



**Eating
Better**

for a fair green healthy future

2016-17

Impact Report



From Eating Better's Chair

Our food and agricultural systems face unprecedented challenges. How do we feed a growing and more affluent world population, healthily, fairly and sustainably, while at the same time, delivering on the crucial global deal made in Paris at the end of 2015 to aim to keep global warming to no more than 1.5°C? In an uncertain world, one thing is for sure. We have to recognise the vital changes that dietary shifts can deliver for the climate, our environment, our health and for fairer food systems.

Essential to that goal is modifying the way we, in developed economy countries such as the UK, eat – to shift to healthier sustainable diets containing lower levels of livestock products. And for the meat and dairy we do eat to come from systems that are better for animal welfare and the environment. Our mission within the Eating Better alliance is to build consensus and develop collaborative practical approaches to engage policy makers, food businesses and civil society in catalysing shifts towards healthy and sustainable eating patterns.

2016-17 has been a successful year for Eating Better. There is growing acceptance that we need to talk about meat and awareness of our core message of 'less & better'. More organisations than ever before are getting involved, collaborating in joint projects, running their own campaigns and initiatives in support of this shared goal.

From a policy perspective Brexit continues to dominate and we are demonstrating how a new UK food and farming policy can be more supportive towards sustainable diets and the Paris Climate Agreement – but who can predict the future!

In the meantime, the market is responding positively with flexitarians, people who are cutting back on their meat consumption, a hot marketing trend. Companies increasingly recognise that the message is resonating with the public. Our 2017 YouGov survey shows 44% of the British public willing or already committed to cutting down on – or cutting out – their meat consumption, which is a major market for companies. And they are responding: our report *The Future of Eating is Flexitarian* showcases over 20 companies that are leading the way in helping people eat a more plant-based diet.

As a testament to all that Eating Better has achieved in its first three years, we are delighted that the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation has agreed to provide core funding for a further three years (2017 – 2020). We have an exciting programme of work ahead and we look forward to developing new projects and partnerships to work the critical goal of mainstreaming sustainable diets.

Clare Oxborrow

Friends of the Earth
Chair, Eating Better

Who we are

Eating Better is a broad and growing UK-based civil society alliance that is calling for action by governments, the food industry and all those who can make a difference to help people eat a greater variety of plant-based foods and less meat; and for the meat they do eat, to be produced in ways that benefit health, the environment, global food security and animal welfare.

Working together with an active and engaged alliance of over 50 civil society organisations, we are joining the dots between the environment, good health, a fairer food system and the food on our plates. Because simply, there is no other option. We cannot hope to prevent dangerous climate change unless we in the UK, and other high consuming countries, substantially reduce the amount of meat and dairy we eat.

Launched in 2013, we have grown the alliance to over **50 civil society organisations** working towards a better food system. They span a breadth of expertise and interests including the environment, climate change, animal welfare, social justice, resource use, public health, research, professional and responsible producer interest.

Our long-term ambition is to see dietary patterns shift towards being healthy and sustainable. In practice, this includes cutting the current average level of consumption of meat and dairy foods by half by 2030 in high consuming countries such as the UK.

Our vision

Our vision is a world in which everyone values and has access to healthy, humane and sustainable diets. High meat consuming countries and individuals have reduced their consumption in line with health recommendations and greenhouse gas reduction targets. Meat is produced humanely and sustainably, its production provides sustainable livelihoods, environmental benefits and it is consumed in quantities consistent with good health and global resource use capacity.

Our approach

Eating Better encourages a culture where we place greater value on the food we eat, the animals that provide it and the people who produce it. Eating Better supports farmers who produce meat in a sustainable way. Moderating our meat consumption – whether red, white or processed meats – while also choosing ‘better’ meat that is naturally-fed, has a known provenance and is produced to high animal welfare, environmental and quality standards can help support farmers without being more expensive for consumers. A ‘less and better’ approach to meat with meals based around a greater variety of plant-based foods will ensure healthy, balanced diets that are better for the planet and for fairer food systems too.



What we do

Our activities reflect the shared goals established by the alliance to:

- **Build and demonstrate coherent cross-sectoral leadership** and collaboration on less & better meat consumption and more plant-based eating as part of healthy, sustainable diets.
- To **make change happen** at the level of government policy, business practice and behaviour change, by developing 'asks', generating advocacy support and encouraging practical initiatives.
- **Stimulate long-term cultural shifts** by devising new ways of framing the 'less and better meat' message that are compelling and inclusive.

