

Lincolnshire Food Partnership

For fairer healthier greener food

Welcome to the January 2021 edition of the Lincolnshire Food Partnership Newsletter

It has been a busy festive season for all at the Lincolnshire Food Partnership. At the beginning of December, we received a call from Grantham Business in the Community to see if we could help distribute some of the million meals or more left surplus to requirements by the 'grounded' airline industry. We report on how we got on, below.

We've also review our work at the other end of the food chain. We have been examining how we can develop food growing that will help people's physical and mental health through social prescribing. This is where people are referred to



growing projects as a means of improving their health. Part of this has entailed collecting together groups of community growing projects in the county and for this, we are pleased to report, too, on the launch of Incredible Edible in Lincolnshire.

We also have something to say about the Chartwells food parcel for children who are eligible free school meals, that hit the national headlines in January.

And January is the month, too, for the Oxford Real Farming Conference. Laura has been there (virtually of course) and reflects on five important messages that she's taken from it.

In December, the Lincolnshire Food Partnership also won a research competition at the University of East Anglia. We report on this 'Food Hubs research below.

And finally, we can't let Mint Lane Café go unacknowledged for winning the regional competition for the best Christmas meal made from 'surplus' food – many congratulations to them!

There's more local food news from across the county on our [blog](#). Please do contact us if you would like to share your news stories about any aspect of local food – whether it is a growing project, local produce-making and sale, cooking communities or tackling food waste. We would be pleased to showcase your work, no matter how small, in this newsletter.

Our email address is: lincolnfoodpartnership@gmail.com

If you are happy to continue to receive this newsletter and therefore be considered a member of the Lincoln Food Partnership community of interest, you need to do nothing.

If on the other hand you wish to unsubscribe from this newsletter, just email us. Many thanks for your interest

Nigel Curry,

Co-chair Lincoln Food Partnership

Eudaimonia Flies High for the Lincolnshire Foodbanks

Flight cancellations due to the pandemic are resulting in thousands of airline meals going to waste. We've been working with Lincolnshire's foodbanks to get this surplus food to people who need it.

Volunteers at fifteen foodbanks across Lincolnshire have so far played a part in storing and distributing thousands of frozen airline





meals to people in their communities faced with household food insecurity at this time.

The whole operation is very much thanks to the kindness, driving and logistical agility of our friends and Food Partners at Eudaimonia in Gainsborough, who kindly used their freezer vehicle to collect and distribute the meals across the county. This was an impressive feat of flexibility and co-operation by everyone involved - thank you!

Social prescribing: food projects can improve physical and mental health

Social prescribing is when health professionals refer people to undertake a social activity to improve their health and wellbeing. Food projects are amongst the most popular social prescribing activities of all. *The Grow, Share and Cook* project in Plymouth guides those at risk of obesity and type 2 diabetes in growing and cooking seasonal vegetables, for both exercise and diet change.



Sow the City in Manchester has created a food patch at the Cornbrook Medical Practice, for healthy exercise, free food and social contact. It addresses mental as well as physical health needs. *Grow Cook and Eat* in Wythenshawe has even introduced aquaponic and hydroponics into their social prescribing projects.

The LFP, through Incredible Edible in Lincolnshire (see below), would like to increase social prescribing into food (growing, cooking) projects in the County: do

contact us if you have a project that might be suitable and that might benefit from such a scheme.

Nationally there are over 100 food based social prescribing schemes and although they haven't been fully evaluated yet, a survey by Sustain suggests that they can reduce GP use by around 28% and A and E use by 24% amongst participants. It's got to be worth exploring further.

Incredible Edible in Lincolnshire: reconnecting with food

Incredible Edible is about actively participating in the journey towards a sustainable food future, becoming more connected with our food and each other.

This can take various forms: creating community gardens to bring the neighbourhood together over food; transforming derelict public spaces to become beautiful and edible - propaganda gardening, we call it! - or re-learning the disappearing arts of seed saving, cultivating or preserving.

Across Lincolnshire, residents are using the winter lockdown as an opportunity to connect with each other online, share ideas and make plans. Lincolnshire Food Partnership is hosting a series of online talks and discussions to support and inspire anyone interested in growing in their community, or just curious to learn more about what others are doing.

So far we have heard from Incredible Edible Beeston, which has been running for a year, throughout the pandemic, from Incredible Edible Wakefield, which has been growing for a decade, and Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust on how to support biodiversity in our gardens.

Everyone is welcome to take part, whether to start a project, get involved with an existing project, or just pop in to find out what it's all about - if you eat, you're in!

