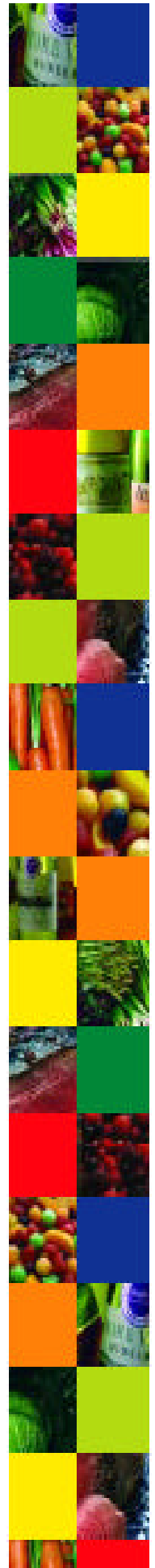




# Extending Regional Hospitality



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# 5: SUSTAINABILITY AND THE BUSINESS CASE FOR BUYING LOCAL

*“Food and farming play a key role  
in creating culture, landscape and health.”*  
Local Food Works

Buying from local suppliers often means that production processes are very different from large growers. In what way? Rather than multi scale production, often using technical engineering to promote growth, the local business will be producing environmentally friendly produce or using traditional food processes, often by hand rather than machine.

In this section you will

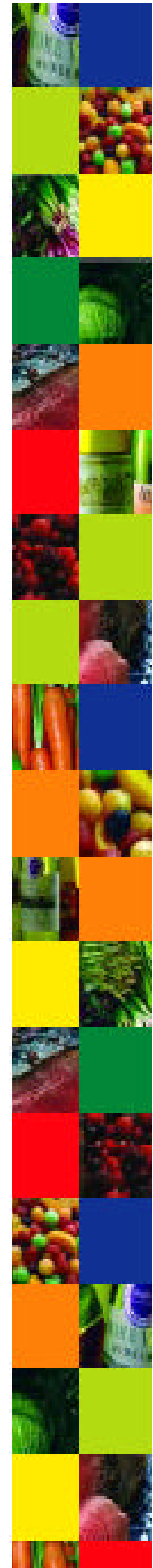
- Define what ‘local’ means
- Identify the benefits of buying locally on health, social aspects, the economy and environment benefits
- Develop an understanding of the balance of sustainability and buying locally
- Identify the advantages of building partnerships with your suppliers

## ■ What is ‘local’ food?

Definitions can vary but have the same core concept:

“Local means the shortest and simplest route from field to plate. In some cases a set distance defines this. In all cases it suggests a self contained local trading area, with close contact between all parties and few middlemen.”  
Flair – Food and local agriculture information resource

The Soil Association have defined buying locally as “food that is grown, harvested and traded all in one area. The production and processing of the food normally involves sustainable methods like organic farming.” However, sustainability can also be achieved for community, economic and environment aspects.



**EXERCISE:**

Listed below are some example benefits. Tick those benefits that you think could be applicable to your business or community and make a note of how this might be evidenced in your business or local community.

Benefit	✓	How will your business, area or community benefit?
<p><u>SOCIAL BENEFITS</u></p> <p>Local co-operation</p> <p>Opportunities for employment</p> <p>Increasing local ownership and participation</p> <p>Improving communication across geographic barriers</p> <p>Getting to know and trust people</p> <p>Increasing confidence and pride in local communities</p> <p>Improve diet and health</p>		
<p><u>ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS</u></p> <p>Reduction in convenience packaging and waste problems</p> <p>Reduction in pollution from food transportation</p> <p>Increased wildlife</p> <p>Reduction in potential risk from chemicals</p> <p>Increased re-generation of land using mixed grazing and other procedures</p> <p>Reduced food miles and transportation costs</p>		

Benefit	✓	How will your business, area or community benefit?
<p><b><u>ECONOMIC BENEFITS</u></b></p> <p>Keeps money in the local economy</p> <p>Encourages small businesses to start up – ‘entrepreneurship’</p> <p>Increases rural services</p> <p>Increases jobs</p> <p>Revitalises local services e.g. shops and transport</p> <p><i>Economic benefits to your business:</i></p> <p>Produce may last longer as less transportation</p> <p>Reduce costs if using seasonal foods</p> <p>Increases commercial opportunities</p>		

Generally in the last 10 years the public have become a lot more aware of the food they are eating and the processes that are used by growers and farmers. This is through the publicity of the hygiene and labelling regulations and the increase of publicity on health scares and media attention on farming methods. More and more the public are demanding evidence that the food they are buying and eating is of good quality all the way down the supply chain.

## ■ Case Study: Consumers demand 'ethical' pork supply

*Caterer and Hotelkeeper May 2004*

Ninety per cent of consumers are concerned that the majority of pork, bacon and ham imported into this country would be classified as illegal if it was produced in the UK. The findings were part of a British Pig Executive (BPEX) report on the growth in pig meat imports into the UK in 2003, which estimated that some 70% of pork entering this country is farmed under conditions that would fail minimum welfare requirements in the UK.

