



Campaign to Protect  
Rural England  
Standing up for your countryside

# From field to fork: YEOVIL

Mapping the local food web



# INTRODUCTION

**A food web is a local network of links between people who buy, sell, produce and supply food. The concept stems from earlier research in east Suffolk,<sup>1</sup> which showed how a thriving local food chain can benefit the quality of life, prosperity and landscape of an area. It also showed how local food economies and independent retailing are under threat from supermarket expansion and increasingly centralised supply chains. The research concluded that we urgently need to identify food webs elsewhere and nurture them so they can thrive and resist the pressures which could undermine their benefits.**

This report on Yeovil is part of a wider national project, Mapping Local Food Webs, which builds on the east Suffolk research. It aims to:

- reveal the extent, nature and benefits of local food webs in other parts of England
- increase public and policy makers' awareness of local food networks and
- identify ways to improve support for the production, supply and sale of local produce around England.

Yeovil was one of 19 locations across England to be mapped. The Mapping Local Food Webs project is funded by the Big Lottery Fund through the Making Local Food Work programme.

The report's findings come mainly from the work of local volunteers in and around Yeovil in 2010. There were interviews with outlets, producers and local residents, and a public meeting. These were supplemented by further case study research in spring 2011. Residents and outlets were interviewed within a 2.5-mile radius from Yeovil town centre. Producers were interviewed from the 'local food' supply area, which covers a further 30-mile radius from this core study area.

This report summarises the key issues and sets out the main findings on the benefits of the local food web to Yeovil and the challenges and barriers to a stronger local food system. The findings are divided broadly into economic, social and environmental themes. The report then gives recommendations on how to strengthen the local food web. A conclusion is followed by appendices explaining the national and local projects in more detail.

## Contents

<b>Introduction and contents</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Local food and local policy</b>	<b>19-21</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>22-26</b>
<b>Summary</b>	<b>3-4</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Local food and the local economy</b>	<b>5-9</b>	<b>Appendix A: Information about the area</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Local food and the local community</b>	<b>10-13</b>	<b>Appendix B: National project overview</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Local food and the local environment</b>	<b>14-15, 18</b>	<b>Appendix C: Overview of the Yeovil project</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Map of the local supply chain</b>	<b>16-17</b>	<b>Appendix D: Endnotes</b>	<b>31</b>

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We regret to report that the Ceres Bakery outlet featured on page 10 has ceased trading since this research was carried out.

CPRE gratefully acknowledges the support of the Big Lottery Fund for the Mapping Local Food Webs project, which enabled the community-based research for this report to be undertaken, and the Plunkett Foundation for further advice and support.



# SUMMARY

Yeovil is a large market town in south Somerset with a population of 42,000. The town is set to expand further over the coming decades. Retail is an important part of the local economy although the town centre has suffered from recession with a higher than average ratio of empty shops at one in six. Major regeneration is planned to help address this. The town's food shopping is characterised more by the major supermarkets than distinctive local outlets. Relatively few smaller food shops remain for a town of its size despite the area's rich food heritage, in particular relating to dairying and Cheddar cheese. Given the size of Yeovil compared with other towns studied in this project across England, the local food web is relatively small, and it has the potential to be much stronger, especially as there are many suppliers in the area. However, shops in the centre, together with a regular farmers' markets in the town (and also nearby at Montacute House), farm shops and a local food box scheme, do provide access to a wide range of local and distinctive produce.

## Key findings

Our research identified a number of strengths within the local food web, but also several challenges which need to be addressed to sustain and develop it.

### Strengths

- 10 shops and 31 market stalls sell local food, supporting a network of 120 suppliers within 30 miles of Yeovil.
- Local food supports, we estimate, 65 jobs at independent outlets, and over 1,300 at local supply chain businesses.
- Annual turnover from sales of local food at outlets in Yeovil is estimated to be up to £1.9 million; they support estimated turnover at supply chain businesses of over £42 million.
- Food web businesses support a wide range of other non-food businesses and services.
- Producers maintain historic links to food and the local landscape, which lends itself to varied food production.
- Businesses in the local food web contribute to community life through supporting local good causes, offering a personal and friendly service, and providing information about food.
- Allotments are popular and tenants have formed their own association to promote and support food growing.

### Challenges

- Although 42 outlets stock local food, 31 of these are market stalls providing local food regularly but only on market days once a month. The retailer that has the largest number of local suppliers is a successful box scheme which delivers to Yeovil residents but is based in Glastonbury.
- There are few traditional specialist outlets present such as butchers or greengrocers for a town of this size<sup>2</sup>.
- Supermarkets, which rarely stock significant levels of local food, dominate the retail landscape: Yeovil has a hypermarket, three of the four big-name supermarket chains and several smaller ones.
- Local smaller outlets and suppliers struggle to compete against the cheap food on offer in supermarkets.
- Smaller local food outlets and local producers need an intermediary to help them link up and generate new business.
- Growth of the town could mean the development and permanent loss to food production of relatively scarce highly fertile agricultural land.



## Key recommendations

### Local authorities

South Somerset District Council should ensure their Local Plan:

- addresses the issue of empty shops in the town centre by encouraging new independent retailers back into town and supports the development of a range of new outlets such as the farmers' market and Country Market to increase town centre footfall
- contains policies to promote retail diversity in the town as supported by the National Planning Policy Framework – and particularly of food outlets – and policies to protect existing smaller food outlets as essential local services
- requires the need for new large-scale retail developments to be assessed using a solid, independent evidence base
- sets a locally appropriate size threshold for new stores above which they must be assessed for their impact on the town centre, other nearby towns and villages and the rural economy, including local food production
- recognises high grade agricultural land as a strategic resource for local food production and protects it from development.

All public bodies – South Somerset District Council, Somerset County Council, the local education authority, schools and hospitals – should buy more sustainable local produce through their procurement policies and processes.

Local authorities should recognise the economic value of local food and its potential to support tourism and the rural economy, and work with businesses to promote it.

Public bodies should take a strategic view of food by working with community and business partners to develop a food strategy and action plan for the area, as seen in Herefordshire, Brighton and Hove<sup>3</sup>, Plymouth<sup>4</sup> and other areas.

### Local food businesses

Local food allows local businesses to offer distinctive, high-quality produce with strong, positive messages about how and where it's produced. Businesses should:

- use the great variety of Somerset magazines and websites to promote local food more widely
- challenge the view that prices of local food are high – where prices are competitive, show price comparisons with larger outlets, especially for seasonal produce
- help improve access to local food by developing shared local delivery schemes
- cooperate to organise and deliver short training courses in marketing for small producers
- form local food business groups to work together to address the issues highlighted in this report.

### The community and individuals

Local people can contribute to a more sustainable and local food system in many ways. You could:

- shop widely to encourage a variety of businesses and seek out those which stock plenty of local food
- use local shops, farmers' markets and delivery schemes to buy local food
- ask retailers, including supermarkets, where your food comes from and how it's produced – give them feedback to encourage them to buy local
- contact local planners and councillors and encourage them to support your local food web – you could start by sending them this report and asking them to act on its findings.



# LOCAL FOOD AND THE LOCAL ECONOMY

## Benefits

### Local food counts

- Sales of local produce constituted the majority of turnover for over two-thirds (11 out of 15) of the independent shops and market stalls interviewed in Yeovil.
- Based on interviews with five outlets<sup>5</sup>, turnover of local food outlets is from £2.1 million to £3.8 million\* a year. Around half of this (49% or £1.0 million to over £1.9 million) was attributed to sales of local produce.
- The outlets interviewed serve around 4,500 customers weekly and, based on these, all outlets selling local food combined serve an estimated 8,000\* customers a week.
- The 13 local suppliers interviewed that disclosed turnover generate nearly £3.3 million of turnover a year; based on this, turnover of the 120 supply chain businesses supported by sales into Yeovil is estimated to be £42.4\* million a year.

### Local food, local jobs

- Based on the 15 outlets interviewed, independent local food outlets provide from 35 jobs to 65\* full-time and part-time jobs.
- The 15 local suppliers interviewed support around 160 jobs, giving an estimated 1,300\* jobs for all suppliers identified in the local supply chain.

Local food businesses further underpin the local economy by supporting local services. Fifteen of the 17 businesses interviewed, or 88%, were using other local traders, solicitors or accountants.

### Distribution

Producers told us distributing locally can reduce transport costs and save time. Some felt distribution could be improved by schemes to share transport or create a central distribution hub. At the workshop, however, retailers said that because **'small producers are not always able to deliver and can be unreliable,'** they in turn are **'not always able to stock the product people want and expect'.**

### Demand across many sectors

Although there are few independent food outlets in Yeovil town centre, the businesses that remain, as well as farm shops and producers in the town's rural hinterland, supply a wide range of customers including farmers' markets, box schemes, schools, the NHS, Yeovil College, local nursing homes, the local tourist information centre, village post offices and shops, pubs, restaurants, hotels, local markets, cafés, private businesses and wholesalers in Bridgwater and Bristol.



## Key figures

- **10 shops, 1 box scheme and 31 market stalls** were identified as selling local food
- Annual turnover of outlets supported by local food sales: **£2.1-£3.8 million\***
- Annual sales of local food: **£1.0-£1.9 million\***
- Jobs at independent outlets in the Yeovil area selling local food: **35-65\***
- Weekly customer visits to local food outlets: **4,500-8,000\***
- **120 suppliers** sell through outlets in and around Yeovil
- Annual turnover of suppliers supported by these sales: **£42.4 million\***
- Jobs at suppliers supported by sales into Yeovil: **1,300\***

Please note: lower figures in range are based on data disclosed; other figures marked \* are derived by applying average (mean) calculated from interview data disclosed to total number of local food outlets/suppliers identified



### Supporting the local economy

The businesses in the Yeovil food web are varied and include butchers, bakers, box schemes, farm shops, pie makers, fish farmers, millers, cider makers, preserve makers, rapeseed oil producers, livestock farmers and abattoirs. These businesses depend on each other for trade and also benefit other parts of the local economy by providing skilled jobs and supporting a range of other businesses such as accountants, plumbers, electricians, lawyers, solicitors, laundry services, vets and stationers.

These strong relationships are facilitated by an **'active Chamber of Trade'** that has over 100 members and works hard to **'promote initiatives to help the town'**.

### Entrepreneurial spirit

In the words of one outlet, being an independent shop selling local food **'nurtures the entrepreneurial spirit in the local population who put their life and soul into building businesses and making a quality product'**. **'It encourages local business start-ups and initiatives,'** echoed another. **'It keeps the local economy going and encourages and supports local businesses,'** said a third.

Previous research undertaken by CPRE has shown that a diverse range of small independent outlets can support a network of small producers and encourage new ones.<sup>6</sup> These businesses are interdependent and can help each other to grow, expand and innovate. Conversely, the closure of independent outlets has a knock-on effect on producers in the area, who lose their main markets and can struggle to find new ones.

