

FOODS WE CAN TRUST

A BLUEPRINT FOR FOOD SECURITY
AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE IN THE UK



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Foods We Can Trust: A Blueprint for Food Security and Community Resilience in the UK

Author's Note

Food is as vital to our survival as the air we breathe and the water we drink. Yet, in a world shaken by global events - pandemics, wars, climate extremes, and economic shocks - we are being forced to confront just how fragile our access to food truly is.

The empty shelves, supply chain breakdowns, and soaring prices witnessed in recent years are not distant headlines; they are warnings that the systems we rely on can fail, and that complacency is no longer an option.

We cannot afford to treat food as a mere commodity or convenience. The urgency to reconsider our relationship with food has never been greater. Now is the time to arm ourselves with real knowledge about what food means, where it comes from, and how we can secure access to the foods that genuinely meet our needs.

This is not just about national policy or global trade - it is about reclaiming power at the most personal level, ensuring that we, our families, and our communities are resilient in the face of uncertainty.

At the government level, food security is too often interpreted as simply ensuring that people have something – anything - to eat, regardless of its source, quality, or nutritional value. This narrow view shapes policy and public messaging, and overlooks the deeper vulnerabilities in our food system.

The approach to farmers and the UK food chain has prioritised convenience and global supply over resilience and self-sufficiency, leaving us dangerously exposed. In a world where events can disrupt the flow of food into the country at any time, this complacency puts every household at risk.

Food is power. When we understand it, value it, and take responsibility for our choices, we begin to secure not only our own wellbeing but also the future of those around us.

Food security is not an abstract issue - it is immediate, urgent, and deeply personal. By learning, reflecting, and acting, each of us can play a part in shaping a future where food is truly recognised as the essential of life that it is.

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Cheltenham. UK.
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Introduction

Introduction

In a world increasingly shaped by uncertainty - pandemics, climate extremes, economic shocks, and geopolitical tensions - the question of how we secure our food has never been more urgent.

Foods We Can Trust: A Blueprint for Food Security and Community Resilience in the UK invites readers to rethink their relationship with food, challenging the complacency that has left households and communities vulnerable to supply chain disruptions and rising prices.

This book is not just a policy manual or a critique of government and industry. It is a call to action for individuals, families, and communities to reclaim power over what they eat and how it is produced.

Drawing on personal experience, research, and practical insight, Adam Tugwell explores the complex realities of food security in the UK - from the narrow definitions used by policymakers to the deeper vulnerabilities exposed by our reliance on global supply chains.

Through clear explanations, practical tables, and accessible guidance, the book equips readers with the knowledge to understand nutrition, assess the reliability of their food sources, and take meaningful steps toward resilience.

It highlights the abundance of foods that can be farmed, caught, harvested, and grown locally, and demonstrates how home growing and community initiatives can transform not just our plates, but our wellbeing and social fabric.

Foods We Can Trust is both a blueprint and an invitation: to question, to learn, to act, and to share. Whether you are a grower, a community organiser, or simply someone who cares about the future of food, this book offers the tools and inspiration to help build a more secure, nourishing, and connected future for all.

PART 1 - What is Food Security?

Introduction

Food security is a term that's often used in headlines, policy debates, and community conversations - but its true meaning is far from simple.

For many, it conjures images of full supermarket shelves or national self-sufficiency. For others, it's about the daily reality of wondering where the next meal will come from, or whether the food available is truly nourishing and trustworthy.

In the UK, the concept of food security is shaped by a range of perspectives: government officials, farmers, food producers, and everyday members of the public all bring their own experiences and priorities to the table.

These differences matter. They influence the policies we create, the support we offer, and the choices we make as individuals and communities.

My own understanding of food security has been shaped by personal experience and research. I've seen firsthand how easy it is for the meaning of food security to become muddled - sometimes even manipulated - by those in positions of power.

Too often, the conversation is reduced to a simple question: "If people can eat, are they food secure?" But as you'll discover in this section, the reality is much more complex.

In Part 1, we'll explore:

- How food security is defined by different groups, and why these definitions matter
- The risks and vulnerabilities in the UK's current food supply
- What true food security should mean for everyone, beyond just having enough to eat

By the end of this section, you'll have a clearer understanding of the challenges we face - and why rethinking food security is essential for building a future where everyone can access foods they can trust.

Food Security Unpacked: Perspectives, Risks, and Realities

Food Security is one of the key reasons that I embarked on my Foods We Can Trust project.

Because of what Food Security means to me, what I understand it to really be and most importantly, how important I believe Food Security to be in respect of everyone – and that means us all.

However, like many things about Food today and indeed pretty much every experience that we share with others beyond ourselves and what's very personal to us alone, Food Security can mean a lot of very different things.

And that difference is already doing a lot of harm.

What does Food Security mean to you?

Before we continue, could I ask you to please take a moment to stop and think about what Food Security means to you.

Is it about the Food that UK Farms produce?

Is it about being sure there is always Food available to eat?

Is it knowing that you will always have a choice of Food and whatever you want to eat?

For you, Food Security and what it means to be Food Secure could be any of these. It could be any of these in a manner of speaking. Or what Food Security means to you could be something very different, and ALL of the options could still be correct!

The things that Food Security can and does mean

It is important that we recognise and accept that different perceptions of Food Security not only exist.

To some, their own view, or what someone else like the Government refers to or considers to be 'Food Security' is the only thing that it *can* be.

Unfortunately, having any fixed or accepted meaning for Food Security can be problematic when there is a version of Food Security that everyone accepts as being what Food Security means, and those who are controlling that narrative then abuse the trust that people place in the understanding those people have of that version of Food Security and then manipulate information, statistics and even the truth, so that it can be said that either you or the UK is 'Food Secure', *even when you are not*.

In a moment, I will talk about the version of Food Security which is the establishment's 'accepted' term.

I will then discuss the version of Food Security that UK Farmers and Food Producers generally think of when they talk about it.

We will then move on to discussing what Food Security should really mean, *to everyone*.

The Establishment view: If people can eat, they have Food Security

The way that the establishment, politicians and government operate today is built around this idea or philosophical standpoint:

If people can eat, they are Food Secure

Yes, I understand that suggesting this will annoy different people and organisations who are doing great things in the Food sphere. *Because very few of us actually believe that as long as people have a meal of some kind, that's all Food Security is about.*

However, if you consider what having a meal of some kind can and regrettably does mean for so many different people in so many different ways today, you will then begin to see how those who really have control over Food policy, have come to think about their priorities and obligation to the Public in this *perhaps honest*, but nonetheless very unhelpful way.

If you aren't hungry, you don't have a problem

It sounds brutal I know, *and it really is.*

But with the issues that Government is really facing today – *and that means the things that are really going on, rather than what the media and the narratives would suggest we believe*, politicians do genuinely believe that if everyone can eat, they have done their job – no matter where our Food comes from or the Food we are eating really is.

This means that all the initiatives about healthy eating, encouraging us to eat properly and even the talk about how important our Farms and Fishing are, are really just wishful thinking and it doesn't really matter to whoever is in power if they come to nothing. *Because the only problem for them will be if people have nothing to eat and then everything as we know it stops as a result.*

Foodbanks are a very uncomfortable truth

What I have just written isn't easy to read.

I wouldn't be surprised if it makes people feel prickly at the thought that so many parts of government, the public sector and all the organisations that are championing positive messages about Food and what we eat, are currently championing a lost cause.

But if you really want to try to get to grips with what the real priority around Food Security for politicians, the government and the establishment really is, then considering Foodbanks and the need for them – *which is disputed by many* – will soon begin to tell you what that priority is. *And it has very little to do with Food and the role that Food does or should play in our lives.*

When I was studying at the Royal Agricultural University, I wrote a paper after researching Foodbank use today and compared their role in poverty today in relation to my own experiences of poverty as a child. It's called 'Is Poverty Invisible to those who don't Experience it', and the full version can be read by following the link immediately below:

The Farmer view: Food Security is about the Food that we Produce in the UK

Whilst Food Security is a much broader set of issues than many realise, the one version of Food Security that is perhaps easiest to understand and relate to is that *too much of our Food comes from overseas and outside of the UK.*

Please read my last post on Foods We Can Trust '[Rationing and Health: The Surprising Benefits](#)', if you would like to explore this view of Food Security and what the risks of being dependent upon Food from Overseas can mean.

The latest figures from [The United Kingdom Food Security Report from November 2024](#) suggest that the amount of Food that the UK produces, that we consume ourselves, is 58%.

However, as you read through the detail of this Government Report, you may note that this figure relates to 'Food by Value', which sounds very much like a way of using statistical jargon to make the figure sound higher than it actually is.

Regrettably, this is the kind of language or political double-speak that people in power and authority use, knowing that it is the figure that members of the public will usually note, rather than the words that the figure has been deliberately wrapped with!

During the 2023-24 Academic Year, the figure that I was using for my research, reports and writing was 54%. I found sources that suggested that it was already as low as 52%. I have seen no evidence to suggest that the UK has increased the amount of Food that it produces for our own consumption during that time.

The amount of Food the UK produces and what we would all have available for us to eat in a time of national emergency where the Food Chain was impacted are two VERY different things.

The impact of the Global Food Chain

Because of the way globalism has affected Food Chains and that Food ingredients are sourced and often moved around as they are processed and manufactured to become the Foods that we often eat, it means that very few of the Farms we pass by each day or know of, actually produce Food that we could eat or prepare to eat straight away, if we found ourselves needing to buy from the Farmer direct.

Even if we accept the figure of 58% that the Government has used in its latest Food Security Report, to quantify the amount of Food that the UK produces itself, the actual figure that relates to Food Produced in the UK, that people living in the UK can actually then eat is likely to be much less. Because so much of the Food Produced across the UK goes into Food Supply Chains where it is nowhere near ready for our consumption or is otherwise transported overseas.

The figures being used are therefore an equivalent. Because we have to import the equivalent of the Food that is grown in the UK and then exported or used for other purposes – *because that's how it goes into the Food Chain*, and what we actually eat comes back into the UK from overseas.

The reasons that many farms don't grow or produce Food that is ready for us to eat are many. It may be as simple as the way we eat and prepare Food in the UK means that we don't like certain cuts of meat. It could be that even though the UK has vastly rich reserves of Fish and Seafood, we don't actually eat that much of it ourselves and most of it goes to Europe. Or it may be that the wheat and the flour it produces that makes the kind of bread that Supermarkets have made us all believe we all want to see on sale, is most easy to produce when it comes from overseas.

If it sounds confusing, it is. *And it helps those who are benefiting from the way that the Food Chain works for it all to be very confusing too!*

The bottom line is this:

If we had a crisis tomorrow and the UK's borders were shut down, meaning that no more Food could come in from anywhere overseas, it wouldn't take long before we all experienced Food Shortages. The Food Producers and Farmers that we have in the UK would have to undergo massive structural and system changes, before they would even be close to being able to meet that need. There is no way that would be possible, overnight.

This is scary stuff I know. But its very real and there are parts of government and other organisations that are researching, studying and thinking about what they call Food Resilience, the whole time.

If you would like to look more closely, here is an interesting link:

[Just in Case: 7 steps to narrow the UK civil food resilience gap - National Preparedness Commission](#)

(Please note that this is not a recommendation or endorsement)

The UK's Food Security is at MASSIVE risk, right now

If you've read this far, you may be beginning to see the picture of just how vulnerable the UK Food Chain is, and that within the Food Supply that we are eating from and have available to us, the priorities of those with influence over the Food Chain are not anything like what most of us would think.

We are NOT Food Secure, anywhere in the UK today.

With global uncertainty unfolding in the way that it currently is, we could easily find ourselves experiencing Food Shortages or perhaps even worse, *at any time*.

Even supporting our Farmers with the Food Production related issues as they see them is not as simple and straightforward as campaigns like that driven by No Farmers No Food and some of the Farming Advocacy Organisations would suggest.

A successful outcome to any of their current aims wouldn't be as effective for any of us, as they are suggesting the changes in government policy that they want for themselves would be. Simply because with the if the priorities remain the same, many of the Farms affected by the policies which are in the spotlight aren't producing Food that would be of any immediate use to us to counteract Food Shortages in a crisis, anyway.

