



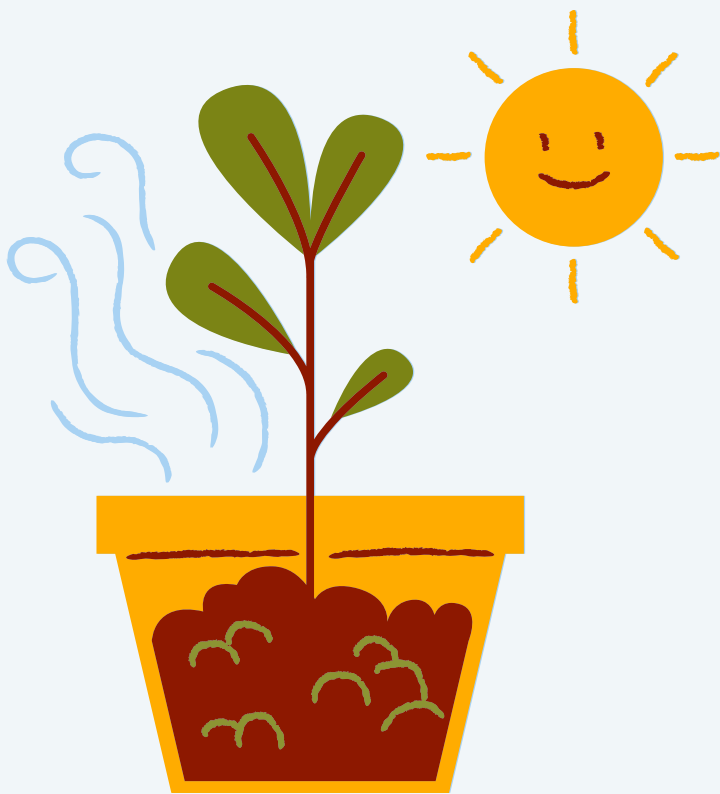
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**Food: Effects of  
climate change on  
food and things  
communities can do  
to help**

# Food and communities



Individuals and communities cannot fix the climate emergency alone because it also needs businesses, industry, national and local governments to take action. However, we can still help by taking our own small and everyday actions, and by pressuring our politicians and services to do more.

This resource is full of top tips from the communities we work with across Scotland on what communities can do to help. We hope you find it useful.

“

**I never thought to make soup in my slow cooker, I used the veg from the community larder and it turned out delicious!**

”

## What is the issue?

Climate change is having an effect on our ability to produce food. Some areas are becoming too hot and dry for the crops which used to be grown there. Some crops have been ruined by extreme flooding events. The food choices we make can also have an effect on the planet. Some food creates more carbon emissions through producing, processing, packaging and transporting.

**Policy:** The Good Food Nation (Scotland) Act 2022 supports sustainable farming and local food growing, as well as the right to good food. Local authorities will be obliged to incorporate aspects of this into regional policy in 2025.

United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 12.3 is to halve food waste by 2030.

The Courtauld Commitment 2030 is a voluntary agreement that enables collaborative action across the entire UK food chain to deliver farm-to-fork reductions in food waste, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and water stress to help the UK food and drink sector achieve global environmental goals.

Many local authorities already have a local food growing strategy, for example: [SBC Community Food Growing Strategy](#) [Community Food Growing](#) | [Scottish Borders Council](#) ([scotborders.gov.uk](https://scotborders.gov.uk)), and food waste collections.

## Let's Act! What can we do?

There are things we can do in our own communities to reduce carbon emissions from food.

- Volunteer at a local community garden and reap the rewards of locally grown fresh veg and fruit.
- Grow your own – even in a window pot or recycled container.
- Try to eat locally grown or seasonal veg. This might mean going to a local greengrocer or spending a bit more time reading the labels at the supermarket.
- Donate any unwanted food to your local food larder. And make use of the Larder too – otherwise some of the fresh food in it will go to waste.
- If possible, buy loose fruit and veg and don't bag it – or take your own reusable bags when you go shopping.
- Start a compost pile if you have space in your garden.
- Things like veg peelings and even eggshells can go on this.
- Use the local food waste collection if you have one in your area.
- Plan your meals to avoid food waste. Try not to be tempted by extra 'deals' you don't really need. And don't shop when you're hungry!

## Tips and case studies

- LINKS Eyemouth uses surplus or on-date food from the Community Larder. It also uses some locally grown food. Families share recipe ideas on Facebook.
- Greener Peebles offers volunteering sessions twice weekly, the garden is accessible and friendly for all ages and abilities.
- TweedGreen ran a 50:50 challenge – for a week people pledged to only eat food from within a 50-mile radius! Everyone was allowed a couple of ‘treats’ such as coffee or chocolate!
- Borders Buddies has published a leaflet on Community Gardens in Tweeddale, with details of local garden and volunteering opportunities. This can be great for people who don’t have growing space at home.
- Coming together to cook and share a meal as many of our groups do avoids waste, saves energy and encourages younger children to eat up.