## CASE STUDY: Bower Hinton Farm

Duncan Palmer is a professional grower of vegetables and soft fruit based at Bower Hinton Farm, seven miles from Yeovil. Several of the greengrocers and a wholesaler he used to supply have closed in recent years. These included four stores belonging to Stokes, the UK's largest independent greengrocers, which went into administration in 2010.



## Challenges and barriers

### Supermarket dominance

All the main supermarket chains have a presence within a 10-mile radius of Yeovil, and three-quarters of shoppers we interviewed use them for their main weekly shop. Yeovil town centre has a Marks & Spencer, Iceland and a Tesco Superstore with free parking. Within half a mile of the centre are another Tesco, Morrisons, Lidl and a Co-op. There is a Sainsbury's five miles to the east and a Waitrose five miles to the west.

Residents, retailers and small producers felt that too many supermarkets had damaged the character of the town, and made it difficult for independent food retailers to survive and therefore for producers to find regular markets. As a result, there is limited access to local foods in the town centre.

Since the 1950s there has been a dramatic 90% decline in the numbers overall of small independent retailers across the country and, although not all of this is usually attributed to the rise of the supermarkets, the total market share of the 'big four' retailers is now over 75%.<sup>7</sup> By the turn of the millennium, less than a quarter of all butchers and greengrocers, a third of all bakeries and a fifth of all fishmongers present in the 1950s remained.<sup>8</sup>

According to local historian Jack Sweet this pattern certainly holds true in Yeovil: **'In 1958 the Snell's Directory shows that there were 20 butchers in Yeovil, 13 of which were in the town centre area, 18 greengrocers, 11 of which were in the town centre area, four fishmongers, three in the town centre, and 72 grocers and provisioners in the town (including corner shops and shops in front rooms) of which 17 were in the town centre.'**<sup>9</sup>

**'Stokes were ideal for small growers,'** says Duncan. **'They had the infrastructure to buy from us, we could phone shop managers daily to tell them what we had. They paid a fair price and were reliable, unlike supermarket buyers.'** Duncan believes this reflects a general trend on the high street: **'It's down to the power of the supermarkets,'** he says. **'They suck the life blood out of the high street. This is clearly the case in Yeovil, a town now surrounded by supermarkets.'**

Having lost five outlets over the space of a year, Duncan has halved production from 20 acres to 10. He's had to find new markets: he's not big enough to supply a supermarket, and the wholesale trade is also shrinking because small shops are closing. Luckily, Duncan planned for the future and took over a farm shop on a county-owned farm, which is now his primary market. He also supplies four independent outlets in the surrounding towns and villages, and sells at two farmers' markets.

## Spotlight on local – Yeovil farmers' market

For over 10 years Somerset Farmers' Markets Ltd have been organising markets at a variety of locations around the county, including Yeovil. The Yeovil farmers' market is held on the fourth Saturday of each month in the pedestrian centre of town. Somerset Farmers' Markets' website includes a supplier directory listing all the producers attending their markets, a seasonal calendar to enable shoppers to understand what's in season from month to month and recipe ideas. Products range from organic fruit and veg to distinctive cheeses, relishes, oils, honey and meats – including water buffalo and traditional breed pork.





Our research shows that now only a handful of butchers, bakers and greengrocers remain in Yeovil town centre. There is a farmers' market, though this is only held once a month, and a weekly street market which sells some food. **'Supermarkets have taken food out of the town,'** says Paul Nicholson from Haynes butchers. **'People go to Tesco for everything now.'**

National chains of the right scale and in the right place may bring footfall to a town centre and can attract further investment and encourage regeneration. But excessively large stores, even if they are in the town centre or well connected to it, can undermine diversity and distinctiveness if they weaken smaller independents so that in the long term they fail. If supermarkets and the brands they choose to stock are the only choice left, the option to buy distinctive local produce is lost. Once supermarkets are dominant in a town the trend is difficult to reverse. Yet there are measures that could be taken in Yeovil to revive a diverse retail system that could broaden shopper choice and support the thriving web of local suppliers, processors and producers that clearly exists in its hinterland.

### Lowering business rates

Business rates in town centres tend to be very high, so only multi-national or national chains with high profit margins can afford them. As a result, smaller independent businesses get pushed to the edge of town, though the recession has left many empty shops in the town centre. According to one independent retailer **'more support for small independent businesses from local government and landlords'** is needed. In fact, this is an issue for national government. They could give local authorities the power to set business rates at lower levels to encourage small independent retailers to come back to town centres.<sup>10</sup>

### Staying competitive – price or perception?

Outlets and producers frequently mentioned competition with supermarket pricing as a barrier to local food. Two out of five shoppers said the main reason they used supermarkets was because of cost.

One challenge for small independent outlets and the producers supplying them is that they can rarely buy and stock in bulk so have difficulty negotiating cheaper prices. Also, where prices are higher, this may reflect better quality and very good value for money. Pricing of local food may also mean balancing a fair reward to producers – receiving a return which enables them to cover costs and make a profit to invest in their businesses – and a fair price to the customer. In comparison, supermarket buyers operate centrally, buy in bulk and source produce globally. This gives them significant buyer power enabling them to drive down prices and require producers to support promotions and discounts which can leave producers with very small margins.

Supermarkets spend large amounts on advertising their 'low' prices to compete with other large chains, which can contribute to an overall impression of their cheapness. This can leave smaller independents appearing less competitive than larger chains, especially if price is the sole measure of comparison. In fact, as two outlets pointed out, the local food they sell is often cheaper than the equivalent at the supermarket, but shoppers perceive it to be more expensive.

### Small businesses need marketing support

**'Supermarkets have their own public relations [PR] departments and have better access to advertising,'** said a participant at the workshop. Conversely, the majority of outlets and suppliers don't have such budgets and rely on word-of-mouth promotion. Some businesses are PR savvy, using internet, flyers and leaflets to advertise themselves, updating packaging and consciously **'building a brand'**, but several mentioned they would like support in marketing. Lack of promotion and advertising of local foods was a recurring theme in food shopper surveys. Respondents felt raising awareness amongst the community would increase support for local: **'local food producers could advertise more widely and sell their wares more regularly in Yeovil.'**

### Producers need a larger local market

Four producers felt selling locally limits their market. If producers want to expand but have saturated local markets, selling locally can be restrictive. Most producers we spoke to, however, told us they wanted more opportunities to sell produce via local markets; they mentioned more regular farmers' markets, a food hub, more local food shows, more outlets in Yeovil and persuading the council to buy local.





### Local food retail out of kilter

There are three farm shops within 2.5 miles of Yeovil and several more in the nearby area.<sup>11</sup> While these typically provide excellent access to local food, they are also less accessible for those who don't or can't drive. Shoppers at the workshop also felt there **'were too many farm shops for the market to sustain'** and that **'planners were allowing too many shops on farms, which is diluting their exclusiveness.'** One supplier echoed this, commenting on the competition between farm shops. Farm shop owners felt they needed a **'unique selling point'** by expanding their services to include crafts, gifts, plants or cafés. Producers suggested farm shops could do better on local sourcing and should **'have a strictly local food network'**.

The high number of farm shops in the area could reflect the difficulties and lack of opportunities to sell in Yeovil town centre. Producers and retailers may have little choice but to establish alternative outlets where they can outside the town.

### CASE STUDY: Somerset Local Food Direct box scheme

Somerset Local Food Direct (SLFD), based in Glastonbury, provides a local food delivery scheme serving towns across Somerset, including Yeovil. **'We provide a link between Somerset producers and potentially every householder in the area,'** says manager and founder Roger White. **'Producers benefit from steady sales every week, and the people who order online tend to be regular.'** Customers order online or over the phone, and producers can log on and see what customers have ordered. SLFD only buys what customers have already ordered, so suppliers know exactly how much is needed and nothing is wasted. Each week producers drop off at a central warehouse and produce is distributed across the county. This substantially reduces the journeys they might otherwise make to multiple small outlets across long distances.

There are major benefits for shoppers too. **'There is no other single place where people can buy such a wide range of local produce in one go,'** says Roger. **'Lots of the produce we stock can be found in farm shops or even Waitrose but delivering this to people in one fell swoop makes us unique.'**

SLFD buys fresh and processed foods from 86 Somerset producers, including vegetables, meats, dairy products, breads, cereals, eggs, flour, preserves, ciders and soft drinks. They also supply some non-local items like brown rice, pasta and fruit that can't be grown in the UK, but are always clear about where their produce comes from.





# LOCAL FOOD AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

## Benefits

### Business supporting local good causes

Most businesses interviewed offer cash and 'in kind' support to a wide array of local good causes including the air ambulance, the animal sanctuary, Meals on Wheels, schools and churches. Most frequently they donate money or prizes for events. One outlet offered free advertising space for local groups and initiatives while another hosted community group meetings and events. Some producers sponsor community activities, such as the annual produce show, Rotary Club and children's hospice, and several had more direct contact with the community through school visits, open days and farm walks.

### Direct trading connects people to their food

The shorter the supply chain, the more knowledgeable retailers are about the food they sell. All outlets and most producers said customers ask about provenance and production methods. Because of the strong relationships developed through trading directly, one outlet felt able to **'answer all the questions customers ask'**. Outlets and producers also communicate information about animal welfare, nutrition and recipe ideas via labelling, leaflets, websites and even the local newspaper.

### Servicing demand for fresh, high quality, traceable local food

Seven out of ten shoppers interviewed buy some local food. Shopper surveys revealed quality and taste were key reasons broadly half of people buy local food. Its freshness and quality were mentioned repeatedly by shoppers and participants at the public workshop. These attributes are closely linked and outlets and suppliers also recognised them as clear advantages of local food. Traceability (short supply chains are the most easily traceable), uniqueness, distinctiveness and high standards were other selling points mentioned.

## CASE STUDY: Ceres Bakery

A small handful of independent outlets selling local food remain in Yeovil. They are well loved and supported by local people. One of these is Ceres Bakery, a speciality wholefood bakery that's been in Yeovil for 30 years. As well as selling bread, sandwiches, pasties, cakes, quiches and more at the bakery, Ceres sells to health-food shops and delis across the South West.



The guiding principle at Ceres is to provide customers with pure baked goods, free from enhancers, preservatives and processed flour, with reduced sugar, fat and salt. It caters for a variety of diets including vegan, celiac and diabetic. Flour comes from Shipton Mill, a traditional organic mill based in the South West. Eggs and butter are sourced very locally. **'Research in the UK shows that today few bakeries bake and sell on the premises,'** says manager Julia Cheetham. **'We always bake for the shop. Our baker, Paul Jennings, is a traditional baker who predominantly works by hand. His methods differ little to those used 100 years ago.'**





## The advantages of local supply chains

Local supply chains bring benefits to shoppers, traders, producers and livestock.