So, what does, or rather, what should Food Security really mean?

What Food Security and being 'Food Secure' *should* mean

To be fair, part of the problem, *when it comes to the meaning of Food Security and being 'Food Secure'*, is that the whole subject and all of the other subjects and public policies that the issue of Food Security links to, are VERY complicated. *And in many respects, deliberately so.*

That's why it's very easy to be convinced by any soundbite we hear or read that makes some version of Food Security *and what being Food Secure means to someone else*, easy to get behind.

If we were to distil Food Security and what it means to be Food Secure into the simplest terms possible, it would probably be something as follows.

Namely that we will be Food Secure and have Food Security when:

Everyone can choose to eat enough of the Foods that are Good for them and that will meet their genuine needs at every mealtime, without any experiencing fear of going without or not knowing where the next meal will come from.

However, even this is open to interpretation.

Food Security will regrettably continue to be vulnerable and at risk for as long as what it means to be Food Secure can be interpreted differently by different parties, in ways that are not actually wrong. *From a certain point of view.*

To overcome this problem, it is likely that we all need to at least review and, in all likelihood, moderate or change the way that we think about Food Security and what it is to be Food Secure.

With this in mind, the key ingredients that together provide Food Security are that the Food Supply is:

- Reliable and NOT under Threat
- Available

- Accessible
- Meets Nutritional Needs and Health Requirements
- Affordable

I will now add a little more detail to each, so that they and how they each interact with each other as part of the Food Security equation will hopefully begin to make more sense.

Reliable and not under Threat

Food Security can and will only be achieved when the supply of Food for everyone is not at risk.

If we are Food Secure as a Country or perhaps at the Macro level, the Food Supply cannot and will not be compromised by anything that we and our own systems of governance cannot independently address.

Today, government figures suggest that we are reliant upon at least 42% of the Food that we consume coming from Overseas. That's before we consider that of the remaining 58%, only a fraction of that figure represents Food that any of us could eat at any time.

IF there were a national crisis and the borders shut down, this would mean that even if two thirds (66%) of the Food We Need were available to us every day, year round, that would still mean that more than 22 Million People in the UK would have to go hungry, if the rest of the population were to continue eating the same meals as they do, *today*.

However, we also know that even this isn't the real figure. Because of the way that the UK Food Chain and Food Production works.

The reality is that if we were to experience a real national crisis where no Food from overseas could be brought in, the UK only has enough food AVAILABLE for everyone for perhaps a few days, before Food Shortages would cut in and people of all kinds would start to go without.

Available

We will only be Food Secure when the Food We Need is always available, to everyone.

Being available to everyone means that there is no reason that the Supply of Food can be obstructed or held up by anything that is outside of the control of the person who needs to eat that Food, or the People around them who they know and can trust.

The factors that can make Food unavailable to some are:

Cost

Food is too expensive for some people to be able to afford to eat properly at every mealtime. *And the retail values of all the Food we buy today are continuing to shoot up!*

To be Food Secure, the Food We Need MUST be affordable in the sense that the price to buy or exchange something for that Food is realistic and the price has not been overinflated by something like greed, profiteering or another agenda of some kind.

Supply

For most of us, the Food we are able to eat today relates directly to the Food that is supplied to the shops, websites or other sources where we buy it.

If we cannot source the Food We Need, the supply is not functioning as it should, and we are NOT Food Secure.

If the only Food Supply that we can Access will provide us with 'Food' that isn't healthy for us or that we can afford to buy (with the money we have available) then that Supply is also NOT Food Secure.

To be Food Secure, we must ALL be able to Access the Foods We can Trust, without having to choose from Foods that are not good for us, as a substitute.

Religion and Ideology

Regrettably, agendas, ideas and even religion can get in the way of us being able to Access Food that is available. Because ideological restrictions can easily prevent some from accessing that Food, because others have made a 'conscious' choice.

This is not a matter of saying that anyone who will not eat certain Foods because of a religious or philosophical viewpoint is wrong.

It is merely a fact that many of those same people then influence the Supply of Food around them, because of the choices that they themselves make.

The agendas of other people are also important to consider. In instances such as the political pursuit of Net Zero, the choices that politicians are making and some of the worlds billionaires are using their financial resources to impose, will lead to the supply of Foods We Need being restricted and potentially stopped, only because of the ideas that they wish to pursue.

We will only be Food Secure when no other person can influence the supply of the Foods We Need, simply because they have the power, influence or financial means to do so.

Greed and Profiteering

In my recent book '[Who Controls Our Food Controls Our Future](#)', we unpicked the layers of the Food Chain onion to expose just how the Food Chain that brings most of the Food we all eat today, isn't really about the Food We Eat at all.

The Food Chain today is ultimately all about money, profit and the power and influence that go along with an entire Food System that is being increasingly used as a tool of societal control.

People, Communities and entire Nations can and will only be Food Secure when they have complete control over their Food Chain and Food Destiny.

That means Food being all about the Food and what Food really means to People and Life, rather than the Food Chain being all about money, profit, influence and control, as it is now.

Accessible

We will only be Food Secure when the Food We Need is always Accessible.

Access literally means that we can access the Food We Need for every mealtime and that no matter where we are, what transport we have available, or what physical barriers might be in the way, these factors will never get in the way or stop us from eating as and when we might like or need to.

To put this in context, most of us can access one of the well-known supermarket brands across the UK, either by being able to travel to one of their stores, or by being able to make an online order that will then be delivered to our home or wherever we are, from there.

However, our Food Access is now limited to whatever the stores we are able to access actually sell.

Food Security will not exist until we are able to access the Foods We Need, whenever and wherever we need them to be.

Meets Nutritional Needs and Health Requirements

We will not be Food Secure until the Food that is Available, Accessible and Affordable, also meets all of our Nutritional Needs and Health Requirements – not matter what we may then personally choose to buy, prepare and eat from the Food that is available.

No matter how politically convenient it might be for politicians and the establishment to work on the basis that '*Food is Food, no matter what the Food really is*' – whether deliberate or not, the truth is that **Not all Food is equal in the Food Chain today**, and the greater percentage of the Food that is Affordable to everyone, isn't actually very good for us at all!

Affordable

Whilst we have already talked about Cost and the price of the Food that we buy, there is also a much bigger and perhaps even more alarming dimension to the issue or question of the Food that people can afford to buy. It relates to the issue of the Affordability of Food itself.

If people cannot afford to feed their dependents and themselves for reasons outside of their control that mean they don't have enough money to buy the Foods they Need, they are NOT Food Secure.

Food Security for them, is unaffordable.

It is very easy for those who can get by each week to look unfavourably upon those who cannot and to assume that anyone who doesn't have enough money for Food – *either for themselves or themselves and their dependents* – will have found themselves in difficulty through their own financial mismanagement. Or because they don't work as much as they should.

Whilst this may of course be true for some, the number which it would be accurate to describe will be significantly smaller than many might imagine.

Indeed, the reason why many people today find themselves short and in need of emergency help like that provided by Foodbanks, is because **a significant part of our society does not either earn or receive an income high enough – even for working a full working week – to cover the basic cost of living and to provide themselves with the basic essentials that are necessary today, just to stand still.**

In October 2023 I wrote about [what it genuinely cost to live as opposed to the rate of the National Minimum Wage](#) and calculated that the difference between what those working a full-time 40hr week on the lowest *legal* wage and what it would actually cost to live without claiming benefits, help from charities (Foodbanks) or getting into debt, was at least £2.50 per hour or £100.00 per week.

Although [the rate of the National Minimum Wage jumped to £12.21 in April](#) of this year, there is no reason to believe that with inflation continuing to push up the cost of living as quickly as it has, that anything is really different for anyone on the lowest wages now.

Just as serious is the reality that life for many today revolves around credit.

Those with monthly payment commitments, *including even those earning what many of us would consider to be very good wages*, can easily find that a list of monthly outgoings that seemed very affordable at the time the commitments were made, can suddenly become an unaffordable burden. When even the smallest of changes – perhaps to utility bills, fuel or similar takes place, and payments are raised with those higher costs automatically taken from a credit card or bank account.

As food is one of the few things that most of us still pay for, *as we go*, it is easy to see how the disposable income left for Food and other essentials can very quickly disappear, pretty much as we are all still asleep!

Food Security and Income are inextricably linked

The reality is that Food Security at the personal or perhaps micro level, is inextricably linked with income levels and what it costs to live.

Because government doesn't prioritise the Food Chain and Supply of Food in the way that we all really should, Food has become an afterthought in far too many ways.

No serious steps have been taken to acknowledge and certainly not to make provision for the need for everyone to be able to access and eat enough of the Food We Need, without being dependent upon the help or intervention of others to get by.

Any government that doesn't recognise and legislate to ensure that everyone who is able to work can earn enough to cover the costs of the basics and essentials they need on a basic wage, without benefits, charity or debt, is not fulfilling its obligations or responsibilities to society at all.

Until the Food We Need is affordable for everyone – no matter how ridiculous in today's terms that might seem, we will NOT be Food Secure!

Truth vs *Truths* that serve someone else's purposes

The Food Security question and getting to grips with Food Security and what being Food Secure really is, demonstrates just how easy it has become for those with platforms and influence to speak about a subject and mean one thing, whilst knowing that to everyone else, what they have said will be heard as something very different.

Both the Establishment (Inc. Government, political, big business in the Food Chain) and the U.K. Farming industry hold positions on Food Security which are arguably right, *from a certain point of view or from a manner of speaking.*

Both positions on Food Security, either when:

- a) People have 'food' or
- b) Food should be produced on Farms in the UK

are **both** correct.

But they are also only partial truths.

Like any good sales tactic, a partial truth – or a sales pitch that contains an element of truth that they know will make the whole narrative, story or line sound like the whole thing is true – and is often enough to make an argument that is otherwise utterly flawed sound compelling, *because we have fallen into the trap of assuming the rest!*

So yes, it is certainly correct to say that we all need to eat food and if we are fed, we will not be hungry. But if the food itself isn't good for us, is unaffordable, could potentially do us harm or comes with strings attached, it will not be Foods We Can Trust.

Equally, if only the equivalent of what we all eat is produced or grown on Farms across the UK, but is nonetheless produced with chemicals or processes that cause harm in any way, or the food grown is itself transported overseas and replaced by food that comes from overseas so that the net equation says we are producing what we eat ourselves, that also isn't Foods We Can Trust.

*Where Food Security is concerned, Farmers cannot be victim and saviour at the same time
It is important to add that I am massively pro-UK Farming. I'm just not pro-UK Farming in the sense that the industry typically functions today.*

Farming today is actually part of the Food Problem. Because it has become part of the global model that is causing all the problems with Food.

Farmers understandably want help and support from everyone. But what they really want is for the establishment to change its policies so that the way farming works today stays the same, but just works better – more realistically, but also more profitably for them.

What many in the industry have not recognised yet is that UK Farming is no longer seen as being necessary to an establishment that believes it doesn't have a problem with the Supply of Food, as long as people are being fed – no matter what they are being fed with.

Meanwhile, the people - that's us – who desperately need UK Farmers to see the bigger picture and step up in a very different way – will lose out twice as badly if UK Farming collapses and the establishment gets its way!

If you'd like to read 'Who Controls Our Food Controls Our Future', a copy is available online [HERE](#).

If you'd like to understand more about the realities that underpin the differences between what we say deliberately or innocently, and what others hear, a read of the very interesting book '[Words that Work - It's not what you say, It's what people hear](#)' by American Pollster Dr Frank Lunz may be worth your while.

Going round in circles

You may now feel the need to circle back to the 'as long as people aren't hungry' backstop – which is where *without good governance and leadership*, the bigger Food picture and the importance of Food and the role it should be playing in our lives usually falls down.

We can accept what others tell us. Or we can be clear that we require Foods We Can Trust to be normal life for all.

Part 1 Summary

Part 1 explores the complex and often misunderstood concept of food security in the UK, examining how its definition and practical implications vary depending on perspective and policy.

Key Points

- Multiple Definitions and Perspectives:
Food security means different things to different groups—government, farmers, and the public. The actions of government define food security simply as “if people can

eat, they are food secure,” focusing on the availability of any food, regardless of quality or origin. Farmers, on the other hand, emphasise the importance of producing food within the UK and reducing reliance on imports.

