

Cork Food Policy Council

The Cork Food Strategy Action Plan Vision

Our global and local food systems are facing extreme and interconnected challenges. These range from climate change, diet-related chronic diseases such as obesity and heart disease, malnourishment through to food insecurity.

A vast amount of the food produced globally is consumed – and wasted – in cities. Urban diets and access to healthy food have huge public health and environmental implications. Food production, especially from animal-sourced food, and the disposal of wasted food in landfill produce large quantities of methane (CH₄), a very powerful greenhouse gas (GHG), as well as carbon dioxide (CO₂). Food production is also a major contributor to biodiversity loss, freshwater use, change in land use and deforestation. Meanwhile, many urban residents still struggle to access healthy food. Access is influenced by many factors including cost, food skills, marketing of unhealthy foods and availability of fresh foods in the area.

Cities host over half the world's population with the projection of increasing population for Cork city to 330,000 by 2040. With rapid growth, COVID crisis, instability due to conflict and over reliance on food importation and climate impacts, the global food systems challenges have become serious challenges for cities, including Cork City. Getting a nutritious diet with more plant based foods that supports both human and environmental health requires major and rapid population-level changes given that unsustainable food systems producing unhealthy diets are the global norm.

Ireland's responsibility and commitment to reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions by 20% by 2020 and 30% by 2030 is supported locally by Cork City Council's commitment to carbon neutrality by 2030. There is an urgency for local action in the Cork and surrounding region to build a more resilient local food system to meet these commitments. Resilience refers to

- Supporting environmental sustainability through minimal impact on greenhouses gases, water usage, and biodiversity;
- A more adaptable food system that can withstand shocks, stresses and risks that emerge;
- Provides the population with equity in access to a nutritious healthy diet which is culturally and socially acceptable.

Who are we?

The Cork Food Policy Council (CFPC), established in 2013, is a partnership between representatives of the community, food retail, farming, restaurant/catering, education, environmental and health sectors and local authorities in Cork.

Why the CFPC?

The CFPC was formed to work towards the achievement of a fairer, healthier, more secure and sustainable food system with the city and throughout the region.

We pride ourselves that Cork is the food capital of Ireland. However,

- Increasing numbers of families across Cork are finding it difficult to put good nourishing food on the table. This increases the risk of people suffering ill health.
- Along with rest of the world we face climate change – local food systems can help us tackle climate change;
- We increasingly rely on a global food supplies and have increasingly disconnected with food production;
- Local horticultural growers and communities are finding it difficult to access land to grow food;

As a World Health Organisation Healthy City and an EU Mission city, Cork Food Policy Council provides a platform for integrating and co-benefitting the health and sustainability agendas.



Vision for the Cork Food Strategy

1. Nourishing food for all

Everyone in Cork city should have access to information, training and resources that enable them to grow, buy, cook, and enjoy good food. The food we eat impacts on all aspects of our wellbeing – our nutritional needs, mental health, social and psychological health. Building capacity around food in communities, particularly in areas where additional barriers exist to accessing nourishing food, will support greater equity in access for all.

2. A sustainable and resilient local food system

Food production, processing and distribution needs to protect nature - reduces food miles, packaging and waste; and increases composting and recycling. Maximising the use of greenspace and brownfield sites in the region to produce food for the people of Cork and environ. By increasing the proportion of food we consume from local sources we will become more resilient and more responsive to regional and global stresses and shocks.

3. A thriving local and diverse food economy

Encouraging a greater number & diversity of food enterprises and jobs, making the most of our rich land & sea resources. Sourcing healthy & sustainable food from local producers & suppliers, keeping value within the local economy.