### CASE STUDY: The local farm – Townsend Farm

Townsend Farm has been in the Curtis family since 1920, passed down to Robert and Mark Curtis by their parents Kenny and Kate. They farm 70 acres (30 hectares) and raise sheep, dairy cows and beef cattle. They sell to various local outlets, including Haynes butchers, the village shop and a local cheesemaker. They use the local abattoir, CS Meats, less than 15 miles from the farm. **‘It’s better for us to sell to local outlets like Haynes,’** says Kate. **‘Paul has known us for years, his customers like our produce and the animals don’t have to travel far.’**

Making a profit this past year has been difficult due to a rise in feed and fuel prices, but the passion for farming runs deep and the family are undeterred. **‘My two sons have always wanted to farm,’** says Kate. **‘Farming keeps the local community, the small shops and the rural economy alive which allows us to work here and stay here. People need to understand that if they buy local, they are supporting all those things; if they don’t, it will be lost.’**



### CASE STUDY: The local abattoir – CS Meats

Abattoir and butchery CS Meats was set up in 2004 by Charlie Goodland, a registered animal welfare officer. They pride themselves on humane slaughtering and specialise in smallholders and small farmers rather than large contracts. This means they can offer a more personal service to each customer. As well as cattle, pigs and sheep, the slaughterhouse is licensed for bison, water buffalo, farmed deer, goats and wild boar, and holds organic and Freedom Foods accreditation. **‘Big abattoirs are heartless killing factories and farmers who use them can’t be sure if it’s their animals they are getting back,’** says Charlie. **‘Here we serve each producer privately and directly. They know what they get back is theirs and that the animals are respected and well treated.’**



### CASE STUDY: The local butcher – Haynes

Haynes butchers has been in Yeovil since at least 1930, and run by the Nicholson family since 1977. The meat is butchered on site, and Haynes also makes its own pies, faggots and a range of pork sausages, including with chilli, leek, apple and cranberry. Haynes has a good long-term relationship with six local suppliers, and at least 70% of what they stock comes from within 20 miles. Many customers have shopped at Haynes for generations. As a result they don’t have to advertise: their strong reputation locally is spread by word of mouth and they remain popular and busy.

**‘Our meat is better quality than the supermarket and often cheaper,’** says owner Paul Nicholson. **‘Everything is spot on – it would prey on my mind if it wasn’t right. Customers like to talk to you and have an explanation about what they are buying instead of just picking stuff up off the shelf and we go out of our way to be friendly.’**



## Community interest in food

### CASE STUDY: Somerset Community Food

Somerset Community Food is a grassroots charity which aims to reconnect people with the social, health and environmental benefits of growing, buying, preparing and eating local food. It offers small grants to community groups or small social enterprises through its Get Growing Support Fund.

Its Somerset Land and Food project<sup>12</sup> aims to bring more land into production for community-based growing projects. It matches landowners with land available to local community groups interested in growing food, and has worked with partners Geofutures<sup>13</sup> to develop a digital mapping tool, FoodMapper ([www.foodmapper.org.uk](http://www.foodmapper.org.uk)), to help this happen.



Groups can also use FoodMapper to map all local food resources – allotments, community gardens and orchards, chicken co-ops, local food initiatives, events – to give anyone rapid access to information on where they can grow, buy and eat out on local food in their area.

### Access to local food is restricted

There are some excellent farm shops and farmers' markets in the hinterland of Yeovil, but workshop comments highlighted the problems: **'most local food is outside the town'**. Without a car, access to these shops is difficult and inconvenient: **'too much time is needed to travel between different small or farm shops to buy different goods; it's much easier to do a one-stop shop.'** Farm shop owners agreed they **'can't compete with convenience offered by multiples in terms of opening hours'**.

Shoppers repeatedly said they would like to see more local food sold within the town centre but the kind of outlets most likely to stock significant levels of local food – traditional specialist stores such as greengrocers, fishmongers, bakers and butchers – are few, especially for a town of this size. This leaves shoppers with much less choice of where to shop in the town – other than supermarkets – for the full range of food they need.

### Labelling and promotion

Outlets and labels on food products lack the information customers need to help them identify local produce. One in ten shoppers interviewed said they didn't know whether they bought local foods, and for these the main reason they gave was not knowing which foods were local. Food shoppers want information on which outlets stock local food, where produce is from and how it's produced. Retailers and suppliers should work together to improve the labelling and promotion of local food.

### CASE STUDY: Home food growing in Yeovil

The demand for fresh, local food in Yeovil means many residents are growing fruit and vegetables for themselves. In the last five years there has been a surge of interest and a demand for more allotment space. The town has 11 allotment sites with over 300 plots and a growing waiting list. As a result, a new collective body of tenants formed in 2009 to support and promote allotment growing. The Yeovil Allotments Society, run and funded by its members, aims to:

- support allotments in the town
- refuse any future closure of allotment sites
- lobby for additional sites to be provided.

Members meet monthly and have their own website promoting events, sharing recipes and displaying a photo gallery of members' plots.

### Spotlight on local – The Orchard Pig Somerset Cider and Apple Juice

Orchard Pig was founded in 2004 by two friends sharing a passion for food and Old Spot pigs. Andrew Quinlan and Neil Macdonald now make a range of distinctive and totally natural apple juices and ciders sold in outlets across Somerset and the wider area. The business is based at West Bradley Orchards near Glastonbury, a fruit farm with over 150 years of cider making history. Hand-picked whole apples from the orchards are crushed and pressed at the farm to produce award-winning pure juices with no flavourings, colours or sugar added. The range of ciders is made from 10 apple varieties from unsprayed and naturally maintained Somerset orchards. The orchards also are home to Old Spots, the 'original orchard pigs' and host an annual family-oriented Apple Blossom Day in spring to celebrate the orchards and the pork, cider and juice they produce.





## Challenges and barriers

### Supermarkets dominate grocery spend but there is demand and support for local food<sup>14</sup>

Interviews with a range of shoppers at different locations in Yeovil show the following:

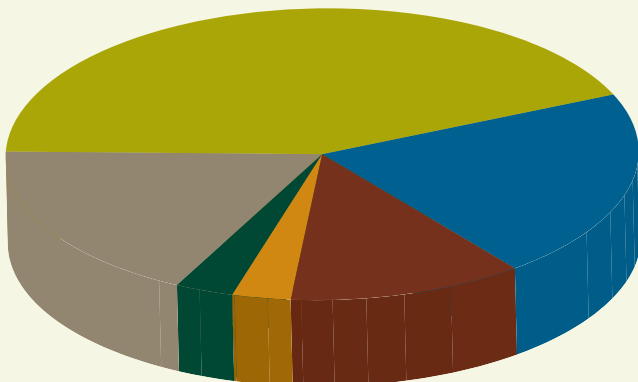
#### Q: Where do you do your main food shops and why?

- 70% of main food shopping was at supermarkets; top reasons were convenience (51%), proximity/location (35%) and price (27%)

#### Q: Where do you do any extra shopping for food?

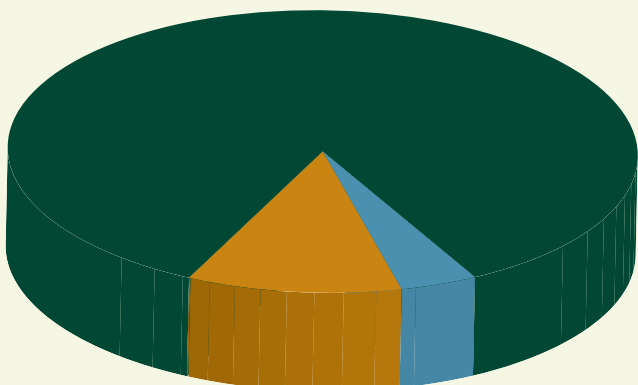
- Nearly 60% of extra food shopping was at local independent shops; shoppers cited a range of reasons including quality/freshness (38%), wanting to support small businesses (31%), and proximity and convenience of location (25%)

#### Q: What do you understand by the term local food?



■ From the county (Somerset)	18%
■ From within 30 miles	43%
■ From the region	21%
■ From a local shop	12%
■ From England	3%
■ Other	3%

#### Q: Do you buy local food? (based on local as produced within 30 miles of the store)



■ Yes	85%	■ No	4%	■ I don't know	11%
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#### Q: If you buy local food what are the three main reasons you choose to buy it?

Quality	57%
Supporting local farmers and producers	55%
Supporting the local economy	55%
Taste	47%
Reducing food miles	34%
Seasonal food	16%
Value for money	15%
Reducing waste and packaging	14%
Health	9%
Protecting the local countryside	8%
Animal welfare	7%
Other	5%

#### Q: Why don't you buy more local food?

Cost or price (affordability)	39%
Convenience or time issues	33%
Availability/choice	30%
Accessibility	11%
Awareness	9%
Quality	3%
Other (grow own, competing ethics, etc.)	7%

#### Q: How much do you spend on food per week and how much on local food per week?

The 80 shoppers who answered both questions spent on average approximately £71 a week on food, of which £21 or 29% was on local food.

Analysis shows a weak correlation between household income and the percentage of the weekly shopping bill spent on local food: in fact shoppers with lower household incomes appear to spend more on local food.

As is the case nationally, supermarkets dominate food spending in Yeovil. Shoppers cited the convenience of having everything under one roof, price, and ease of access, both in terms of parking facilities and location (e.g. near where they lived, on the way to work or school rounds).

Nevertheless, many shoppers do use local independent outlets for extra shopping (60%), seeking out farm shops in and around Yeovil as well as local shops closer to home. People mainly use these outlets for the quality of the produce, to buy specific items, because they are nearby, and to support local businesses. There was also demand for local food – the vast majority of shoppers buy at least some local produce, and had a good understanding of local food, with over two-fifths defining it as from within 30 miles.

Local food accounted on average for around 30% of shoppers' food budget. It was certainly not the preserve of the wealthy: the proportion spent on local food bore little relation to household income, but was slightly higher in lower income households. Shoppers bought local food for a host of reasons, in particular for quality and taste, alongside social and environmental reasons such as to support local producers and reduce food miles. However, shoppers said price and the limited availability and accessibility of local food prevented them buying more.

# LOCAL FOOD AND THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT

## Benefits

### The landscape lends itself to varied food production

Outlets selling local food in the Yeovil area recognise that they benefit from being surrounded by prime agricultural land such as the **'Glastonbury and the Somerset Levels where there is a great range of farmers, cheesemakers and cider makers', 'grass-lands for quality and beef', where 'rapeseed grows well' and 'traditional fruit and vegetables... are supported by the local landscape'**. Many of the producers we interviewed were small in scale and practised extensive or low-intensity farming in harmony with the landscape.