- Risks in the UK Food Supply:

The UK is highly dependent on imported food, with only about 58% of food consumed produced domestically (and possibly less, depending on how statistics are calculated). This reliance on global supply chains makes the UK vulnerable to disruptions, and the actual availability of UK-grown food for immediate consumption is much lower than official figures suggest.

- Food Security Should Mean More Than Just Having Enough to Eat:

True food security goes beyond mere availability. It should ensure that everyone can choose to eat enough foods that are good for them, meeting genuine nutritional needs at every mealtime, without fear of going without or uncertainty about the next meal.

- Key Ingredients of Food Security:

Food security requires that the food supply is:

- Reliable and not under threat
- Available to everyone
- Accessible regardless of location or circumstance
- Nutritious and meets health requirements
- Affordable for all

- Barriers to Food Security:

Factors such as cost, supply chain issues, ideological or religious restrictions, greed and profiteering, and insufficient income all contribute to food insecurity. Many people in the UK do not earn enough to afford a healthy diet without assistance, and foodbanks have become a necessary but uncomfortable reality.

- Partial Truths and Manipulation:

Both government and farming industry narratives about food security contain elements of truth but are often incomplete or manipulated to serve particular interests. This can lead to public misunderstanding and ineffective policy.

- Call for Rethinking Food Security:

Part 1 concludes that food security in the UK is at significant risk and calls for a broader, more inclusive understanding - one that prioritises reliable, nutritious, and accessible food for all, and recognises the need for systemic change in policy and practice.

In summary:

Part 1 challenges readers to reconsider what food security truly means, highlights the vulnerabilities in the UK's current system, and sets the stage for exploring nutrition, local food production, and community action in the following sections.

PART 2 - What our bodies need every day

Introduction

When we talk about food security, it's easy to focus on whether there's enough food to go around. But having "enough" isn't the whole story. True food security means having access to foods that nourish us—foods that provide the nutrients our bodies need to thrive, not just survive.

For many of us, the science of nutrition can feel abstract or overwhelming, filled with technical terms and conflicting advice. Yet, understanding the basics of what our bodies require is essential if we want to make informed choices for ourselves and our families. Nutrition isn't just for experts—it's for everyone who eats.

In this section, we'll cut through the confusion and look at the fundamentals: the macronutrients and micronutrients that keep us healthy, why our needs can differ, and how to approach dietary information with a critical eye. You'll find practical tables, trusted sources, and guidance on how to become more conscious about what you eat and why it matters.

By the end of Part 2, you'll have a clearer understanding of what your body needs every day—and why access to nutritious, trustworthy food is a cornerstone of genuine food security.

Nutrition Made Simple

The very sad thing about a standard education is that pretty much everything to do with science seems abstract or theoretical – and especially so when it comes to our relationship with Food and what our bodies actually do with it – *which is pretty amazing!*

Everything to do with Food, how we produce Food and how our bodies turn Food and what it contains from its basic natural forms into all the things that we need is an extraordinary process. The real magic of it all it is almost certainly happening in our bodies, right now.

We don't need to be scientists or have a truck load of science qualifications to understand the basic mechanics and processes of the body. *And if you are interested in finding out more, the internet and channels like YouTube have bags of information that come from a wide range of sources that don't have agendas!*

Will we look closely at specific Foods in other posts. But to begin with, I wanted to share an overview of the more detailed stuff that we should probably all know about the things that our bodies actually need our meals to contain EVERY DAY!

Like most of us, I'm not a food scientist, dietician or nutritionist. So, if you really want to get into the levels of detail which are available to uncover, these are the types of specialists who should have the most accurate understanding of these subject areas. You may also like to

follow the links that I have added to this page that provide an idea of the kinds of organisations that are working on these subjects too.

Nutrition and Nutrients that our bodies need

When we start to look at what our bodies actually need to take from the Food We Eat, we are considering Nutrients and what is commonly referred to as Nutrition.

Nutrition is all about what Nutrients our bodies actually need; how much of those Nutrients our bodies need, and also, how much of those Nutrients may be *too much*.

Please do remember that too much or too little of anything we eat, or drink can become a problem, usually over a period of time!

The Nutritional Content of our Food is usually talked about at two different levels.

These levels are **Macronutrients** and **Micronutrients**.

Macronutrients are terms that we often hear talked about on the media and news. They include words like Sugar, Fat, Carbohydrate, Protein and Fibre.

Micronutrients are terms that we don't hear talked about quite as often – unless we have an interest or maybe a job that puts us in regular contact with them, or we pay very close attention to food labelling all the time! They include words like Vitamins and Minerals – and then names like Calcium, Riboflavin, Phosphorus and a range of other Minerals and Vitamins too.

Every person's body and their nutritional requirements are different

It's important to be clear that I have written and posted this page to provide an overview of the basic nuts and bolts reasons why we all need to be able to eat Foods We Can Trust, *normally*.

Every Human Body is different.

Each of our Bodies has different Nutritional requirements.

Our Nutritional requirements may also vary depending on a wide range of factors that themselves may have very little to do with our food.

Macronutrients

With this being an important part of the background and reason for Foods We Can Trust when it comes to making sense of what this Food Journey is about, I wanted to focus on information that is already available online, *that we can all access*.

Below is a brief table that I put together after doing an Internet search that we could all do using the search term 'Daily Nutritional Requirements'.

My search provided a number of different links with the 4 that I have chosen to draw information from following immediately below:

Table 1: Macronutrients

(Web Search on Google 1 May 2025, from Cheltenham, UK)

Daily Macronutrient Requirements

Nutrient	BNF (UK) Male	BNF (UK) Female	FSC (NZ/Aus) Avg. Adult	WHO Healthy Person
Calorie Intake	2500 cal/pd	2000 cal/pd	—	2000 cal/pd
Fat	≤97g	≤78g	70g	—
Saturated Fat	≤31g	≤24g	24g	—
Carbohydrate	≤333g	≤267g	310g	—
Free Sugars	≤33g	≤27g	—	50g
Sugars	—	—	90g	—
Protein	55g	45g	50g	—
Fibre	30g	30g	30g	—
Salt	≤6g	≤6g	2.3g	≤5g

>= Up to <= More than

BNF = British Nutrition Foundation

FSC = Relates to the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code (There was an election underway at the time of the search which appears to mean the main website has been unpublished)

WHO = World Health Organisation

The most important information is on the left of the Table where the names of the Macronutrients and Calorie Intake requirement are listed.

I've added the different figures that these different websites have provided, as they give a general idea of the amount of the **Macronutrients** that we need in our Food every day.

However, they also demonstrate that confusion and contradiction can exist between just 3 different organisations, which we might all consider to be credible, as there are different approaches and figures being used.

I'm not going to recommend sources, but the links here are very interesting in respect of the information we are focusing on.

<https://www.nutrition.org.uk/nutrition-for/men/nutrition-recommendations-for-men/>

<https://www.nutrition.org.uk/nutrition-for/women/nutrition-recommendations-for-women/>

<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/healthy-diet>

<http://www.mydailyintake.net/daily-intake-levels/>

How much is a Gram?

You may be in for a shock when it comes to getting to grips with just how much these suggested amounts are.

A Gram (g) would be best represented by the approximate weight of either a raisin, a paperclip or a biro cap!

Micronutrients

The subject of **Micronutrients** is where Nutrition starts to sound much more like a science and it's very easy to become switched off or feel like you are glazing over.

Here's a list of the **Micronutrients** – that's **Vitamins** and **Minerals**, that our bodies require daily.

The search terms were specific – i.e. 'calcium' or 'calcium function body'.

Please note that I have opted not to add specific amounts here.

As with **Macronutrients**, the amount of **Micronutrients** that we require will almost certainly vary from person to person.

*My own view on Nutritional intake is that it makes sense to work out which Foods contain and will provide these **Macronutrients** and **Micronutrients** as part of a regular diet and go from there (Unless we have special or medically related Nutritional requirements and are taking advice or instruction from a specialist of some kind).*

Table 2: Micronutrients

(Web Search on MSN / Bing 1 May 2025, from Cheltenham, UK)

Key Daily Micronutrients

Vitamin	Also Known As	Functions (Examples)	Reference Link
Vitamin A	Retinol	Immunity, Vision, Skin	https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vitamins-and-minerals/vitamin-a/

Vitamin	Also Known As	Functions (Examples)	Reference Link
Vitamin B1	Thiamine	Energy, Nervous System	https://www.nhs.uk/medicines/thiamine-vitamin-b1/about-thiamine/
Vitamin B2	Riboflavin	Skin, Blood Cells, Brain Function	https://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/Riboflavin-HealthProfessional/
Vitamin B3	Niacin	Energy, Heart, Nervous System, Skin	https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vitamins-and-minerals/vitamin-b/
Vitamin B6	Pyridoxine	Brain Health, Immunity	https://www.mayoclinic.org/drugs-supplements-vitamin-b6/art-20363468
Vitamin B9	Folate	Blood Cells, Pregnancy	https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/folate
Vitamin B12	Cobalamin	Blood Cells, DNA, Brain/Nerves	https://www.mayoclinic.org/drugs-supplements-vitamin-b12/art-20363663
Vitamin C	Ascorbic Acid	Immunity, Cell Repair, Skin, Iron Absorption	https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vitamins-and-minerals/vitamin-c/
Vitamin D	Sunshine Vitamin	Bones, Teeth, Muscles	https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vitamins-and-minerals/vitamin-d/

By now, you will probably be getting a good idea of how much detail, information, research and study is available on the subject of Nutrition at this level.

Foods We Can Trust isn't about Food Science as such. But it certainly includes the importance of Food Science within it!

Getting to Grips with our own Nutrition and Nutritional Requirements

The only person we can really trust when it comes to what we put in our mouths, is ourselves.

So, the best way to look at any source of information is do do so with critical thinking.

Please don't take any information about Food at face value, just because the source has a well-known name, is a big brand, has lots of followers, or is even a public organisation.

Ask yourself what the facts are. What is opinion. What is just something that helps someone else. What they are really trying to achieve. What is the message, story or narrative really about. Who or what are they really working for. What's stopping them from being a bigger voice and making a real difference. How much of their credibility is because of how well known or who they are. And of course, does what they are saying set off any alarm bells in the wrong way – *and not just because you are hearing something that is true, and you don't like it because it means you should change!*

Worth a Look

The NHS has created The Eatwell Guide, which you will find at the end of this link and may well be worth a visit:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/food-guidelines-and-food-labels/the-eatwell-guide/>

Another interesting page that I found as I was looking more closely at Nutrition earlier was this from the United States:

<https://www.nal.usda.gov/human-nutrition-and-food-safety/dri-calculator>

Please note that it is clearly intended for use by Medical Professionals and that there is no clear guidance upon how the page works, what information and calculations it uses, so it shouldn't be used as advice.

It may, however, provide some interesting food for thought!

Overview on what our bodies need every day

We should all be aware of these lists, so that we can become more conscious about what we are eating and whether the food we consume is providing us with enough of everything we need to keep our bodies healthy.

Checking the contents listed on packets, asking what the pastries in our favourite coffee shop contain and talking to the farmer at the local farm shop about what they use to grow their crops and feed their animals are all actions that we can and should take, and not think twice about doing so.

When we know what we are eating and have full control over our diet, we will then have the best chance of being able to enjoy great physical, mental and all-round health, for as long as possible.

Part 2 Summary

Part 2 explores the essential role of nutrition in genuine food security, emphasising that having “enough” food is not enough. What matters is access to foods that truly nourish us.

