



**BOTANIC
GARDENS**
CONSERVATION
INTERNATIONAL

UK Food sustainability case studies



This report was funded by The Rothschild Foundation as part of the BGCI Food Sustainability project



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Contents

Introduction	3
Growing food	4
Case study 1: The Community Garden, University of Exeter Grounds.....	4
Case study 2: The Grow Project, Inverness Botanic Gardens.....	5
Case study 3: Seasonal, Local Produce, Royal Botanic Gardens Kew	6
Case study 4: Edible Campus, The University of St Andrews	6
Case study 5: Kernel Urban Farm and Community Garden, St Andrews Botanic Garden	6
Case study 6: Global Growth Vegetable Garden, RHS Hyde Hall	7
Case study 7: Urban Veg, Winterbourne House and Garden.....	7
Case study 8: Edible Gardening Project, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh	8
Food certification	9
Case study 9: Sustainable Palm Oil Campaign, Wild Planet Trust	9
Case study 10: First Sustainable Palm Oil City, Chester Zoo.....	10
Case study 11: Protecting potatoes, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh	11
Case study 12: Food Forever Global Exhibition, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh.....	12
Food waste	13
Case study 13: Shelf Life Project, Chelsea Physic Garden	13
Case study 14: Wasteline Initiative, Eden Project	14
Case study 15: Plastic Waste Reduction, Royal Botanic Gardens Kew.....	15
Food choices	16
Case study 16: Make the Change, Eden Project	16
Case study 17: Planet Botanic: Green Inspectors, Oxford University Botanic Garden & Arboretum.....	16
Case study 19: The Chefs Manifesto, Royal Botanic Gardens Kew	17
Case study 20: BigPicnic, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh	18
Case study 18: The Big Lunch, Eden Project	19
A selection of (non-botanic garden) sustainable food case studies	20
Community Fridge Project, Hubbub	20
Feeding the 5000, Feedback	20
The Cool Food Challenge	20
Good to Grow, Sustain	21

Introduction

This report is an outcome of BGCI's Food Sustainability Challenge, which is funded by The Rothschild Foundation.

This project aims to work with leading botanic gardens to develop a series of simple, small-scale food sustainability challenges, with associated incentives, that aim to empower and bring about behavioural change amongst garden visitors and the broader community. This food-focused project will be UK focused and will feed in to a wider, global sustainability challenge project.

BGCI will work with leading UK food sustainability practitioners to select proven models that can be scaled up rapidly and easily for maximum impact. We recognise that it is not enough to tell people that there is a problem. Instead, we need to enable and empower our visitors and communities to change their attitudes and practices.

As a first step, a literature review was carried out to gather data on sustainable food practices undertaken by UK botanic gardens. Data was collected through a combination of web-based research, semi-structured interviews and online surveys.

Just over half of the gardens surveyed (53%) currently operate behaviour change interventions to encourage people towards food sustainability. Practices range from having community gardens where community members and students learn to grow their own vegetables, awareness raising through interpretation, guided walks and talks in gardens, and large public campaigns for sustainable food choices. Awareness raising and community gardens are the most common interventions within the gardens, generally focussing on encouraging sustainable purchasing and growing your own. Fig. 1 provides an overview of the type of practices observed.

