

FOOD, FARMING AND FISHERIES

Market forces and government policies have favoured increasing industrialisation of agriculture, mass-produced food and dependence on fossil fuels. This comes with great 'external costs' to the environment, human health, farming people and animal welfare. Soil erosion, depletion of water resources, pollution, loss of biodiversity and animal suffering are commonplace. In addition, agriculture accounts for a significant proportion of greenhouse gas emissions, and pressure on land resources is linked with deforestation in many parts of the world.

But food supply and farming are not just another business, and we need to ensure:

- That nutritious food is available to everyone at prices they can afford;
- Decent rural livelihoods and support for rural communities;
- That there is national and international food security;
- That farming respects the environment and treats farm animals well.

To secure these objectives we will:

- Seek to reform the *Common Agricultural Policy* and reform our national agri-environment schemes to prioritise and support farmers who farm sustainably and enhance biodiversity on farmed land with a variety of farming styles, methods and scales.
- Foster *environmentally sustainable agriculture*, land management and a secure food supply by properly supporting valid, rigorous and reliable research into all areas and types of farming including organic farming.
- Encourage farming to operate in *fair trade* conditions, which guarantee a *decent livelihood for farmers* at home and also in countries that export food to the UK.
- *Protect productive farmland from development* except for that associated with agriculture and those engaged in it. In particular, review the current classification of farm land to maximise local production of food.
- Work to *reduce food imports* and increase home and local food production where feasible.
- Increase *localisation of the food chain* and encourage direct sales via local markets; support fair trade for farmers and enable them to gain independence from disadvantageous contracts with supermarkets by strengthening the powers of the supermarket ombudsman.
- Help *hospitals and schools* and other food buyers in the public sector to lead the way in buying sustainable products, and encourage children to be involved in growing and cooking food.
- Work to ensure *sustainable fishing policies*, leading to sustainable fishing communities, at both the national and European levels as appropriate. In particular, fishing quota allocations should reward local sustainable fisheries.
- Research, promote and support farming methods that *reduce greenhouse gas* emissions, enable carbon storage and have minimum impact on wildlife, as established by rigorous and reliable research. In particular, we should encourage *eating less and better meat*.
- Support a moratorium, at national and EU level, on the use of *genetically modified organisms* (GMOs) in all agricultural systems, including production of human food and animal feed, and on importation of GM food or feed.
- Work to reduce *food waste*.

Green councillors promote local food...

Councillor Molly Scott Cato in Stroud secured £100,000 in the District Council budget to invest in local food production for everyone. 'In a rural area like Stroud, it makes sense to support local food producers so that everyone can eat food grown within the district,' she said. Molly was elected in 2014 as the new Green Member of the European Parliament (MEP) for the South West.

ANIMAL PROTECTION

We support calls for a new Commission on Animal Protection, which would cover animal protection issues in all the areas specifically addressed below.