



LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS

Dr Barbara Tocco

*Strength2Food Project Manager & Research Associate,
Newcastle University Business School, UK*

Hybrid Forum – an Open Public Dialogue “Creating Sustainable and Healthy Food Procurement: What is the Role of Local Foods?”

March 12, 2020, Newcastle Civic Centre, Newcastle upon Tyne



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 678024.

 **#STRENGTH2FOOD**

LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS: CONCEPTS & DEFINITIONS

- No single, internationally accepted definition of 'local' food system
 - Ambivalent definitions and conceptual approaches:
 - # local and regional food systems (LRFS)
 - # localised agro-food systems (LAFS)
 - # alternative food networks (AFN)
 - # short food supply chains (SFSC)
 - # direct-to-consumer (D2C)
- Local food system, here defined, as:
- Production and services linked, by their characteristics and operations, to a specific territory
 - Geographical, and social, proximity between primary producers and end-consumers



POTENTIAL WELFARE BENEFITS OF LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS

ECONOMY

- Job-creation, higher incomes, entrepreneurship opportunities
- Value-added & local multiplier effects in the territory
- Regeneration of local areas

SOCIETY

- Social cohesion, social inclusion, social capital
- Good governance & power relations
- Cultural heritage & regional identity

SMART - RESILIENT - SUSTAINABLE

ENVIRONMENT

- Green food system/ blue economy
- Natural capital & good resource management
- Circular economy

NUTRITION & HEALTH

- Food safety
- Food security
- Health & nutritional quality



EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE AND CAVEATS

Fragmented empirical evidence, lack of systematic and comparative analysis, at different scales and contexts

STRENGTH2FOOD project:

- ❑ Trade-offs across dimensions and indicators
- ❑ Direct and indirect effects for different agri-food supply chain actors
- ❑ Heterogeneity across localities and contexts – e.g. socio-cultural, political and regulatory framework
- ❑ Organisational governance, ‘hybridity’ and engagement in multiple markets (local/global, short/long)

STRENGTH2FOOD

www.strength2food.eu

- Impact evaluation of (local) short food systems and their sustainability
- Qualitative and quantitative empirical evidence
- 6 European countries: France, Hungary, Italy, Norway, Poland and the UK
- 12 case studies: Farmers' markets, box schemes, farm/ specialty shops, producer/ consumer cooperatives, food hubs, etc.
- Key published results :
 - Measuring the Economic, Environmental and Social Sustainability of Short Food Supply Chains ([Malak-Rawlikowska et al., 2019](#))
 - Short Food Supply Chains and their Contributions to Sustainability: Participants' Views and Perceptions from 12 European Cases ([Vittersø et al., 2019](#))



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FOOD QUALITY FOR SUSTAINABILITY AND HEALTH

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FARMERS' MARKET, HEXHAM

<https://www.hexhamfarmersmarket.co.uk/>



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FOOD QUALITY FOR SUSTAINABILITY AND HEALTH



FISH BOX SCHEME, AMBLE

<https://northumberlandseafood.co.uk/creel-fish-club/>



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FOOD QUALITY FOR SUSTAINABILITY AND HEALTH

OPPORTUNITIES FOR FOOD PUBLIC PROCUREMENT

<p>SMALL-SCALE LOCAL FOOD</p> <p>Farmers' markets, box schemes, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational efficiency and economies of scale • Niche customer base
<p>PUBLIC PROCUREMENT – hospitality, catering, hospitals, schools, etc.</p> <p>How to open up opportunities?</p>	<p><u>Realistic delivery of benefits:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to fresh, seasonal, local and 'quality' food • Value added and multiplier effect in local economy • Social capital and better governance
<p>SUPERMARKETS AND RETAILERS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volume, price, convenience • Commercial logistics and competitiveness



FROM LOCAL TO MORE SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS

- Local food systems as mixed bag and no 'one-size-fits-all'
- Local does not imply sustainable!
- Carbon footprint considerations (\neq food miles)
- Better access to healthy and nutritious food ?!
- Affordability and efficiency issues (vs global food chains)
- How to capitalize on opportunities?
- Ensure economic, socio-ethical and environmental benefits can be delivered





Thanks for your attention!

Dr Barbara Tocco

barbara.tocco@ncl.ac.uk

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