

What does food sovereignty mean in a UK context?

*An investigation
to voice our next challenges*

Jade Bashford

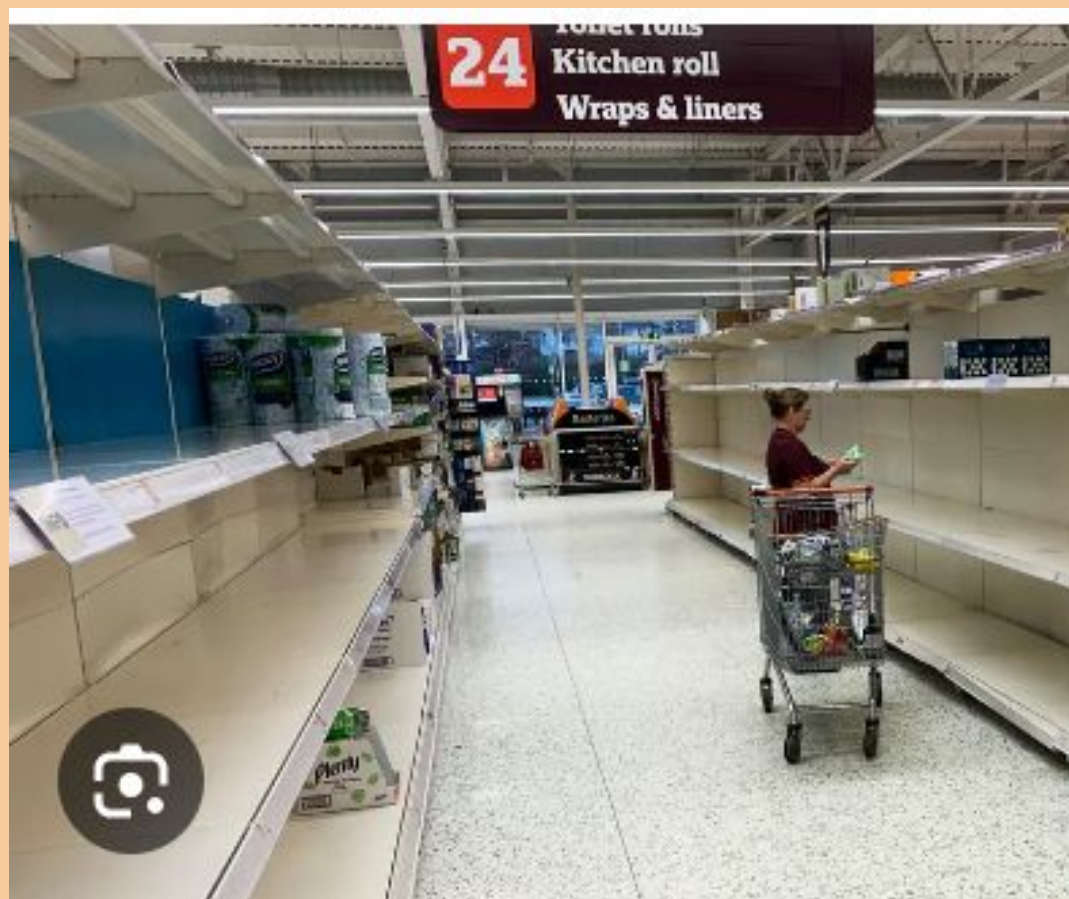
Programme Co-ordinator
Real Farming Trust



REAL
FARMING
TRUST







Food bank queue, Leicester











Landmark Events for the Building of the UK Food Sovereignty Movement



Food Sovereignty National Gathering 2012

Over two days around 100 people inspired by efforts around the globe towards food sovereignty gathered to discuss and shared experiences about food sovereignty and its meaning within the UK.

The event ended with a statement in support of the Food Sovereignty Pillars. It was also a space for landless workers to ignite what is today the Land Workers Alliance.

Organised by a group of people members of activist groups, landless workers, farmers, campaigners, consumers and NGOs. Over 30 UK organisations supported the event.



Food Sovereignty Month 2014

A series of events carried out by several organisations across the UK were disseminated and bundled around food sovereignty principles to commemorate the World Food Day.

Supported by Organiclea, Permaculture Association, Youth Food Movement, Transition Towns, Reclaim the Fields, UK Food Group, GM Freeze, Friends of the Earth, World Development Movement, Pig Business, Gaia Foundation, War on Want, Accord, World Family, Scottish Crofters Federation.