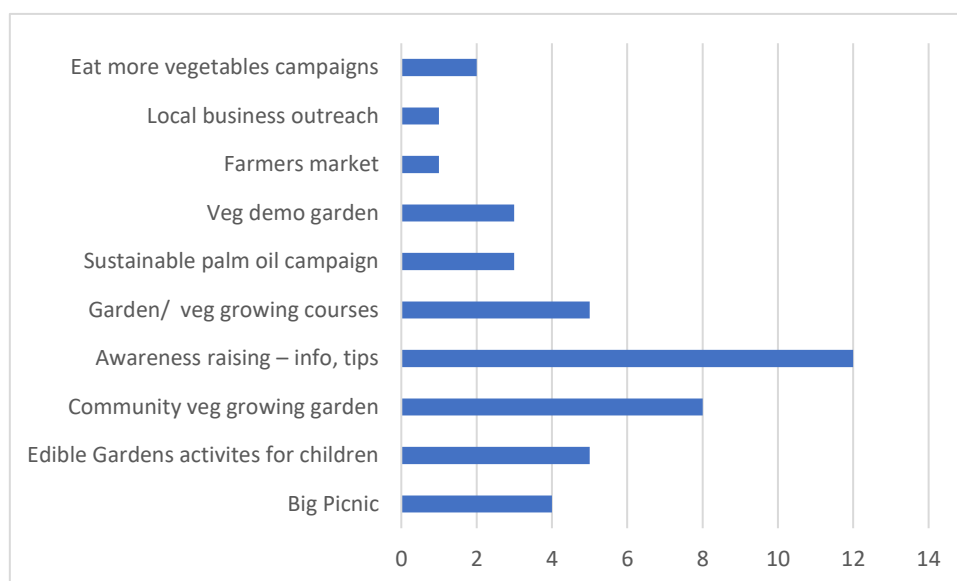


Figure 1: Number of gardens reporting practices encouraging sustainable food behaviours

The data collected was used to develop a selection of case studies to showcase the work that is currently taking place within UK botanic gardens on the subject of sustainable food. The case studies in this report are provided under the headings of growing food, food certification, food waste and food choices.

Growing food

Case study 1: The Community Garden, University of Exeter Grounds

The Community Garden was started in 2011 in Streatham Campus as a partnership between the grounds team and the Students Guild. The garden is a small area on the campus with six raised beds, has a total area of about 0.1ha. The following year, it doubled in size with a number of buildings added, including 2 polytunnels, a greenhouse and a storage building. The community garden now also includes beehives, an orchard and a physic garden. It aims to grow produce to an organic standard, taking measures such as not using chemicals, composting, sowing green manures and using mulching materials to encourage best practice amongst members.

Initial volunteer membership of the Community Garden was comprised of 50 students and staff, including a few local community members. Membership has now grown to 388 people, 285 of which are active on the mailing list. With a high student membership, the turnover rate is high, but many take a continued interest in the garden after graduating, and many are overseas – resulting in an international membership base. The community plays an active part in the management committee running the garden. Through the commitment of the Student Guild and the community groups, the Community Garden has flourished as an area of teaching, wellbeing, sustainable growing and as a way to reduce food miles. Produce from the community garden is shared and showcased during taster sessions and harvest festivals. Volunteers working on the allotment are free to take home a proportion of each harvest.



Produce from the Community Garden - © University of Exeter Grounds

The ethos of the campus is to become a 'living laboratory', and the garden is used practically in university courses to demonstrate permaculture and growing food within nature. Along with community engagement and building closer relationships between the University and the community, the grounds team at the garden developed partnerships with local charities. An example of this is providing wood chipping facilities to recycle Christmas trees for Hospice Care, involving students from the local Bicton College to help and complete their training in using the equipment.

The Community Garden has run numerous awards that indicate its success as a community – student project, including an award from the National Student Guild, repeated Green Flag Awards and a Britain in Bloom in the Community award. The high membership of the project, its continuity over 8 years and its replication on another campus also demonstrates its popularity. Due to the success of the Streatham community garden, a smaller garden has been set up on the St Lucas campus by the St Lucas User Group (SLUG), emulating the methodology used in the community garden.

Case study 2: The Grow Project, Inverness Botanic Gardens

The GROW Project is an award-winning scheme that gives people with learning difficulties the chance to learn horticultural skills. Running for 25 years, it has produced high quality and organic locally grown produce, which can be purchased by the public from Inverness Botanic Gardens. The GROW project relies on the commitment of the project leader and a strong community group of approximately 30 trainees and volunteers. Together, they grow produce to an organic standard, which has created a high demand within the area. The GROW project made around £3000 this year from the sale of their produce including herbs, fresh fruit and vegetables, which has gone back into their project.

Trainees are taught to promote recycling and wildlife, to grow produce and sell a range of organic produce. They also assist in events such as an annual Garden Festival, where they help children make bird boxes or run the juice bike. Inverness Botanic Gardens are in the process of offering the trainees the Grow and Learn qualification, through the Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society, which will result in a certificate and portfolio to take home, and the chance to move to the next stage that they offer.

