



Progress Report

Accelerating the transition to more sustainable food systems

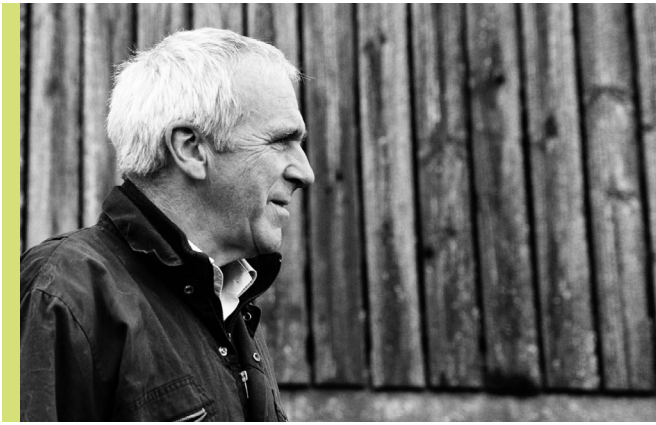
March 2021



Sustainable Food Trust

A global voice for sustainable food and health





A Letter from Patrick

The farm is an ecosystem representing a microcosm of the key elements of the food system as a whole. Here, human beings are not separate from the farm ecosystem or from nature. They are part of a larger system in which they are responsible for stewardship, care and love of place, as well as the production of nutritious food to promote the physical and mental health of the population. Speaking personally, I believe that all farms and food systems, starting with the farm where I live and work, need to be expressions of this broader and deeper understanding of our connection with nature.

I believe that all the work that we do at the Sustainable Food Trust needs to be seen and understood as a systemic response to the challenges that exist in the world right now. As an organisation, we have been inspired by the growing realisation that the devastating effects of climate change, biodiversity loss, COVID-19, as well as declines in public and mental health, are all manifestations of an ecological, societal and spiritual crisis. Only when we strive to develop a new and harmonious understanding of our relationship to the world and embody this in our daily working lives, will we yield positive results.

We believe these wider perspectives are of vital importance and that is why they are at the centre of the Sustainable Food Trust's mission,

namely to accelerate the transition towards more sustainable food systems. This is not just a material striving which might result in, for instance, a shift from chemically-based to biologically-based agriculture, but one that embraces education, the nurture of the human spirit, wellbeing, human capital and culture. For any transition to be durable, it must embrace the intangible aspects of the world's systems.

We need to find a new way of living and working in harmony with nature, very much along the lines that our patron, The Prince of Wales, described in his book *Harmony: A New Way of Looking at Our World*. It is important to understand that although he wrote this book over ten years ago, the philosophy, ideas and principles behind it are truly timeless and need to find expression in new ways for the 21st century.

In this connection, for me, the Sustainable Food Trust is not just an organisation which is heading up a number of projects, it is an organisation that holds an understanding of the wider relationship between human beings and the planet which we have abused so comprehensively and now must find ways to heal.

For this reason, every project and theme which falls under our future work is guided by and should be understood in this context.

Patrick Holden

Patrick Holden, Founder and Chief Executive, Sustainable Food Trust

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This report provides an insight into the main activities and progress made by the Sustainable Food Trust throughout 2020.

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About the SFT

As a friend and supporter of the Sustainable Food Trust, we are delighted to share with you our report charting the work and progress made by the organisation during 2020.

Despite the ravages of COVID-19 and its disruptive impact, perhaps surprisingly, we have experienced one of the busiest years in our organisational history and have taken some giant steps forward in our key areas of work. Specifically, our work on Sustainability Metrics which we hope will provide an internationally harmonised framework for measuring on-farm sustainability and its sister initiative, True Cost Accounting, have generated significant impact, not just in the UK but throughout the world. Please find an update of this work on pages 7 and 8.

Umbilically related and central to the challenge that governments worldwide are now facing, is the need to develop policies and practices which address the existential threats of climate change and biodiversity loss, as well as provide a sufficiently remunerative financial environment to incentivise farmers to switch to food production systems which exists in harmony with nature. Once again, we have experienced unprecedented interest in our recommendations for policy packages which support this transition

to sustainable, agroecological, regenerative and organic practices, all of which are, of course, connected to the application of our sustainability assessment framework.

A third area of engagement relates to the task of creating an informed body of public opinion in relation to farming practice, sustainability, food productivity, diets and human health. We have placed great emphasis on this work because we firmly believe all lasting change in farming practice needs to be driven by the power of informed public opinion, acting both electorally and in the marketplace.

This connects with our fourth theme, education, with a particular focus on the application of the Harmony principles as developed by Prince Charles, firstly in schools, but now extending to food and farming.

