

Introducing Dynamic Food Procurement

Currently, 95% of food purchased in the £2.4bn public sector catering and food market is channelled through just 5 companies. These companies are predominately reliant on long, opaque supply chains where the provenance of most food is unknown and so they are typically unable to provide any farm level data on food and drink. Anchor Institutions are therefore often purchasing food with little or no understanding of where it came from, growing practices or standards. There is little baseline data on the food Anchor Institutions are currently procuring. The government under-secretary for DEFRA recently openly admitted in a government enquiry that they have no idea where its food spend goes.

There is an urgent need for a new, nationwide system to facilitate shorter food supply chains with greater transparency.

Dynamic Food Procurement is widely recognised as the solution.

Dynamic Food Procurement can be established throughout the UK by creating expertise regionally through the creation of regional food hubs, and rolling out an innovative technology platform which has already been successfully piloted.

Specialist Dynamic Food Procurement technology connects local food growers, logistics providers and purchasers in one place and enables shorter supply chains to be formed profitably for all chain members (farmer, logistics provider, procurer and chef). The technology tracks producer and product data from farm gate right the way through to the chef, providing purchasers with information that informs better food purchasing decisions.

Public sector buyers using the Dynamic Food Procurement platform can take more control of their food supply and make more informed and sustainable choices. The platform will provide a much wider choice of options for healthier, local and less carbon intensive produce, which will help to address issues of climate change, biodiversity, food security, poverty and diet-related disease.

Dynamic Food Procurement also benefits the regional economy by enabling more small and medium sized producers to sell directly to public sector through consolidated orders. Research shows that for every £1 spent with local producers there is a £3 return into the local economy.

The system has already been successfully trialled in Bath, where schools were able to make choices to source food from local producers and, as a result, reduce the environmental and financial cost of their sourcing.

National roll-out has huge transformative potential to drive positive change for the environment, the economy and public health.

Case Study: Dynamic Food Procurement in a School

One of the largest schools in the Bath and North East Somerset Pilot used Dynamic Food Procurement to upgrade the meat they were buying and, as a result, improved catering service profitability and the environmental impact of their procurement.

» Before Dynamic Food Procurement was implemented



The school cook would ring up a butcher and place their order. They wouldn't know anything more about the meat, other than its weight and price.

The council's contract specification with the butcher would stipulate that the meat needs to conform to "Red Tractor equivalent" standards. In practice, this means the meat can come from anywhere in the world so long as there is a claim that it is in line with Red Tractor.



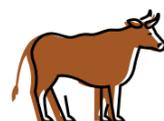
No traceability exists on the meat and no Management Information would be available beyond the product name, its weight and its price so no reporting was possible for the school and measuring social value impacts was virtually impossible.

» After Dynamic Food Procurement and digital supply chain management was implemented



The school cook browses the meat available on an online store that provides the name, weight and price of the product (like before), but also provides much more information including:

Farm information including the name and location of the farm, information and photos of the farm and animals in situ.



Animal welfare standards such as time outdoors vs indoors, grazing approach, use of antibiotics/medicines, feed information such as grain vs grass

Certification data such as Pasture For Life, Soil Association Organic, RSPCA Freedom Foods



Qualitative data about the people working with the animals and produce

Processor information; the supply chain journey of the animal from farm to kitchen



With the additional information now available, the school cook decided she wanted to upgrade the beef in a curry to mitigate the scope three CO₂ emissions associated with intensively reared grain fed beef.

She chose to order beef from Farm Wilder, sourced from a number of farms on Dartmoor. Farm Wilder standards ensure the preservation and restoration of natural habitats to allow critically endangered species to return.



Being 100% pasture fed meant the carbon footprint associated with deforestation to grow soy to feed intensively reared beef was mitigated.

She noticed significant quality superiority and so did the diners. Marketing assets were made available to promote the better choices to school pupils, parents and staff. This resulted in take up of the catering service growing to a record high (>90% take up) and therefore improved service profitability.



The additional cost of the beef was paid for by reducing the frequency it appeared on the menu and replacing it with non-meat lower cost dishes on other days.



One of the positive, surprising benefits of our Dynamic Food Procurement pilot was the extent to which we were able to analyse the food we were purchasing at levels of granularity we couldn't have dreamed of before the pilot. By redirecting food spend via the Technology Agent's digital platform, the management information we received enabled us to perform spend analyses by producer, product, site and date. We could also request data analyses on dozens of different product attributes including things like weight/volume, animal welfare, feed information, certifications, dietary/lifestyle factors and other qualitative information about the farmers and the approaches taken at production site. This helped us end the purchase of non-free-range pork for example and move to 100% free-range pork across all schools. Of course, in the future, as more and more pertinent data becomes available at farm level, data transparency along the chain will be a crucial factor in procurement decision making. Without Dynamic Food Procurement and specialist technology, this simply isn't possible.

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