Key Points

- **Nutrition Is for Everyone:**
Understanding nutrition isn't just for experts. Everyone who eats benefits from knowing the basics of what our bodies require to thrive, not just survive.
- **Macronutrients and Micronutrients:**
Nutrition is built on two main categories:
 - **Macronutrients:** These include carbohydrates, proteins, fats, fibre, and sugars. They provide energy and are needed in larger amounts. Tables in this section outline recommended daily intakes from trusted sources such as the British Nutrition Foundation and the World Health Organisation.
 - **Micronutrients:** These are vitamins and minerals (like Vitamin A, B, C, D, calcium, iron, etc.) required in smaller amounts but vital for health. The section lists key micronutrients, their functions, and sources for further information.
- **Individual Needs Vary:**
Every person's body and nutritional requirements are different, influenced by factors such as age, gender, activity level, and health status. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to nutrition.
- **Critical Thinking About Nutrition Advice:**
Readers are encouraged to approach dietary information with a critical eye - questioning sources, understanding the difference between fact and opinion, and being wary of advice that serves commercial or ideological interests.
- **Practical Tools and Resources:**
The section provides practical tables, links to reputable organisations (like the NHS Eatwell Guide), and guidance on how to check food labels and make informed choices about what to eat.
- **Empowerment Through Knowledge:**
By becoming more conscious of what we eat and understanding our nutritional needs, we can take greater control over our health and wellbeing, making food choices that support a secure and nourishing future.

In summary:

Part 2 highlights that true food security is inseparable from nutrition. It equips readers with foundational knowledge about what our bodies need, encourages critical thinking, and provides practical tools to help everyone make healthier, more informed food choices.

PART 3 - Foods We Can Farm, Catch, Harvest and Grow Locally in and around the UK

Introduction

It's no great wonder that "foods we can trust" are often thought of as boring, bland, or expensive—especially when compared to the convenience and variety of supermarket shelves. Yet, the reality is that the number and diversity of foods we can farm, catch, harvest, and grow locally in the UK is far greater than many of us realise.

In recent years, it's become increasingly clear that relying on distant supply chains and imported ingredients leaves our food system vulnerable. Local food production isn't just about nostalgia or tradition—it's a practical response to the challenges of food security, resilience, and sustainability. By looking closer to home, we can rediscover a wealth of fruits, vegetables, crops, livestock, fish, and dairy that are available or could be made available to us with a different approach.

This section brings together practical lists and insights into what's possible when we focus on local resources. You'll find tables of UK-grown produce, farmed and wild foods, and ideas for what can be cultivated in gardens, allotments, and community spaces. The aim is to spark curiosity, challenge assumptions about what's "possible" in the UK, and empower you to make more informed choices about the food you eat and support.

Whether you're a home grower, a community organiser, or simply someone interested in where your food comes from, Part 3 offers a starting point for exploring the abundance and potential of local food in Britain.

Rediscovering Local Abundance: Foods We Can Farm, Catch, Harvest and Grow

It's no great wonder that Foods We Can Trust are thought by many to be boring and bland, as well as being expensive and increasingly difficult to buy or access.

The alternatives often taste good. Always seem to be available whenever and wherever we want them, and in terms of the cost of everything we buy today, the most convenient Foods also appear to be the cheapest.

Ask anyone how many natural, locally or UK produced Foods they could find at a shop they regularly use to buy today, and the list will probably be short and at the same time confirm everything that I've just outlined above.

However, the number and variety of Foods We Can Trust that are available across the U.K. and that may be growing on a farm, in an orchard, in someone's allotment, or perhaps are being docked at a fishing harbour near us today is much greater than many of us think.

We will talk about nutritional values, seasonality, production and other really useful things to know about how we make Foods We Can Trust available to everyone as a part of normal life in other posts.

But for now, becoming aware of and understanding the list basic Foods, or Foods that are either available or could become available to us that we can grow, farm, harvest or catch locally across the UK or around our coastline, is a very important place for us to begin.

A Work in Progress

The information that I am about to share is based on what I either know already, or what I have been able to research using sources such as those that I will link later on this page.

One of the reasons that I began Foods We Can Trust is that I hope to share information about Food Production that isn't widely known or acknowledge about the Foods We Can Trust that are already widely available, or could be, if we decide to take a different approach.

As such, I hope that the following Tables will be updated here and will in time be accompanied by posts, videos and resources online that will come from other contributors.

If you notice any errors, glaring omissions or would like to add something yourself, please get in touch!

For now, the Foods We Can Farm, Catch, Harvest and Grow Locally in and around The UK will be broken down into the following groups, with a little detail to help with each:

- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Crops
- Livestock
- Wild Livestock & Game
- Natural Fish and Seafood Landed at UK Ports
- Natural Fish that can be Line Caught from UK Rivers etc.
- Dairy Products that can be made from UK produced Milk

Please note that the inclusion or exclusion of anything may not be deliberate and anything you are aware of may be added later.

Equally, inclusion is not making any statement upon the views and perspectives of any individual or group that believe certain foods should be included or excluded for ideological, religious or other reasons. This is about being practical and realistic about the food that we can grow, produce and that is otherwise available across the UK.

Table 1: Fruits that grow or can be grown in the UK

Fruit	Months Available
Apricots	July, August, September, October
Blackberries	July, August, September, October
Blackcurrants	June, July, August
Blueberries	July, August, September
Cherries	June, July
Gooseberries	July, August, September, October
Pears	January, February, March, October, November, December
Plums	July, August, September, October, November, December
Raspberries	June, July, August, September, October, November, December
Redcurrants	July, August, September
Rhubarb	March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October
Strawberries	June, July, August, September, October, November

Table 2: Vegetables that grow or can be grown in the UK

Vegetable	Months Available
Apples	January–December
Asparagus	April, May, June
Aubergines	January–December
Beetroot	January–December
Broad Beans	May, June, July, August, September
Broccoli	June, July, August, September, October

Vegetable	Months Available
Brussels Sprouts	January–May, October–December
Butternut Squash	October–December
Cabbages	January–December
Carrots	January–December
Cauliflowers	January–December
Celeriac	January–May, December
Celery	July–December
Chestnuts	October–December
Chicory	January–December
Courgettes	July–November
Cucumbers	August–October
Fennel	July–November
Jerusalem Artichokes	January, November, December
Leeks	January–May, October–December
Lettuce	May–November
Mangetout	August, September
Marrows	August–November
Mushrooms	January–December
New Potatoes	April, May
Onions	January–December
Parsnips	January–May, September–December
Peas	July–September

Vegetable	Months Available
Peppers	January–December
Potatoes	January–December
Pumpkins	January, October–December
Purple Sprouting Broccoli	February–June
Radishes	May–November
Rocket	May–November
Runner Beans	August–November
Sorrel	March–September
Spinach	June–November
Spring Onions	May–December
Swedes	January–November
Sweetcorn	August–November
Tomatoes	July–November
Turnips	January–March, July–December
Watercress	June–December

Table 3: Crop Types that grow or can be grown in the UK

Crop Types That Grow or Can Be Grown in the UK

Crop	Also Known As	Main Food Uses	Other Uses
Barley		Bread, Soups, Stews, Ingredients	Brewing, Distilling, Animal Feed
Beans (Faba)			Animal Feed, Green Manure

Crop	Also Known As	Main Food Uses	Other Uses
Linseed	Flaxseed	Bread, Biscuits, Cakes, Snack Bars, Porridge, Curries, Stews	Oil
Oats		Porridge, Overnight Oats, Granola, Flapjacks, Flour	
Oilseed Rape	Canola Oil	Cooking Oil, Mayonnaise, Margarine, Ingredient	Biodiesel
Peas		Soups, Casseroles, Pasties, Curry	Animal Feed
Rye		Flour, Bread	Animal Feed, Cover Crop
Sugar Beet		Sugar	
Wheat		Bread, Cakes, Biscuits, Flour	

Table 4: Livestock that is Farmed or can be Farmed in the UK

Livestock Farmed or Can Be Farmed in the UK

Livestock	Food Use	Food Produced	Other Goods
Chickens	Chicken (breast, fillet, thighs, drumsticks, burgers, cold meat)	Eggs	Feathers
Cattle (Cows)	Beef (joints, ribs, steak, burgers, sausages, cold meat, dripping)	Milk (all dairy)	Leather
Deer	Venison, burgers		
Ducks	Duck		Feathers
Geese	Goose, goose fat		Feathers
Pigs	Pork (chops, sausages, sausage rolls, burgers, ribs, hams, crackling)		

Livestock	Food Use	Food Produced	Other Goods
Sheep	Lamb, mutton (joints, chops, burgers)		Wool
Turkeys	Turkey, burgers, cold meat		Feathers

Table 5: Wild Livestock & Game found in the UK

Wild Livestock & Game Found in the UK

Animal	Food Use
Boar	Boar
Deer	Venison
Grouse	Grouse
Hares	Hare
Rabbits	Rabbit
Wood Pigeon	Pigeon
Pheasant	Pheasant

Table 6: Natural Fish and Seafood that is or can be landed at UK Fishing Ports

Natural Fish and Seafood Landed at UK Fishing Ports

Fish/Seafood	Also Known As
Anglerfishes	
Atlantic Cod	
Atlantic Halibut	
Atlantic Herring	
Atlantic Horse Mackerel	

Fish/Seafood	Also Known As
Atlantic Mackerel	
Ballan Wrasse	
Black Seabream	
Blonde Ray	
Brill	
Catsharks	Nursehounds
Clams	
Common Cuttlefish	
Common Dab	
Common Edible Cockle	
Common Octopus	
Common Prawn	
Common Shrimp	
Common Sole	
Cuckoo Ray	
Cuttlefish	Bobtail Squid
Dogfishes and Hounds	
Edible Crab	
European Anchovy	
European Conger	
European Flat Oyster	
European Flounder	

Fish/Seafood	Also Known As
European Hake	
European Lobster	
European Pilchard	Sardines
European Plaice	
European Seabass	
European Smelt	
European Sprat	
European Squid	
Garfish	
Gilthead Seabream	
Great Atlantic Scallop	
Green Crab	
Grey Gurnard	
Haddock	
John Dory	
Lemon Sole	
Ling	
Lumpfish	Lumpsucker
Manila Clam	
Megrim	
Megrims	
Mulletts	

Fish/Seafood	Also Known As
Norway Lobster	
Pacific Cupped Oyster	
Periwinkles	
Pollack	
Pouting	Bib
Queen Scallop	
Rabbit Fish	
Red Gurnard	
Saithe	Coalfish
Sand Sole	
Sandeels	Sandlances
Sea Trout	
Shortfin Squids	
Small-Eyed Ray	
Small-Spotted Catshark	
Smooth-Hound	
Solen Razor Clams	
Spinous Spider Crab	
Spotted Ray	
Starry Smooth-Hound	
Thornback Ray	
Tope Shark	

Fish/Seafood	Also Known As
Tub Gurnard	
Turbot	
Undulate Ray	
Velvet Swimming Crab	
Whelk	
Whiting	

Table 7: Natural Fish that is or can be line caught from UK Rivers and Watercourses

Natural Fish That Can Be Line Caught from UK Rivers and Watercourses

Fish Name
Barbel
Bream
Chub
Common Bream
Common Carp
Crucian Carp
Dace
Grayling
Gudgeon
Perch
Pike
Roach

Fish Name
Rudd
Salmon
Silver Bream
Smelt
Tench
Trout

Please note that whilst links to information sources used to create this page are listed later under ‘Worth a Look’, I have added a link here to [Gov.UK – Freshwater rod fishing rules](#), as there are clearly stipulated fishing allowances for anyone wishing to catch fish with a line from UK Rivers and Watercourses.

Table 8: Fish that is or can be Farmed in the UK

Fish That Can Be Farmed in the UK

Fish Species
Atlantic Salmon
Lobsters
Mussels
Oysters
Rainbow Trout
Sea Bass

Table 9: Dairy Products that are or can be produced from UK Milk

Dairy Products That Can Be Produced from UK Milk

Dairy Product

Butter

Cheese

Cream

Milk

Yoghurt

Worth a Look

I researched the content for the 9 tables listed above on 9 May 2025 using mostly Google Searches made from Cheltenham.

There are a number of very useful websites that will follow from where I sourced most of the information that I have pooled together to construct these Tables. There are others and these have been used because the information they offer is easy to use.

Please note that whilst there is every reason to believe the information linked below is both credible and from organisations considered the same, the inclusion of these links is neither an endorsement nor recommendation of the information these organisations provide. Their referencing here makes no suggestion of there being shared views or objectives, even if there are areas relevant to this page which are aligned.