### Outlets and suppliers are reducing waste and energy use

Over half of the producers and a quarter of outlets are reducing their energy use in a range of ways including improved insulation of buildings, switching to energy-efficient fridges, adjusting boilers and using low-energy light bulbs. Two suppliers were generating renewable energy through wind, solar and ground-source heat pumps. One farm shop collects rainwater from the roof to put back into lakes for wildlife.

With 70% of household waste nationally coming from food and food packaging, retailers and suppliers can help cut waste upstream and so reduce the packaging that shoppers need to take home. All outlets and suppliers interviewed were taking steps to reduce waste: through recycling, bottle and jar return and refill schemes, composting, using biodegradable carrier bags and packaging, reusing and minimising packaging and reusing paper for cow bedding. To ensure no food is wasted, producers give leftover food to pigs and cows or use it to fertilise fields. One outlet takes surplus produce from local allotments.



## CASE STUDY: Levels' Best™

The Somerset Levels and Moors is an ancient wetland landscape, home to wading birds, otters, water voles and water shrews, and a rich variety of meadow and wetland flora buzzing with dragonflies, grasshoppers and butterflies. It's a landscape that small producers following traditional extensive farming practices are helping to keep alive – and a local food trademark is bringing their efforts greater recognition. The Levels' Best logo – based on the landscape's distinctive willows and rhynes (ditches) – is a guarantee of high quality, environmentally friendly produce from within the 260 square miles and 114 parishes of the Somerset Levels and Moors.



As well as providing a distinctive 'landscape brand' for local food, the Levels' Best trademark provides assurance of high standards in conservation, land management and animal welfare, and support for native English breeds of livestock and traditional varieties of fruit and vegetables. **'The Levels and Moors contains a great diversity of landscape types which generate huge potential for the range of foods that can be produced there,'** says Elaine Spencer-White of Levels' Best. **'We have traditional orchards, vineyards, microbreweries, fruit, vegetables, honey, salt-marsh lamb, grass-fed, native-breed beef and even walnut orchards for oil and spelt flour to name but a few.'**

As well as improving access to quality assured food for consumers, Levels' Best also helps producers from the Levels find markets. A popular farmers' market for Levels' Best food and drink takes place monthly at Montacute House, an Elizabethan mansion owned by the National Trust, three miles west of Yeovil.

The Levels' Best Community Interest Company now owns the registered brand and is currently developing a new website that will promote Levels' Best produce and support an inclusive network of food and drink businesses across the Somerset Levels and Moors.



### Reducing transport and transport pollution

Reducing food miles and food's carbon footprint – terms many interviewees used unprompted – are recognised by the majority of outlets and suppliers as advantages of local food. Mapping identified over 100 producers supplying an impressively wide range of predominantly fresh or lightly processed food and drink into the Yeovil study area directly from within 30 miles, with many much closer. Some businesses reduce food miles further by cutting delivery rounds, streamlining routes and devising timetables which ensure efficient delivery.

For over half of outlets surveyed, at least half of their produce was local. These outlets provide excellent access to food that has not travelled unnecessarily. By contrast, food in supermarkets tends to travel long distances – even items that originate locally are usually sent outside the area for processing, or along the motorway to a regional distribution depot and then back again.

One in three shoppers interviewed (34%) selected reducing food miles as one of their main reasons for buying local food. Without widespread labelling of carbon footprints or transport distances, buying local remains a straightforward, even intuitive way for people to reduce the environmental impact of their shopping habits, especially when combined with walking, cycling or using public transport to shop.

### Historic links to food production attract tourists

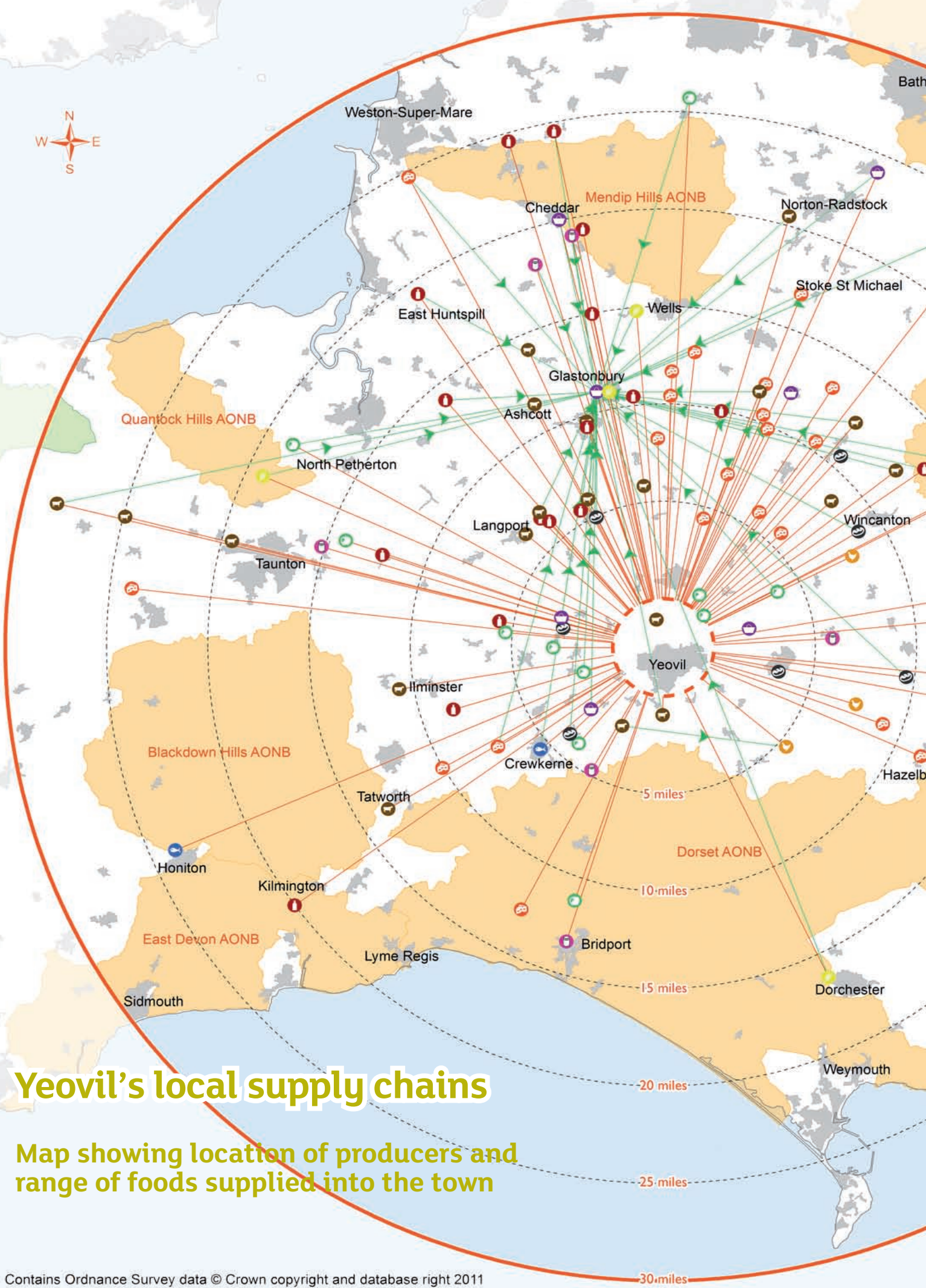
Dairy farms and orchards are iconic landscape features of Somerset and the South West. Cheese, specifically cheddar, and cider are products whose provenance is still strongly associated with Somerset, Dorset and Devon, three counties within a 30-mile radius of Yeovil. Producers and outlets in the Yeovil study area are conscious of the historic tradition of food production in Somerset. While **'some farmers have given up'**, those that remain recognise their role in keeping food and farming traditions alive, which in turn attracts tourists who buy their produce.

Producers felt the towns of Sherborne, Frome, Wells and Glastonbury attracted tourists by maintaining their market town history and links to the countryside. They didn't identify Yeovil as having these same strong associations with food and farming, though they did mention Montacute House, the National Trust house just outside Yeovil which hosts farmers' markets.

As well as maintaining the natural landscape, producers and suppliers can play a role in maintaining historic farmsteads and listed buildings, which make an important contribution to the distinctiveness and character of the area. A quarter of producers interviewed were maintaining historic or listed buildings.







## Yeovil's local supply chains

Map showing location of producers and range of foods supplied into the town



## Local products typically supplied into Yeovil

<b>Meat</b>	Beef, free-range poultry (chicken, duck, goose), game, guinea-fowl, lamb, mutton, offal, pork, pigeon, rabbit, turkey, veal, wild venison
<b>Processed meat</b>	Bacon, faggots, free-range sausages, ham, Parma-style ham, pâté, pheasant sausages, pork sausages, venison sausages
<b>Fish</b>	Smoked trout, trout
<b>Dairy</b>	Butter, buttermilk, clotted cream, cow's milk, cheese (including goat's cheese, organic cheeses, sheep's cheese, smoked cheese), clotted goat's butter, ice cream, mousse, PDO Cheddar, yoghurt (including ewe's milk yoghurt, fruit yoghurt, natural yoghurt)
<b>Fruit</b>	Apples, pears, strawberries and other soft fruit
<b>Vegetables</b>	Asparagus, broccoli, cabbages, cauliflowers, curly kale, herbs, leeks, mushrooms, parsnips, potatoes, purple sprouting broccoli, red cabbages, runner beans, salads, sprouts
<b>Eggs</b>	Duck eggs, free-range chicken eggs
<b>Preserves</b>	Chutneys, honey, jams, jellies, lemon curd, marmalades, mustard, pickles, sweet and savoury sauces
<b>Drinks</b>	Ale, apple juice, beer, cider, fruit smoothies, fruit wine, mineral water, sparkling elderflower drinks, spring water, wine
<b>Baked goods</b>	Baps, biscuits, buns, bread, cakes, flapjacks, gluten-free baked foods, pasties, pies, puddings, quiches, rolls, sausage rolls, scones, shortbread, special breads, tarts
<b>Cereals</b>	Muesli, organic flours (spelt, stone-ground, wholemeal)
<b>Other</b>	Chinese meals, cider vinegar, confectionery (fudge, truffles), doughnuts, mayonnaise, rapeseed oil, ready meals, salad dressings, soups, sunflower oil

Note: though there is a wealth of local producers in the area around Yeovil most are supplying the local box scheme or farm shops given that few local food outlets remain in Yeovil's centre.

### Key

-  Boundary of core study area
-  Boundary of local food supply area
-  Settlements
-  Supply chain links
-  Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
-  Multi-stage supply chain links (samples)
-  Meat/processed meat
-  Dairy
-  Fruit/vegetables
-  Eggs
-  Fish/shellfish
-  Drinks
-  Preserves
-  Baked goods
-  Cereals
-  Other products



Yeovil's core study area and location of main local food outlets

## CASE STUDY: The loss of fertile agricultural land

Under the Labour government in office until 2010 Regional Spatial Strategies set targets for new and affordable housing across the UK. Local authorities were required to include these targets in their Core Strategies. As part of South Somerset's Draft Core Strategy the county is potentially due 16,000 new homes by 2026, many of which could be built on prime agricultural land surrounding Yeovil.

