

Lyon's Call to Action for a Healthy and Sustainable Food Future

(Full title in French: Plaidoyer international de Lyon pour une alimentation saine, durable, locale, de qualité, favorisant la santé et la transition écologique)

Lyon, June 5, 2025

Introductory Summary

We, Mayors and representatives of European and international cities, gathered in Lyon on June 5, 2025, affirm our collective commitment to promoting healthy, sustainable, and local food, placing food education at the heart of our public policies. Aware of our responsibility towards future generations, we seek to act together to support sustainable, fair, and ecological food systems that create social bonds and respect local territories and producers.

Calling for a new urban-rural food deal

In a global context marked by environmental and climate crises, persistent food insecurity, and a rise in chronic diseases linked to unbalanced diets, local authorities play a crucial role. Cities, through public procurement, particularly in school cafeterias/canteens and childcare facilities, can serve as key drivers in accelerating the transition toward healthier, more sustainable, and fairer food systems.

Schools are privileged places where all children, regardless of their backgrounds, can access quality food and develop a common food culture. Meals consumed within the school setting provide a unique opportunity to raise awareness about diverse and nutritional balance, complementing food education shared within families. School meals are thus essential for promoting social justice, reducing food inequalities of access to quality products, and educating responsible citizens about nutrition. Additionally, urban areas, by leveraging their unique gastronomic and cultural resources, can encourage environmentally friendly food practices, highlight their culinary heritage, all while strengthening economic, social, and cultural ties with nearby rural areas.

Our call to action is based on a transformative vision where cities become key players in territorial food sovereignty. We affirm that food is a common good that should not be subject to purely commercial logic.

Through our commitments, we promote a new social and ecological contract between cities and rural areas, where public procurement becomes a democratic tool for ecological transition, schools reclaim their emancipatory mission, and gastronomy becomes a shared heritage once again.

We aim to end the paradox of a world where food waste and nutritional insecurity coexist, by building food systems where citizens take back control over their food and farmers reclaim their rightful place in the value chain.

This systemic transformation is based on five fundamental pillars that we commit to implementing: ethical and transformative public procurement, emancipatory food education, effective and democratic food justice, structural support for local ecological agriculture, and the promotion of gastronomic heritage as a vector of social inclusion.

Our Commitments

1. Making Public Procurement a Driver of Ecological and Economic Transition

- Use public collective catering as a major means for developing local and organic food sectors by ensuring fair compensation for farmers and agricultural professionals.
- Strengthen short supply chains and prioritise regional agricultural sectors to bridge urban and rural areas with the goal of achieving food sovereignty and balanced local development. It is recommended that at least 10% of food in public contracts originate from small-scale farmers.
- Advocate at the European level for a revision of the public procurement framework to better align it with objectives of public health, environmental sustainability, and territorial resilience. We support the initiatives led by various cities and networks, including France Urbaine¹, in calling for a new European regulation on sustainable food systems. This updated framework should grant local authorities greater flexibility, particularly through the free choice of procurement procedures for part of their food purchases, provided they are embedded within a transparent and collaboratively developed territorial food strategy. We believe food must be recognized as a legitimate matter of public interest, warranting specific and adapted approaches in procurement policies.
- Ensure transparency in our public food purchases by regularly publishing information about the origin, quality, and production methods of the food served.
- Effectively implement existing national targets when they exist (e.g. France's Egalim law requiring 20% organic products²) while aiming to make continuous progress both on the share of products from organic farming, thereby promoting biodiversity and the health of soils and waters, and on supply from small-scale farmers, thus helping to reduce the gap between rural and urban areas. These objectives will be adapted to the capacities and specificities of each region.