More information and details of forthcoming events on our website.
lincolnfoodpartnership.org/incredible-edible-in-lincolnshire



How much food will £30 buy you?

The photo of the meagre food parcels supplied by Chartwells for children eligible for free school meals went viral January. We've reproduced this here and it represents what they claim to be £30-worth of food.

Just out of comparative curiosity, we asked Mint Lane Café to assemble £30 of food from their 'Thrifty' Shop. This is the second picture, below. We also asked Mint Lane Café how much the Chartwells food parcel would cost to buy in their 'Thrifty' Shop. You can get it for £1.70.

The more serious point, perhaps, is that it would be hugely more cost effective and nutritionally effective simply to give those eligible for food parcels the £30, either in cash or as a voucher. And the Thrifty Café is even developing menu cards to guide people in the best combinations of food to buy and how to cook them – at no extra cost. Thrifty by name



Highlights from the Oxford Real Farming Conference

“The point of ORFC is not to attack the status quo but to look ahead: to ask what the world really needs, and what’s possible, and to show what really can be done. Always on the agenda, or thereabouts, is the dream of Agrarian Renaissance: to restore agriculture and all that goes with it to its proper place at the heart of the economy, and indeed of all our lives.

Ruth West

The Oxford Real Farming Conference is an annual event bringing together farmers, economists, activists, scientists, policymakers and others to talk about *agroecology* - agriculture in positive relationship with the environment and society.



This year, the constraints of the pandemic became an extraordinary opportunity to include far more people - the conference was attended by well over 5000 delegates, and to hear and learn from farmers across the globe. My top five takeaways from this year’s conference:

Eat more beans - Can Britain feed itself by 2020? Yes, according to Xavier Poux, the brains behind recent modelling of the European and UK food system, using agro-ecological principles. But it relies on us changing our diet - eating far less sugar, less meat, less dairy, more fruit & veg, and about three times more beans/pulses! Legumes play an important role in a sustainable farming system, because they fix nitrogen in the soil, eliminating the need for polluting, GHG emitting artificial fertilisers.

If you’d like to get started exploring more beans in your diet already, check out [Hodmedods](#) who are pioneers in British-grown (including Lincolnshire-grown) legumes, and have loads of recipes. Let me know how you get on by tagging [@lincolnshirefoodpartnership](#) on Facebook/Insta, [@food_lincoln](#) on Twitter

Oppose cheap food - Cheap food has not and cannot solve the problem of poverty says Orla Delargy from Sustain (that is a whole other story). Someone, somewhere is losing out, usually the producer, and their ability to farm in a healthy, sustainable way. "*Hunger is not caused by a scarcity of food, but by a scarcity of democracy.*" Frances Moore Lappe.

Imagination is not a luxury - Slogan on Rob Hopkin's t-shirt! We need to imagine what the world could be like - have a moment of pause, be genuinely curious, have many answers. What if we could build back better?

Here's Rob Hopkin's podcast, [What if to what next?](#) which explores such questions as, *what if we learnt to love weeds?* and *what if we took play seriously?*

Workshops with Rob Hopkins usually cause my brain to explode with ideas - I literally cannot wait to explore these questions on our online [Incredible Edible conversations](#).

Community Supported Agriculture is resilient -

CSAs are designed to be resilient, and schemes have proved themselves during the pandemic: CSAs across

Europe, asserted Florent Sebban, have remained steady despite the upheaval around them. Many have experienced an increase in demand; the short supply chain has lowered transmission risks as fewer people handle food between field and fork; and they have become increasingly valued and integrated in their communities. To create more CSAs in the UK, access to land and training of new farmers is needed.

Real farming has to be the revolution of our times - I cannot begin to convey the power and urgency of Dr Vandana Shiva's message, and all I can say is, go and listen to her for yourself - she is an Indian physicist, academic and one of the most incredible people alive!

Talks from ORFC can be found on their YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/realfarmlife>



Food Hubs: a great place for different food ideas to come together?