Since 1999 the UK has banned the use of stalls and tethers for pregnant sows. Although the rest of the EU plans to follow suit by 2013, the difference now between production standards has made imported meat much cheaper.

Mick Sloyan, chief executive of BPEX, said: "The importers say they merely respond to market demand, so we thought we'd test that demand. It is implicated from our survey that consumers expect the [production] standards they demand of British pork to apply." He added that food service operators should heed the results of the survey. "Are food service operators serving their customers' demands and trust if they do not meet those standards?" he asked. The report calculated that 85% of all bacon used in food service was imported.

Two of the biggest food service suppliers, Brakes and 3663, this week confirmed that they sourced pork products from both the UK and the EU.

A spokesman for 3663 said: "3663 sources pork and processed pork products from Holland and Denmark, produced to European standards." Meanwhile, Brakes stressed that it would use only "EU-approved facilities".

Although it is legal to import meat that has satisfied EU regulations but not UK farming standards, the report found that 92% of consumers agreed that imported meat should be produced to similar standards as in the UK.

*This article was followed by a double page in the Mail On Sunday on how pigs are killed in some EEC countries.*

Customers now may be asking questions about the origin of the food on the menu. The Meat and Livestock commission have developed a code of practice (2003) which states that all origin information relating to the produce on the menu has been documented, to provide a fully traceable supply chain.

Food and drink information centre:

The Food Standards Agency is encouraging the implementation of 'best practice' traceability systems in all food businesses. These are to ensure:

- ◆ Rapid collation of reliable information in food safety incidents
- ◆ Identification of the cause of a problem so that corrective action can be taken
- ◆ Provision of reliable information to consumers about the content, and where appropriate, the source of individual foods
- ◆ Deterrence of fraud

Some of the quality labels discussed in Section 3 – Sourcing local suppliers will provide this guarantee to you. By using a local supply chain and building relationships with your suppliers you can be assured that the food you have on your menu is produce ethically and therefore you can increase your customer confidence.

### Three Crowns Inn

[www.threecrownsinn.com](http://www.threecrownsinn.com)

The Three Crowns Inn complies with the 2003 Code of Practice for Menu Transparency as developed by the Meat and Livestock Commission.

All origin information relating to the produce on the menu has been documented, as to provide a fully traceable supply chain.

Malvern Country Meals of Great Malvern, Worcestershire supply  
Beef, Lamb, English Veal, Venison & Duck  
Sourced at Williams of Woobley, Herefordshire,  
from livestock reared within a thirty-mile radius.

At times Beef may come from the Orkney Islands, when of a superior quality  
Veal is supplied through Alternative Meats, sourced from RSPCA Freedom Farming accredited farms in  
Northwick & Huddersfield

Venison is sourced from The Welsh Venison Centre, coming from managed herds within  
The Brecon Beacons National Park

Duck is from the Gressingham Breed from farms in Sussex

Teme Vale Victualers, of Cothelridge, Worcestershire supply  
Sausages & Bacon  
Sourced from, Williams of Woobley.

Garden Tudge of The Bury, Richards Castle, Shropshire supplies  
Additive Free 'Berkshire' Rare Breed Pork  
Free range Chickens

Kelynack Cornish Fish of Helston, supply  
All sea fish and shellfish  
Sourced from Newlyn Market on the Lizard, Cornwall

Lay & Robson of Hereford supply  
Smoked Salmon & smoked Haddock.

Wynne's of Dinwore, Herefordshire supply  
Eggs from RSPCA Freedom Farmed Free Range chickens