National Gathering 2015

This was the second national gathering to build a stronger movement for food sovereignty in the UK.

Organised by a group of volunteers from the broad food sovereignty movement including people from Community Centred Knowledge, the Community Food Growers Network, Food Sovereignty Sussex, Global Justice Now, Incredible Edible Todmorden, the Land Workers' Alliance, the UK Food Group, War on Want, Wild Heart Permaculture and the Workers Educational Association.

<https://foodsovereigntynow.org.uk/>

Slide prepared by: Graciela Romero-Vasquez
romerovg@uni.coventry.ac.uk

What is food sovereignty?

What does the UK look like when we have food sovereignty?

What is the opposite of food sovereignty?

. 'An approach developed by smallscale food producers in the global South that has become a global movement'

Definition

Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems.

Declaration of Nyéléni

Six pillars of food sovereignty

- focuses on food for people
- values food providers
- localises food systems
- puts control locally
- builds knowledge and skills
- works with nature



WHOSE food sovereignty are we interested in?



Whose sovereignty are we interested in?

Our own agroecological networks eg landworkers

‘Normal’ people in the UK

People most affected by poverty

People in other parts of the world

People who want to eat a diet we approve of

People who want food choices that we do not share

Individual or collective



Food sovereignty is everyone having a right to agroecologically produced food.

OR

We have food sovereignty when everyone can have the food choices they have defined for themselves.

‘People would prefer that food isn’t organic. That’s for posh people, not what we would choose here.’

How do we get low income households to become members?

How do we make our resources available to people for them to meet the needs they have identified for themselves?

Monday, 26 apr



Tuesday, 27 apr



Wednesday, 28 apr



Thursday, 29 apr



Friday, 30 apr



Food sovereignty cannot be separated from sovereignty in every other aspect of our lives; poverty, democracy, capitalism, education, community cohesion, race, oppression, depression, high street planning, workers' rights, public transport, marketing, food policy, culture.....

Factors outside of our control that limit options. We can only choose from available options.

It is a nonsense to think about 'food sovereignty' as a thing.

Is food sovereignty everyone having access to agroecologically produced food?

If we are committed to food sovereignty in the UK then one of our roles is to

offer PROCESSES by which all groups find their own voice and increase agency

Agroecology is defined by social fertility and social cultivations as well as biological ones.

Lynsey Kelleher

What enabled you to move from little agency over your food to being more powerful?

Lynsey volunteers with the Network of Stroud Hubs (NoSH) and is the Chair of their local hub in Uplands. Lynsey has worked, spoken out and advocated for people experiencing food poverty since having a spell of first-hand experience post-pandemic.

Adele Jarrett-Kerr

Twinning as a process to make space for people's own choices

Adele is one of the founders of Soul Farm, a market garden in the Falmouth area of Cornwall and she acts as the organisation's social impact lead.

Ruby Makepeace Somerville

A process to identify community voice

Ruby coordinates Lewes District Food Partnership and Fitzjohns Food Bank in East Sussex. She recently coordinated a project called 'Feeling the Pinch' which amplified the voices of residents experiencing food insecurity and challenged misconceptions around food poverty. She is passionate about dignity, agency and choice in food support

Dr Courtney Scott

Courtney is Director of Policy and Research at the Food, Farming and Countryside Commission, a food and nutrition policy expert and a Registered Dietitian. She is passionate about ensuring everyone has access to healthy, sustainable food, and has led FFCC's work on the National Conversation About Food, the UK's biggest dialogue about food. Prior to joining FFCC, she was Research and Policy Advisor at the Food Foundation and has worked in the US and Belgium.

A lot of people claim to know what 'people' think about food. They say 'people don't want a nanny state' for example. FFCC's National Conversation About Food is asking citizens directly: what do we really want from food?

In phase one, we invited over 24,000 citizens from Birmingham and Cambridgeshire through a randomly selected postcode lottery and met a representative sample of citizens over three weeks.

Phase two kicks off in 2024.

Do these processes influence food sovereignty?

What do we know about the social interventions we should be making?

(Short supply chains, capitalism, co-ops, land reform, etc also matter)

If the agroecology movement is serious about FS in the UK, what are the questions we need to engage with next?