[The NFU \(National Farmers Union\) Seasonal Guide to British Fruit and Vegetables](#)

[The Vegetarian Society – Seasonal UK Grown Produce](#)

[The National Trust – Guide to Seasonal Food](#)

[DEFRA Accredited Official Statistics – Chapter 7: Crops](#)

[DEFRA Accredited Official Statistics – Chapter 8: Livestock](#)

[Marine Management Organisation – List of common species codes for Fish Landed in the United Kingdom](#)

[Gov.UK – Freshwater rod fishing rules](#)

Overview on 'Foods We Can Farm, Catch, Harvest and Grow Locally in and around the UK'

The information contained on this page is likely to be one of the most important parts of the Foods We Can Trust initiative.

When we remove all the noise and all the agenda-led information available about what Foods and Ingredients can be brought in from Overseas; what can be manufactured or produced in factories, and why these are the Food Sources that we can and must rely on, the reality is that it is only the Foods and the Ingredients for Meals that come from them that we can grow, catch, harvest and create from these, that have the potential to be classed as genuine Foods We Can Trust.

As this work progresses, I expect to reference this topic frequently, especially as we begin to look at different aspects of UK Food Production more closely, and at Grow Your Own and Home Growing in particular.

I am very keen to add as much information as I can in these important subject areas and will be very pleased to hear from anyone who can add to what is already here in ways that will promote awareness and understanding of the information and processes that will help everyone to have access to Food We Can Trust.

Part 3 Summary:

Part 3 explores the diversity and potential of foods that can be produced locally in the UK, emphasising the importance of local food systems for resilience, sustainability, and genuine food security.

Key Points

- **Local Food Production Is More Diverse Than Many Realise:**
The UK has a wide variety of fruits, vegetables, crops, livestock, fish, and dairy that can be farmed, caught, harvested, or grown locally. This diversity is often underestimated compared to the convenience and variety of supermarket offerings.
- **Vulnerability of Global Supply Chains:**
Reliance on distant supply chains and imported ingredients leaves the UK food system exposed to risks and disruptions. Local food production is a practical response to these vulnerabilities, offering greater resilience and sustainability.
- **Practical Lists and Insights:**
The section provides tables and lists of UK-grown produce, farmed and wild foods, and ideas for what can be cultivated in gardens, allotments, and community spaces. These resources help readers understand what is possible when focusing on local food sources.

- **Empowering Individuals and Communities:**

By highlighting what can be grown or sourced locally, Part 3 encourages readers to make more informed choices about the food they eat and support. Whether as home growers, community organizers, or consumers, everyone can play a role in strengthening local food systems.

- **Resources for Further Exploration:**

The section includes links to reputable organizations and guides for seasonal produce, crop and livestock statistics, fishing rules, and practical advice for growing food at home or in community settings.

In summary:

Part 3 demonstrates that local food production in the UK is both abundant and achievable. It challenges assumptions about what is “possible,” provides practical tools and inspiration, and empowers readers to contribute to a more resilient and trustworthy food system.

PART 4 - Grow Your Own or 'Home Growing'

Introduction

Writing and publishing these pages has given me the chance to reflect on how food security is not just a national or policy issue—it's something that touches each of us, every day, in our homes and communities. While the challenges facing the UK's food system can seem daunting, the most powerful solutions often begin close to home.

If we continue to take food for granted, trusting that supermarket shelves will always be full and that the food chain will keep working as it does today, we risk being unprepared for shortages or disruptions. The reality is that the UK's food supply is more fragile than many realize, and waiting for a crisis before taking action could leave us all vulnerable.

But there is hope—and it starts with each of us. By growing our own food, joining community initiatives, or working together as “citizen farmers,” we can all play a part in building a more secure, resilient, and nourishing food future. Whether you have a windowsill, a garden, or access to a community allotment, there are ways for everyone to get involved and make a difference.

In this section, you'll find practical guidance on home growing, collaborative projects, and community food solutions. We'll explore the benefits of reconnecting with food production—not just for our plates, but for our wellbeing and our communities. The aim is to inspire action, share resources, and show that together, we can create access to foods we can trust.

Let's dig in and discover how growing, sharing, and working together can help secure our food future—one seed, one meal, and one community at a time.

Growing Together: The Power of Home and Community Food Initiatives

Writing and publishing the pages of Foods We Can Trust as I go, does mean that I have had the opportunity to reflect upon and even mention relevant topics from the news as I go.

At the end of May, it was pleasing to see The Times report that former President of the National Farmers Union Minette Batters (Who has taken the step of working for the government, now that she is in the Lords) suggested that [future housing developments should include Allotments](#).

Sadly, comments that followed on social media branded this as 'Everythingism'; a term that like many others that is now being used to dismiss anything with deeper meaning or a point that runs contrary to common or 'accepted' thought.

Allotments, or rather the Allotments that are available for people to rent today are popular. This point was proven well when I did a search as I have been writing and found that the Local District Level Authority where I live, Cheltenham Borough Council has [a waiting list for the Allotments under its control](#) that can extend from a matter of weeks to a couple of years.

Contrary to what some might immediately think, I am not criticizing CBC or any Local Authority in any way for not having Allotments immediately available today – as it's great that they are there and can be available. Popularity does of course vary and the last thing that many people think about today when it comes to Food, is Growing Your Own.

The need for us to contribute to Food Security

If you've read the page '[What is Food Security](#)', you will now have a better idea of what it means to be 'Food Secure' and why we really aren't Food Secure, anywhere in the UK today.

Unfortunately, finding a way to help enough people understand that we are all taking a massive risk by trusting that the Food we eat everyday will always be available and that as if by magic, the Food Chain will keep on doing what it does today, isn't easy.

Especially as everything that the Government is currently doing is reinforcing the message that the UK doesn't need Farms and that the Food of the Future will be manufactured in warehouses and factories – sadly without any regard for what that will really mean for us all in terms of not being able to eat [Foods We Can Trust](#).

If we continue to wait until there is a real problem with the UK Food Supply, before we begin taking steps to ensure that we always have enough Food available and ready to Feed everyone across the UK, we are all likely to experience Food Shortages quickly. And as time goes by, following the arrival of a serious Food Supply Shortage, more and more of us may even be forced to go without.

Food Shortages are not a problem that any of us should be taking lightly. But neither should any of us – *and particularly our politicians* – be taking it for granted that enough Food of *any kind* will always be available for everyone – *as is clearly the case, right now*.

Perhaps the most challenging aspect of understanding the risk to UK Food Security and then considering the steps that need to be taken to ensure that we will always have enough Food, is this:

The UK Food Chain is currently unable to Feed the UK Population without considerable supplies being imported from Overseas.

If that's difficult enough to accept, the next point we need to understand is this:

If Overseas Food Imports were stopped, UK Farms and Food Producers would be able to provide significantly less than the 54-58% of 'self-produced' or 'UK-Produced' Food that UK People would immediately need. Because the Food Supply and Logistics Chain isn't set

up to prioritise British Consumers today, and very few of the Farms the UK has would be able to supply Food that is ready to be prepared to eat, direct.

To add some further perspective, we must then accept that:

The Farms across the UK that are geared up and have the systems in place to provide Food to us direct are likely to already being doing so. They are what we already know and use as our Local Farm Shops and Food Businesses that are selling us the Food that we already know to be coming from Local Farms, Harbours and Fisheries before being turned into Dairy Products, Breads or any of the Foods that are available to us through recognizable Local Suppliers or direct delivery services.

The question of the Food We Eat, is now Food for Thought.

Waking up to Our Food Supply Reality

[A Report by the Countryside and Community Research Institute](#) in May 2024 suggested that the amount of Food that comes to us direct from Farms is about 11% of what the UK Population needs to eat.

In real terms, that means that if the Border around the UK (*That's transport by Air, Sea or the Channel Tunnel*) closed for any prolonged period, there would only be the equivalent of enough Food available for 1 in 9 People – in relative terms.

And that's before we think about cost, accessibility and [all the things that Foods We Can Trust is about](#).

Whilst I will always champion UK Farmers as some of the most entrepreneurial and creative People I have the pleasure to know, the time it would take to transform and restructure the UK Food Chain so that it works *as it arguably always should – in our best interests and for us all*, following a crisis or breakdown in the Food Supply – would probably be a period of months, before everyone was being supplied with at least some Foods that we should all have available to us, *right now*.

We will not have the luxury of time for the Food Chain to change, if we wait for Food Shortages before we begin

Whilst it would be beneficial for the majority of Our Farmers to begin restructuring their businesses to work towards Local Food Chains and UK Food Security through self-sufficiency today - *for themselves as well as the UK Population*, many remain tied to the way that the Food Chain in the UK has been evolved by the Global Model (Most strikingly, through the UK relationship with the EU).

Many UK Farmers still believe that a change of government or the politicians themselves, will be all it will take for them to get paid more or to be subsidized further for what they do, so that they receive a higher, *or more appropriate* income than they do now.

However, Farmers and existing Food Growing Businesses are not going to survive, if they do not adapt their businesses to operate independently as part of Local Food Chains.

Because the economic system we have today doesn't value independence in the Food Chain and is already actively working to remove it.

At some point, probably sooner rather than later, UK Farms will be called upon to make this necessary change.

Sadly, as things stand today, this is likely to be when the UK is already in crisis – **as it will only be when we are in the middle of a Food Crisis, where everyone is experiencing the problem themselves, that the real meaning and need for genuine UK Food Security is going to make sense.**

However, that doesn't mean that we cannot do something to help, right now, if we can see that hope and waiting for tomorrow is very unlikely to save the day.

Suggested further reading for this Section:

[Farms consider more direct sales to combat rising costs - Countryside and Community Research Institute](#)

Growing Your Own is the most trustworthy way to source Food

Whilst talking about the role we all have to play in the UK's future Food Security might feel like a deviation from the direction of Foods We Can Trust, it is important enough for us to be aware of and to understand the real benefits from having and developing access to home grown, community grown and Food that comes direct from Local Farms and Growers, *today*.

Just having Food to Eat is important. But **prioritising Food Chains that supply the Foods We can Trust is essential.**

There is no better way to be sure that we are eating Foods We Can Trust than if we Grow Our Own Food. Whether it be at home, within community allotments or gardens or other shared spaces, where we can be sure of everything used to Grow Our Food, as well as the continuation and availability of the supply.

Grow Your Own Foods We Can Trust

As we have discussed above, there are two very good reasons to Grow Your Own:

- Growing Our Own Food will at least increase the Food we have available, and
- Growing Our Own Food is the surest way to know we are eating Foods We Can Trust

There are other advantages to Growing Your Own Food too, such as producing Food that we can all share with others, or exchange for different types of Food or other essentials that we might need in a crisis.

However, one of the biggest, and probably best reasons to Grow Your Own (*beyond having a supply of our own Food to Eat*) is that the process of growing, harvesting, cultivating and handling Home Grown Food can be very good for our mental health or sense of wellbeing, as well as the activity required to do so contributing positively to our physical health.

Foods We Can Grow Ourselves

Understanding and being open to the idea of DIY Food Growing is where the whole idea of Grow Your Own can become even more interesting and exciting, as the list of the different Foods We Can Grow Ourselves is extensive!

In fact, what We Can Grow Ourselves may only be limited by the space and resources that we have available we have.

To illustrate just how broad the list of Foods We Can Grow Ourselves and the different ways that we can Grow Our Own Food really is, we will now share lists of the different Fruits, Vegetables, Herbs and Animals that we can grow ourselves, along with suggestions of the different ways that we can grow them.

The following list IS NOT exhaustive and there may be many more!

Please note that links to organisations, businesses and groups that are added anywhere on these Pages about Grow Your Own are for information sharing purposes only. They are not recommendations and certainly not endorsements of any other organisation, product or the advice and suggestions that they provide.

Vegetables that can be Grown at Home

Growing Vegetables at home probably feels like the most obvious type of Food to grow when it comes to Growing Your Own.

However, did you know just how many types of different Vegetables there are that we can Grow Ourselves in the UK?

