

Institution: University of Gloucestershire
Unit of Assessment: 16 Architecture, Built Environment and Planning
Title of case study: Developing Community Capacity And Innovation in Sustainable Food Chains
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>The CCRI's extensive programme of funded research (for the EU, UK government, research councils, private and the voluntary sectors) into local and sustainable food has impacted at both national and local levels. Nationally, it has led directly to changes in fishing regulations (Defra), adjustments to ministerial roles (DCLG), changes in the implementation of the Big Lottery's Local Food programme and the successful development of traditional food markets. Locally, food strategies and marketing strategies for local food have been developed and community food growing has been implemented on the ground. National television and radio coverage have ensured wide dissemination.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>Precursors to the underpinning research include Kirwan's work [A] (ESRC Open Scholarship 1999-2002) on Farmers' Markets. This work, which set the agenda for much of the research described in this case study, highlighted the importance of transparency and continued inter-personal contact in fostering community and social innovation in food networks. Similarly, Ilbery and Maye's research on local foods noted the significance of the re-creation of place and new spatial networks through 'locality' foods and Courtney's work, in association with Reed, focused on the importance of local economic linkages around 'alternative' food producers. Meanwhile Ingram's earlier work focused on innovation and adaptation amongst food producers, particularly in relation to the provision of advice.</p> <p>Funded under the UKRC, the Rural Economy and Land Use (RELU) programme (Kirwan 2005-2007) the 'Eating Biodiversity' project [B] focused on embeddedness and reconnection of production with consumption through the relationship between the sustainability of production and the message presented to consumers. Ilbery and Maye supervised two ESRC funded PhD studentships concerned with the social relationships around food distribution and retailing. One with the Soil Association examining the potential of buying groups to increase access to organic produce (Little) [C] and one with the National Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA) (Smith), assessing the role of street markets in fresh food provisioning.</p> <p>The <i>Freshstart</i> initiative, which was evaluated by Kirwan and Ingram, (2005-2008), and built on Kirwan's earlier work, was funded through Cornwall Agricultural Council Development Trust (CACDT) under Objective 1 funding, and offered a package of measures to both farming entrepreneurs entering the industry and farmers wishing to leave. Key to its evaluation [D] was a concern to understand how the local farming community in Cornwall could be made more socially sustainable by matching entrants with those hoping to leave the industry.</p> <p><i>SOLINSA</i> (EU, Framework VII, 2010-2013, Ingram and Kirwan), examined innovations in learning and information flows within and between communities to assist in the development of the practice of sustainable agriculture. Of two case studies, one has involved working with the Brighton and</p>

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Hove Food Partnership, whereby the latter have been a research partner rather than a research subject. It focused on linking food to energy, waste and health to maximise the benefits of local food production.

The Social Impact of Inshore Fisheries (Reed and **Courtney**, 2010-2011) was funded by Defra as part of their programme *Sustainable Access to Inshore Fisheries* (SAIF), examined the contribution made by smaller commercial fishing business to their local community. The research [E] reported on the symbolic and cultural role of inshore fishing in creating a sense of place and how that underpinned the tourism economy and related niche food sectors.

Local Food (LF) is a £60 million funding programme to help make locally grown food accessible and affordable to communities. The fund is managed by the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts (RSWT) and was evaluated by the CCRI (**Kirwan** and **Ilbery**, 2009-2014). The research [F] focused on affecting change at a community level and the need to support projects that are using food as a creative medium through which to develop community capacity across a spectrum of issues, including health and well-being.

3. References to the research

A] **Kirwan, J.** (2004), Alternative Strategies in the UK Agro-Food System: Interrogating the Alterity of Farmers' Markets. *Sociologia Ruralis*, 44: 395–415. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-9523.2004.00283.

B] Morris, C. and **Kirwan, J.** (2010) Food commodities, geographical knowledge and the reconnection of production and consumption: the case of naturally embedded food products. *Geoforum*, 41, pp. 131-143. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2009.09.004>

C] Little, R., **Maye, D.** and Ilbery, B. (2010) Collective purchase: moving local and organic foods beyond the niche market. *Environment and Planning A*, 42 (8), 1979-1813. DOI: 10.1068/a4262

D] **Ingram J** and **Kirwan J** (2011) Matching new entrants and retiring farmers through farm joint ventures: insights from the Fresh Start Initiative in Cornwall, UK. *Land Use Policy* 28, 917– 927. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.landusepol.2011.04.001>

E] Reed, M., **Courtney, P.**, Urquhart, J. and Ross, N. (2012) Beyond fish as commodities: Understanding the socio-cultural role of inshore fisheries in England. *Marine Policy*. Vol.37 pp.62-68 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2012.04.009>

F] **Kirwan, J.**, **Ilbery, B.**, **Maye, D.** and Carey, J. (2013) Grassroots social innovations and food localisation: an initial investigation of the Local Food programme in England. *Global Environmental Change*. Vol. 23. Issue. 5 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2012.12.004>

Key Grants and Contracts

Kirwan, J; Little, R and Smith, J. One ESRC open Scholarship and two ESRC CASE Studentship awards (2002 – 2010)