2. Placing Food Education at the Heart of Our Public Policies

- Ensure that food education is integrated into school meals by including education on healthy, sustainable, and responsible eating in school programs and public catering contracts through the "Whole School Food Approach"³ or similar strategies.
- Develop participatory and experiential educational projects that actively involve children, families, and educational teams, reconnecting them to agriculture and food (school gardens, cooking workshops, farm visits, exploration of local territories).
- Enhancing the educational role of school canteens/cafeterias by introducing children to the benefits of diverse, seasonal, organic, and local diets.

¹ <https://franceurbaine.org/app/uploads/2024/02/COMMANDE-PUBLIQUE-RENOVEE-08-FEV-2024-EN.pdf>

² <https://agriculture.gouv.fr/50-de-produits-bio-de-qualite-et-durables-dans-la-restauration-collective-horizon-2022>

³ https://schoolfood4change.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/SF4C_WholeSchoolFoodApproach_Framework_EN_web_new.pdf

- Create evaluation indicators to measure the impact of educational programs on children's and families' eating habits.
- Provide continuous training for public catering staff on sustainable and healthy food issues, adapted culinary techniques, and food education for children.

3. Acting for Effective and Inclusive Food Justice

- Ensure all children have access to healthy, varied, and balanced food at no extra cost to families by providing school food for the schools it has responsibility for and recommends that all other schools in the city follow suit.
- Reduce food insecurity by integrating school canteens / cafeterias into a broader food solidarity approach:
 - Promote a minimum standard of school meals and food education for every child in every school (as requested in the Healthy School Meals Petition⁴), which would greatly decrease nutritional insecurities.
 - Implement progressive social pricing adapted to family income to guarantee universal access to quality food.
 - Extend school meal services during holidays for children from low-income families.
 - Utilise canteen/cafeteria food surpluses through responsible and dignified redistribution systems.
 - Link school catering to local food aid projects (e.g., social grocery stores, "Hallimentaires"⁵ in Lyon).
 - Organise parent-child cooking workshops to transfer nutritional and culinary skills between school and families.
- Develop inclusive, open-to-all, non-stigmatising food democracy spaces based on Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) principles, favouring social and cultural diversity.
 - Promote community-based food education in these spaces by offering awareness-raising activities, cooking workshops, and cultural exchanges centered around responsible eating.
- Strengthen local partnerships between municipalities, producers, schools, associations, and medical-social actors to create solidarity networks that give back control to citizens over their food. These initiatives are inspired by the principle of food democracy promoted by the *Hallimentaires* and the Food Social Security⁶: enabling people to come together to choose their own food, regain control over what they eat, and thus sustainably remain out of food

⁴ <https://action.wemove.eu/sign/2024-09-free-school-meals-petition-EN>

⁵ The "Hallimentaires" are places where food can be sold and consumed, where people can learn about the health and environmental issues surrounding food, where know-how in agriculture and responsible cooking can be passed on, and where social and cultural exchanges can take place. They are one of a range of tools available to combat food insecurity.

⁶ <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20230321-cost-of-living-europes-trials-in-social-security>

insecurity. These approaches aim to transform food aid beneficiaries into active participants in their nutritional choices and in the local food system.

- Establish participatory governance (e.g. via a local food council) directly involving citizens and local actors in the development and management of these initiatives.

4. Actively Supporting the Transition to Organic and Ecological Agriculture

- Support farmers in transitioning to environmentally friendly and climate-resilient production methods.
- Establish robust public procurement frameworks with require minimum percentages of organic products and minimum percentages of supplies from small local producers, accompanied by fair pricing to ensure economic viability.
- Create mechanisms to simplify administrative processes to facilitate small producers' access to public markets (dedicated digital platforms, administrative support, adapted allotment procedures).
- Set up purchasing schemes that brings guarantees for producers converting to organic farming to mitigate financial risks.
- Develop shared logistics systems (supply platforms, distribution hubs) to facilitate access for local products to urban markets while reducing the carbon footprint of food transport.
- Facilitate young farmers' establishments in peri-urban areas through protective land policies and tailored support programs.
- Support local food processing initiatives (vegetable processing plants, canneries) to add local value and generate non-relocatable jobs.
- Integrate urban and peri-urban agriculture into urban planning documents and reserve dedicated spaces for organic food production in urban development projects.
- Create "territorial food councils" (such as 'Food Policy Councils') bringing together urban and rural elected officials, farmers and food producers, food processors, and consumers to co-create food strategies that promote local organic agriculture.

