working with boroughs to help protect, extend and ensure the nutritional quality of meals on wheels (ensuring older people have at least one good meal every day), and free school meals.

- Will double the number of London Boroughs signed up to the Veg Cities campaign to 12 and champion water- only schools.
- Will work with boroughs to map food poverty and identify opportunities to improve access to affordable healthy food by introducing new street markets and allotments in areas where it is hard to buy or grow food, and helping each borough to produce a Good Food Retail Plan and improve its own procurement policies.

For more detail, go to:

www.sianberry.london/manifesto-2021/

Sadiq Khan

Labour Party

- Supporting Londoners to lead healthier lives through the roll out of water fountains and banning junk food advertising on the TfL network to help tackle unacceptable levels of childhood obesity.
- The London Recovery board nine missions include healthy food, healthy weight.
- Push all 32 boroughs to provide the full range of doorstep waste collections, including food waste. Will work with London's food sector to reduce waste as part of London's status as one of three flagship global cities looking at a circular economy. And will ensure that the London Recovery Board's mission to create healthier diets includes a focus on those that are sustainable and good for the planet.
- A zero-waste city also means investing in the circular economy, supporting small businesses that can turn waste into new sustainable products. Where we cannot reuse food waste we should seek to use it to generate energy through anaerobic digestion. Will continue to oppose new incineration in London and ensure that where it already exists, it is working to the highest standards and capturing energy from waste to heat local houses.
- Reduce the number of single-use plastic bottles, by expanding network of water fountains across the city. Continue to grow the Refill London scheme, growing the 3,300 refill points that already exist across the city. At City Hall, have ensured free drinking water is available and ended the use of plastic cutlery, and want to source as much of our food from London as possible.
- Have established the world- leading London Childhood Obesity Taskforce, whose purpose

is to ensure that every child has the chance to grow up eating healthily, drinking plenty of water and being physically active. New London Plan restricting the opening of new fast-food takeaways within 400 metres of schools. Has also supported the running of the Daily Mile in schools, established a Healthy Early Years Programme to help give under-5s the best start in life with almost 1700 nurseries and children's centres now signed up and, will roll out plan that by 2025 every Londoner lives in a healthy food neighbourhood — with an expanded role for School Superzones.

- Will expand the number of water- only schools, reducing consumption of sugary drinks by children. Some Labour-controlled local authorities in London already provide free healthy school meals for all primary school pupils, and I'll lobby the Government to provide the funding for this to be universal.

For more detail, go to: <https://sadiq.london/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Sadiq-for-London-Manifesto-.pdf>

Luisa Porritt

Liberal Democrat Party

No clear commitments on food issues in manifesto. Other commitments related to our manifesto:

- Liberal Democrats, across the country, are campaigning for a rent relief fund to help small businesses clear the debts they piled up during the pandemic through no fault of their own.
- The Liberal Democrats have a plan to rewild thousands of spaces across London, from green roofs to more public parks. Green roofs will create green jobs.
- The Liberal Democrats will take tree planting seriously and take action to protect mature trees too.
- A Liberal Democrat Mayor would be the first to publish a Statement of Community Involvement. A promise to Londoners that there will be proper community engagement and participation in all planning decisions in the capital.

For more detail, go to:

www.luisa4london.co.uk/manifesto

Candidates' track record on food

In addition to their future vision for food it is useful to look at the candidates' track record on food. Following our research into public positions the four main party candidates have taken on food issues, here we offer a glimpse into what they said on food.

Shaun Bailey

Conservative Party

- 2020: warned that "demand for things like The Felix Project will only grow" as he visited the charity's West London depot and delivered food for those in need.

