

# Fringe Farming: Progress & policy recommendations

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Glasgow Fringe Farming event – WashHouse, Glasgow  
(Credit: Rob Logan)



**Number of annual premature deaths attributed to low vegetable diets in the UK: 18,000\***

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**Converting 0.65% more agricultural land to horticultural production would meet national fruit and veg demand\*\***

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## **The Fringe Farming project**

- Increase access to fresh fruit & veg across the UK
- Support local food systems
- Build connections between urban and rural areas with multiple agroecological benefits





Fringe Farming partners' gathering – Regather Farm, Sheffield  
(Credit: Rob Logan)

## What's been happening?

- Year 1 – local meetings to form action plans, practitioners' forums, joining the dots
- Year 2 – engaging with local action plans, national policy, building up to a campaign
- Year 3? – forging political alliances, lobbying action, devolved nations

**Proportion of  
farm-holders  
younger than 35:  
3%\***

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\*Agriculture in the UK, 2017

## Context - critical issues

- Public health
- Climate emergency
- Cost of living crisis
- Lack of diversity in farming
- Land competition



# Key asks

- Delivering an integrated package: land, resources, skills, market
- Maintain and expand land access by local authorities and other public institutions
- New Entrants Support Schemes
- Environmental Land Management schemes
- Net Zero
- Levelling Up

# Resources



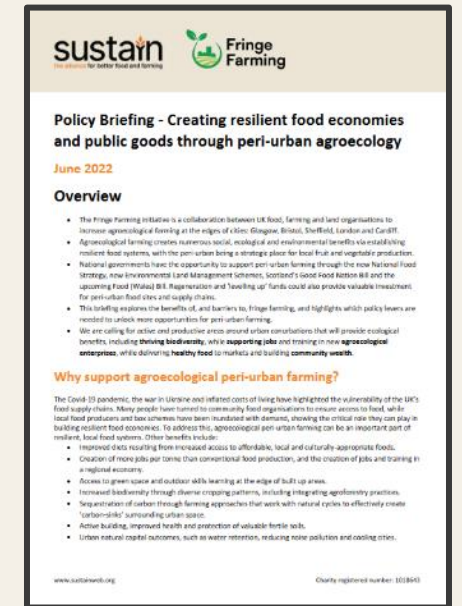
Our national & local policy recommendations in full

[www.sustainweb.org/publications/feb22-fringe-farming/](http://www.sustainweb.org/publications/feb22-fringe-farming/)

Policy briefing

[www.sustainweb.org/assets/policy\\_briefing\\_fringe-farming-Jun22.pdf](http://www.sustainweb.org/assets/policy_briefing_fringe-farming-Jun22.pdf)

[www.sustainweb.org/fringe-farming/](http://www.sustainweb.org/fringe-farming/)



Policy Briefing - Creating resilient food economies and public goods through peri-urban agroecology

June 2022

Overview

- The Fringe Farming initiative is a collaboration between UK food, farming and land organisations to improve agroecological farming at the edges of cities: Glasgow, Bristol, Sheffield, London and Cardiff.
- Agroecological farming creates numerous social, ecological and environmental benefits via establishing resilient food systems, with the peri-urban being a strategic place for local fruit and vegetable production.
- National governments have the opportunity to support peri-urban farming through the new National Food Strategy, new Environmental Land Management schemes, Scotland's Good Food Nation Bill and the upcoming Food White Paper. Expansion and 'hooking up' farms could also provide valuable investment for peri-urban food sites and supply chains.
- This briefing explores the benefits of, and barriers to, Fringe Farming, and highlights which policy levers are needed to unlock more opportunities for peri-urban farming.
- We are calling for action and producer areas around conversations that will provide ecological benefits, including **thriving biodiversity**, with **supporting jobs and training in new agroecological enterprises**, with **delivering healthy food to markets and building community wealth**.

Why support agroecological peri-urban farming?

The Covid-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine and inflated costs of living have highlighted the vulnerability of the UK's food supply chains. Many people have turned to community food organisations to ensure access to food, while local food producers and businesses have been inundated with demands, showing the critical role they can play in building resilient food economies. To address this, agroecological peri-urban farming can be an important part of resilient, local food systems. Other benefits include:

- Improved diets resulting from increased access to affordable, local and culturally appropriate foods.
- Creation of more jobs per tonne than conventional food production, and the creation of jobs and training in a regional economy.
- Access to green space and outdoor skills learning at the edge of built-up areas.
- Increased biodiversity through diverse cropping patterns, including integrating agroforestry practices.
- Sequestration of carbon through farming approaches that work with natural cycles to effectively create 'carbon sinks' surrounding urban areas.
- Active building, improved health and protection of valuable fertile soils.
- Urban natural capital outcomes, such as water retention, reducing noise pollution and cooling cities.

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Fringe Farming

sustain  
the alliance for better food and farming

# My questions to you

1. If we came up with an FF toolkit, what would be most wanted?  
How would it help you?
2. What would you most like to see in an FF campaign?  
Who would you want us to lobby?
3. If you are interested in this agenda, who can coordinate an FF network?

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