5. Promoting Local Gastronomic Heritage for Social Connection and Sustainability

- Recognise and promote gastronomy as an intangible cultural heritage and a powerful educational tool that reconciles tradition and innovation while conveying values of sustainability, sharing, and respect for resources.
- Transform school canteens/cafeterias into spaces for learning about taste and culinary discovery, enabling all children, no matter their social status, the ability to experience quality, local, and accessible gastronomy.

- Support initiatives that democratise access to culinary skills and quality products, making gastronomy a tool for social inclusion and sustainable territorial development.
- Develop international exchanges between our cities around sustainable gastronomy to share experiences and build a common vision of culturally rich and ecologically responsible food⁷.

Our International Collaboration

We recognise that the strength of our commitment lies in our ability to act together across borders. Therefore, we commit to:

- Embodying and sustaining existing food-related city networks (ICLEI CityFood, The Food Capitals by Délice Network, Milan Urban Food Policy Pact, France Urbaine...) with regular thematic gatherings focused on our shared priorities (food education, social justice, sustainable gastronomy) and relevant initiatives, such as SchoolFood4Change.
- Relying on and capitalising on common tools for implementing and evaluating our food policies, such as the Whole School Food Approach and the Sustainability Impact assessment tools.
- Encouraging the adoption of sustainable public food procurement policies and practices, building on existing work and initiatives like innovations in public contracts with the SchoolFood4Change network and the Buy Better Food Campaign's Manifesto⁸ for the Establishment of Minimum Mandatory Criteria for Public Canteens across the EU.
- Monitoring our collective commitments through shared evaluation mechanisms within our exchange networks.

⁷ For example, the Erasmus+ co-funded project "Future in our Kitchens" led by the Délice network: <https://www.delice-network.com/activities/Projects/the-future-in-our-kitchens-social-sustainable-skills-for-culinary-trainees>

⁸ <https://buybetterfood.eu/documents/sustainable-food-procurement-manifesto>

Conclusion

By signing this call to action, we, representatives of European and international cities, affirm that food is much more than a nutritional act: it is the cement of our societies, the living expression of our cultures, and the universal symbol of sharing. Around the table, the bonds that connect us are woven, the knowledge that defines us is transmitted, and the unity that strengthens us is built. By making healthy and sustainable food an educational, ecological, and social priority in our cities, we uphold a way of living together that nourishes not only bodies but also minds and hearts. We invite all cities around the world to join us in this common adventure to amplify our positive impact and leave future generations a food legacy they can be proud of.

(Signatures of partner cities)

Date: June 5, 2025

Appendix

Cities are invited to share examples of their own public policies and initiatives relating to the points of this Call to Action. Additional examples will be added as the Call to Action gathers signatures.

1. Initiatives from the city of Gothenburg, Sweden

Municipal Initiatives for Sustainable and Inclusive Urban Agriculture in Gothenburg

The Model Farm (Modellodlingen)

The Model Farm is a municipal urban agriculture initiative operated by the City of Gothenburg. It functions as a learning and demonstration site for a wide range of audiences, including vocational trainees, new entrants to farming, municipal staff, and university researchers. The farm is also being developed as a pedagogical resource for primary schools. The harvest is integrated into the city's public meal system, providing locally produced vegetables for schools and care homes.

The Municipal Urban Farmer (Stadsbonden)

The Municipal Urban Farmer operates as a mobile and educational role aiming to activate new community farms in socio-economically vulnerable areas and facilitate collaboration between different community groups. The initiative strengthens food justice, community resilience, and local climate adaptation by encouraging citizens to reclaim and cultivate public land. It also includes educational activities and workshops, particularly at the municipally managed urban farms in Lilla Änggården and Angereds gård.