Sian Berry

Green Party

- 2015: came out in support of local foods saying "We could build a much more self-sufficient city, where we use resources better, we grow more food, we recycle, we compost. All of those things can add up to a much more sustainable city, with more people in it. It's the things that make it unsustainable, the fleets of HGVs that bring all our food in every day, the waste of shipping things in and out of London when we could be repairing them."
- 2016: in response to the Al-Mizan Charitable Trust's request, committed to develop a co-ordinated and strategy response to food poverty in London, working with boroughs, to help protect and extend meals on wheels and free school meals, and deal with problems such as 'holiday hunger' when school meals are not available. Also promised to support schools, hospitals, prisons and care homes to grow their own food, offer more healthy food including organic vegetarian and vegan options, and remove all junk food and drinks vending machines
- 2020: with other Green Party Members, came together to pass a new Food and Agricultural policy which ensures the sustainable use of Green Belt land in providing a wide range of environmental benefits including supplying sustainable sources of food.

Sadiq Khan

Labour Party

- 2015: was in favour to prohibit fast food opening within 400 metres of schools and is in favour of the sugary drinks tax, says "If we don't start doing something now to tackle the growing problem of childhood obesity then we're storing up a whole host of problems down the line. We need to do more to discourage fast food shops opening up around schools and colleges and I want to give local authorities the power to put a stop to this."
- 2018: published London Food Strategy to provide 'a framework to help all Londoners, London boroughs and the partners we work with adapt our city's food system to meet the challenges that lie ahead'.
- 2019: signed up to the C40 Good Food Cities Declaration 'in order to promote and preserve the health of citizens and the health of the planet' and pledged to reduce meat consumption in the city.
- 2019: enforced a ban on junk food advertising across London's public transport network.
- 2019: Established the world- leading London Childhood Obesity Taskforce, whose purpose is to ensure that every child has the chance to grow up eating healthily, drinking plenty of water and being physically active.
- 2020: wrote to major supermarkets asking them to help the capital's food banks maintain their levels of stock "as a matter of urgency" over the Easter period.

Luisa Porritt

Liberal Democrat Party

- 2020: with the local businesses in Belsize Park and the New Journal Food Aid van helped with the deliveries to make sure no child went hungry, saying 'For some on particularly low incomes, the costs and time of shopping and cooking over half-term has been hard – some are single-parent families working shifts.'

What next?

Vote Good Food

If you think the next Mayor has an important role in making food in London healthier, greener and fairer for all, join our **#VoteGoodFood** campaign on social media and contact candidates to ask questions.

In addition to attending election hustings, you can get touch with candidates by email or through social media. Feel free to use or adapt our suggested tweets below.

Tweet:

Make London food greener, healthier, fairer
@sianberry @sadiqkhan @ShaunBaileyUK
@LuisaPorritt #VoteGoodFood

: From food poverty to the climate and nature emergency, we want the next elected #MayorOfLondon to tackle the capital's food- related concerns head on. Join @LondonFoodLink's #VoteGoodFood campaign to tell the candidates how food should feature in the upcoming election

What are your asks for the next
@MayorofLondon? #LondonMayor2021
#VoteGoodFood

London Food Link has worked closely with the food policy teams of Mayors Ken Livingstone, Boris Johnson and Sadiq Khan since 2002 to help design and implement the Mayor's London Food Strategy. We have run many influential projects to help London's citizens enjoy better food – projects such as Capital Growth, Good Food on the Public Plate, Sustainable Fish City, Cage Free Capital, Beyond the Food Bank, Urban Food Fortnight, Good Food for London and the London 2012 Olympic & Paralympic food standards working group.

We will continue to work with the next Mayor to ensure that good food continues to play a role in making our city great.

To support our work visit:
www.sustainweb.org/londonfoodlink/membership



Grower, Capital Growth



Buckinghamshire Food Partnership



Ren Piercey, Sustainable Food Places

Vote Good Food

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A Sustain publication

April 2021

About Sustain

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 living and working environment, enrich society and culture, and promote equity. It represents around 100 national public interest organisations working at international, national, regional and local level.

Sustain: The alliance for better food and farming

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