Quotes from the trainees and participants show the wellbeing benefits of the project:

'It gets me out of the house'
'I'm happy when I come here'



GROW Project participants - © GROW Project

For more information: <https://www.hIGHLIFEhighland.com/inverness-botanic-gardens/grow-project/>

Case study 3: Seasonal, Local Produce, Royal Botanic Gardens Kew

Seasonal, local produce that has minimal environmental impact is at the centre of food served in Kew's restaurants and cafés. A kitchen garden along with the herb garden provide seasonal vegetables and herbs for dishes.

The garden relies on the expertise of horticulturalists to know when wild herbs and plants are tasting their best, these are then foraged from across the Gardens to use in the restaurants and cafés. The garden also has a focus on sourcing local and seasonal produce to celebrate the best of British produce. At the garden's Pavilion Bar and Grill, fresh vegetables come from local Surrey farms and sea bream is from Cornish day boats. Beef is sourced from specialised farms in Wales and the south-west of England, and is reared on a diet of 70% foraged food.

The garden has also thought carefully about sustainable ways to cook the produce, with a Josper grill that uses a mix of charcoal made from the woody waste at Kew and DEFRA approved charcoal.

For more information: <https://www.kew.org/read-and-watch/kews-restaurants-sustainable>

Case study 4: Edible Campus, The University of St Andrews

The Edible Campus project aims to reinvigorate skills, knowledge and interest in eating more locally. By increasing the amount of food grown within St Andrews, the project aims to reduce the town's carbon footprint and benefit the health of the community.

Across the town, the project runs 14 community gardens and helps oversee two community orchards. There is a wealth of growing space for all. Garden sessions are hosted almost daily; this is where the bulk of the seasonal work gets done such as planting, weeding, mulching and harvesting. Opportunities are available for the local community, whether that is just for a chat or to lend a hand in seasonal activities. The Edible Campus is funded by the Climate Challenge Fund and The University of St Andrews.

For more information: <http://www.transitionsta.org/local-food/edible-campus/>

Case study 5: Kernel Urban Farm and Community Garden, St Andrews Botanic Garden

This is a community food garden and urban farm that aims to promote the health and wellbeing benefits gained from small-scale intensive organic vegetable growing. The project is supported by the Climate Challenge Fund and lead by St Andrews Botanic Garden.

Drawing from the Urban Farm movement the project has adopted small-scale bio-intensive techniques to help maximise production, whilst creating an effective model for organic growing which is centred on efficiency and respect for natural processes.

One of the aims is to produce fresh organic produce for targeted local charities and organisations, who serve the community.

For more information: <http://www.transitionsta.org/local-food/kernel-urban-farm-and-community-garden/>

Case study 6: Global Growth Vegetable Garden, RHS Hyde Hall

Designed by Suffolk-based garden and landscape designer Xa Tollemache, this garden is set out in a circular design to represent the globe, and split into four quarters to showcase plants of different origin: Europe and the Middle East, Asia, North and Central America, and South America. At the centre of the garden is a bespoke 14m (46ft) wide octagonal glasshouse, donated by Hartley Botanic, in which less hardy edibles are grown.

The Global Growth Vegetable Garden, supported by Witan Investment Trust, is an educational space, incorporating crops that are not generally associated with food in the UK. Traditional varieties are being grown alongside new, exciting and rare edible plants, challenging perceptions of conventional allotments. South American root crops include yacon and yam. Other intriguing crops are *Cyperus esculentus* (tiger nuts), with coconut-flavoured edible tubers, and *Decaisnea fargesii*, commonly known as the blue bean shrub due to its curious seed pods.

As a direct result of this garden, Hyde Hall's audience has become more diverse, and it has helped to enrich the knowledge of how different food types are cooked and used in other cultures. Where possible, the garden's produce is used in Hyde Hall's restaurant.

For more information: <https://www.rhs.org.uk/gardens/hyde-hall/garden-highlights/global-growth-vegetable-garden>

Case study 7: Urban Veg, Winterbourne House and Garden

As part of BGCI's Communities in Nature project Winterbourne House and Garden, created Urban Veg. This was a community based vegetable garden designed as a two way cultural exchange and learning experience for the Islamic communities of Birmingham and the Garden.