CPRE in general supports major new housing developments being built as infills or additions to existing towns which already have all their services in place. CPRE also supports small-scale building in and around smaller villages only where there is evidence of need for affordable housing. **'The problem with Yeovil,** says local resident Henry Best, who chairs CPRE's South Somerset District Group, **'is that over the last 40 years it's expanded and expanded, and now the only way it can grow is by going into very good agricultural land that is currently being farmed'.**

The figures for new homes are calculated on predicted population growth, which includes inward migration. But according to CPRE Somerset, the net inward migration figures supplied by the Office for National Statistics show a steady downward trend in recent years.

But there's another incentive for building houses, Henry points out: **'Good agricultural land sells for £5,000 to £10,000 an acre. Land with planning permission to develop housing sells for half a million per acre. The temptation for land owners and farmers to sell land is therefore almost irresistible.'**

Looking into the future, rising energy prices, global food prices and resource shortages including lack of water could make imported food increasingly unreliable. The UK may again depend more heavily on domestic agriculture to put food on our plates. Highly fertile land is a strategic resource for the future and its loss reduces the options for greater self-sufficiency and local production of a range of food types. CPRE Somerset believes planning authorities should adopt a presumption against any development on agricultural land, and prohibit development on the most fertile land to protect it for future food production. The most valuable land for farming graded 1, 2 or 3a under the Agricultural Land Classification system is currently classified as Best and Most Versatile (BMV) land. The majority of land identified for urban extension in south Somerset is BMV land graded 1 to 3a, giving great cause for concern.





# LOCAL FOOD AND LOCAL POLICY

Responsibility for local planning policy and development management for Yeovil lies with South Somerset District Council. The Local Development Framework (LDF), which replaces a number of earlier Local Plans, sets out the main policies for future development of the area until 2026 and will help to shape the way towns and the surrounding countryside are developed. It has the potential to create vibrant, viable and diverse town centres that support local food webs. A key element is the Core Strategy, to be adopted in 2012.<sup>15</sup>

## Local authority planning policies: strengths and opportunities

Yeovil is identified in the Core Strategy as the main regional centre within the district: 'Yeovil is to be the main focus for new investment in retail and other major facilities requiring high levels of accessibility'<sup>16</sup> with development of retail and services in other market towns in the district to be considered within this hierarchy. There is generally good support for a concentration of retail development within the town centre through application of the sequential test, as well as an understanding that excessive development of Yeovil could damage other market towns in the district. A number of key policies support town-centre retail. These are likely to lend support to the kinds of outlets which sell higher percentages of local food – traditional specialist stores and markets – and are set out below:

- Policy EP12 *Retail Vitality and Viability*: 'In order to sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of town centres, new shopping proposals will be permitted within Yeovil town centre shopping area and the town centres of Market Towns and Rural Centres provided that:
  - The proposals are of a scale appropriate to the size and function of the town centres and would help to sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of the centre;
  - The proposals, either alone or combined with other recent and outstanding planning permissions, would not seriously affect the viability of the town centre of another nearby settlement; and
  - Parking will serve the centre as a whole.'<sup>17</sup>
- Policy EP11 *Presumption against Major New Regional Shopping Facilities* reinforces this, stating 'development of major new regional-scale shopping facilities outside Yeovil town centre within South Somerset will not be supported.'<sup>18</sup>
- Retail analysis and Policy EP14 *Comparison Floorspace* in Yeovil also make it clear that there is no need for substantial new convenience – or everyday – goods retail space in the town, suggesting that there would be no need for a significant new large food supermarket:
 

'The cumulative net increase in convenience goods retail floorspace to be completed in Yeovil is limited to a figure of 900sq m by 2014, 2,200 sq m by 2021 (i.e. an increase of 1,300 sq m since 2014) and 3,100 sq m by 2026. The overall net increase in comparison goods should be limited to a figure of 10,000 sq m by 2026. The floorspace provision is to be regularly monitored to take account of changing circumstances.'<sup>19</sup>



However, there is some risk that the need for comparison goods floorspace could attract another large supermarket chain, which could combine comparison and convenience retail and weaken existing smaller food retailers in the town. This recently occurred in Darlington.

- The Core Strategy also makes clear that there is no need for 'future out-of-centre retail allocations in South Somerset' with sufficient sites available for development 'within, and on the edge of, the main town centres.'<sup>20</sup>
- Finally, Policy EP9 *Farm Diversification* could provide opportunities for producers struggling to find local markets to diversify into opening farm shops or a bed-and-breakfast.<sup>21</sup>

Under the new LDF, the *Vision for Yeovil* is described as a 'delivery vehicle for a wide range of regeneration projects' over the next 25 years and this includes aspirations to enhance 'its close relationship with the Country Park and countryside beyond'.<sup>22</sup> By adopting the recommendations in this report, the local authority could help local food to play an important part in building stronger connections between Yeovil town and the countryside around through local food.

## Local authority planning policies: weaknesses and threats

The Draft Core Strategy identifies Yeovil as ‘an important employment centre’, the ‘prime economic driver for the district’ and a ‘commercial and administrative centre’. Yeovil is set to grow substantially, with housing development planned for greenfield sites – including high-grade BMV agricultural land – around the town over the next 20 years.

The related *South Somerset Retail Study Update* complements this vision, stating that the ‘draft RSS [Regional Spatial Strategy] states that the aim for Yeovil is to maintain and enhance its sub-regionally significant role, and functions for housing, employment, cultural, education, retail, health and other services and facilities and act as a strategic hub for public transport.’<sup>23</sup>

As part of its economic prosperity section, the South Somerset Core Strategy tells us that a goal of Shaping South Somerset: A Strategy for Sustainable Communities (2008-2026) is ‘Distinctiveness’, which has the objective of ‘a thriving Yeovil, market town and rural economy environment able to attract and retain visitors, consumers and high-quality sustainable businesses’.<sup>24</sup> While this goal is positive, the Core Strategy could move Yeovil further away from its role as a market town well connected to its rural roots as it expands and acts as a sub-regional centre for growth. More recognition should be given to the potential and powerful role re-localising food supply can play in the development of a more sustainable local economy and for retaining and strengthening Yeovil’s links to its rural hinterland.



Though independent bakers, a butcher, regular street markets and a monthly farmers’ market remain in Yeovil, convenience retail (for everyday goods) in the town is dominated by chain stores including a Tesco Extra hypermarket in the town centre and two superstores: an Asda (3,325m<sup>2</sup>) and a Morrisons (2,787 m<sup>2</sup>). In addition to these, there is a large Lidl supermarket (1,286m<sup>2</sup>) and a range of smaller stores, including two Tesco Expresses and two Co-op convenience stores.

At the same time, the number of empty shops is increasing – there were 43 vacant units in 2010 and a vacancy rate of over one in six stores in August 2011 (17.7% of the total number of units in the town centre), above the national average. The Core Strategy recognises that ‘the town’s retail sector is struggling with the impact of the recession characterised by empty shops in the town centre and that the town centre is not currently meeting its considerable potential as an attractive location for living and for expansion.’<sup>25</sup>

### Spotlight on local – Yeovil Country Market



Yeovil Country Market, established for 50 years, is a co-operative market selling fresh, home-produced goods and crafts from local producers direct to the public. The high-quality, good-value produce includes seasonal fruit and veg, free-range eggs, butter, cheese, cakes, pastries, honey, jams and preserves. The Country Market is open every Friday from 8.30am to 1.00pm and also has a stand at the monthly farmers’ market. Producers are supported by the national Country Markets organisation, which represents 10,000 home producers, 64 societies and 400 markets across the country and advises on food labelling legislation and food safety requirements.



Currently there is little incentive for local businesses to fill these or newly planned premises in the town, as business rates are unaffordable and competition from chain stores acts as a deterrent. Food businesses may be challenged in particular by the dominant presence and convenience of large supermarkets. The District Council should take action to make empty premises (and the centre) more attractive to smaller local businesses including local food businesses. This could bring more diversity to food shopping in Yeovil and, through local food, better connect the town with its rural hinterland and its heritage. It could further attract tourists and improve the general vitality and distinctiveness of the town.

The Draft Core Strategy could be strengthened in other respects to better support and promote the local food web:

- it recognises the importance of agricultural diversification<sup>26</sup> but this appears to mean away from food production, and there is no parallel support for food-based diversification to add value to agricultural produce, to support the rural land-based economy as well as the potential for local food tourism. Local food can meet a number of such goals and should be recognised for this.
- a policy to protect BMV land for its long-term strategic value for food – and in particular local food – production is missing from the Draft Core Strategy, despite it recognising that there is likely to be a loss of high-grade agricultural land, specifically Grade 1, in its preferred options for growth of Yeovil to the south in its East Coker/Keyford/Barwick Option.<sup>27</sup>

### Spotlight on local – Stoates & Sons at Cann Mill

Cann Mill was recorded in the Domesday Book. Today it continues to operate from a 500-year-old listed building that was formerly a county mill supplying animal feed to local farmers. It produces traditional stone-ground flour, and lists Yeovil-based Ceres Bakery among its customers. The growth in popularity of traditionally produced artisan breads and home baking has helped Stoates & Sons maintain this authentic milling legacy.



# RECOMMENDATIONS TO STRENGTHEN THE LOCAL FOOD WEB

These recommendations reflect issues identified in the Yeovil research as well as CPRE's views. They may apply elsewhere depending on local circumstances. Recommendations for national Government are the focus of a national report published in 2012.

