‘Food Cultures’ Research

Commissioned by Schumacher College
Research by Caroline Aitken
Aims of the research

To aid the transition to sustainable food systems

- Assess current educational opportunities
- Identify unmet educational needs within sector
- Identify target groups

How do we help to get new entrants into sustainable food businesses and ensure they have the skills needed to succeed?
Sector consultation

➢ Farmers & growers
➢ Processors and distributors
➢ Food service & retail businesses
➢ Educators
➢ Food systems organisations
Research

- Identify target groups:
  - via interviews, surveys and professional experience

- Survey of target groups:
  - Content
  - Format
  - Accessibility

- Assessment of current opportunities
  - All types of courses offering related content in the UK
Current Educational Opportunities

Course formats:
- Level 2 (certificate)
- Level 3 (Diploma)
- Apprenticeships
- Foundation Degrees
- Bachelor Degrees
- Masters
- Short Courses
- Traineeships and Mentoring Programmes
Current Educational Opportunities

Agricultural colleges and universities:
- Plant sciences
- Agribusiness (conventional)
- Agritech (conventional)
- Horticulture (conventional)
- FE & HE courses (1 - 4 years)
- Apprenticeships in horticulture.

Predominantly conventional
Current Educational Opportunities

Practical Short Courses:

- Regenerative agriculture
- Ethical and sustainable animal husbandry
- Soil
- Sustainable gardening
Current Educational Opportunities

Postgraduate programmes:
- Sustainable food systems
- Food policy
- Sustainable food & natural resources
- Agroecology
Educational Gaps Identified

- Food systems: supply and distribution, markets, etc
- Business management skills
- Co-operative models
- Principles of ecology and agroecology
- Nutrition
- Practical experience in agribusiness
- Holistic systems design skills
Demographics

- School leavers
- Existing farmers
- Food business entrepreneurs
- Graduates/career changers
Accessibility

- Cost
- Time
- Culture
Conclusions

- Theory
- Practice
- Business

- Affordable short courses, CPD
- Apprenticeships and traineeships
- Comprehensive professional courses
Future ideas at Dartington/Schumacher

- Link with other learning opportunities on the estate
- Extend Practical Sustainable Horticulture course
- BSc Sustainable Food and Farming Business: PT, FT, Modular
- Short course programme:
  - Credit-bearing modules
  - CPD
- Internships / Traineeships / Apprenticeships
- Incubation