Our core Eating Better activities focus on **raising awareness** of the need for less and better meat eating as part of sustainable diets – and **demonstrating how to make that happen in practice** - among civil society, and other key audiences including policy makers, businesses, the media and the general public. Our **communication channels** extend our impact and reach, engaging audiences via our website, blogs and monthly e-newsletters, social media, and using media commentary and conference presentations to promote the benefits of eating less and better meat.

We **provide expertise and thought leadership** (research, analysis, reports) to inform and support the work of alliance organisations, to influence public and political discourse and to underpin the development of shared asks of policy makers, businesses and research. We convene organisations within the alliance to work collaboratively to develop shared positions and add their weight to campaigns and activities. We help civil society organisations navigate tricky issues, find common ground and align behind shared goals. This enables organisations to be more confident in their own messaging and to develop their own relevant work programmes that support Eating Better's goals.

Our monitoring and horizon scanning of latest research, market developments and policy towards sustainable diets provides a valuable and authoritative resource for alliance organisations and Eating Better's wider network in the UK and globally.

As an organisation focussed on **developing innovative solutions**, we provide a forum for generating ideas and practical pilots and for sharing learnings. We develop and lead collaborative projects and campaigns while also encouraging alliance organisations to develop their own activities/campaigns in support of Eating Better's goals. To facilitate collaborative working, Eating Better convenes an annual workshop and working group meetings that provide **a space for dialogue and learning, sharing of experiences and enable NGOs to connect and collaborate.**



Highlights of

2016-17

(June 2016 – June 2017)



Brexit has provided much uncertainty but also an opportunity for future UK food and agriculture policy to do more to support healthy and sustainable food production and consumption. Activities included:

- Eating Better called on the Government for Brexit and new trade deals to mean high-standard Britain, particularly for meat and dairy foods, not bargain-bin Britain. Our report **Beyond the CAP: Policies to support better UK meat and dairy production post Brexit** includes 10 key recommendations for food and farming fit for the future (published July 2017). This was widely circulated within Government and to parliamentarians and was well received, including by Defra officials.
- New research into **Better Policies for Livestock Farming** commissioned by Eating Better provided evidence of the need for, and how, future policies towards livestock farming and trade in the UK and EU can support a shift to healthy sustainable diets and develop more coherent approaches to environmental objectives such as climate change, protecting nature and high animal welfare (published March 2017). This was welcomed by the Government's Committee on Climate Change who drew on it in their June 2017 report to the Government. It has informed alliance organisations in their own post-Brexit policy work and helped Eating Better to develop its own suite of policy recommendations towards livestock and sustainable diets post-Brexit.
- Eating Better kicked off 2017 by hosting a lively debate on **Livestock Post-Brexit** at the Oxford Real Farming Conference, co-hosted with Friends of the Earth (January 2017).
- Eating Better joined 85 organisations **writing to Prime Minister Theresa May and Brexit Minister David Davis**, urging the Government to take control of food, farming and fisheries for public good (July 2016).
- Eating Better was one of 12 organisations **calling on European Agriculture Commissioner Phil Hogan**, to rethink his commitment to funding meat promotion (November 2016).

Beyond the CAP

Policies to support better UK meat and dairy production post-Brexit



Our Eating Well for the Planet campaign to integrate sustainability into UK dietary guidance was a major policy achievement in 2015-2016. During this year we:

- Continued to encourage Public Health England to be more explicit in its less meat messages and for the new advice to underpin policies across government including public sector food procurement, and future climate and agriculture policies.
- In collaboration with MedAct we published **A Healthy and Sustainable Food Future: Policy recommendations to embed sustainability in the Eatwell Guide and wider UK food policy** (March 2017) which included a comparison of UK guidelines with Swedish, German and Dutch dietary guidelines to demonstrate ways in which UK official messaging can be developed and communicated.
- We collaborated with MedAct and Tara Garnett at the Food Climate Research Network to write an article for the BMJ (submitted June 2017) *Livestock and Meat: Why it is a critical global health issue*.

