



# London 21

## Better food for London & London Sustainability Weeks

Chris Church,  
Chair, London 21

# London Sustainability Weeks

- ◆ Two weeks to promote and celebrate grass roots action (June 3<sup>rd</sup> – 17th)
- ◆ About 250 events – 30 of them focus on food
- ◆ Events to highlight every stage in the food chain – production, procurement, distribution and consumption
- ◆ All part of work to change our consumption patterns

# Using procurement to promote sustainable development

- ◆ The purchasing power of large organisations is enormous – the NHS spends over £500M a year on food....
- ◆ This could be a power for good – Defra has set up the Sustainable Procurement Task Force.
- ◆ OGC report on Social Issues in Purchasing (February 2006) – identifies issues where public procurement is seen as a lever towards sustainability

# No shortage of issues...

- ◆ Skills and apprenticeships
- ◆ Equality – gender, race and disability
- ◆ Fair and ethical trade
- ◆ Human rights and core labour standards
- ◆ Small and medium size enterprises (including black and minority ethnic enterprise, women-owned and disabled owned businesses, social enterprise, and voluntary and community sector/third sector organisations)
- ◆ Local labour / UK jobs and manufacturing
- ◆ Innovation
- ◆ Regeneration
- ◆ Sustainable procurement...

# The Public Sector Food Procurement Initiative (PSFPI)

- ◆ Launched in 2003
- ◆ A contribution to the need to shift consumption and production onto a more sustainable footing through the creation of markets and supply chain support. Its priority objectives are to:
  - Raise production and process standards
  - Increase tenders from small and local businesses
  - Increase consumption of healthy and nutritious food
  - Reduce adverse environmental impacts of production and supply
  - Increase capacity of small and local suppliers to meet demand

# So why are we not more focused on procurement?

At least one national agency has admitted informally that its' detailed guidance materials are very under-used. Why?

- ◆ The risk culture and procurement management
- ◆ A lack of:
  - **Policy** to lead
  - **Infrastructure** to support
  - **Engagement** to move policy and action forward

# Moving forward

- ◆ Any major public agency has three roles:
  - **Employer**
  - **Neighbour**
  - **Purchaser**

*(Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate)*

- ◆ Any procurement strategy should consider the long-term goals of the agency – e.g. social justice

## We need to see:

- ◆ **Pressure** - comes from meeting legal requirements (this is the body in its role of Employer and Purchaser)
- ◆ **Support** - comes from information, guidance, frameworks etc. Informal discussions with public sector staff suggest a lack of knowledge about the resources that are available.
- ◆ **Leadership** - comes from political commitment, and from learning from good practice and success (this is the body in its role of good Neighbour)

# Issues for action

- ◆ Procurement development
- ◆ Tender management
- ◆ A framework for procurement that goes beyond purely operational procedures
- ◆ Commitment to
  - Local Sourcing
  - Supporting organisations that benefit all stakeholders rather than simply shareholders
  - Assessing whether existing / potential suppliers have fair / ethical practices and CSR

# The benefits of such work

- ◆ A signal that we are 'putting our own house in order'
- ◆ Building our reputation and leadership to fulfil sustainable development obligations
- ◆ Increasing overall performance and influencing others:

*"We should not underestimate the potential of Government and the whole public sector to influence good practice by the power of persuasion, and its access, through **procurement**, to decision-makers in a very wide range of supplier companies."*

'Approaches to support workforce skills through public procurement' The Policy and Legal Framework. Dept for Education and Skills.  
[www.ogc.gov.uk/embedded\\_object.asp?docid=1004393](http://www.ogc.gov.uk/embedded_object.asp?docid=1004393)

# London 21

- ◆ Why is London 21 interested in this work?
- ◆ It's our mission:

**London 21 supports grassroots and disadvantaged communities in acting to create a sustainable London.**

**London 21 shares information and promotes good practice, raises awareness and recognises that sustainable development is a shared responsibility strengthened by collective action."**

# So let's make it happen!

- ◆ For more information on social sustainability and procurement:

[www.suscom.org/Documents/SocialProcurementEPC.pdf](http://www.suscom.org/Documents/SocialProcurementEPC.pdf)