What are the issues?	Why does it matter?	What needs to be done and how?		
		By local authorities	By businesses	By community groups and local people
<p>Local food may cost more or is perceived to be more expensive</p> <p>Smaller outlets can struggle to compete with supermarket offers</p>	<p>Supermarkets attract shoppers by competing hard on price and use the TV and press to advertise low prices</p> <p>The cost of special offers can be passed back to producers and can undermine their business</p> <p>Shoppers may do all their shopping in one store leading to further loss of small shops</p>		<p>Small producers could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- form a co-operative, enabling them to supply larger markets such as the public sector or larger local shops with competitively priced produce and share the costs of marketing</li> <li>- share distribution to reduce transport and admin costs, including establishing a local 'food hub' – an intermediary between producers and business customers<sup>28</sup></li> </ul> <p>Work together as outlets and suppliers to run promotions to entice shoppers to try local produce</p> <p>Persuade shoppers local food is affordable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- advertise where prices are lower than or the same as at the chains</li> <li>- emphasise value for money and the quality, taste, freshness and goodness as well as customer service</li> <li>- persuade customers to buy better quality but less quantity – eat less and eat better but pay the same</li> <li>- sell 'ugly' fruit and veg for less</li> </ul>	<p>Set up a food co-op to bulk-buy fresh, locally produced food</p> <p>Join a local box scheme or community-supported agriculture scheme. Buying directly from producers can be cheaper</p> <p>Keep checking prices in local shops and markets against the supermarket – they are often cheaper</p> <p>Pay a little more if necessary for better quality food but buy less of it to stick to your budget</p> <p>Buy produce in season: local produce will be in abundance and therefore cheaper</p>
<p>Small businesses and local food need support in marketing, advertising and promotion</p>	<p>Competition is weakened if the system of diverse small businesses can't compete with large national chains</p> <p>Shoppers need to know what is available, where and at what price to make informed choices</p>	<p>Work with local business initiatives such as Yeovil Town Centre Partnership to support production of a town centre and/or local area map for locals, visitors and tourists to highlight businesses selling local produce, including farm shops and markets</p>	<p>Form producer co-operatives to boost sales and share joint marketing initiatives.</p> <p>Work with the local authority and sympathetic organisations such as Levels' Best, the Chamber of Commerce, the Yeovil Town Centre Partnership and local colleges and universities on these initiatives</p> <p>Tell the story behind the business to <i>Somerset Life</i> and get listed in its Somerset Food Guide.</p> <p>Get listed on the Visit Somerset and somersetfood.org websites and national ones such as Big Barn or www.foodloversbritain.com</p> <p>Work with local organisations to sponsor and promote a local food awards scheme</p>	<p>Use websites such as somersetfood.org and foodmapper.org to find local food near where you live</p>



What are the issues?	Why does it matter?	What needs to be done and how?		
		By local authorities	By businesses	By community groups and local people
<p>'Local food' is not legally defined</p> <p>The meaning of 'local food' varies between Yeovil shoppers</p>	<p>Shoppers need to know the difference between local and non-local food so they can make a choice</p> <p>Confusion over the meaning of local may undermine the values attached to local food</p> <p>Without clarity there is a risk regional or British food can be sold as local</p>	<p>Work with local business networks to promote the existing Levels' Best trademark for quality food from the Levels and Moors and explore the option to define 'local to Yeovil' in ways which can complement this brand</p>	<p>Co-operate through business networks to define 'local' for the area</p> <p>Outlets should seek out Levels' Best accredited producers</p> <p>Within store, give a definition of what Levels' Best and 'local' mean to the business and signpost local food in a section, on shelves and packaging</p> <p>Use a blackboard or map to list local seasonal produce and food miles (or metres)</p> <p>Give information on who produces the food, where and how</p> <p>State the business's buying policy and highlight local products in publicity (including menus for cafés and restaurants)</p> <p>Farm shops should seek accreditation from FARMA to reassure shoppers that produce is sourced from within 30 miles</p>	<p>Support outlets which stock and clearly define local food:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- support farmers' markets (if FARMA-certified, all produce is normally from within 30 miles) and farm shops</li> <li>- for supermarket shopping, Waitrose defines local food as produced within 30 miles</li> </ul> <p>Ask outlets including supermarkets to define 'local' clearly and to display their buying policy</p>
<p>Local food producers as smaller businesses tend to operate with a higher cost base, making it difficult to compete with larger businesses producing 'anywhere' food</p>	<p>Low farm-gate prices are making small and medium-sized farms unviable, leading to a less diverse farming system and countryside</p> <p>Traditional farmsteads important for the character of rural areas are lost to large-scale food farming</p>	<p>Public procurement officers can increase opportunities for small local producers by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- setting specifications and assessment criteria for the freshness, seasonality and frequency of delivery of produce</li> <li>- training staff on how to get the best from catering contracts</li> <li>- splitting larger contracts into lots, for example into product groups or by distribution area</li> <li>- advertising opportunities to local producers through the competitive tendering process<sup>29</sup></li> </ul>		

What are the issues?	Why does it matter?	What needs to be done and how?		
		By local authorities	By businesses	By community groups and local people
Businesses could do more to promote the wider environmental benefits of local food	<p>The environmental benefits of local food are often perceived to be limited to reducing food miles – which does not necessarily mean reduced CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. This ignores wider benefits</p> <p>Awareness and understanding of wider benefits may strengthen shoppers' commitment to seek out and buy local food</p>	Work with local business networks to promote the existing Levels' Best trademark and its environmental standards	<p>Businesses should promote local food better by explaining its wider environmental benefits and its contribution to more sustainable eating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- reducing waste</li> <li>- using less energy, since local food is usually seasonal</li> <li>- helping smaller and traditional farms stay viable</li> <li>- keeping the farming system diverse</li> <li>- supporting low-intensity agriculture</li> <li>- protecting wildlife habitats and important landscapes</li> <li>- maintaining traditional breeds and distinctive fruit and vegetable varieties</li> </ul> <p>Support Levels' Best producers, who fulfil many of these criteria</p>	
Supermarkets offer the convenience of a one-stop shop with free and ample parking	<p>Shoppers frequently cited convenience as a major factor in where they shop</p> <p>In the absence of a strong local food offer in the centre of Yeovil itself, shoppers wanting to find local food have to travel to the farm shops on the outskirts of the town or visit other nearby market towns</p>	Investigate ways to improve sustainable forms of travel locally (e.g. pedestrian routes, cycle paths and better public transport) to improve access to farm shops and encourage linked trips to the countryside	<p>Farm shops could explore developing independent or shared delivery services. As many outlets selling local food in Yeovil are outside the town, this could meet the needs of those without a car or with low mobility. Such a scheme would also carry a strong environmental message, as delivery services can be more efficient than each customer using their car and so reduce traffic congestion and pollution.</p> <p>Farm shops could explore offering late-night and/or Sunday opening to improve access for shoppers who work full time</p>	<p>Explore other ways to shop conveniently for local food:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- use a local box scheme to get fresh, seasonal local fruit and vegetables and other foods delivered to your door</li> <li>- ask farm shops if they deliver</li> <li>- check if local farm shops are open evenings or at the weekend</li> <li>- ask your supermarket to stock more local lines</li> </ul>





What are the issues?	Why does it matter?	What needs to be done and how?		
		By local authorities	By businesses	By community groups and local people
<p>Supermarket chains dominate food retail nationally and in Yeovil, taking over 75% of trade, but typically offer low levels of local produce (less than 5%)</p> <p>There is demand for local food but convenience, access and availability impede buying</p>	<p>Market domination by supermarkets reduces access to locally produced food</p> <p>Shoppers doing their main shop at supermarkets find it difficult to support local food</p> <p>Supermarkets put less money into the local rural economy</p>	<p>South Somerset District Council should develop policies to maintain and promote a diverse retail economy to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- offer genuine choice of outlets and food</li> <li>- meet a range of shopping needs</li> <li>- provide good access nearby to fresh sustainable local food and through it connect people to their local countryside</li> <li>- retain markets for smaller producers and support their innovation in food production</li> <li>- support trade and tourism in the town centre</li> </ul> <p>These policies should be updated in line with the National Planning Policy Framework to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- support and promote clusters of local shops in the town centre and encourage new local food outlets to support retail diversity and the individuality of Yeovil</li> <li>- support on-farm diversification into local food production to support small-scale employment and the rural economy</li> </ul>	<p>National supermarket chains and other supermarkets should increase their local food offer by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- giving local store managers discretion to source produce from local suppliers</li> <li>- ensuring local produce is delivered directly to stores and signposting this clearly to customers</li> </ul>	<p>Spread your spending across a wider range of outlets and support those that stock high levels of local food – this will also encourage supermarkets to stock more</p> <p>Ask in supermarkets, shops, cafés and restaurants where the food comes from and how it's produced – make businesses think about their buying policy</p> <p>Give shops feedback to help improve the range of local food on offer</p>
<p>Supermarket chains need to take action to ensure their presence in market towns doesn't destroy town centres and their relationship with the rural hinterland</p>	<p>Town centres are vital to local communities and local economies. Superstores especially out of centre can cut footfall to high streets and depress trade at a range of food and other shops including florists, newsagents, pharmacies and clothing shops. This can threaten their viability and weaken consumer choice as well as the health of the centre.</p> <p>Town centres support people wanting to shop on foot, bicycle or by public transport and those without use of a car. If superstores undermine other food shops in centres this can mean poorer access to fresh, local and seasonal food as well as taking away a main reason for shopping trips to the centre: to buy food.</p>		<p>Supermarket chains should support strong, diverse high streets by developing town centre formats and halting further out-of-centre expansion</p> <p>Following recommendations in the Portas High Street Review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- large retailers should support and mentor local businesses and local retailers</li> <li>- large retailers should report on their support of local high streets in their annual report<sup>30</sup></li> </ul>	

What are the issues?	Why does it matter?	What needs to be done and how?		
		By local authorities	By businesses	By community groups and local people
The lack of independent food outlets in the town centre means local suppliers struggle to find a market in Yeovil	Yeovil isn't capitalising on the wealth of producers in Somerset and the availability of local food	<p>Promote local food in Yeovil to stimulate the local rural economy as well as attract tourists by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- supporting more regular farmers' markets</li> <li>- providing incentives to new local food businesses to set up in the town centre</li> <li>- using their new discretionary powers to give business rate concessions to new local businesses</li> </ul>	The Yeovil Chamber of Commerce should lobby the local authority to provide incentives and support for new local food businesses wanting retail space in the town centre	
Yeovil appears increasingly disconnected from its rural hinterland	<p>The residents of Yeovil will understand less about how and where food is produced or why they should care about their local countryside</p> <p>People from Yeovil may be less likely to visit their local countryside and benefit from recreation</p> <p>The rural area can add distinctiveness to the town; without it Yeovil risks being a 'clone town' with less to attract visitors and tourism</p>	<p>In its Local Plan, South Somerset District Council should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- recognise the link between a strong and diverse retail mix and how it supports local food producers, and adds value to the local farming industry and rural economy</li> <li>- recognise the scarcity and importance of high quality farmland for food production – in particular for local food – and provide strong protection in planning policy</li> </ul> <p>Within the District Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the Economic Development Team should develop a local food directory of where to buy locally produced food and drink (such as developed by North Somerset District Council)</li> <li>- environmental health and communications teams could promote local food via their newsletters to businesses and the public<sup>31</sup></li> <li>- the tourism team could work with Visit Somerset, Somerset Food.org and <i>Somerset Life</i> to highlight the local produce and independent shops that bring character to the area</li> </ul> <p>The local authority, NHS and other organisations such as Somerset Community Food, CPRE Somerset, Levels' Best, Somerset Farmers' Markets and the Yeovil Town Centre Partnership should work in partnership to develop a food strategy and action plan for the area. Models include the Herefordshire Food Partnership and their recent Herefordshire Food Strategy</p>		



# CONCLUSION

**Yeovil is south Somerset's largest town. With a historical relationship to both agriculture and industry, it traditionally acted as market for produce for smaller towns and villages across the county. The recently written vision for Yeovil states that the town should encapsulate 'the heart of the country and the mind of a city'. Yet the modern character of the town seems to be largely disconnected from the surrounding agricultural county, while local authorities target it as a major growth area for housing and industry.**

Planning policy in the town has failed to protect a diverse retail mix and traditional smaller food outlets have disappeared, leaving supermarket chains to dominate food retail. Supermarket saturation and high business rates deter new independent food outlets from setting up shop and create very challenging competition for those that remain. This reduces the opportunity for small producers in the area to find new and regular markets in the town, leaving a diminished local food web operating below its potential given the range and quality of local produce.

