



London Food Purchasing Commitment

Produced by: **ReLondon**  **Hackney**

Endorsed by: **#OneWorldLiving**  **LONDON COUNCILS**  **sustain**
the alliance for better food and farming

Preamble

Action on food can help to tackle many of today's biggest health, economic, social, political and environmental challenges, including climate change. As a sector, food and agriculture is a leading carbon emitter, accounting for a third of global greenhouse gases. Food is linked to half of human-induced biodiversity loss and is a decisive factor on the health and wellbeing of citizens.

In London, food accounts for almost 10% of the city's consumption-based greenhouse gas emissions. Approximately 2.3 million tonnes of food is wasted from across London's food supply chain per year. Meanwhile, many Londoners are increasingly suffering from food poverty amidst rising food prices and the cost-of-living crisis, with an estimated 1.5 million adults experiencing low or very low food security.

Food can be a powerful driver of change and we, London's local authorities, must be at the forefront of efforts to shift to a low carbon, healthy and fair food system in London. We have a key role to play to make the food we buy and provide across our council services more sustainable, healthier and to meet key ethical standards that London residents expect. Reducing food loss and waste and ensuring healthy and sustainable menus and diets can also deliver affordability co-benefits for the council, helping to reduce costs amid the current cost of living crisis. And by supporting local food producers and growers to access public sector contracts, we can play an important role in community wealth building.

The Mayor of London has set ambitious targets for the city to reduce food waste by 20% per person by 2025 and 50% by 2030, and to become a net zero-carbon city by 2030. He has prioritised efforts to ensure that all Londoners have access to healthy and sustainable food through the London Food Strategy. And he declared a climate emergency in 2018, followed by 28 of London's boroughs and the City of London. 27 of London's local authorities have committed to become net zero in their operations by 2030 and through the One World Living programme, run by London Councils and London's boroughs, boroughs are developing actions to reduce consumption-based emissions by two thirds by 2030.

This Commitment establishes a common and minimum level of ambition for London's local authorities to improve the health and environmental impacts of the food we serve, and to reduce the amount of food waste generated, in line with our net zero and One World Living commitments, and in line with the Mayor's target to cut food waste. By signing this commitment, we are leading by example and illustrating responsibility to our residents and other stakeholders.

This commitment has been designed to set a common minimum level of ambition for London's local authorities, as well as other large buyers of food in the city. As such, we're calling for other procurers of food in the city (including academic institutions, venues, workplaces, caterers) to join us in making this commitment and in our collective effort to create a city where food is sustainably produced and never wasted.

2.3 million tonnes

Of food is wasted from across London's food supply chain per year; 67% is edible and only 0.5% is redistributed.

Source: [London's food footprint report](#)

31% reduction

In annual food-related consumption-based emissions could be achieved in London by reducing food waste by 50% and shifting towards a more healthy and sustainable diet.

Source: [London's food footprint report](#)

The Commitment

As a signatory of this commitment, we are committing to work towards the required timebound actions set out below for all food procurement that is either under direct or indirect council control.¹ We are also committing to influence other procurers and providers of food in our borough, in particular schools, early years settings and anchor institutions (e.g. hospital trusts), to align their own catering arrangements with the required actions we have committed to below.

Required actions

1/ Food-related greenhouse gas emissions

- A. **Measure:** Measure absolute and per plate CO₂-eq emissions on an annual basis, against our current baseline and share this data with ReLondon.²
- B. **Target:** By 2030, reduce per plate emissions by 38% against this baseline figure³ or to below 1.04 kg of CO₂-eq (LCA) or 4.39 kg of CO₂-eq (LCA and carbon opportunity costs)⁴ to align with WRI's Coolfood initiative and the Paris Climate Agreement.

2/ Food waste

- A. **Measure:** Measure food waste from our operations on an annual basis, against our current baseline, and share this data with ReLondon.
- B. **Target:** Reduce food waste⁵ by 50% by 2030 against this average baseline figure.