- In 2016 Eating Better was honoured to be selected to provide a 'challenge' to the marketing industry's **Do It Day initiative** that brings together marketing industry creatives and donated advertising to support selected good causes. We provided the challenge of 'How do we encourage men to eat less meat?' as our research shows that men typically eat more meat than women (and average consumption is not declining) and that young men are potentially more open to 'moderation'. The strategy behind the winning campaign idea focussed on humour and positive messaging.
- Aimed at young men, the **Are you Vegcurious?** campaign and assets were created as a result of this collaboration and launched (Nov 2016) with donated advertising space (on UK billboard sites including Piccadilly Circus, a week of adverts on Scottish TV and adverts in the Guardian and Financial Times) plus social media support (estimated to the value of £100K).



- Growing public awareness, that Eating Better and our alliance organisations are stimulating, is building a movement of 'flexitarians' (people who are looking to reduce their meat consumption without giving it up completely). **YouGov research for Eating Better** (May 2017) found that 44% of the British public are willing, or already committed, to cutting down on meat consumption, or cutting it out completely – a statistic that has been widely quoted in the media subsequently.
- Our YouGov research also found young people in particular are more interested than ever in eating less meat, making this a generational shift. Younger people are much more aware of the environmental impacts of meat eating, and more willing to cut down. Over twice as many (46%) young people (aged 18-24) agree that *"producing and consuming meat/livestock products has a significant negative impact on the environment"* compared with older people (20%) over 65. We are using this insight to develop further behaviour change projects.
- In 2016 we provided UK civil society liaison/engagement with the **UN International Year of Pulses** to promote pulses as delicious, healthy, sustainable alternative to meat. This provided us with a platform with invitations to speak at many events during the year (including a parliamentary reception). We also worked with pulse champion and chef, Jenny Chandler, to provide monthly pulse-based recipes via our newsletter – adding a popular dimension to our communications.



- World Meat Free Day (June 2017) Eating Better is valued as a lead partner of this global initiative including advising on research and media activity and providing a spokesperson for the media. In 2017 #WorldMeatFreeDay reached over 82 million people, with over 22,000 posting about the initiative. In the UK, Eating Better's Sue Dibb took part in 17 media interviews.

Influencing business practices and policies

We are helping to drive the meat-reduction market by creating competition in the marketplace, demonstrating the market for less and better, showcasing companies leading the way, developing 'how to' advice for businesses and amplifying and supporting the work of Eating Better alliance organisations.



- In May 2017 we published **The Future is Flexitarian: Companies leading the way** which showcased over 20 companies including high street chains and supermarkets, that are leading the way to help people eat a greater variety of plant-based foods and less meat, and to support 'better meat' from farming that benefits the environment and animal welfare.
- This provided 22 practical actions for companies:
 - for the food service sector
 - food product manufacturers and retailers
 - for companies to engage their consumers
 - for achieving broader impact
- We also showcased 18 civil society organisations that are working with businesses towards healthy and sustainable eating.

Engaging civil society

Eating Better has **built a strong and influential alliance** of 52 organisations spanning an unrivalled breadth of expertise and interests. In addition to participating in alliance activities, we also encourage alliance organisations to develop their own initiatives that support Eating Better's objectives – this has grown to 36 programmes.

In our 2017 survey alliance organisations said they value being part of a movement that is working towards shared goals, where coming together means bigger impact and which enables organisations to set their own work in context. Our expertise is valued: eg *"Eating Better is the 'go to organisation' for the latest developments in policy or market developments on the issue."* There was 97% agreement that Eating Better is **helping NGOs connect and collaborate** and that we are **enabling NGOs to be more confident** in their own messaging/campaigns towards less & better meat/sustainable diets (94%).



Communication is an essential part of our work. Our website is a well-used source of information, news and comment (1.7K monthly users). In the last year (June 2016-17) we have published 35 blogs including 18 guest blogs. We are regularly invited to contribute articles for other organisations and our commentary features in the media (49 publications in the last year). We have a growing social media presence with over 5K followers on Twitter and Facebook.

To continue our organisational development, In April 2017 we applied to the Charity Commission and Eating Better is now a registered charity (No 1175669).