Four independent food retailers stocking local food remain in the town centre, and the monthly farmers' market and Country Market boost availability of local food. Despite the value of these outlets in extending choice, access to local food in the town centre is generally poor and there are significantly fewer outlets than in similar market towns with smaller populations. Conversely, local food is widely available in the many farm shops in the immediate hinterland of the town, but these can only be easily reached by car and will be inconvenient for some shoppers.

Nevertheless, Yeovil is fortunate to have a wealth of diverse local producers: we found at least 120 within 30 miles. They work to preserve agricultural traditions indigenous to the area and protect special landscapes such as the Somerset Levels and Moors, which in turn attract tourists. Meat is the local product most supplied into Yeovil, but the majority of producers are not supplying shops in the town: they supply alternative markets including box schemes, farm shops, farmers' markets, the public sector, and outlets and markets in nearby market towns.

Though small in number, the remaining retailers in Yeovil bring a range of benefits to the community and the economy. Outlets generate an estimated £1.9 million turnover from local food which flows back into the local economy, and supports a range of other local businesses and services. More widely businesses in the Yeovil food web provide an estimated 1,350 jobs. The web itself makes available the freshest, high-quality food which offers to customers a closer connection to where their food comes from, and contributes in various ways to food culture and social and community life.

Public authorities, local businesses and the community can all play a part in strengthening the local food web. Local planning policy should strongly promote a diverse retail mix to meet residents' everyday food needs and broaden access and choice. Policies need to safeguard the remaining essential local food outlets – generally smaller independent ones – and support other valuable outlets such as farmers' markets and the Country Market. The local planning authority – South Somerset District Council – also needs to find ways to stimulate new food outlets, which can add to the town's distinctiveness. It should have a strong vision for the future of food and farming in the district, and protect precious fertile agricultural land from being developed. Public procurement policy offers another way to engage smaller local producers and so develop a stronger, more sustainable supply chain.

Local produce needs to be better promoted generally. Businesses, especially those servicing the tourist trade, could improve the signposting of local food and its benefits. The Levels' Best brand offers an effective way to promote the credentials of locally produced food and make better links between Yeovil and the bountiful county which surrounds it and should receive strong backing. Local residents and the wider community need to seek out their local businesses, support them and enjoy the distinctive local produce they offer. Finally, all these groups should come together to form a partnership and drive forward a food strategy for the area to ensure that their local food web grows and thrives.



# APPENDIX A

## Information about the area

**Yeovil is a large market town of around 42,000 people in south Somerset in south west England.**

### History

The town developed from a Saxon village in the 8th century to an important market for the area by the time of the Norman Conquest. In the early 15th century, Yeovil began to host two annual market fairs which attracted traders from across Somerset and Dorset. Over the centuries these markets expanded and became renowned for produce such as cheese and hemp. Small manufacturing industries developed in the town, notably for glove and parchment making.

In the mid-19th century, railways connected Yeovil to the rest of Britain and supported further industrial developments. The surrounding area was also known as some of the finest dairy land in the country, with local company St Ivel becoming one of Britain's leading dairy producers. With severe competition the local industry declined and many of the town's production facilities had closed down by the mid-20th century.

### Local government

South Somerset District Council, the main local authority since 1974, is responsible for spatial planning, planning policy and development management. Yeovil Town Council, the lowest tier of local government, is responsible for developing the neighbourhood plan and the management of recreational and leisure facilities and open spaces.

### Culture

Yeovil showcases the best of the South West with its various festivals and events which also serve as a tourist attraction. The many festivals include Street Fest, the Royal Bath and West Show, and the Leigh Village Food Festival in July, which features the best of local food and drink. Many of the town's restaurants feature locally sourced food. Cadbury Castle, just north of Yeovil, is a popular tourist haunt linked to the legend of King Arthur.

### Geography and land use

Agriculture in the area is dominated by livestock holdings which benefit from the shallow chalky limestone soils that support lowland grazing of sheep and beef cattle. Dairy farming is also significant, largely in areas of heavier, clay-rich soils scattered across the region. Horticulture and cereal production account for a smaller portion of agricultural output, mostly concentrated in the alluvial soils near coastal fringes and river catchments. Though suffering decline in recent years the fishing industry in Sidmouth and Weymouth is an important source of seafood for Yeovil and the wider South West region.

The area includes several landscapes of national importance: the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) to the south-west, Cranborne Chase and West Wilts AONB to the north-east, and Dorset AONB in the south. The Somerset Levels and Moors in the north-west are internationally important wetlands protected for their bird species.

### Economy

Yeovil's many shops and stores are an important economic asset. Like many others the town centre is dominated by national chains, though some independent retailers still remain, as well as a twice-weekly street market and a monthly farmers' market. The town also has three of the four major supermarket chains. The town centre has a higher percentage of empty shops (17.7%) than the national average (14.5%), and the third worst in the South West.<sup>32</sup>

Quedam Shopping Centre, in the heart of the town, is one of the most popular shopping destinations in the South West. Proposals to extend the complex have recently been approved by the council, and will be the largest development in Yeovil since the construction of the original shopping centre.<sup>33</sup> The council has also set in motion many other regeneration projects, including a plan to develop the main Market Street, home to many of the town's retail outlets, and to improve transportation links.<sup>34</sup>

Yeovil has long been known for the manufacture of aircrafts. AgustaWestland, one of the major helicopter manufacturers, is the largest employer in the town. The Yeovil Chamber of Trade and Commerce enjoys a strong voice in the community with over 160 member companies.<sup>35</sup>

### Population

Yeovil houses roughly a third of the population of South Somerset district. The number of households in the district is predicted to increase by 41% in the next 20 years – markedly higher than the projected national increase of 29%.<sup>36</sup> The area around the town centre is the most affluent of the three postal districts that loosely comprise the town. Unemployment levels here are lower than elsewhere in the town, and the resident workforce significantly more qualified than in the poorer districts to the north and south. Over a fifth of the working population in the wealthiest areas are educated to degree level or above, compared to fewer than one in seven in the poorest parts, significantly lower than the national average.<sup>37</sup>





# APPENDIX B

## National project overview

### Background

The concept of a local food web stems from the work of Caroline Cranbrook. In 1998 Caroline grew concerned about the impact of a proposed superstore on her local market town of Saxmundham in east Suffolk. She researched the local food network and showed its importance to Saxmundham, and the surrounding towns and villages.

Caroline found that local food producers, wholesalers and outlets depended upon each other and also supported local businesses such as builders and electricians. Local outlets provided an accessible market for new food business start-ups. Keeping local shops open gave people access to good affordable food and places to meet. By providing a market for their produce local outlets enabled farmers to raise livestock which, through grazing, maintains important nature reserves and beautiful Suffolk river valleys such as the Alde.

CPRE published Caroline's findings in *Food Webs* (1998) and in *The Real Choice: how local foods can survive the supermarket onslaught* (2006), which shows how the local food web has prospered since the superstore development was turned down.

This research suggested local food networks with similar benefits exist elsewhere, but further evidence was needed.

### Spotlight on local – Cheddar: a world-famous Somerset cheese

Cheddar-type cheese is made all over the world, but the original cheddar comes from Somerset. Named after the town where it was traditionally made, it has an older provenance than any cheese in England. 'Cheddaring' is a complex production method that gives the cheese its distinctive and ever-popular rich flavour and crumbly texture. Today, cheddars produced by members of the West Country group<sup>38</sup> using specific methods, ingredients and maturing times, have been awarded the prestigious Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) status, alongside the likes of Parma ham and champagne. Milk is sourced from local herds; the cheese is free of colouring, flavouring or preservatives and is matured on farm for at least nine months. PDO foods are protected under European Union law. They help producers obtain a premium price for their authentic products and preserve their place of origin, traditional methods of production and essential ingredients. This in turn can promote rural and agricultural livelihoods and local character.

### Aims of the national project

Mapping Local Food Webs is a national project led by CPRE, supported by Sustain, and funded from 2007 to 2012 by the Big Lottery Fund through the Making Local Food Work programme. The project engages people in researching their own local food web in up to three towns and cities in each of the eight English regions.

The project aims to increase the local community's understanding of the size and importance of the local food web and its impact on local people's lives, livelihoods, places and the countryside. It explores the relationships between what people buy and eat and the character of their town and the surrounding countryside. Finally, it aims to increase support for greater local food production and better supply in local outlets, and to strengthen and secure local food webs across the country.

Individual mapping projects have been running since early 2009 in 19 towns and cities across the country. We selected each on population size (below 10,000, 10,000-30,000, over 30,000) and to achieve broad coverage of the relevant region. In each location we established a core study area defined by a 2.5-mile radius circle usually centred on the town or urban area. Beyond that, we defined a 30-mile radius circle as the local supply area.

The project employed regional co-ordinators to recruit and support local volunteers to research shoppers' attitudes to local food, identify and interview outlets selling locally sourced food in the core study area, and interview a sample of their suppliers. We held open public meetings and workshops to involve local residents and businesses in the project, to raise awareness of the issues and to gather information on barriers and opportunities to local food.

### Definition of a local food web and local food

A *local food web* is the network of links between people who buy, sell, produce and supply food in an area. The people, businesses, towns, villages and countryside in the web depend on each other, and this interdependence benefits livelihoods, quality of life and the quality of places.

This project defines *local food* as raw food, or lightly processed food (such as cheese, sausages, pies and baked goods) and its main ingredients, grown or produced within 30 miles of where it was bought.

# APPENDIX C

## Overview of the Yeovil project

**Yeovil was one of the South West region projects and one of the large towns (population over 30,000) included in the research. Regional co-ordinator Elaine Spencer-White recruited and supported a team of four local volunteers. The project ran from November 2009 to May 2010.**

### Area covered

The core study area (2.5-mile radius circle from the town centre) covers the civil parish and wider urban area including the suburbs of Summerlands, Penn Mill, Forest Hill and Abbey Manor. Because of the relative value of the farmers' markets held at Montacute House, the National Trust house just outside Yeovil, for local food supply, the core study area was centered on a point north of Yeovil town centre on the edge of the town. The 30-mile supply chain area extends to cover all of Somerset and large parts of Dorset and Devon. To the north, the area reaches close to Bath and north-west into the Bristol Channel. In the south, the area is bounded by a stretch of the east Devon and Dorset coastline – the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site – together with fishing ports and seaside towns such as Sidmouth and Weymouth.

