**GFEM**
GOOD FOOD EAST MIDLANDS

## What is GFEM?
We are an independent organisation with membership open to any individual or group that has an interest in healthy and sustainable food; whether you want to **Love it, Eat it, Grow it or Share it!**

We have a Board which acts as our governing body; and broad membership from across the food community in the East Midlands, including those who grow and sell food; local authorities; schools; universities; health; housing and others.

## The need for an East Midlands approach
Most local food groups have their origins in two broad concerns about food (driven by the United Nations and the World Health Organisation), and GFEM is no different. We have developed a strategy to support our aims and objectives which considers both the production and consumption of food:

1. In terms of *production*, there are threats to global food security – fossil fuel use, crop failure, soil erosion, environmental impacts of high input high output agriculture, impacts of animal production, resource depletion, food waste and greenhouse gas emissions.
2. In terms of *consumption*, the relationship between food and health is a focus of attention – obesity, high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease and food poverty.

GFEM and the Board that oversees it was formed after discussions between the Sustainable Food Cities programme (the production end) and Public Health England East Midlands (the consumption end), but GFEM is now an independent body with a focus on the **whole food chain.** For GFEM this includes energy, waste and a concern for what good food might be, as well as the social and the commercial.

GFEM seeks to put forward policies and offer advice in an attempt to redress the two core problems of production and consumption. As a uniquely regional body it does this by seeking to influence *downwards* – its constituent counties and communities – and *upwards* – to central government

## Advantages of Local food Systems
As well as addressing these core *problems*, seeing food as an holistic or systemic local food system has been shown to have a whole range of other *benefits* too – for local populations:

| Environmental | Health | Economic | Social | Educational |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Reducing food waste | Combatting obesity | Creating employment | Combatting food poverty | Educating about food |
| Reducing environmental impact | Promoting mental health | Positive multiplier effects | Creating community cohesion | As a medium for learning skills |
| Reducing food miles | Promoting physical health | Promoting local enterprise | Linking various facets of deprivation | Changing lifestyles |
| Addressing food shortages | Drug rehabilitation | | | |

## Developing Best Practice
GFEM is concerned to maximise this range of benefits in the region in the context of addressing the two core problems. Much of this is done through sharing best practice. For example:

*Community cohesion*: B-inspired: food sharing in the community in Leicester; Diverse Diggers, Leicester; Hockerton co-housing.

*Stimulating the elderly*: Derbyshire nutrition and hydration group in care homes.

**Tacking food poverty**: food banks in all counties; holiday food schemes in all counties.

**Public procurement, food quality and the local economy**: school catering in Leicestershire and Lincolnshire; hospital procurement in Nottinghamshire.

**Tackling mental health**:  therapeutic gardening in Lincoln (Green Synergy)

**Tackling physical health:** early years healthy eating in Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire; gardening for health in Derbyshire.

**Drug rehabilitation:** Leicester City, Graceworks; Lincoln City, Adaction.

**Improving the environment**: food growing as environmental restoration in Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire (BTCV).

**Sustaining our heritage**: rare fruit breeds (Lincolnshire); rare animal breeds (Leicestershire)

**Food waste and sustainable energy**: Lincoln city anaerobic digestion proposals.

**Food waste and redistribution**: pay forward and pay as you can afford cafes in most counties using supermarket food. Fare share.

**Stimulating the local economy and jobs**:  Indoor market redevelopment – Leicestershire and Lincoln; Community food processing

---

**GFEM Action areas**

*Health*
- Tackle health and hunger amongst the poor and vulnerable, particularly children and the elderly and reduce health inequalities
- Use all aspects of good food (see below) to promote mental health, substance abuse rehabilitation physical exercise;
- Champion the specific role of food education and action in schools, in relation to diet, breakfast clubs and meals in the school holidays.
- Develop food education for all citizens in the region.
- Work to tackle obesity in the region.

*Environment*
- Reduce food waste.
- Encourage, wherever appropriate, the adoption of short food miles.
- Be mindful of actions to reduce food insecurity.

*Economy*
- Support the importance of the local food economy within the food system.
- Use of food to stimulate local economic development and develop skills,
- Develop sustainable food procurement.

*Culture*
- Celebrate the food culture and distinctiveness of the East Midlands

*Sustainable Food Cities (SFC)*
- Seek SFC status in 2017/18.
- Support local authorities in the region in working towards SFC accreditation.
- Act as a Regional membership organisation

*Procedural*
- Demonstrate strategic leadership in delivering a healthier, more sustainable and resilient food culture in the East Midlands; take a whole system approach to food ensuring links across key issues, partners, and delivery of actions.
- Develop a consistency of vision and approach with stakeholders.
- Provide a hub for connections across all sector stakeholders.
- Work with partners to ensure appropriate links in the East Midlands.
- Identify resources, expertise and funding for the delivery of the action plan.
- Provide oversight and challenge of delivery of actions.
-  Provide an information hub for all stakeholders.
- Support research to enable the development of relevant policy.

---

For more information on GFEM, how you can get involved and planned events/activities please check out our facebook page -  https://www.facebook.com/GoodFoodEastMidlands/

## Love it, Eat it, Grow it, Share it!