Despite the fact that Birmingham has a higher number of Muslims than any other local authority area, this community was under represented in the demographics of garden visitors. The aim of the project was to build stronger relationships with this group. Fifteen participants visited the garden each Wednesday to grow vegetables. To help them become better gardeners, they participated in a series of workshops on sowing, planting and maintenance techniques.

The Urban Veg project workshops emphasised water conservation, sustainable growing media, wildlife awareness and reducing food miles and carbon footprints. There was also guidance and advice about growing at home with the aim of communicating the messages to a wider audience.



All generations working together:
Planting out seedlings at the Urban Veg
project plot - © Winterbourne House and
Garden / Communities in Nature

This project has now been widened and aims to promote a culture of urban food production as a means to addressing social exclusion and public health. Through the central theme of food growing it introduces concepts of conservation, sustainability and increased well-being whilst addressing social isolation, low levels of physical activity, healthy eating and food provenance issues.

More information: <https://urbanvegwhg.wordpress.com/about/>

Case study 8: Edible Gardening Project, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh

The Edible Gardening Project is based at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh and teaches people the skills and knowledge they need to grow their own food. Supported by the players of People's Postcode Lottery, the project is for those who are keen to grow their own food but do not know where to begin.

From February to November the team provide weekly 'Meet the Gardener' sessions in the Demonstration Garden where members of the public can drop in for growing advice and get inspiration for their own gardens.

The Project also provides opportunities for local community groups who want to grow their own food, with a number of regular groups who look after their own vegetable plots in the Demonstration Garden and attend on a weekly basis to work alongside one of the community gardeners. Groups such as Garvald, Edinburgh and Lothians Regional Equality Council and TEENS+ have gained practical, hands-on experience of growing vegetables and learnt horticultural skills.

The project delivers a range of free workshops to community garden groups. Topics include vegetable growing for beginners, composting, growing winter vegetables and organic pest and disease control. The project also holds a regular cook club at the Botanic Cottage, where anyone is welcome to join and learn new cooking skills and to enjoy a healthy meal that has been freshly prepared by the group.



Participants of the Edible Gardening Project - © RBGE

For more information: <https://stories.rbge.org.uk/edible-garden-project>

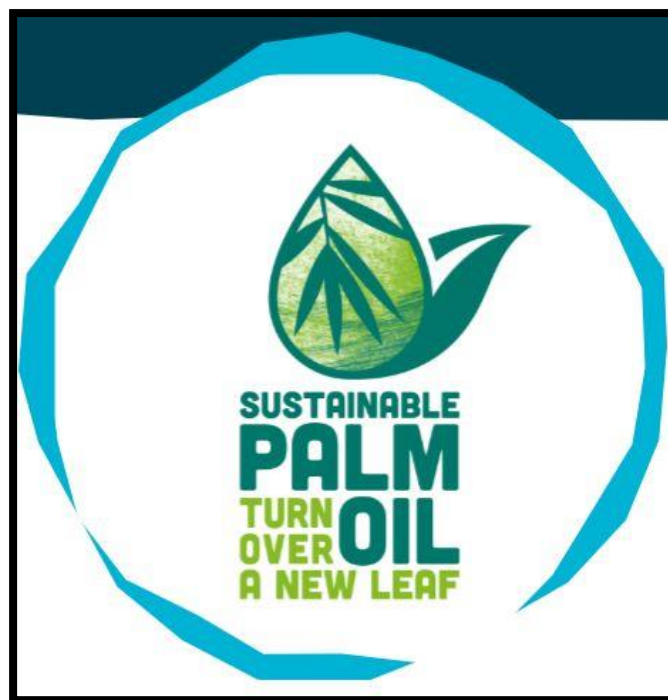
Food certification

Case study 9: Sustainable Palm Oil Campaign, Wild Planet Trust

Wild Planet Trust's Sustainable Palm Oil campaign began in 2015. The first stage of this project was to ensure responsible procurement of RSPO (Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil) certified products within the Zoo. This meant working with local producers and suppliers to ensure that they used sustainable palm oil in their products, and modified recipes where appropriate. The flagship for their public facing campaign is the charismatic orangutan, with the enclosure being an appropriate platform for engaging people about the dangers of unsustainable palm oil. Engagement included interpretation, activities and daily talks focussed on the issue. The campaign also involved 25 local schools through running an art competition where each school created metre square canvasses on Sustainable Palm Oil, which were then displayed in the zoo.