### Main project activities

These were:

- a public launch meeting with 30 people attending in January 2010
- identifying 54 food outlets (including shops, supermarkets, market stalls and a box scheme); screening of 46 of these identified at least 42 selling locally sourced food
- carrying out interviews with 15 outlets (5 stores and 10 market stalls) to research economic, social and environmental impacts of their business and their main local suppliers
- interviewing 15 businesses in the local supply chain
- interviewing 144 food shoppers on attitudes to local food and purchasing habits.

### Scope and limitations of the research

#### Data collection

A small team of local volunteers was recruited to support field research using questionnaires and workshop models developed by a university research team and pilot tested in six locations, but the majority of surveys were carried out by regional co-ordinator Elaine Spencer-White.

The approach taken was:

- for food outlets – to identify and screen for local food sales; to interview as many local food outlets as possible, with retail as the priority
- for suppliers/producers – to interview all businesses in the supply chain of two products in each of seven main product types (meat, processed meat, dairy, eggs, fruit, vegetables, preserves) with a target of seven simple (single-stage or direct) and seven complex (multiple-stage) supply chains
- for food shoppers – to sample shoppers in a range of locations including streets, markets and community venues in different areas. To achieve a broad sample of ages and income levels, we set a minimum of 20 respondents in each age and income band with an overall minimum of 120 surveys. Guidance was given on achieving gender diversity and good representation of ethnic minorities, although targets were not set.<sup>39</sup>

Broadly, the success rate for these targets was good for outlets, suppliers and shoppers. In total, we surveyed 144 shoppers in Yeovil, interviewing 20-30 shoppers in every age band except 15-24 (two shoppers); 10% gave no answer. For income, coverage was high in five bands from £10k or less to £40K, but lower for higher ranges: £10K or less (16), £10-20K (20), £20-30K (16), £30-40K (22), £40K-50K (13), £50K-60K (4), £60K-70K (4), over £70K (5), with 31% giving no answer. Some businesses approached to take part in the research refused because of time or other reasons.

### Data analysis

CPRE staff and volunteers collated and analysed statistical and qualitative data (mainly answers to open questions) which support the findings in this report. Samples were not random or stratified so are not strictly representative, but we believe they strongly illustrate trends and issues. Statistical evidence derives from direct answers from a high percentage of businesses interviewed with mid-point figures used where answers are given as range data. We note where statistics are produced by extrapolation to a larger population.

Qualitative findings are drawn from comments organised and coded by theme then corroborated by several interviewees (usually five or more) and where possible cross-referenced to comments from other surveys and the workshop/public meeting. In general, we give greater weight to businesses, as we interviewed a much higher percentage of the total business population than for shoppers.

Where we refer to 'local' or 'locally sourced' food or produce we have relied upon information supplied by outlets, but we have independently confirmed the location of supply chain businesses. It was beyond the scope of this research to verify whether produce is entirely or partially locally grown or raised, although many suppliers are identifiable as primary producers (mainly farmers or growers).





# APPENDIX D

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Cranbrook, C, *The Real Choice: how local foods can survive the supermarket onslaught*, Campaign to Protect Rural England, 2006
- <sup>2</sup> Several traditional specialist retailers were trading in the town centre at the time of surveying, as well as three farm shops: these were Ceres Wholefoods, Ceres Bakery (had ceased trading at time of printing), Loders butchers, Haynes butchers, Apple Tree Farm Shop, Bowerhinton Farm Shop and Pitney Farm Shop. Two other farm shops are outside the town.  
www.bhfood.org.uk
- <sup>3</sup> www.foodplymouth.org
- <sup>4</sup> Supermarkets and market stalls are excluded from the outlet figures below. Local food sales at supermarkets are generally a low percentage of overall turnover (below 5%); businesses trading at markets will also sell in other towns in the area, making it difficult to assess the turnover, customer numbers and employment relating specifically to sales in Yeovil.
- <sup>6</sup> Cranbrook, 2006
- <sup>7</sup> The 'big four' are Tesco, Sainsbury's, Asda and Morrisons; market share data is taken from www.kamcity.com/namnews/mktshare/2012/kantar-march12.htm [accessed 6 August 2012]
- <sup>8</sup> The Competition Commission, *The supply of groceries in the UK market investigation*, 2008, p.34.  
Available at: www.competition-commission.org.uk/rep\_pub/reports/2008/fulltext/538.pdf [accessed 6 August 2012]
- <sup>9</sup> Snell's was a printing firm in Yeovil and publisher of local directories
- <sup>10</sup> Respublica, *The Right to Retail*, 2011, p.4
- <sup>11</sup> These include farm shops at Barley Mow, North Perot, Modbury Washing Pool and Goose Slade Farm Shop.  
www.somersetcommunityfood.org.uk
- <sup>12</sup> www.geofutures.com
- <sup>13</sup> All percentages given in these tables are based on the number of shoppers answering the specific question, except for the main and extra food shopping destinations where the percentages given are based on the total number of responses where interviewees gave one or more answers.
- <sup>14</sup> See South Somerset District Council, *Draft Core Strategy (incorporating Preferred Options)* October 2010; Available at: www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/167087/draft\_core\_strategy\_print\_master\_for\_ssd\_c\_website\_130711.pdf [accessed 6 August 2012]
- <sup>15</sup> Ibid., p.137
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid., p.139
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid., p.138
- <sup>18</sup> Ibid., p.141
- <sup>19</sup> Ibid., p.143
- <sup>20</sup> Ibid., p.135
- <sup>21</sup> www.yeovilvision.co.uk [accessed 6 August 2012]
- <sup>22</sup> GVA Grimley/South Somerset District Council, South Somerset Retail Study Update, July 2010, p.30, para. 4.11. Available at: www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/15591/SSRetail\_Study\_Update.pdf [accessed 6 August 2012]
- <sup>23</sup> South Somerset District Council, *Draft Core Strategy (incorporating Preferred Options)* October 2010, paragraph 9.3. Available at: http://consult.southsomerset.gov.uk/consult/ti/Draft\_Core\_Strategy/viewCompoundDoc?docid=553524&sessionid=&voteid=&partId=554164 [accessed 24 October 2012]
- <sup>24</sup> Empty shops are highlighted as an issue on page 43 of the Core Strategy.
- <sup>25</sup> South Somerset District Council, 2010, p.135
- <sup>26</sup> South Somerset District Council, 2010, p.49
- <sup>27</sup> See Morley, A, Morgan, S and Morgan, K, *Food Hubs: the 'missing middle' of the local food infrastructure*, BRASS Centre, Cardiff University, 2008: 'A Food Hub ... may be thought of as acting as an intermediary that offers to put the produce of many suppliers, growers, farmers and processors into the hands of retailers, food service firms, public sector buyers and procurement consortia, and/or direct to the final consumer.' (p.3). Available at: www.brass.cf.ac.uk/uploads/Food\_HubKM0908.pdf [accessed 6 August 2012]
- <sup>28</sup> These measures are permitted by European Union directives, though specifying local produce is not. These recommendations are drawn from Food Links UK, *Best Practice in Sustainable Public Food Procurement*, June 2006.  
www.localfood.org.uk/library/Defra-FLUK%20best%20practice%20final%20June%202006.pdf [accessed 6 August 2012]
- <sup>29</sup> Portas, M, *The Portas Review – an independent review into the future of our high streets*, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, 2011, p.38
- <sup>30</sup> For example, Yeovil Town Centre Partnership produces a quarterly newsletter about events and initiatives in the town.
- <sup>31</sup> Research by the Local Data Company cited in *Western Gazette*, 'Empty shop listing doesn't cool optimism of traders', 4 August 2011, www.thisissomerset.co.uk/shop-listing-doesnt-cool-optimism-traders/story-13067502-detail/story.html [accessed 6 August 2012]. This research 'showed that 17.7 per cent of shops in the town are empty, a rise of 0.8 per cent on last year. Only Gloucester and Bristol, which have both seen steep rises in shop vacancies, have a higher proportion of empty premises.' The UK average rate of empty shops at the time of writing was 14.5%.
- <sup>32</sup> www.yeovil.com/shopping
- <sup>33</sup> www.yeovilvision.co.uk/projects/market-street-area.htm [accessed 6 August 2012]
- <sup>34</sup> Yeovil Chamber of Trade and Commerce, www.yeovilchamber.org
- <sup>35</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>36</sup> www.mouseprice.com/area-guide/demographics/BA20/Yeovil, www.mouseprice.com/area-guide/demographics/BA21/Yeovil, www.mouseprice.com/area-guide/demographics/BA22/Yeovil [accessed 6 August 2012]
- <sup>37</sup> This group is made up of 13 traditional farmhouse cheesemakers including Brue Valley farms, Denhay Farms, Green's of Glastonbury, Keen's Cheddar and Montgomery's Cheddar. See www.farmhousecheesemakers.com/pdo-our-provenance [accessed 6 August 2012]
- <sup>38</sup> Some gender bias was expected as more women than men do food shopping. In Defra's 2007 *Survey of Attitudes and Behaviours in relation to the Environment*, 70% of the main food decision-makers were women. Therefore it was deemed not unreasonable for the sample to contain more women than men with a split of roughly 70% women, 30% men.



Making Local Food Work is a five-year £10 million programme funded by the National Lottery through the Big Lottery Fund. It helps people to take ownership of their food and where it comes from by supporting a range of community food enterprises across England. Community food enterprises are businesses run by communities for their benefit, which are involved in at least one part of growing, harvesting, processing, distributing, selling or serving local food. Examples include farmers' markets, community-owned shops, community-supported agriculture, country markets, food co-operatives and many others. [www.makinglocalfoodwork.co.uk](http://www.makinglocalfoodwork.co.uk)

The Big Lottery Fund's Changing Spaces programme was launched in November 2005 to help communities enjoy and improve their local environments. The programme is funding a range of activities from local food schemes and farmers' markets, to education projects teaching people about the environment. Full details of the work of the Big Lottery Fund, its programmes and awards are available on its website: [www.biglotteryfund.org.uk](http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk)

CPRE fights for a better future for England's unique, essential and precious countryside. From giving parish councils expert advice on planning issues to influencing national and European policies, we work to protect and enhance the countryside. We believe a beautiful, thriving countryside is important for everyone, no matter where they live. Nationally, we don't own land or represent any special interests. Our members are united in their love for England's landscapes and rural communities, and stand up for the countryside, so it can continue to sustain, enchant and inspire future generations.

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- Influence land use in town and country for people and nature
- Protect and enhance beauty, tranquillity and local distinctiveness
- Increase and harness public and political support for the countryside.

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