4. Resilient community-centred food environments

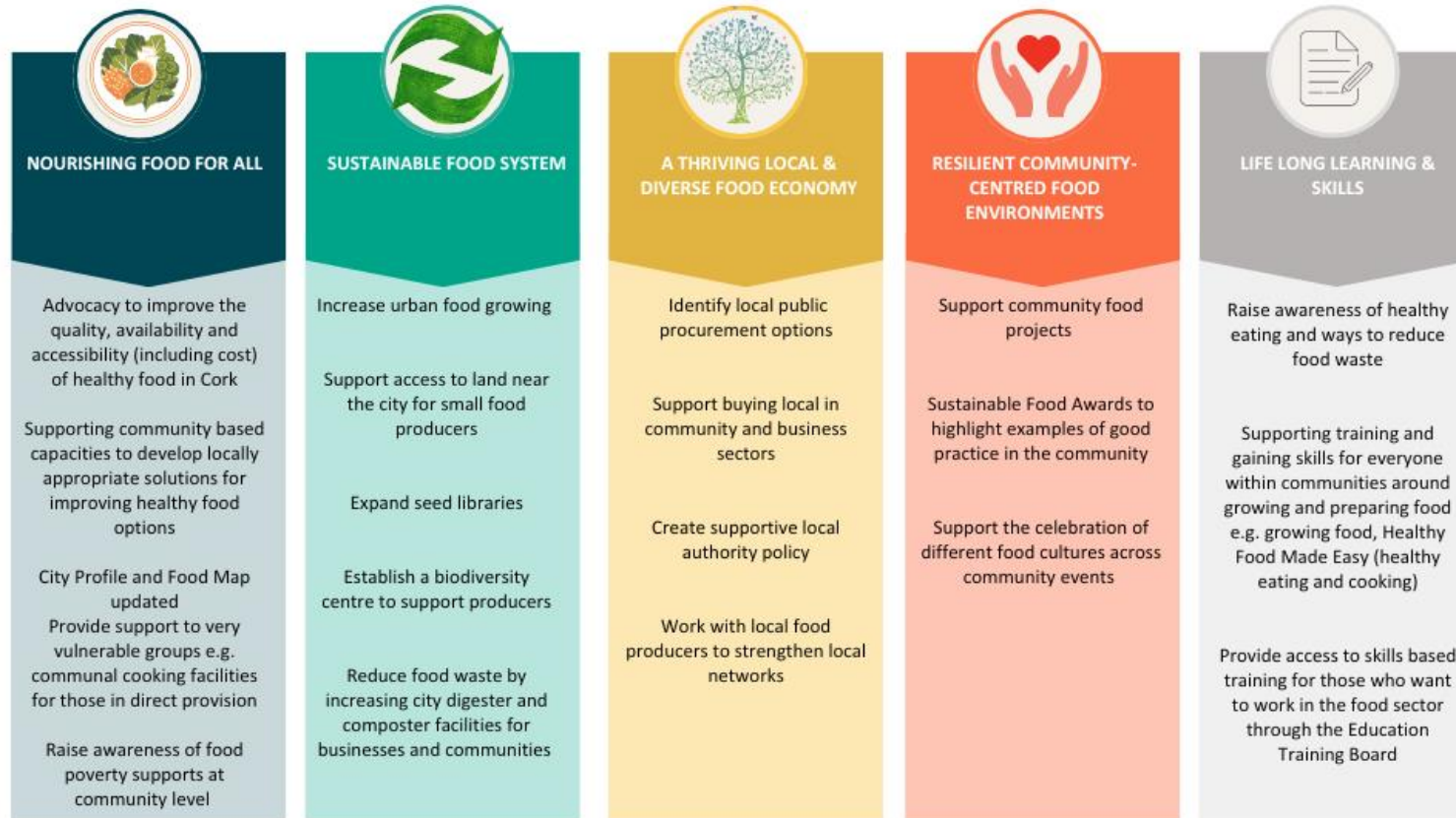
Food is a very powerful lever for community development and community food initiatives should be supported. Encouraging a greater focus and normalisation of nourishing food within our communities where different foods traditions are celebrated should be encouraged.

5. Lifelong learning & skills

Giving everyone the opportunity to learn about good food – how to grow it, how to cook it, how to eat it and how to enjoy it. Knowledge sharing and capacity building within organisations such as schools, hospitals, businesses and other caterers to transform their food culture.

ACTIONS

ADVOCATING FOR SUPPORTIVE POLICY AND APPROPRIATE RESOURCES



Engaging with stakeholders



Monitor progress and publish annual reports