List of Grow Your Own Vegetables in the UK:

- Aubergines
- Asparagus
- Beans
- Beetroot
- Broad Beans
- Broccoli
- Brussels Sprouts
- Cabbages
- Carrots
- Cauliflower
- Calabrese
- Celeriac
- Celery

Chard
Chicory
Chilli Peppers
Chinese Broccoli
Chinese Cabbage
Courgettes
Cucumbers
Endive
Florence Fennel
French Beans
Garlic
Globe Artichokes
Jerusalem Artichokes
Kale
Kohl Rabi
Leeks
Lettuce
Marrows
Mizuna & Mibuna
Okra
Onions
Pak Choi
Parsnips
Peas
Peppers
Potatoes
Pumpkins
Radishes
Rhubarb
Rocket
Runner Beans
Salad Leaves
Salad Onions
Salsify
Shallots
Soya Beans
Spinach
Squash
Swedes
Sweetcorn
Sweet Potatoes
Tomatoes
Turnips

Please note that I will cover the different methods that can be used to Grow Your Own, depending upon the resources and space that you have available once I have finished listing what you can grow.

Suggested further reading for this Section:

[RHS - UK's leading gardening charity / RHS](#)

[20 Best Vegetables to Plant and Grow at Home](#)

[Top 20 Easy Vegetables to Grow at Home \(A Beginner-Friendly Guide\) | Envynature](#)

Herbs that can be Grown at Home

There are lots of Vegetables that we can Grow Ourselves. But the list doesn't stop there, as we can also Grow Herbs – which will of course help to add flavour to the other Foods that we Grow Ourselves when we have them available.

List of Grow Your Own Herbs in the UK:

Basil
Bay
Chamomile
Chervil
Chives
Coriander
Dill
Fennel
Horseradish
Lemon Balm
Lemongrass
Lovage
Marjoram
Mint
Oregano
Parsley
Rosemary
Sage
Savory
Sorrel
Tarragon
Thyme

Suggested further reading for this Section:

[RHS - UK's leading gardening charity / RHS](#)

[The 16 easiest herbs to grow indoors: a beginner's guide](#)

[16 Herbs That Grow Indoors All Year](#)

Fruits that can be Grown at Home

Vegetables and Herbs are likely to be the easiest and, in many cases, the quickest Foods that we can Grow at home.

However, if you have access to the space and resources necessary, there is a surprisingly long list of Fruits that we can Grow Ourselves in the UK too!

List of Grow Your Own Fruits in the UK:

Apples
Apricots
Blackberries
Blackcurrants
Blueberries
Cherries
Citrus
Damsons
Figs
Gages
Gooseberries
Grapes
Kiwi Fruit
Medlars
Melons
Mulberries
Nectarines
Olives
Peaches
Pears
Plums
Quinces
Raspberries
Redcurrants
Strawberries
White Currants

Suggested further reading for this Section:

[RHS - UK's leading gardening charity / RHS](#)

[5 Of the Easiest Fruits and Veg to Grow in Your Home | Ecoscape](#)

[Top 10 Easy to Grow Fruit Trees & Plants | Thompson & Morgan](#)

Animals that we can keep for Food at Home

Some will be surprised to learn that it is possible to keep some kinds of animals for Food at home.

In fact, historically, it was quite normal to keep some animals as a source of Food for domestic consumption.

Perhaps the most obvious animals to keep at Home for Food would be Chickens. Not necessarily as a source of fresh meat. But as a source of fresh eggs. *Which anyone who has*

had home grown eggs or eggs straight from a local Farm will know often taste much better than those we buy in supermarkets or online!

Other types of poultry, rabbits and fish are different animals that can more easily be kept as a source of Food at home.

However, it is important to be aware that these and other animals that are sometimes kept at home for Food such as pigs, goats and anything else that you might have space for, may need to be registered or cared for under licenses that it may be difficult for a normal home to hold.

As such, it may be better left to a local farm or community small holding to keep them.

Like pets, any animals kept for Food require time, commitment and unavoidable expense which may mean that keeping them is simply impractical.

Suggested further reading for this Section:

[How to Keep Chickens – A Beginner’s Guide | GardenLifeDirect](#)

[Creating A Good Home for Chickens - The Open Sanctuary Project](#)

[5 Tips to Raising Livestock from Melissa Norris](#)

[Slaughter poultry, livestock and rabbits for home consumption - GOV.UK](#)

[Home slaughter of livestock | Food Standards Agency](#)

Methods for Growing Vegetables, Fruit and Herbs Ourselves

Learning to Grow Your Own doesn’t have to be boring and certainly doesn’t have to follow any kind of rigid model or set plan.

In fact, like all of our homes, the resources we have and the time we have available will be different. So, Growing Our Own Food doesn’t need to be the same as what anyone else does, even if we are growing the same Foods!

Yes, having some ground available in a garden, allotment or open space is of course a fantastic place to begin. *But we don’t need a garden to Grow Our Own Food* and there are ways that we can grow all sorts of different things simply by making better use of the space that we have already got.

Here are the different ways that we can Grow Our Own Food, either alone or in collaboration with neighbours or members of our local communities:

Grow Bags

Perhaps the simplest, quickest and most cost-friendly way to get started with Growing Your Own Food will be to use Grow Bags.

Garden Centres, Farm Shops, Country Stores *and at certain times of the year, even supermarkets* will have Grow Bags available to buy.

Grow Bags can be a fun, efficient and low-cost way to learn about growing Food, without making significant commitments with resources, money and time.

The range of Vegetables and Herbs that can be grown using Grow Bags may not be as extensive as it would be with other spaces and resources to use. But there is still plenty that you can try!

List of Grow Your Own Foods for Grow Bags:

Celery
Chillies
Courgettes
Herbs
Lettuce
Radishes
Rocket
Salad Leaves
Spinach
Spring Onions
Sweet Peppers
Tomatoes

Suggested further reading for this Section:

[Link to Suttons Seeds page on Grow Bag Growing](#)

[Gardening in Grow Bags | Answers to All Your Questions | joegardener®](#)

[Grow Bag Gardening Do's and Don'ts | The Beginner's Garden - with Jill McSheehy](#)

Window Boxes

Space for growing any type of Food at home can be a challenge, and I'm certainly not taking it for granted that you have a garden or space available inside.

If you don't have space outside or inside near a patio window or perhaps a conservatory area, growing Food using a Window Box may be another way to get started:

List of Grow Your Own Foods for Window Boxes:

Baby Carrots
Basil
Beets
Bush Beans
Celery
Chamomile
Chives

Dwarf Peppers
Garlic
Green Onions
Lettuce
Microgreens
Oregano
Parsnips
Parsley
Patio Tomatoes
Radishes
Spinach

Suggested further reading for this Section:

[Window Planter Veggie Garden – Planting Window Box Garden Vegetables | Gardening Know How](#)

Here's a [helpful page from Gardening Know How](#)

Containers

By this point it may be becoming clearer that Growing Your Own Food can be much easier to begin than we might have assumed!

Now that we've covered Grow Bags and Window Boxes, it might also be helpful to consider that Food can grow very well in containers of all sorts of descriptions.

This includes old buckets, watering cans and even dustbins (that have been cleaned out!).

List of Grow Your Own Foods for Containers:

Beetroot
Broad Beans
Carrots
Chillies
Dwarf French Beans
Herbs
Peas
Potatoes
Radishes
Rocket
Runner Beans
Peppers
Salad Leaves
Salad Onions
Salad Turnips
Tomatoes

Suggested further reading for this Section:

[Vegetables in containers / RHS Gardening](#)

[How to Grow Vegetables in Containers: A Beginner's Guide - Simplify Gardening](#)

Hydroponics

If you have limited space where there is access to daylight in your Home and you enjoy a little DIY with technology, perhaps you could give Hydroponics a try.

Hydroponics – or what is known by some as Aquaculture, is the process of growing Food using water-based systems that provide nutrients and whatever the plant-based Foods you are growing through the water itself, which can be circulated around even a very small system that might even be small and compact enough to sit on a shelf.

Hydroponics supplies are now widely available, and it would be well worth doing an online search for them if you are interested in giving this form of Grow Your Own a try!

List of Grow Your Own Foods for Hydroponics:

Arugula
Basil
Butterhead
Collard Greens
Celery
Cilantro
Cucumbers
Fennel
Green and Red Oak
Kale
Mustard Greens
Oregano
Peppermint
Peppers
Rainbow Chard
Romaine
Rosemary
Snap Peas
Spinach
Strawberries
Thyme
Tomatoes

Suggested further reading for this Section:

[Hydroponics / RHS Gardening](#)

[Complete Guide to Hydroponics | BBC Gardeners World Magazine](#)

[Hydroponics: How It Works, Benefits & How to Get Started](#)

And here's a [helpful page from Eden Green](#)

Greenhouses

Some of us may already have Greenhouses or have space where one could easily be erected.

Greenhouses or glass boxes of any size or kind aren't a small or low-value purchase – so please be prepared for this if you are going to research further after reading this section.

Greenhouses of any size are a great way to Grow Your Own, because they can be used to provide an environment that can be managed to be consistently the same for longer periods throughout the year.

List of Grow Your Own Foods for a Greenhouse:

Asparagus
Aubergines
Bean Sprouts
Beets
Broccoli
Carrots
Celery
Cherries
Chillies
Cucumbers
Garlic
Grapes
Herbs
Kale
Lemons
Lettuce
Onions
Peppers
Radishes
Raspberries
Spinach
Squash
Strawberries
Tomatoes
Turnips

Like each of the sections covering ways to Grow Your Own, researching Greenhouses further will be a great idea before ruling the idea in or out – not least of all because of the wider range of Grow Your Own options and what could be year-round ability they offer to Grow different Foods.

Here are a few links to help, but please do take time for a wider online search if you can!

Suggested further reading for this Section:

[Beginners guide to greenhouse gardening - Gardening Express Knowledge Hub](#)

[15 Vegetables to Grow in A Greenhouse | Alitex](#)

[Vegetables: growing in your greenhouse / RHS Gardening](#)

Allotments, Gardens and Vegetable Patches

If you have access to a Garden or an Allotment, there is a large variety of Vegetables, Fruits and Herbs that can be grown – *subject to seasonality and the amount of space you have available.*

Like all of the different ways to Grow Your Own, researching the best options for you will be a great place to start and it may also be useful to search online to see what other people are growing on their Vegetable Patches, Allotments and in their Gardens in the area you live in – bearing in mind that the climate across the UK can vary!

List of Grow Your Own Foods for Allotments and Gardens:

Beetroot
Broad Beans
Brussels Sprouts
Cabbage
Calabrese
Carrots
Cauliflowers
Celeriac
Celery
Courgettes
French Beans
Garlic
Herbs
Leeks
Lettuce
Mangetout Peas
Melons
Mixed Salad Leaves
Onions
Parsnips
Peas
Potatoes (Not early varieties)
Pumpkins
Purple/White Sprouting Broccoli
Radishes
Rhubarb
Runner Beans
Salad Onions
Shallots
Soft Fruits

Squash
Swedes
Sweet Potatoes
Tomatoes
Turnips

Suggested further reading for this Section:

[What to grow on your allotment / RHS](#)

[Top 10 Vegetables to Grow | Allotment Book](#)

[Allotment Garden Vegetables | Allotment Gardening | Fothergill's](#)

[Low-maintenance Veg and Fruit to Grow | BBC Gardeners World Magazine](#)

Citizen Farmers - Working together with other members of Your Community to Grow Your Own

Whilst these pages on Grow Your Own are primarily intended to raise awareness for People who may be open to growing their own Food at home – *whatever space and resources they might have available*, there is a different, more community-orientated approach to Growing Your Own Food that is available to many of us too.

Where there are enough People ready to work together as a community or on behalf of the community they live in to grow and supply Food, there are different approaches that can be used to develop and manage the cultivation, growing and harvesting of all sorts of different Foods locally, working collaboratively, together with like-minded People, who live close by.

Whilst it may conjure up all sorts of different ideas and responses, putting the ideologies, agendas a bias that get in the way of us all having unfettered access to Food We Can Trust aside could easily lead to the age of the Citizen Farmer. Where everyone, young and old contributes to and plays a vital role in Local Food Production – recognising that even with U.K. Farming and Food Production infrastructure realigned, meeting our nutritional needs year-round and with Food being prioritised in the way that it should be, is likely to mean everyone playing their part.