3/ Food provenance

- A. **Measure:** Establish what percentage of our total ingredient budget in our current baseline is spent on food that supports fairer, more equitable, sustainable and farmer-focussed food production, and food that builds wealth within communities, and share this data with ReLondon. This means:
- Produce sourced from the Greater London region, or an adjacent county
 - Produce bought directly from a small or medium enterprise (SME) or a farmer within the borough
 - Produce bought through a model which allows local and smaller producers to access public sector contracts (e.g. dynamic food procurement)
 - Fairtrade produce
 - MSC certified fish or fish considered 'fish to eat' (i.e. rated 1 or 2) by the Marine Conservation Society
 - Any free-range meat, dairy or eggs

¹ Where local authorities have direct control, the council runs the catering provision in-house. Where local authorities have indirect control, the council sets out and manages a contract which goes out to tender to private providers.

² The Circular Food Procurement Working Group is convened by ReLondon, the London borough of Hackney in their capacity as London Councils' One World Living food theme lead, and Sustain. It was set up to empower local authorities to ensure that food bought and served across council services is healthy, climate- and nature-friendly, and never wasted. ReLondon acts as the Secretariat for the Working Group.

³ The 38% per plate GHG reduction target is aligned with the World Resources Institute's Coolfood Pledge, which helps city governments and other food providers commit to a science-based target to reduce the climate impact of the food they serve with a level of ambition in line with the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement.

⁴ This rule of thumb defines "per plate" as "per 1,000 kcal," assumes that London's baseline emissions per plate are similar to the UK/Europe average in 2015 (the base year for the Coolfood Pledge), and assumes that boroughs will use the Coolfood calculator to estimate emissions.

⁵ Reduced food waste is defined as the total food waste diverted from the food waste recycling and general waste streams. This can be achieved by preventing food from becoming waste in the first place or redistributing surplus food for human consumption.

- Any certified organic produce

Optional actions*

4/ Food provenance

- A. Spend at least 30% of our total ingredient budget by 2030 on food that supports fairer, more equitable, sustainable and farmer-focussed food production, and food that builds wealth within communities.

This can include any of the following:

- Produce sourced from the Greater London region, or an adjacent county
- Produce bought directly from a small or medium enterprise (SME) or farmer within the borough
- Produce bought through a model which allows local and smaller producers to access public sector contracts (e.g. dynamic food procurement)
- Fairtrade produce
- MSC certified fish or fish considered 'fish to eat' (i.e. rated 1 or 2) by the Marine Conservation Society
- Any free-range meat, dairy or eggs
- Any certified organic produce

- B. To complement part 4A of the commitment, work towards the [Soil Association's Food for Life Served Here](#) accreditation or the [Sustainable Restaurant Association's Food Made Good](#) rating and achieve the highest standard, gold or three stars respectively, by 2030.⁶

Signatures

London boroughs are invited to sign at any of the following commitment stages depending on where your organisation is on your journey to circular food procurement. For guidance on this, please see London's Food Purchasing Commitment summary document available on ReLondon's [website](#):

- Bronze: Engage & identify
- Silver: Measure & share
- Gold: Action & influence

Please send this signed document to sarah.malone@relondon.gov.uk.

Name of organisation*:	Name of nominated council officer who will be responsible for overseeing implementation:
Stage of commitment your borough sits in:	Bronze/Silver/Gold
Executive or cabinet sponsor name:	Role of nominated council officer:
Executive or cabinet signature:	Email address of nominated council officer:
Date of commitment:	Confirmation that the nominated council officer has joined the circular food procurement Working Group
We would be grateful if you could provide us with a short quote to use publicly that summarises why you have signed this commitment and why is it important to you – please insert it in this box if you would like to supply one.	

⁶ The Council or their catering provider (depending on the catering model).

**This name will be used on the published signatories list.*

First steps following signing

1. **Sign up:** Sign up to the [Circular Food Procurement Working Group](#) if you have not already.
2. **Download our toolkit:** This showcases the practical steps to take to implement the commitment and can be found [here](#).
3. **Request a meeting to discuss your borough's next steps:** Email sarah.malone@relondon.gov.uk to request a meeting to discuss the next steps for your borough.