



Food Production

Action 4.2

FOOD POLICY

A municipal farm to supply the local schools' canteens

KEY WORDS

Food sovereignty, local production, municipal farm, organic canteen

✓ OBJECTIVES

- To rebuild food sovereignty at the local level and give back to municipalities the power of choosing the food type and quality they provide to children.
- To relocalise organic production.
- To feed citizens with local resources and reduce dependence from other territories.
- To generate a political movement to avoid the rapid urban growth of the city and protect agricultural land.

📄 POLICY DESCRIPTION

Mouans-Sartoux had been wanting since 1998 to transform into organic the canteens of their three schools. The mad cow disease triggered their will for change.

First, the City Council modified the relevant public contracts to introduce sustainable criteria that favours local organic products; however, local production was insufficient and thus the idea to create the municipal farm emerged. With that purpose in mind, the municipality decided to buy and put back into production six hectares of abandoned land in the municipal territory.

Between 2008 and 2010, the first experimental phase took place with a few crops. A diagnosis was undertaken in partnership with schools to understand the demand in terms of production volume and the related offer (number of producers and land need). That showed that four hectares were enough.

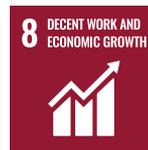
In 2011 the first farmer was hired and 10 tonnes of vegetables were produced (fulfilling 30% of school needs). 2012 was the first year of full organic production. Then, in 2014, the second farmer was hired and in 2015 fruit trees were planted. In 2018 the third farmer was hired and 25 tonnes of vegetables were produced (i.e., 85% of school needs). The remaining 15% was acquired through public tenders, mainly from local producers. The three farmers working on the farm are municipal public workers and the City Council offers them accommodation.

The production is certified organic since the first year of production and is not to be sold. When not absorbed by the schools' demand, it is given to the municipal social grocery shop (where people in vulnerable situations can access food at reduced prices).

The farm has a teaching garden for the schools. With the aim of getting more flexibility to introduce vegetables in the menu based on the municipal farm's availability, the description of school menus became less specific.

In the coming years, the municipality intends to start sharing its experience with other cities and provide technical support to those interested in replicating their initiative.

CONTRIBUTION TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



The project began in 2005. 2012 was the first year with full production and the project is still on-going.

🏠 DEPARTMENTS IN CHARGE

Department of Education – Education House on Sustainable Food (Maison de l'Éducation et l'Alimentation Durable - MEAD). It manages the Territorial Food Project, a French initiative to connect food production and consumption.

Department of Green Spaces (in charge of managing the farm).





KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Gilles Perole (Deputy Major of the Education Department)
Head of Green Spaces Department
The Majors
Canteen staff in schools
Education staff in schools

ASPIRATIONAL QUANTITATIVE OBJECTIVES

85% of the school canteens vegetables needs are produced at the municipal farm.

1,300 organic meals are served in the 3 schools' canteens where all kids are given equal access to fresh and organic food.

The municipal farm is managed by 3 farmers working as municipal employees.

Its 4 hectares are managed following organic principles.

The objective for the coming years is to increase the amount of fruit yield in the municipal farm.

Overall aspiration of the food policies committed to The Barcelona Challenge:

<https://toolkit.thebcnchallenge.org/challenges/report/347>

BENEFICIARIES

1,100 kids and 200 municipal employees.

BUDGET

60,000 € as initial investment and 60,000 € every year.

STRENGTHS AND SUCCESS POINTS

Thanks to the fact that the quantity of food produced is continuously adjusted to actual needs, production can be adapted in real time to the demand. Furthermore, producing in tunnels allows for the extension of the season.

As the farm is within the municipality's budget, its management is easier and helps the City Council avoid public tenders for vegetables, reducing the administrative burden.

The project has positive externalities in terms of education and environment. The farm has available space to organise meetings with other cities and the Summer University (Université d'été). Also, this is a pioneer initiative in France that gives high political visibility to the municipality.

CRITICAL POINTS

It appears necessary to undertake an initial diagnosis of the demand in order to adapt production to actual needs; as well as to accompany the initiative with education and awareness raising actions that involve school actors.

OBSTACLES AND SOLUTIONS

The setting up of this type of initiative is complex, as jurisdiction and administrative tasks are extremely time consuming. Another important obstacle is the high speculative pressure on land. Therefore, a strong political vision and commitment are required to implement this kind of initiative.



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FURTHER INFORMATION

MEAD website / Mouans-Sartoux action sheets