People and Groups are already growing Food together, but an undercurrent in thinking still exists where whatever the stated aims and agendas might be, a big issue with 'us vs them' remains.

However, times are changing and changing quickly. The role of Citizen Farmer, whether it's through Grow Your Own and then sharing, exchanging or bartering anything they don't need, whole communities helping to grow fruit, vegetables and animals on shared farms or helping farmers to get their crops in, will be what True Citizen Farming is all about.

The options for Collaborative Food Growing that *already* exist include:

- Community Gardens
- Share Farming and/or Cooperative Farming

Community Gardens

Earlier in this topic, I mentioned what Minette Batters said about the inclusion of Allotments in future Housing Developments.

As you will probably guess, I agree with Minette and believe that this is a valuable suggestion. Not least of all because there are good and growing reasons to believe that whilst Growing Your Own may only be considered a hobby by many today, it could easily become a need for many of us, *in no time at all*.

Green spaces, green lungs and park areas are of course required to be considered in appropriately sized Developments already. And a time of emergency or prolonged Food Shortages, it would not be unreasonable to consider using some of these spaces – *where appropriate* – to begin growing Food.

Green spaces and parks, like homes and business premises have their own Planning Restrictions too, so at any other time, thinking about creating a community space or area for growing Food may need to consider areas of land that may not be immediately obvious, or perhaps even renting a field or some land from a local farmer that can be used in this way.

If you should find yourself amongst a group of local people or a community that has agreed that there is a need for such a space and there are enough people committed to the idea to make it work either through self-funding or by seeking some funding support, it will be worth getting in touch with your local Parish/Town and/or Borough/District Council to ask for their help and guidance.

In my experience of working with Council Officers of all kinds, it has always been far more productive to ask for that help and guidance before beginning. *And it's advantageous as it's the quickest way to find out what you can and cannot do!*

The big upside of speaking to the local Council(s) is that you may also be guided in the direction of other people and organisations that can help – and perhaps even be signposted to sources of funding and help for groups of people working together that you may not have thought of along the way.

At the very least, knowing what steps to avoid locally is good for everyone. It will save time, good will and perhaps even money too – and that has to be something that's good for everyone!

Share Farming and/or Cooperative Farming (Social Enterprise)

Whilst the key aim of these pages on Grow Your Own are really about encouraging us as individuals to think about the opportunity to Grow Foods We Can Trust in our own homes or using the resources that we already have available, it will also be useful to think about and

be open to the idea of working with other People in our communities to provide Foods We Can Trust, *for everyone in the community*.

Surprisingly, this isn't just an idea for a rainy day (or when there are real problems with the Food Supply) and People, Groups and Communities are already working together to produce, share and sell a wide range of Foods to benefit their Groups and the Communities in which they operate.

Most shared farming or community farming projects that exist today are relatively small. They service or supplement the Food Needs of what we would probably agree are a small number of People who are usually members of a charity, cooperative or social enterprise that has been set up as a way to manage a project that benefits all those involved, *mutually*.

If you [research projects like this great one called Stroud Community Agriculture](#), based in Gloucestershire (UK), near to where I live, it's easy to fall into the trap of believing that community farming isn't scalable and that it is more like a shared version of hobby farming.

However, projects like this one are already learning invaluable lessons. They are helping to create the models for re-learning the practical skills, knowledge and understanding that are needed for a much more hands-on approach to Food Production that itself has the ability to create, contribute to and provide Food Security, built around Local Food Chains.

For those of you thinking more carefully about shared farming and community farming, it might be helpful to consider that the model of Farming most likely to work best for everyone will sit somewhere between groups of what we recognise as typical small commercial or family farms today and the community farming models that we can already see in action like this one in Stroud today.

When you consider all the different Foods and the quantities that can be produced across a range of farms, and then add local processing and retail (like abattoirs, butchery, milling, bakery, dairies, fishmongers, greengrocers) – *which will quickly make a lot more sense in a time of Food Shortages*, it is much easier to visualise how Local Food Chains can not only work, but will begin to restore Food and Food Production to being a central part of our communities and life.

Food: The heart of Communities of the Future

These pages on Grow Your Own have turned out to be much more extensive than I had expected when I began writing over the Whitsun Bank Holiday weekend.

I hope that by reaching this point and having had the opportunity to consider all of the options and aspects there are to Home Growing and Growing Food with the Community, you may have begun to see how Food and Food Production can bring People together, as well as Growing Our Own being a very important part of creating access for us all to Foods We Can Trust.

Whether we Grow Our Own at Home, or contribute to a Community effort in whatever form that might be, there is good reason to believe that even if not all of our Food is grown and brought to us this way, a significant amount of it will be, IF we really want to be sure that we are eating Foods We Can Trust, whilst also having an economic system that not only includes everyone, but is also balanced, fair and just for all.

If you would like to read more of my work on this important area of new thinking, please visit and take a look at my previous works which you will find [on my Blog](#).

Cost

I am very mindful of the additional cost or 'start-up' costs for anyone who would like to Grow Food at Home with limited resources.

Like most things today, prices of any of the equipment required will always vary and it is always advisable to shop around.

However, the links of suppliers and organisations that are listed as we have covered the different methods to Grow Your Own and the Foods that you can grow too will certainly help with online searches for better prices – *if the prices that some of them offer aren't as competitive as they could be themselves.*

I'm not kidding when I say that some of the people who could benefit most from Growing Their Own Food today are also those who simply don't have the spare cash to invest in any of the things that they would need to continue alone.

For anyone experiencing that kind of difficulty, or for those who would prefer to work with others and perhaps get the social benefits of doing so, there is good reason to believe that looking for local gardening clubs or similar organisations could easily open up opportunities to collaborate, work together and pool existing resources, so that the initial outlay and costs associated with getting Your Home Growing started can be shared in different ways.

Online searches that use the name and location of the place that you live will always be a good place to begin. For example, search 'gardening clubs in (place I live)', or 'gardening clubs near to where I live'.

Sharing Your Knowledge on Home Growing

With it being likely that many of us will need to embrace Growing Our Own Food, I am keen to link and collaborate with people, groups and organisations who are open to sharing their knowledge, experience, tips and stories that can help anyone who wants to consider Growing their Own Food using whatever resources they have or may be able to secure.

If you can share information, downloads or would perhaps like to record a tutorial or interview, please get in touch.

Thoughts on Grow Your Own

Writing this section of Foods We Can Trust has so far taken the longest time to complete.

Grow Your Own offers an opportunity for us all to reconnect with sustainable living and demonstrates that the opportunities to return to DIY living or to make an active contribution to ways of providing the things that are essential for us all to live are not something that can only happen out of sight, out of mind or behind the screen of some digital box.

Honestly, I was amazed by how much information, resources and advice is available for anyone thinking about Grow Your Own.

The list and variety of the Foods that we can grow at home, whether it's in a container, grow bag, window box, greenhouse, garden, allotment or using hydroponics is simply staggering.

Yes, there are some very good reasons for as many of us as possible taking up Growing Our Own Food, but the benefits are much bigger than just adding a source of Food alone.

I hope that after reading through these pages, you will feel the same!

Part 4 Summary:

Part 4 explores how individual and community action can strengthen food security, resilience, and wellbeing in the UK by reconnecting people with food production and empowering everyone to play a role in shaping a trustworthy food future.

Key Points

- **Food Security Begins at Home and in the Community:**
While national policies matter, the most powerful solutions often start close to home. Growing your own food, joining community initiatives, or working together as “citizen farmers” can help build a more secure, resilient, and nourishing food system for all.
- **The Fragility of the Current Food System:**
The UK's food supply is more vulnerable than many realise. Relying solely on supermarkets and long supply chains leaves communities at risk of shortages and disruptions. Taking action before a crisis is essential.
- **Practical Ways to Get Involved:**
There are many accessible methods for growing food, regardless of space or resources - window boxes, containers, grow bags, greenhouses, gardens, allotments, and hydroponics. The section provides lists of vegetables, fruits, herbs, and even animals that can be grown or kept at home, as well as guidance on collaborative approaches like community gardens and cooperative farming.

- **Benefits Beyond Food:**
Growing your own food and participating in community initiatives offer more than just sustenance. These activities can improve mental and physical wellbeing, foster social connection, and build local resilience.
- **Collaboration and Citizen Farming:**
Community gardens, share farming, and cooperative projects enable people to pool resources, share knowledge, and produce food collectively. The “citizen farmer” model encourages everyone - regardless of background or resources - to contribute to local food production and security.
- **Overcoming Barriers:**
The section addresses challenges such as start-up costs, limited space, and the need for local support. It offers suggestions for finding gardening clubs, sharing resources, and seeking guidance from local councils or organisations.
- **A Call to Action:**
Part 4 encourages readers to take practical steps - whether by growing a few herbs on a windowsill or joining a community project - to help secure their own food future and contribute to a more trustworthy, resilient food system for all.

In summary:

Part 4 demonstrates that everyone can play a role in food security. By growing, sharing, and working together, individuals and communities can create access to foods they can trust and help build a healthier, more connected, and resilient future.

Conclusion

As we reach the end of this journey through food security, nutrition, local food production, and community action, it's clear that the future of food in the UK - and beyond - depends on our willingness to rethink, reconnect, and take responsibility for what we eat and how it is produced.

Food is not just a commodity or a convenience; it is an essential part of life, community, and wellbeing.

The challenges we face - fragile supply chains, nutritional confusion, barriers to access, and the risk of taking food for granted - are complex, but they are not insurmountable.

By understanding the true meaning of food security, recognising the importance of nutrition, celebrating the abundance of local foods, and embracing the power of individual and collective action, we can build a more resilient, trustworthy, and nourishing food system for everyone.

The stories, research, and practical tools shared in these pages are meant to spark reflection and empower change. Whether you are growing a few herbs on a windowsill, joining a community garden, supporting local farmers, or simply making more conscious choices at the supermarket, you are part of a movement toward a healthier, more connected future.

Food security begins with each of us, but its impact reaches far beyond our own plates.

By working together - as individuals, families, communities, and citizens - we can ensure that everyone has access to foods they can trust, and that our food system serves the needs of all.

Let this book be both a blueprint and an invitation: to question, to learn, to act, and to share. The journey does not end here. It continues in every meal, every conversation, and every seed planted for tomorrow.

Together, we can build a future where food is truly at the heart of life - secure, nourishing, and accessible for all.

Glossary

Accessibility (Food Context)

The ease with which individuals or communities can obtain the food they need, regardless of location, income, or circumstance.

Affordability (Food Context)

The extent to which food is priced within reach for all people, allowing them to purchase enough nutritious food without financial hardship.

Allotment

A plot of land rented by individuals or groups for growing food, often as part of a community initiative or local council scheme.

Barter and Exchange (Local Economy)

Systems of trading goods or services directly, without using money, often used to supplement traditional economic models and improve access to essentials during times of crisis.

Citizen Farmer

An individual who actively participates in food production—whether by growing food at home, joining community initiatives, or supporting local agriculture—to strengthen personal and community food security.

Community Garden

A shared space where people come together to grow food collectively, fostering social connection, education, and local resilience.

Foodbank

A charitable organisation or initiative that provides emergency food supplies to people in need, often as a response to food insecurity or poverty.

Food Chain

The sequence of processes involved in the production and distribution of food, from farm to table, including growing, harvesting, processing, transporting, and retailing.

Food Security

The condition in which all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs for an active and healthy life.

Food Sovereignty

The right of people to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems.

Local Food System

A network of food production, processing, distribution, and consumption that is geographically localised, supporting local economies and reducing reliance on distant supply chains.

Macronutrients

Nutrients required in large amounts by the body, including carbohydrates, proteins, fats, fibre, and water. They provide energy and are essential for growth and bodily functions.

Micronutrients

Nutrients required in smaller amounts, such as vitamins and minerals (e.g., Vitamin A, B, C, D, calcium, iron). They are vital for health, development, and disease prevention.

Nutrition

The process by which organisms take in and utilise food substances, including macronutrients and micronutrients, to support growth, health, and bodily functions.

Resilience (Food Context)

The ability of individuals, communities, or systems to withstand and recover from disruptions to food supply, such as economic shocks, climate events, or global crises.