Strategic Collaboration with Public Sector Institutions

The city works in close collaboration with regional authorities, municipalities, academic institutions, and nonprofit organizations to create supportive frameworks for sustainable food system development. These partnerships enable method development, resource sharing, and joint investments in infrastructure and capacity building.

Integration of Urban Agriculture into Spatial Planning

Urban agriculture is increasingly embedded into urban development and spatial planning in Gothenburg. The city identifies and secures suitable sites for cultivation in both temporary and long-term urban development areas. This includes proactive land use planning to ensure access to land for community initiatives and micro-enterprises.

Community Farms and Citizen Participation

The city supports the establishment of community farms as part of a strategy to increase citizen participation, build social cohesion, and enhance local food literacy resilience. These initiatives foster intergenerational and intercultural exchange while contributing to green urban environments.

Strategic Use of Municipal Farmland for Local Food Production

The City of Gothenburg owns approximately 3,000 hectares of farmland. As part of its food system transformation strategy, the city is working actively to repurpose this land for sustainable food production when land gets available. The long-term goal is to increase local supply, enhance food

sovereignty, and support new ecological farmers through improved access to land, long-term leases, create jobs and strategic partnerships.

Greenhouse Development Using Waste Heat

As part of its climate-smart innovation strategy, the City of Gothenburg has initiated the development of greenhouses that utilise waste heat from data centres. A successful proof of concept (PoC) has already been established, demonstrating the potential of this model to support year-round local food production with minimal climate impact. Based on this pilot, the City has received a political mandate to develop additional greenhouse sites. The initiative aligns with broader municipal goals of resource efficiency, sustainable land use, and strengthening local food security.

Göteborgsmat 2035 – Integrating Food Systems into Economic Strategy

Göteborgsmat 2035 is the City's long-term initiative to embed food system transformation into the local economic development agenda. It forms part of the political assignment to integrate food security, circular resource use, and job creation into Gothenburg's business development strategy towards 2035. This includes aligning food system planning with strategic infrastructure investments, promoting new entrepreneurship models in sustainable food production, and ensuring that food-related policies contribute to social equity, public health, and climate resilience.

2. Initiatives from the city of Wrocław, Poland

Gastronomy Council

(Acting for Effective and Inclusive Food Justice)

The Wrocław Gastronomy Council is an advisory and consultative body to the Mayor of Wrocław on matters relating to the functioning of the food industry and the creation of Wrocław's catering brand, as an important area of economic life in the capital of Lower Silesia.

The tasks of the Wrocław Gastronomy Council include:

- Initiating cooperation and association of entrepreneurs from the catering industry;
- Giving opinions on procedures related to the functioning of the catering industry in public areas;
- Searching for the gastronomic identity of the capital of Lower Silesia, promoting authorities, quality, and interesting culinary concepts;
- Initiating activities supporting the promotion of Wrocław through gastronomy - including competitions, festivals, and gastronomic events;
- Creating a concept for the development program of the Wrocław catering brand;
- Co-creating solutions for the industry, taking into account the special needs when emerging from the crisis after the pandemic, conditions for initiatives of Wrocław gastronomy aimed at regaining stability and sustainable development of the industry.

"From farm to the Wrocław table" - networking, promotion, and local fairs

(Actively Supporting the Transition to Organic and Ecological Agriculture; Promoting Local Gastronomic Heritage for Social Connection and Sustainability)

Project objectives:

- Strengthening and expanding the links between regional food producers and the Wrocław catering industry, creating a space that facilitates the establishment of permanent cooperation between these entities;
- Optimally shortening supply chains, offering residents and customers of Wrocław restaurants healthy, ecological dishes prepared using local products;
- Increasing the scale of cooperation between local producers and businesses;
- Promotion of regional products.