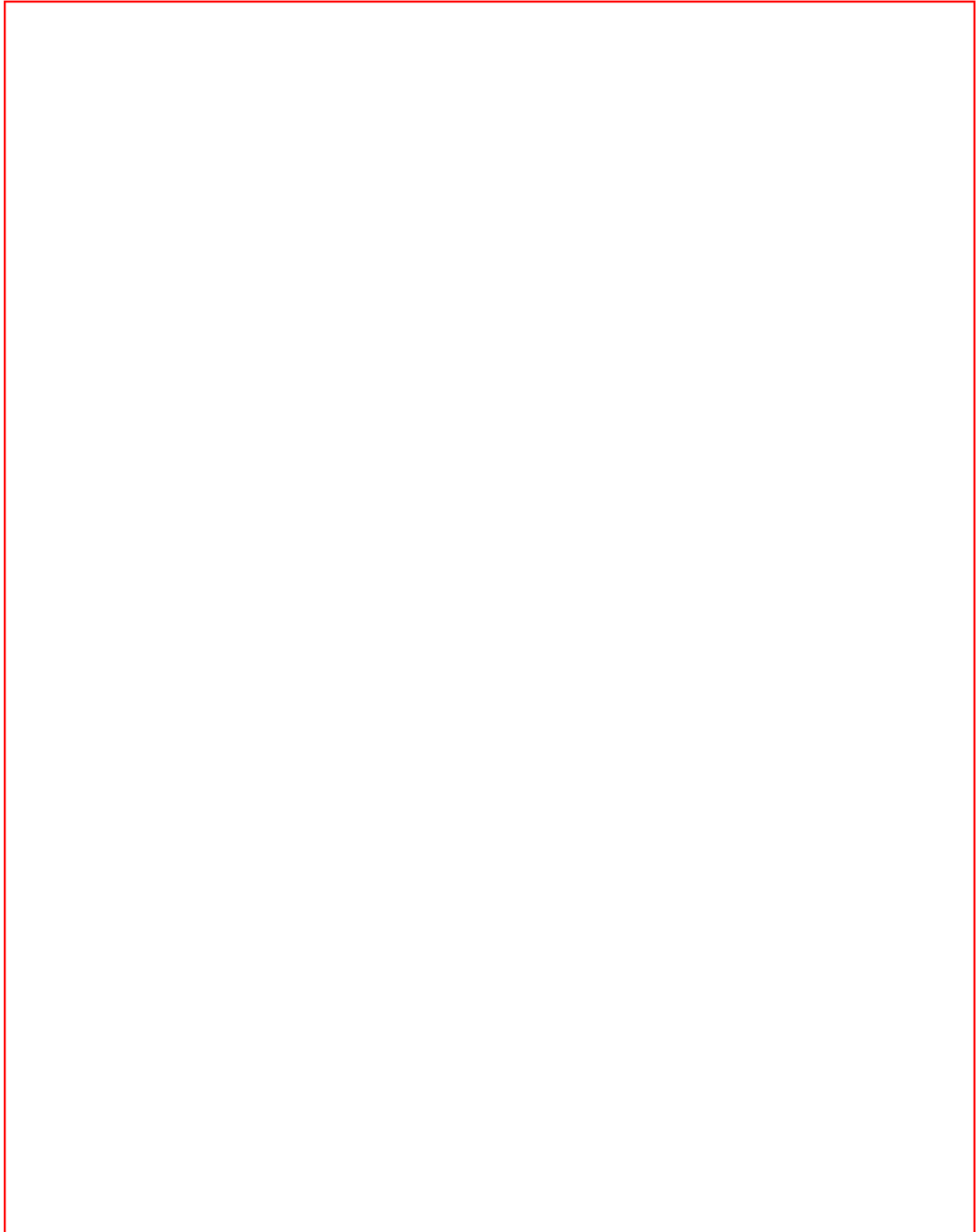
Wegrall's Farm, of Goshall Lane, Leominster, Herefordshire supply  
Organic vegetables from their market garden when in season

The Dairy House of Woobley, Herefordshire supply  
Dairy produce, sourced from their four organic farms in Herefordshire

Our Cheese board is comprised of only British Cheese.  
The origin of each cheese is stated on our menu.

**■ EXERCISE:**

- a) What would be the benefits to your business of sourcing local 'ethical farmers'  
What checks would you make on your supplier?
- b) Compile a document to comply with the traceability code of practice for your business.



## ■ The balance of sustainability and buying locally

Buying locally grown or produced products has many advantages. However, there needs to be a balance of thought. If a product is grown locally under forced conditions not all of the benefits above may be achieved but some will. It may not be feasible to achieve all the benefits at one go.

A business must decide its objectives and principles for buying locally. If you are concerned for the environment and consider this to be a principle of your business you could demonstrate this further by sourcing cleaning and service products etc that will support economic, environmental and social sustainability.

Take advantage of public awareness.

### ■ EXERCISE:

If you were asked by a journalist to justify why you bought produce locally what would your reasons be and how else do you abide by those reasons when buying other products?

## ■ What are the advantages of forming working partnerships with local suppliers?

Working in isolation, without contact with colleagues makes a business vulnerable. New ideas can pass you by. Emerging trends can escape your notice. You might not be aware of new solutions to problems.

If you have an open and positive relationship with your supplier the support is 2 way. A new eye on the business will often bring new ideas.

## ■ Case Study: Brent Castle at The Three Crowns, Ullingswick

TO BE ADDED

### Questions:

- ◆ What is the advantage of having an 'open relationship' with suppliers?
- ◆ If the problem was not discussed what would have been the consequences?

## ■ Summary

- "Food and farming play a key role in creating culture, landscape and health."
- Local means 'food that is grown, harvested and traded all in one area'.
- There are at least four areas of benefit to buying locally: health, economic, environmental and social.
- Take advantage of public awareness.
- If you have an open and positive relationship with your supplier the support is 2 way.
- A new eye on the business will often bring new ideas.