Wild Planet Trust are also working in partnership with Newquay supports sustainable palm oil (NSSPO), a local led initiative to make Newquay the first ever Sustainable Palm Oil Town. This campaign encourages restaurants, retailers and suppliers to divest from unsustainable palm oil. Their awareness raising campaign encourages people to download the Giki app, which helps users cut their environmental impact through barcode scanning and telling users whether the product contains sustainable palm oil. Find out more about the Giki app here: <https://gikibadges.com/>

Impact is currently being measured on this ongoing campaign within the zoo, with research students surveying visitors on entry and exit from the zoo to measure any changes in knowledge, awareness, and intention to change behaviours (ongoing). The Giki app data is also being analysed.



For more information: <https://www.wildplanettrust.org.uk/wild-conservation/sustainable-palm-oil/>

Case study 10: First Sustainable Palm Oil City, Chester Zoo

In September 2017, Chester Zoo launched an ambitious, major new conservation campaign to make Chester the first city in the world to source its palm oil from entirely sustainable sources.

Conservationists from Chester Zoo developed the Sustainable Palm Oil City model based on the framework created by the Sustainable Fish Cities project, led by independent group Sustain, the alliance for better food and farming. The campaign is backed by the Orangutan Land Trust and the Sumatran Orangutan Society, endorsed by key conservation organisations such as the British and Irish Association of Zoos and Aquariums (BIAZA).

The initiative has been supported by a host of industry advisors such as the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil, as well as palm oil sustainability consultants Murdoch Associates and Efeca.

More than 50 organisations in the city have revolutionised their supply chains and committed to sourcing palm oil from entirely sustainable sources.



The Sustainable Palm Oil City logo, and a palm oil plantation - © Chester Zoo

For more information: <https://www.chesterzoo.org/what-you-can-do/our-campaigns/sustainable-palm-oil/>

Food diversity

Case study 11: Protecting potatoes, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh

Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh (RBGE) have begun practical demonstrations of how important local crops can be made more resilient and growing them can become more sustainable if beneficial traits in related wild species can be incorporated into the crop. They began this in earnest with potatoes and the specific problem of late blight, which causes £55 million in losses in the UK annually and involves the use of repeated fungicide application to control disease. By working with key research partners who are leading the way in potato improvement and who maintain collections that preserve agrobiodiversity, RBGE have been able to display plants and conduct breeding experiments to shift disease resistance from the wild into the crop. Key partnerships with the James Hutton Institute and SASA have provided advice and plant material. Volunteers have been involved tending the displays and carrying out the breeding work. The volunteers have been able to do face to face interpretation to visitors about the role of Crop Wild Relatives (CWRs).

Formal measurement of visitor interest in the demonstration plots has not been carried out, but the RBGE Community Engagement Manager said of the project: “I would say that the recent project has been one of the most popular and engaging we have ever had. It’s been very successful in terms of engaging the public with our science, horticulture and with the work of our research partners. It has been a brilliant way to talk about issues such as food security.” The project has also attracted good media attention and appeared on prime time television in the BBC Scotland farming and countryside show Landward and on BBC Radio Scotland in the programme Out of Doors. The story was also picked up by Scottish and UK newspapers. The impact of digital and print media has not been quantified, but it greatly extends what is achieved by the volunteers on site and interpretation panels located in the plots.



Showcasing potato diversity - © RBGE

Case study 12: Food Forever Global Exhibition, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh

Food Forever is a campaign organised by the Crop Trust, which calls upon the global community to protect the vast, colourful spectrum of diversity within our food system. It is about investing in the future by protecting agricultural biodiversity, to ensure adequate nutritious food for all in a rapidly changing world.

Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, in collaboration with BGCI, the Crop Trust, Royal Botanic Gardens Kew and The Leichtag Foundation developed and piloted a Food Forever Exhibition, which was launched in Edinburgh in 2019. From this a toolkit and series of panels have been produced that are available free of charge for botanic gardens and other key sites to use, to produce their own Food Forever exhibition. Through this project, the aim is to promote the message of Food Forever and the importance of crop diversity within our food system to a global audience.



A selection of Food Forever panels - © Food Forever / BGCI

For more information: <https://www.bgci.org/our-work/projects-and-case-studies/food-forever-global-exhibition/>

Food waste

Case study 13: Shelf Life Project, Chelsea Physic Garden

The Shelf Life project is a both visually stunning and educationally effective way to show how plants and products are relevant to people's lives. It is also useful for demonstrating the concept of biodiversity – both within and between plant families.

The initial idea came after seeing an old Hovis bread baking tin for sale in a Chelsea antique shop several years ago and thinking that growing wheat plants in it would be both visually stunning and educationally effective. The plan was to use the product packages (jars, boxes, bottles, wrappers and bags) as containers in which to grow those plants that make up the products' ingredients. It is a bit of a mouthful, but two simple examples include a potato plant growing in a bag of potato crisps and wheat growing in a bag of bread.

At the 2004 Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) Chelsea Flower Show, they created a small 'shop' with shelves showing 90 different 'living' products, including a top shelf alcohol selection, cleaning products and a medicine section. Cotton was growing from the cash register, since our bank notes are woven with it. They were awarded a Silver-Gilt medal for this display. Other non-food products include cotton wool, pine cleaner and printing ink (soya and linseed) as well as many plant-based medicines (morphine, taxol, aspirin, hyoscine, and various essential oils).



Shelf Life display - © Michael Holland

Part of the purpose of 'Shelf Life' was to encourage recycling, to collect seeds from the food eaten and save relevant packaging that would otherwise be thrown away.

The garden still has an ongoing Shelf Life display and also offers an extensive set of accompanying learning resources which can be viewed on the garden's website:
www.chelseaphysicgarden.co.uk/teaching-resources

"Many of the younger visitors to Chelsea Physic Garden (around 2,500 per year) are very surprised – and often quite disgusted – that their meals may have come from plants. When they see tomatoes in a ketchup bottle, potatoes growing in a crisp packet and mint in a toothpaste tube, the message sinks in". *Michael Holland, previous Head of Education, Chelsea Physic Garden*

Case study 14: Wasteline Initiative, Eden Project

Eden's Project Wasteline initiative, aims to design out waste from the garden's products and procedures in the first instance (reduce), to close the loop on material flows (recycle) by sending as much as possible for recycling (currently 51% of total waste) and energy recovery (24%). 100% of Eden's food waste is composted and with a target of zero waste to landfill, the figure is currently at 8%.

Wasteline involves working with suppliers to reduce the amount of packaging that comes onto site, helping teams and visitors improve recycling rates through better products and signage, and involving staff and Eden Apprentices in coming up with waste reduction solutions.

Eden no longer sells water in plastic bottles or uses plastic straws and encourages the use of reusable cups and bottles through products sold in its shop, discounts for customers who bring their own cups, and provision at Eden events. Sandwiches and other food items are wrapped in paper and the majority of food and drinks are served in crockery, which is washed and reused. All food waste is either composted on-site or is sent off for composting at a local anaerobic digestion plant.

Any waste for processing is weighed and over 20 different waste streams are recorded. The data is analysed to make informed decisions about where to focus waste reduction efforts.



For more information: <https://www.edenproject.com/eden-story/behind-the-scenes/waste-and-recycling-at-eden>

Case study 15: Plastic Waste Reduction, Royal Botanic Gardens Kew

Kew have removed 98% of all single-use plastic from their cafés and restaurants, working with the on-site catering company to do so. In its place, the garden provides commercially compostable packaging made from PLA plastics. The garden is also trialling some serving options that cut out packaging altogether by serving food straight to the plate.

In their shops, all virgin plastic bags have been replaced with paper bags for purchases (with the exception are plant bags which need to be waterproof and sealable for biosecurity). These are made from 100% recycled and recyclable plastic. Plastic has also been removed from sweets packaging which is now made from fully compostable cornstarch.