2016-17

Our impact in numbers

52

52 supporting organisations and partner networks (up from 25 in 2013)

36

36 collaborative initiatives and programmes of work by alliance organisations that support Eating Better's objectives



97%

agreement that Eating Better is helping NGOs connect and collaborate*

94%

agreement that Eating Better is enabling NGOs to be more confident in their own messaging towards less and better meat and sustainable diets*

97%

agreement that Eating Better is developing thinking about how best to encourage behaviour change towards more plant-based, less meat eating*

1235

subscribers to Eating Better's monthly e-newsletter

5k

social media followers

1.7k

visits to Eating Better website per month

We posted **35 blogs** and commentaries, including 18 guest blogs

24 media interviews and publications featuring our commentary

102 meetings with members of the alliance, sustainable diets stakeholders and other food interests

44%

of the British public are willing, or already committed, to cutting down on meat consumption, or cutting it out completely**

46%

of 18-24 year-olds agree that *"producing and consuming meat/livestock products has a significant negative impact on the environment"* compared with 20% of older people aged over 65.**

100m

global reach of 2017 World Meat Free Day of which Eating Better was a lead partner

Looking forward


This year marked the last year of a three year grant from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation (EFF) and we are now proud that we are the recipients of new three-year funding from EFF to develop our work to shift the nation's diets onto more healthy and sustainable pathways over the period 2017 – 2020.


Over the next three years we shall continue to mobilise and grow civil society engagement and drive behaviour change towards sustainable diets with less and better meat and dairy. We shall be scaling up our communications impact, developing new Eating Better Challenges, benchmarking progress annually in the business and policy sectors, and developing exciting new partnerships and projects.


Already we have grown our core team, welcoming Aileen Corrieri as our new Campaign Officer.

We are working with our alliance organisations to reach out to all those who can make a difference.

Please join the conversation:

 [Share your ideas with us](#) on how your organisations, institution and business can help.

 Sign up to our [newsletter](#) and keep up to date with latest news and views.

 Follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) and help spread the word.



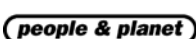
Our supporting organisations and partner networks


Supporting Organisations

Alliance of Religions and Conservation
Behaviour Change
British Dietetic Association
Changing Markets
Compassion in World Farming
Consensus Action on Salt and Health
Fairfood International
Farms Not Factories
Feedback
First Steps Nutrition Trust
Food Ethics Council
Food for Life Partnership
Foodcycle
Forum for the Future
Friends of the Earth
Greenpeace
Hubbub Foundation UK
Humane Society International
LEAF
Medact
Oxfam
Part-Time Carnivore
People & Planet
RSPB
Send A Cow
ShareAction
Slow Food UK
Soil Association
Sustainable Restaurant Association
The Food Assembly
The Food Foundation
The Pig Idea
ProVeg
UK Health Forum
Vegetarian for Life
Vegetarian Society
Waste Watch
World Animal Protection
World Resources Institute
WWF-UK

Partner Networks

Alliance to Save Our Antibiotics
European Public Health Alliance
Food Climate Research Network
Food Research Collaboration
Food Trade
Love Food Hate Waste
Meat Free Monday
Network of Wellbeing
Nourish Scotland
Sustain: the alliance for better food and farming
Sustainable Food Cities Network
UK Food Group





Our Board of Directors

Clare Oxborrow (Chair), Friends of the Earth

Jane Landon, UK Health Forum

Duncan Williamson, WWF-UK

Sofia Parente, Sustain: the alliance for better food and farming

Carol McKenna, Compassion in World Farming

Our staff

Sue Dibb is Executive Director and has co-ordinated the Eating Better alliance since its launch in 2013. Sue has over 30 years experience as an advocate for healthy sustainable food systems, working with government, businesses, civil society organisations and academics to develop solutions to food and sustainability challenges.

Elena Salazar is Campaigns and Communications Manager responsible for research and communication strategies to underpin Eating Better's campaigns and projects to develop Eating Better's reach and impact with key audiences. Elena is a specialist in food and nutrition policy, with an MSc in Food Policy from City University, and a solid background in food advocacy.

Aileen Corrieri is Campaign Officer, joining us in autumn 2017 to support the core activities of Eating Better. Aileen is studying for an MSc in Food Policy at City University and brings a strong administrative and IT background.

Our funders

Our main core funder is the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. In 2016-2017 we were also grateful for the financial support of a number of our alliance organisations towards our project work.

Eating Better: www.eating-better.org

Company registration number: 9772128

Charity registered number: 1175669

Registered office: Eating Better, The Grayston Centre,
28 Charles Square, London N1 6HT