Self-sufficiency (Food Context)

The ability of a person, household, or nation to meet its food needs independently, without relying on external sources or imports.

Seasonality (Food Context)

The times of year when certain foods are naturally available or at their best, often influencing local food choices and sustainability.

Supply Chain

The entire system of organisations, people, activities, information, and resources involved in moving food from producer to consumer.

Sustainable Agriculture

Farming practices that maintain or improve environmental health, economic profitability, and social equity for current and future generations.

Vulnerabilities (Food Context)

Weaknesses or risks in the food system that can lead to shortages, insecurity, or reduced access, often exposed by global events or policy failures.

Further Reading

Foundations of Food Security and Poverty

- **Is Poverty Invisible to Those Who Don't Experience It?**

<https://adamtugwell.blog/2025/02/24/is-poverty-invisible-to-those-who-dont-experience-it-full-text/>

This article draws on personal experience and research to explore how poverty and food insecurity are often overlooked by policymakers and the public. It examines the role of foodbanks, the stigma attached to poverty, and the challenges faced by those who rely on emergency support, offering insights into the lived reality behind the statistics.

- **Who Controls Our Food Controls Our Future**

<https://adamtugwell.blog/2024/11/14/who-controls-our-food-controls-our-future-full-text/>

This piece investigates the power structures and vested interests that shape the UK's food system. It discusses how control over food production and supply can influence public health, policy, and social outcomes, and argues for greater transparency and democratic involvement in food governance.

- **Food from Farms Guaranteed**

<https://adamtugwell.blog/2025/03/14/food-from-farms-guaranteed-full-text/>

Focuses on the importance of supporting domestic food production and the risks associated with dependence on global supply chains. The article highlights the need for policies that prioritise UK-grown food and the resilience of local farming communities.

Policy, Strategy, and Collaboration

- **The Need for a Collaborative Approach to the UK Farming and Food Security Problem**

<https://adamtugwell.blog/2025/01/18/the-need-for-a-collaborative-approach-to-the-uk-farming-and-food-security-problem/>

Argues that effective food security solutions require collaboration between farmers, government, and communities. It explores the barriers to cooperation and suggests practical steps for building a more resilient and inclusive food system.

- **The Real Implications of the UK's Food Strategy 2025**

<https://adamtugwell.blog/2025/07/23/the-real-implications-of-the-uks-food-strategy-2025/>

Analyses the UK's current food strategy, examining its strengths, weaknesses, and the potential impact on national food security. The article discusses policy gaps and the need for a more holistic approach to food system challenges.

Nutrition, Health, and Living Standards

- **Fresh Food is the Foundation of a Happy, Healthy and Productive Life**
<https://adamtugwell.blog/2024/02/25/fresh-food-is-the-foundation-of-a-happy-healthy-and-productive-life-so-why-would-anyone-think-humanity-can-survive-by-leaving-the-basic-building-blocks-of-good-living-behind/>
Explores the critical role of fresh, nutritious food in supporting physical and mental wellbeing, productivity, and social progress. It questions the sustainability of processed food reliance and advocates for a return to whole, locally sourced foods.
- **The Basic Living Standard Explained**
<https://adamtugwell.blog/2025/10/24/the-basic-living-standard-explained/>
Breaks down what constitutes a basic living standard in the UK, including the role of food affordability and access in achieving a decent quality of life. The article discusses income, housing, and the minimum requirements for wellbeing.

Challenges and Crises

- **The Growing UK Food Problem**
<https://adamtugwell.blog/2024/10/23/the-growing-uk-food-problem/>
Provides an overview of the current challenges facing the UK food system, including supply chain vulnerabilities, policy gaps, and the impact of global events on food availability and affordability.
- **The Growing UK Food Crisis**
<https://adamtugwell.blog/2023/10/04/the-growing-uk-food-crisis/>
Details the escalating risks of food shortages and insecurity in the UK, examining the causes and consequences of a fragile food system and the urgent need for systemic change.
- **Is It Just Food Price Inflation That Costs Us More?**
<https://adamtugwell.blog/2023/10/06/is-it-just-food-price-inflation-that-costs-us-more/>
Explores the impact of rising food prices on households and the broader economy, considering the underlying causes of food inflation and its effects on affordability and access.

Sustainable Agriculture and Local Economies

- **Sustainable Agriculture is Part of the Pathway to UK Food Security**
<https://adamtugwell.blog/2024/01/08/sustainable-agriculture-is-part-of-the-pathway-to-uk-food-security-but-it-wont-work-well-for-anyone-until-it-works-for-everyone-in-the-same-way/>
Examines the role of sustainable farming practices in building long-term food

security, and the need for inclusive approaches that benefit everyone, not just large-scale producers.

- **Farm Inheritance Tax Was Always About Wrecking Independent UK Food Production**

<https://adamtugwell.blog/2025/08/14/farm-inheritance-tax-was-always-about-wrecking-independent-uk-food-production-thats-why-it-defies-common-sense/>

Investigates how inheritance tax policies affect independent food producers and the sustainability of local agriculture, highlighting the unintended consequences for food security.

- **The Local Economy Governance System**

<https://adamtugwell.blog/2025/11/21/the-local-economy-governance-system-online-text/>

Explores alternative models for local economic governance, with a focus on how these can support resilient food systems and communities, including decentralised decision-making and local empowerment.

- **The Role of Barter and Exchange in the Local Economy Governance System**

<https://adamtugwell.blog/2025/12/03/the-role-of-barter-and-exchange-in-the-local-economy-governance-system/>

Looks at how barter and exchange can supplement traditional economic systems, helping communities access food and other essentials during times of crisis or economic instability.

Broader Economic and Social Context

- **An Economy for the Common Good**

<https://adamtugwell.blog/2025/02/24/an-economy-for-the-common-good-full-text/>

Discusses the ethical and social dimensions of economic policy, and how these principles can be applied to create fairer, more sustainable food systems and communities.

- **From Here to There Through Now**

<https://adamtugwell.blog/2025/03/06/from-here-to-there-through-now-full-text/>

Reflects on the process of change and progress in society, with insights relevant to food security, community resilience, and personal action. This piece encourages readers to consider their own role in shaping the future.

Resource Directory:

This directory provides a list of the links to external organisations and websites that are referenced throughout this book – along with some of those that link to my other work:

1. Food Security & Policy

- **UK Government Food Security Reports**
 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/united-kingdom-food-security-report-2024/united-kingdom-food-security-report-2024-theme-2-uk-food-supply-sources>
- **National Preparedness Commission**
 - <https://nationalpreparednesscommission.uk/publications/just-in-case-7-steps-to-narrow-the-uk-civil-food-resilience-gap/>
- **DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs)**
 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/agriculture-in-the-united-kingdom-2022/chapter-7-crops>
 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/agriculture-in-the-united-kingdom-2023/chapter-8-livestock>

2. Community Food Initiatives & Local Food

- **National Farmers Union (NFU)**
 - <https://www.nfuonline.com/updates-and-information/back-british-farming-seasonality-chart/>
- **The Vegetarian Society**
 - <https://vegsoc.org/blog/seasonal-uk-grown-produce/>
- **The National Trust**
 - <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/discover/gardening-tips/guide-to-seasonal-food>
- **Stroud Community Agriculture** (Example of a community-supported agriculture project)
 - <https://stroudcommunityagriculture.org/>

3. Home Growing & Gardening

- **Royal Horticultural Society (RHS)**

- <https://www.rhs.org.uk/vegetables>
- <https://www.rhs.org.uk/herbs>
- <https://www.rhs.org.uk/fruit>
- <https://www.rhs.org.uk/vegetables/hydroponics>
- <https://www.rhs.org.uk/vegetables/containers>
- <https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/grow-your-own/allotments/what-to-grow-on-your-allotment>
- **BBC Gardeners' World**
 - <https://www.gardenersworld.com/how-to/grow-plants/complete-guide-to-hydroponics/>
 - <https://www.gardenersworld.com/plants/low-maintenance-veg-and-fruit/>
- **Suttons Seeds**
 - <https://hub.suttons.co.uk/blog/general/growbag-growing>
- **Local Allotment Information (For Cheltenham Borough!)**
 - https://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/info/64/allotments/314/applying_for_an_allotment

4. Nutrition & Healthy Eating

- **British Nutrition Foundation**
 - <https://www.nutrition.org.uk/nutrition-for/men/nutrition-recommendations-for-men/>
 - <https://www.nutrition.org.uk/nutrition-for/women/nutrition-recommendations-for-women/>
- **NHS Eatwell Guide**
 - <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/food-guidelines-and-food-labels/the-eatwell-guide/>
- **World Health Organization**
 - <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/healthy-diet>

5. Foodbanks & Emergency Support

- **The Trussell Trust**
 - <https://www.trusselltrust.org/get-help/find-a-foodbank/>

- **Independent Food Aid Network**

- <https://www.foodaidnetwork.org.uk/independent-food-banks-map>

6. Fishing & Foraging

- **Marine Management Organisation**

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/buyers-and-sellers-of-first-sale-fish-and-submission-of-sales-notes/list-of-common-species-codes-for-fish-landed-in-the-united-kingdom>

- **Gov.UK**

- <https://www.gov.uk/freshwater-rod-fishing-rules/fish-size-and-catch-limits>

7. Further Reading & Blogs

- **Author's Blog**

- <http://www.adamtugwell.blog/>

- **Selected Articles**

- <https://adamtugwell.blog/2025/02/24/is-poverty-invisible-to-those-who-dont-experience-it-full-text/>
- <https://adamtugwell.blog/2024/11/14/who-controls-our-food-controls-our-future-full-text/>
- <https://adamtugwell.blog/2025/03/14/food-from-farms-guaranteed-full-text/>

8. Local & Community Support

- **How to Find Local Gardening Clubs**

- Search online for “gardening clubs in [your town/city]” or “community gardens near me.”
- Ask at local libraries, council offices, or community centres for recommendations.

Get in Touch & Contribute

Your experiences, insights, and questions are vital to building a stronger, more resilient food community. If you have feedback, stories, resources, or ideas to share - or if you'd like to contribute to future editions or community projects—please reach out!

Email: talktotuggy@gmail.com

Whether you're a grower, community organiser, policy expert, or simply passionate about food security, your voice matters. Let's work together to create access to foods we can trust for everyone.

About the Author

Adam Tugwell grew up in social housing in a one-parent family, experiencing firsthand the realities of poverty, free school meals, clothing vouchers, and even grants for beds. Leaving school at 16 with no qualifications, Adam worked in various farm jobs and alongside his father before being inspired to return to full-time education at age 20. He completed his GCSEs in just six months, then pursued A Levels at Gloscat, the local technical college.

Adam's career has spanned management training with Pickfords, running municipal contracts for SITA (GB), and developing community projects to tackle social exclusion for Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (notably The JumpStart Project). He designed, secured funding for, and launched the Gloucestershire Minibus Scheme for Gloucestershire County Council. After experiencing a lung-related illness, Adam became South West Regional Manager for the British Lung Foundation, focusing on regional support groups, before founding his first company by winning a major distribution contract with a national newspaper group in 2004.

Since then, Adam has worked as an advisor, mentor, and coach to business leaders, and has developed multiple business projects of his own. His public service includes being elected to Tewkesbury Town Council (2003–07), chairing the Severn Ham Committee, serving as a founding member of Ashchurch Rural Parish Council (2008–11), and as an elected member of Tewkesbury Borough Council (2007–15), where he chaired the licensing committee from 2011 to 2015.

In 2023–24, Adam completed a Postgraduate Certificate in Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security at The Royal Agricultural University, driven by the conviction that food, food security, and food production are foundational to the future of local communities.

Adam's lived experience of poverty, community, and resilience deeply informs his writing and advocacy. He is the author of several works exploring the roots of inequality and the pathways to authentic governance, including *Levelling Level*, *The Basic Living Standard*, *From Here to There Through Now*, and *Our Local Future*. His work centres on building fair, sustainable, and people-centred systems where dignity, community, and environmental stewardship are at the heart of every decision.

Further Information

To explore more of Adam Tugwell's writing, including the online edition of this post, please visit:

www.adamtugwell.blog

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