**“I grow a few of my own veggies, but otherwise I like to try to buy local veg when in season and I buy the loose supermarket veg to save on packaging”.**

## Community food larders

Community larders, pantries, and fridges can help people share food, reducing waste and make sure everyone has enough.

Some have staff or volunteers, and work like a free or low-cost local shop. Others are more like boxes in public spaces, that everyone can use to drop off or pick up food whenever they want to.

**Funding:** Some community larders apply for funding, and others are organised by community members without any funds.

**What to put in the larder:** They can include cupboard foods, homemade jam, fresh produce, or health and sanitary products. Find out what people in your community need.

**Cleaning:** Decide who's going to clean it, and how often. Local charities might be able to help volunteers get food safety training.

**Where:** The larder could be indoors or outdoors. You'll need permission to put it in some locations - ask the local council and charities for ideas, and think about how people can get there with public transport.

## **Different ways of cooking**

### **Air fryer**

Air fryers are small convection ovens and can be used as an alternative to a standard oven or a deep fat fryer. The internal cooking chamber radiates heat near the food and then a fan moves the hot air around the food.

An air fryer is ideal for cooking crispier, healthy meals with less energy. You can cook a variety of things in an air fryer like meats, vegetables and even scones! Air fryers are about 50% more energy efficient than ovens and use less time to cook.

### **Slow cooker**

Slow cookers are designed to cook food slowly, at a low temperature and keep it hot.

Although slow cookers take longer to cook food, they are often rated at as little as 200 watts, making them one of the most energy-efficient appliances in your kitchen – a tenth of some electric ovens.

An average-sized slow cooker uses just 1.3 kWh per meal, which comes in at around 45p on the current average energy tariff.

## Low cost cooking

Throw in a handful of porridge oats to add extra roughage and texture.

Use soda bread to make (savoury) scones – add grated cheese or dried herbs.

Packs of frozen white fish – great for fish pie or soup, or add breadcrumbs and fry.

Make 'pesto' with any herb pack, greens such as spinach, dash of oil or lemon juice.

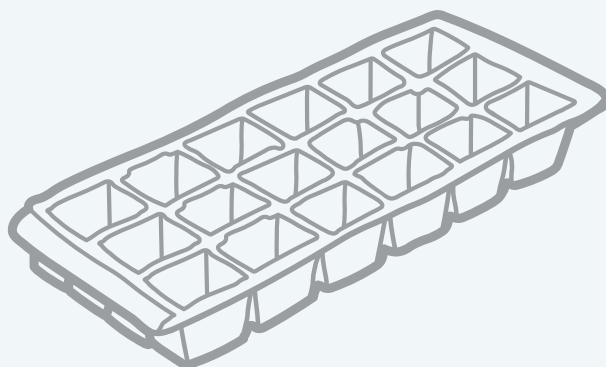
If you are using the oven, consider cooking two things at once, or making double and freeze one.

Batch cook – and freeze some for later.

Freeze extra chopped veg or herbs in ice cube trays – to add to soups, pasta etc.

Freeze stewed apples in ice cube trays – and melt one on your porridge.

If your milk is going to go off before you can use it all, pour some in an ice cube tray and then use when needed.





## Food leftovers

Reheat in microwave or fry up for a quick and tasty lunch.

Make leftover meat or veg into a 'salad pot' for lunch – ideal to take away too.

Add pasta, rice or quinoa, and a drizzle of dressing.

Stale bread – whizz into breadcrumbs if you have a machine, then freeze. Use as crispy topping on pasta, roast veg or anything else.

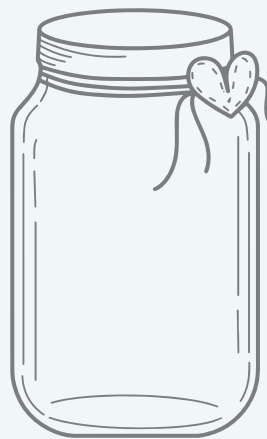
Add herbs and grated cheese.

Freezer night or fridge night – using up odd bits and pieces – add a big pot of pasta or potatoes.

Don't need expensive containers – wash and reuse margarine tubs, ice cream tubs, yoghurt pots etc.

Label clearly with date and contents.

If storing opened container in fridge – write on date opened.





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Produced as part of a series of resources to help communities understand, talk about and act on Climate Change.

An Outside the Box project, funded by the Scottish Government Climate Engagement Fund

Communities committed to climate action



Scottish Government  
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