Working with suppliers, the garden is also reducing and replacing single-use plastic packaging on other items. For example, some children's toys are now to be made from recycled instead of virgin plastic.

The compostable PLA plastic packaging, along with food waste, can be placed in compost bins in the cafés. The garden is currently trialling a system on-site to turn this waste into soil improver using an aerobic waste digester, called the Garbage Guzzler. This uses heat and bacteria to convert all compostable waste into soil improver. General café waste is sorted for recycling and biofuel.



Compostable cutlery - © Paul Smith

For more information: <https://www.kew.org/read-and-watch/how-kew-gardens-is-fighting-plastic-pollution>

Food choices

Case study 16: Make the Change, Eden Project

Make the Change is an Eden Project initiative to challenge visitors to help fight climate change and biodiversity loss through small actions. This includes a Make the Pledge campaign where individuals can sign up, pledging to do one or more simple sustainable actions. Among the 11 Top Tips there should be something for everyone. Eden's approach is a regenerative one, with focus on optimism and solutions to inspire and empower people to take positive action.

The Make the Change pages include information on a range of subjects such as creating a wildflower meadow, building a compost heap, saving fuel, making an insect home and greening a visit to the garden. The resources also include information on simple food actions that individuals can do such as making a meal out of left overs once a week, or out of local, seasonal products.



© Make the Change / Eden Project

For more information: <https://www.edenproject.com/make-the-change/what-you-can-do/pledge>

Case study 17: Planet Botanic: Green Inspectors, Oxford University Botanic Garden & Arboretum

How can we look after the planet for future generations? Pupils are transformed into 'Green Inspectors' to see how environmentally friendly the Garden really is. Pupils will think about the wise use of water and power, endangered species, food production, Fairtrade and waste reduction. The session is a fun introduction to sustainability, full of ideas for pupils to take back to school and home to make the world a greener place. This session is linked to the National Curriculum and is ideal for those needing inspiration for school councils and the 'Eco Schools' challenge. This session contains both a guided tour and self-guided activities.

For more information: <https://www.obga.ox.ac.uk/planet-botanic>

Case study 19: The Chefs Manifesto, Royal Botanic Gardens Kew

The Royal Botanic Gardens Kew have collaborated with the SDG2 Advocacy Hub, which has brought top chefs from all over the world together to create a Chefs' Manifesto. The manifesto, made by chefs for chefs, is a framework, which outlines how chefs can contribute to the SDGs through simple, practical actions. Set up to fight the food-related issues that matter most to them under the SDGs, the campaign aims for a better and more sustainable food system for all.

Several of the chefs involved with Chefs' Manifesto paid a visit to Kew to learn about the garden's vital science and horticultural work around food security, sustainability, biodiversity and growing food in new ways. The relationship between science and food is vital to achieving the SDGs.

'It's been amazing to be at Kew Gardens and to have botanical scientists meeting with chefs, really sharing insights into different plants and how they are used and grown,' says Paul Newnham, Director of the SDG2 Advocacy Hub.

'But also how this can translate into taste and flavour and help us address some of the Sustainable Development Goals.

'I think there is a real opportunity for these kinds of cross collaborations to really look at creating new solutions to some of the biggest challenges we face such as climate change and biodiversity loss.'



Chefs involved with SDG2 Advocacy Hub's Chef's Manifesto - © Paul Smith

For more information: <https://www.kew.org/read-and-watch/chefs-manifesto-kew-science-sustainable-development-goals>

Case study 20: BigPicnic, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh

Inequality, culture and knowledge all create barriers to accessing nutritious food, but many communities and individuals are striving to overcome them.

The EU funded BigPicnic project (coordinated by BGCI) aimed to explore the global challenge of food security using participatory methods to facilitate a conversation with a diverse group of people.

As part of this project, the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh collaborated with local food initiatives to give a voice to people. Using digital storytelling, a quick and easy video making method, people were able to develop and record personal food stories.

A set of 19 digital stories were created during the project. All of the stories were shared at community venues as part of pop-up “exhibitions”. In 2019, the stories were presented to Members of the Scottish Parliament during a period of consultation over Scotland’s ambition to become a Good Food Nation. The overall aim of the project was to listen to people not always heard by decision-makers, and encourage debate on access to good food.