A culinary guide, "From farm to the Wrocław table" was created as part of the project, constituting a compendium of knowledge about regional products and Wrocław gastronomy. We organized a culinary weekend, during which it was possible to taste dishes inspired by ecological and natural products from the region, from a special festival menu based on a local product, and a networking meeting combined with a tasting of regional products. 4 promotional spots and 4 informational and educational films were created, and a promotional and educational campaign on the Internet and social media.

Culinary competition: "Culinary Grand Prix of Wrocław"

(Promoting Local Gastronomic Heritage for Social Connection and Sustainability)

The competition aims to show the potential of Wrocław catering companies through culinary talents and select the best Wrocław chef.

The subject of the competition was to prepare one competition dish from the main course category based on at least one regional product (from Lower Silesia). The following were assessed: taste values of the competition dish, composition of the tasting menu, locality of products, and the method and style of serving the dishes, as well as service.

The International Competition Committee supervised the correctness of the Competition.

“Gastro Academy” Trainings

(Promoting Local Gastronomic Heritage for Social Connection and Sustainability)

A series of free training and workshops for people who want to open their own restaurant in Wrocław. Study visits and meetings with restaurateurs and gastrobusiness practitioners accompany it. The project is part of the Wrocław Entrepreneur Academy. Thanks to the training:

- We facilitate the functioning of young businesses in the gastronomy industry;
- We develop the gastronomy industry in Wrocław;
- We eliminate mental barriers to entry into the gastronomy industry resulting from a lack of knowledge and experience;
- We shape and support the gastronomic brand of Wrocław.

Culinary Festival "Delicacies"

(Actively Supporting the Transition to Organic and Ecological Agriculture; Promoting Local Gastronomic Heritage for Social Connection and Sustainability)

As part of the Festival:

- We promote regional products;
- We support Lower Silesian producers and family manufactories;
- We organize a workshop and educational zone, lectures, and cooking shows on stage;
- We present the "Delicacies" awards for the best regional product;
- We work to raise awareness among residents in the scope of preparing healthy and tasty food using regional products.

“Love Wrocław Markets” Campaign

(Placing Food Education at the Heart of Our Public Policies; Actively Supporting the Transition to Organic and Ecological Agriculture; Promoting Local Gastronomic Heritage for Social Connection and Sustainability)

The project that:

- promotes markets as meeting places, local events, no-waste zones, fresh fruit and vegetables, street food, and a commercial offer no worse than in supermarkets;
- strengthens the visual identification of city markets.

As part of the Campaign, over 1,600 bio-waste containers were distributed in exchange for surveys on waste segregation and knowledge about markets.

Wrocław's Urban Farm

(Making Public Procurement a Driver of Ecological and Economic Transition; Placing Food Education at the Heart of Our Public Policies; Acting for Effective and Inclusive Food Justice; Actively Supporting the Transition to Organic and Ecological Agriculture)

Wrocław's urban farm is an interdisciplinary project implemented through a collaborative partnership between the municipality, universities, an NGO, and a business. It aims to deliver both social and environmental benefits. The goals of the urban farm are to:

- Increase the role of local production in the city's food system, and shorten supply chains.
- Promote sustainable agriculture.
- Reduce pollution, including CO2 from road transport, and prevent food waste.
- Support those most in need, including people in difficult life situations, those at risk of social exclusion, and lonely seniors.

Urban Farm's operating model integrates multiple sectors to address environmental, economic, and social challenges.

- Environmental: Promotes sustainable agriculture and reduces pollution (including CO2 from transport).
- Economic: Helps people facing social and employment exclusion by training them in food cultivation skills to facilitate their economic independence, while also helping reduce unemployment in the city.
- Social: Supports lonely, dependent seniors, through the distribution of surplus crops and educational activities, including the creation of an educational zone for meetings, workshops, and as a place where various social groups can interact.