

# Carbon Literacy Project Ideas

## Doing it differently: Food

### Low carbon diet



'Doing it differently' for food, means having healthy, delicious meals that use foods that take fewer resources to get to our plate.

#### Project aims

- Households have a balanced diet with a higher proportion of local, seasonal fresh fruit and vegetables.

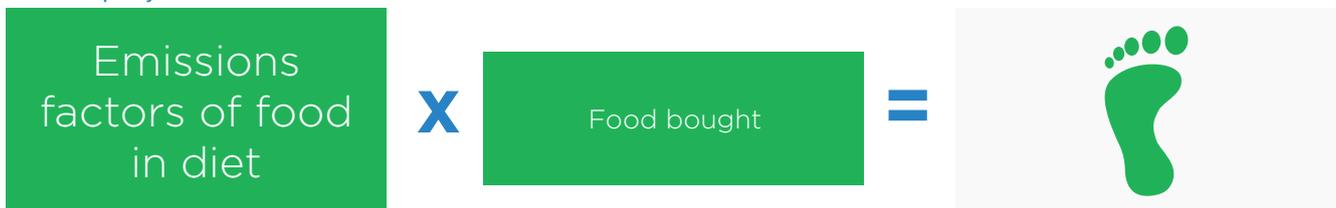
#### How does that save carbon? What's the measurable outcome?

All the food we buy has embodied carbon associated with getting it to the shop shelves, but different foods have different amounts of embodied carbon. By choosing to replace foods with higher embodied carbon emissions with those with lower embodied carbon emissions, we can ensure a healthy diet with a lower carbon footprint.

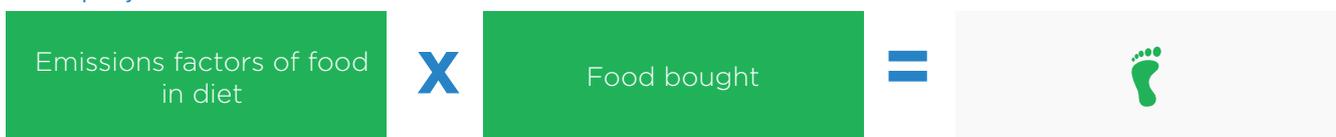
**Measurable outcome:** Increase consideration of carbon in food choices.

The CCF reporting tool and data collection guidance explains how you can monitor and evaluate how much your project has saved.

#### Before project



#### After project



Carbon footprint from diet.

#### What are the co-benefits? What are the potential 'community outcomes'?

**Health and wellbeing :** A low carbon diet is very close to what nutritionists recommend as a healthy diet.

**Improved skills, confidence and employability:** Encouraging a low-carbon diet can also lead to improved cooking skills in the community as people learn to cook from scratch.

**Local economy:** Promoting local food producers has benefits to the local economy.



## How do we demonstrate the co-benefits?

**Health and wellbeing:** There are a variety of methods you could use to monitor whether dietary changes are having an impact on participants' mental or physical wellbeing. Evaluation Support Scotland have a range of resources, guides and tools to help you monitor your impact. <http://www.evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk/resources/>

**Improved skills, confidence and employability:** There are a variety of methods you could use to monitor changes in skill, confidence and employability of participants in your project. Evaluation Support Scotland have a range of resources, guides and tools to help you monitor your impact.

**Local economy:** Alongside collecting data about people's dietary habits you may be able to collect data about changes to people's shopping habits, to evidence increased use of local food producers. Alternatively you could work with local food producers to evidence increase in their use.

## What are the risks?

Due to the complex nature of our food system it can be confusing trying to work out what a low carbon diet looks like, and the impact of changes are difficult to measure.

- Whilst local may seem better, large scale farming techniques can actually be less resource intensive than food grown on a small scale.
- Fruit and vegetables are generally lower carbon than meat, but when out of season and flown in, this isn't necessarily the case.
- Processed food and ready meals generally have a higher carbon footprint, but switching to cooking meals from scratch can mean an increase in food waste.

## How do you a low carbon diet in your community?

**Designing your project:** If you wish to develop a project to reduce food waste, you should investigate what are the most important barriers and opportunities in your community. Your consultation could look into:

1. What does a typical diet in your community look like?
2. How likely people are to take part in your proposed activities
3. What are the biggest opportunities for making low carbon choices around food?
4. What assets are there in the community, or wider opportunities, that could support your project aims?

The four questions, four zones grid from Shifting Normal can help you identify factors that could influence the willingness or ability to increasing consideration of carbon in food choices.

### Example project activities

Below are some examples of typical activities that CCF projects run in order to reduce food waste

**Awareness raising:** Campaigns that raise awareness of the issue in the community and share messages about choosing local, seasonal food: Visit <http://www.greenerScotland.org/eating-greener/in-season-food-calendar> for more information.

**Cooking classes:** Practical classes to teach people skills to cook meals from scratch using low carbon ingredients.

**Community meals:** Some communities find a workshop/class format too formal and find that communally cooked meals are good way to build confidence and share messages around low carbon food choices.

**Increasing access to locally produced food:** Projects can work to link local food producers to consumers in the community, by promoting existing markets and suppliers, or by co-ordinating local food markets.

Visit our website to view a selection of case studies from past CCF projects:

[www.keepsScotlandBeautiful.org/ccf](http://www.keepsScotlandBeautiful.org/ccf)



<sup>1</sup>How bad are bananas?' Mike-Berners Lee