Digital storytelling with user-friendly technology enables those with no experience to make short engaging videos - ©RBGE

For more information: <https://www.rbge.org.uk/news/big-picnic/>

Case study 18: The Big Lunch, Eden Project

The project started with a very simple idea - what if, on one day a year, people came together with their communities and shared a meal.

And so, in 2009, The Big Lunch was born. It's the UK's annual get-together for neighbours taking place each June and its grown ten-fold since then, each year getting bigger and better as millions of people take to their streets, gardens and neighbourhoods to join in for a few hours of community, friendship, and fun.

The Big Lunch connects people and encourages friendlier, safer neighbourhoods where people start to share more – from conversations and ideas, to skills and resources, and, for some, it ignites a passion for doing more good things where they live.

The Eden Project provide a pack of resources to help individuals, groups and communities set up their own Big Lunch.

From 750,000 people who joined the first Big Lunch back in 2009, now over 6 million people a year, of all faiths, ages, ethnicities and backgrounds, come together with their neighbours to share food, have fun and get to know each other better.

'Over the years we've had Big Lunches, it's had a massive impact on our community. We know each other now, and I'd say a good 70/80% of my social life now is centred around my neighbours.' Big Luncher, Lisa

For more information: <https://www.edenprojectcommunities.com/thebiglunchhomepage>

A selection of (non-botanic garden) sustainable food case studies

As has been shown in the case studies above, botanic gardens in the UK are running a wide variety of sustainable food based programmes. Within this project however we also want to identify and showcase potential opportunities and collaborations with other organisations working within this field. Below are a selection of case studies relevant for botanic gardens.

Community Fridge Project, Hubbub

Community fridges are an easy way to share good food that would otherwise go to waste. A community fridge is a space where anyone who lives nearby can exchange surplus food, including businesses.

Hubbub coordinates the world's only and biggest Community Fridge Network with over 130 members (95 are up and running, and the rest are setting up). They offer free support to groups across the country to set up their community fridge and are providing a comprehensive guide, design assets, health and safety templates and a free fridge.

For more information: <https://www.hubbub.org.uk/the-community-fridge>

Feeding the 5000, Feedback

Feeding the 5000 is a campaign that aims to shine a light on the global food waste scandal, champions delicious solutions and catalyses the global movement. To date Feedback and partners have hosted over 50 Feeding the 5000 events around the world, where a communal feast for 5000 people is served up, made entirely out of food that would otherwise have been wasted. The campaign brings together a coalition of organisations that offer the solutions to food waste, raising the issue up the political agenda and inspiring new local initiatives.

For more information: <https://feedbackglobal.org/campaigns/feeding-the-5000/>

The Cool Food Challenge

Cool Food is a French-British project created under the INTERREG FRANCE (CHANNEL) ENGLAND PROGRAMME to support the transition to a low-carbon economy. It focuses on the development and adoption of new or existing low-carbon technologies in sectors with the highest potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The project created 10 commitments – or challenges – for individuals to take on. Each one helps to make a noticeable carbon saving and individuals that sign up are provided with a range of hints, tips and delicious recipes to inspire. The challenges are:

- Introduce vegetarian meals
- Chop your meat portions in half
- Make your own meals
- Dairy-free days
- Don't waste bread
- Reduce your food waste
- Buy local, seasonal and organic
- Swap soft drinks for tap water
- Have tea-free days
- Have coffee-free days

For more information: <http://coolfood.net/en/about-coolfood/>

Good to Grow, Sustain

Good to Grow (previously called the Big Dig) is an online platform to support food growing in the UK, run by Sustain. The Good to Grow Network is all about getting people involved in their local community garden.

Gardens that are part of the network can promote their activities using the project's platform to encourage new volunteers. The platform also has a series of available resources such as the Harvest-o-meter, an online tool that helps growers keep track of how much food they grow and how much money they save.

For more information: <https://www.goodtogrowuk.org/>

Sustain also have a range of other sustainable food projects:

<https://www.sustainweb.org/projectsandcampaigns/>