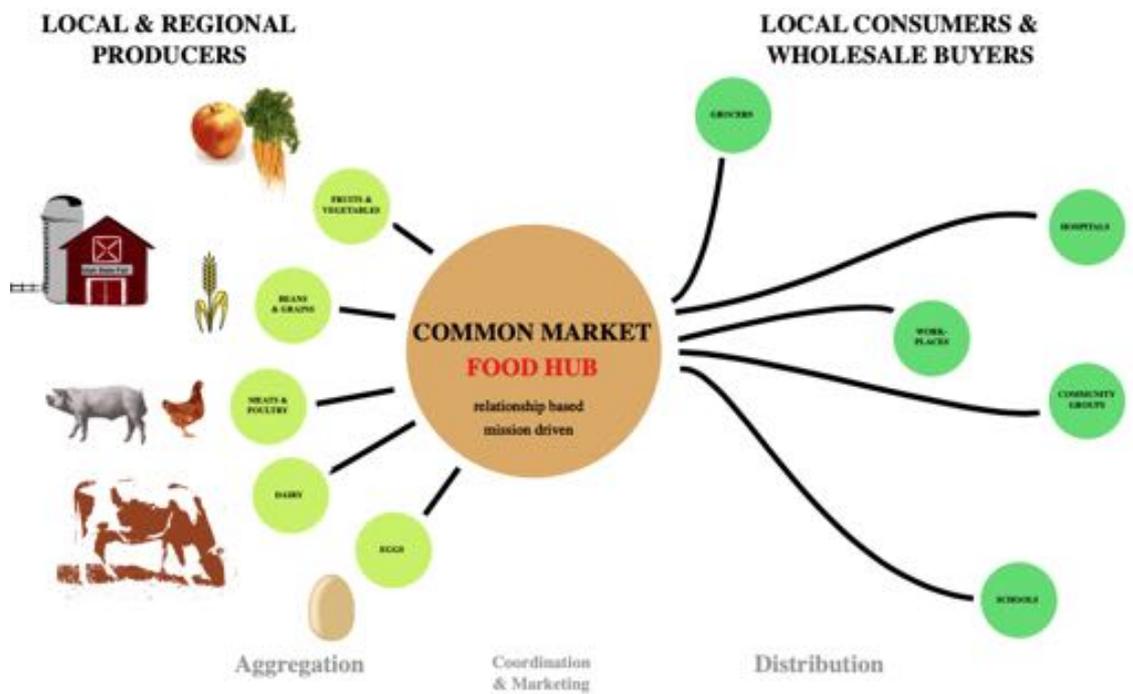
Just before Christmas, the LFP entered a 'competition' at the University of East Anglia (UEA) to pitch a research idea to one of the University's food research groups. Of 29 entrants (all of the others were universities) we were the winning team.

We presented a research idea about how Food Hubs – where a range of different food ideas and projects are brought together - can spark new ideas just from finding themselves side by side.



So for example, people interested in buying food through an organic box scheme may end up volunteering at a food bank simply because they are both in the same place and one gets exposed to the other.

School food provision might spark an interest in school projects to reduce food waste; people seeking to lose weight might develop an interest in community cooking – and so on.



The research will seek to examine which of these 'collisions' of ideas are most likely to spark positive, new, outcomes and ideas. UEA is now working with the LFP to 'flesh out these ideas and seek funding. The research will use food developments and ideas in Lincolnshire as the major case study.

Mint Lane Café: a surprise Christmas present!

Fare Share Midlands covers 12 English Counties, from Herefordshire and Shropshire in the West, through Birmingham, to Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire in the East. This Christmas they ran a competition to find the 'Best Christmas Meal Made from Surplus Food'.

And the winner was
..... Lincolnshire's
very own Mint Lane Café!

Mariea Miskowicz and the cooking team from the Café created a beautiful Christmas wreath pizza complete with mozzarella, pigs in blankets and pomegranate seeds.

The Fare Share competition judges commented, "This incredibly creative use of food blew us away. Thank you to the team over at Mint Lane for your efforts".

Here at the Lincolnshire Food Partnership, we extend our congratulations, to Mint Lane Café, too. There is a considerable number of Fare Share users in the whole of the Midlands region. To top them all says a huge amount about the quality and creativity of the 'Friendship' café in making great use of food that would otherwise go to waste. Well done Mint Lane!



Tell a Friend...

If you know of other people or organisations who would like to be involved in the Lincoln Food Partnership, please help to spread the word. Why not start by forwarding this newsletter to them?

If this has been forwarded to you, you can sign up to receive our newsletter directly to your inbox next month [here](#)

Thank you!

Keep an eye out for our next newsletter in February.

GDPR Statement

We will hold your details securely and confidentially and only use them for the purposes for which you have supplied them and will delete them when no longer required. We will not share your details with any third parties except with your consent or as required by law.

You can ask us for a copy of your details at any time. Please let us know if any of them change or if you no longer want us to hold them.

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