Kirwan, J., and Morris, C., 'Eating Biodiversity' (RELU) (2004-2007) £3,682 (out of £379,122)

Kirwan, J., and **Ingram, J.**, 'Evaluation of Freshstart Initiative' CADC £32,000

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Reed, M. and **Courtney, P**, 'Social Impacts of England's inshore fishing industry' Defra (2009-10) £110,000

Kirwan, J., & **Ilbery, B.**, 'Local Food Evaluation' Big Lottery (2009-2014) £135,000

Curry, N., **Ingram, J.**, **Maye, D.**, & **Kirwan, J.**, 'SOLINSA' (2010-2014) EU FP7 £122,000

4. Details of the impact

CCRI research into **traditional food markets for NABMA** led directly to the following, according to their Chief Executive. The construction, by CCRI, of the national retail markets database of traditional food markets was endorsed by the All Party Parliamentary Markets Group (A). The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Select Committee Report, *Market failure? Can the traditional market survive? (2009)* used the CCRI research to establish a markets working group and to create a ministerial role within DCLG for traditional markets. DCLG's Good Practice Guide for Markets also included a number of CCRI recommendations. In addition, NABMA used the CCRI research in its submission to the *Mary Portas Review of the High Street (2011)*, sponsored by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. NABMA's *Love Your Local Market (2013)* campaign was a direct outcome of the CCRI research. [A]

The research team in the **SOLINSA** project worked in partnership with two community food groups. It made an active contribution to the development and structure of the second Brighton and Hove Food Strategy (*Digging Deeper*, 2012) in the areas of food awareness, safe affordable food and providing sustainable food and waste recycling. The team also worked with the Permaculture Association in actively improving its marketing strategies and developing its strategies for linking with the farming industry and for research. The team also facilitated two 'strategic review' discussion groups for the Association. According to the Permaculture Association Chief Executive, the CCRI's work "*helped to develop an innovative 'co-housing' project with Leeds City Council and housing associations that included community food growing within the overall project brief*" (B).

The **social impacts of fishing** research led directly to changes in the Shellfish Regulations for England's inshore waters. It was also used directly by Defra as a principal input to their economic assessment of the impact of such fishing to the tourism economy of coastal communities, and their social assessment of the welfare of these communities (25/03/2011) (E). In addition, the findings were utilised by Defra in informing the creation of Marine Conservation Zones.

In the **Local Food Project**, the CCRI evaluated the £60 million initiative by the Big Lottery (2009 on) that encouraged local food growing and capacity building within the community. The whole programme benefited from the CCRI's evaluation through the dissemination of both principles and good practice. A project instigator has noted, "*I have enormously valued the robust, rigorous and objective discussions within the CCRI team on working out the best approaches; something that doesn't happen very often within organisations and project delivery*" (C). The project is being managed by Royal Society of Wild Trusts (RSWT), who's manager notes that "*through communications all [Local Food] projects have benefitted in some way*" and that the strategic impact of the research had been considerable, allowing the management team to "*pitch the outcomes and emerging trends of Local Food with robust evidence to the Big Lottery Fund policy colleagues, addressing the wider context of community impact and not just environment and food growing*" (D). The work of the CCRI on the Local Food project is on-going but the RSWT project

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manager has commented that whilst several organisations contribute understanding to the project, the work of the CCRI has been 'critical'.

The sustainable food organisation, f3 has worked with the CCRI on the *SOLINSA*, *SUPURB* and *Local Food* projects. According to their Associate Director the research has “*demythified the notions of evaluation and impact for local food practitioners*” allowing communities on the ground to gain a better understanding of their own influence (C). Importantly, the CCRI has facilitated crossover between academics and practitioners, leading to practitioners publishing academic works and academics becoming directly involved in the local food movement.

The CCRI places considerable emphasis on informing wider societal debates around food production and consumption and its wider impacts. An example of this can be seen in the Local Food evaluation where the CCRI's report was presented to a conference of 500 delegates in the local food sector (October 2012) and informed the creation of 3 films, shown on Community Channel (23 July 2013) (F). The research team have also contributed to national debates, such as Kirwan's contribution to BBC Radio 4's 'Farming Today' and 'Today' programmes regarding Farmers' Markets (25 June 2012) (G). In addition, CCRI's involvement in events such as the Royal Society on 'Sustainable Intensification as the Future of Farming' (May 2013) (H) reflects the significance of its contribution to this debate.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact*People*

A - Chief Executive National Association British Market Authorities

B - Chief Executive Officer, The Permaculture Association.

C - Associate Director, f3

D - Local Food Programme Manager, Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts.

Documents

E - Defra - Reform of Fisheries Management Arrangements – England – Impact Assessment 1338 25/03/2011

F - Local Food: More than just the Veg – The Community Channel, Freeview channel 87 or <http://www.communitychannel.org/video/owGLITqIjSY/>

G - BBC Farming Today 25/06/2012

H - Royal Society Policy Lab meetings – video, blogs and story of twitter debate - <http://royalsociety.org/events/2013/sustainable-intensification/>