We do hope you will enjoy reading this update on the progress we have made. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you require further information on any aspect of our work.



Building Collaborative Partnerships

A central element of the SFT's mission is to build new alliances between individuals and organisations in positions of influence, in recognition that collective action can deliver more than the sum of its individual parts and create lasting change.



During 2020, we were invited to take part in an unprecedented number of virtual meetings which helped form some powerful collaborations with individuals and organisations.

Perhaps most significantly, we have been acting as a bridge, bringing together farming representatives, retailers, financial institutions, fellow NGOs, political representatives and consumer organisations to collaborate on the most effective way to implement our harmonised framework for measuring on-farm sustainability, leading to influencing policy and public support for sustainable farming methods.

This has moved us towards achieving our aim of reaching an international agreement - either voluntary or more formally - between governments on the adoption of a harmonised framework to be tabled during the COP26 negotiations and UN Food Systems Summit in 2021.

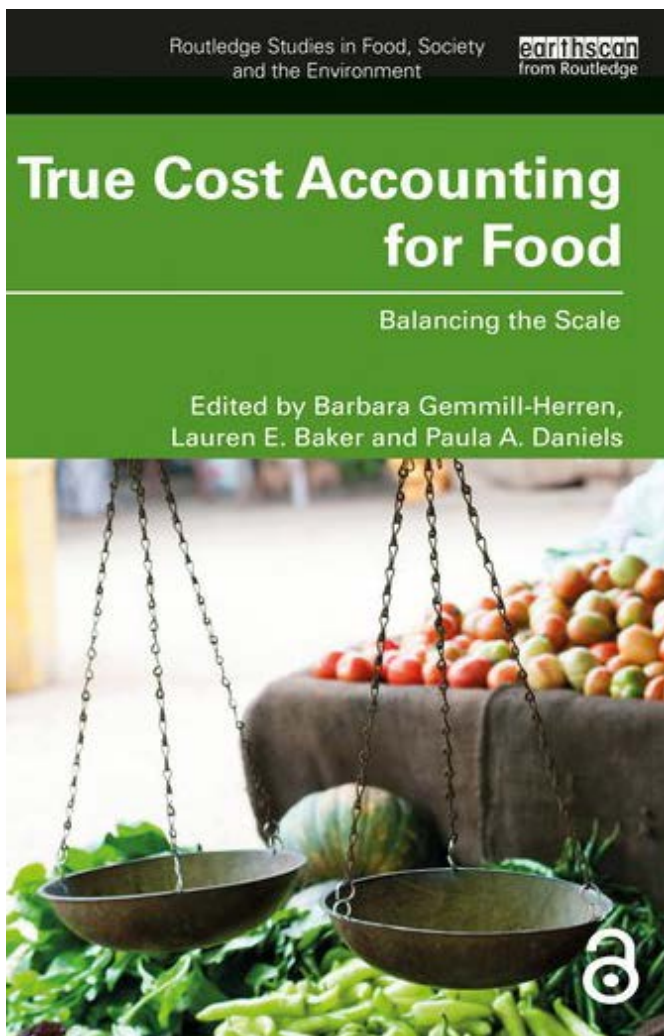
In the latter part of the year, conversations with universities and farming groups overseas began in places including the United States, Malawi, Australia, New Zealand and India; we hope to begin trials of our harmonised framework over the next 12 months.

Furthermore, our Harmony in education work has significantly widened our reach and networks, as we seek to influence a new way of learning as described on page 12.



True Cost Accounting

Our current global economic system fails to incorporate the hidden social and environmental impacts of food production on food prices. This represents the single greatest barrier to a global transition to more sustainable food and farming systems.



Our aim is to suggest interventions, both at policy and market level, which improve the profitability of sustainable agriculture and the affordability of healthy and sustainably produced food.

During 2020, we have been in contact with the secretariat of the UN Food Systems Summit, due to take place in the autumn of 2021. True cost accounting features heavily on the agenda for this event, which will put pressure on the team organising COP26 to follow suit.

In addition, we were involved in helping to shape the agenda for the Prince of Wales's 'Sustainable Markets Initiative' and are also an active member of the newly formed 'TCA Accelerator' - set up by the Global Alliance for the Future of Food. This group is working collaboratively to harmonise TCA frameworks, create a communications campaign and develop guidelines on how to implement TCA within future policy frameworks.

Patrick Holden and Adele Jones recently contributed to an article on the theme of true cost accounting in *Nature Communications*, as well a chapter in the soon to be published book, *True Cost Accounting for Food*.



Harmonised Farm Sustainability Metrics

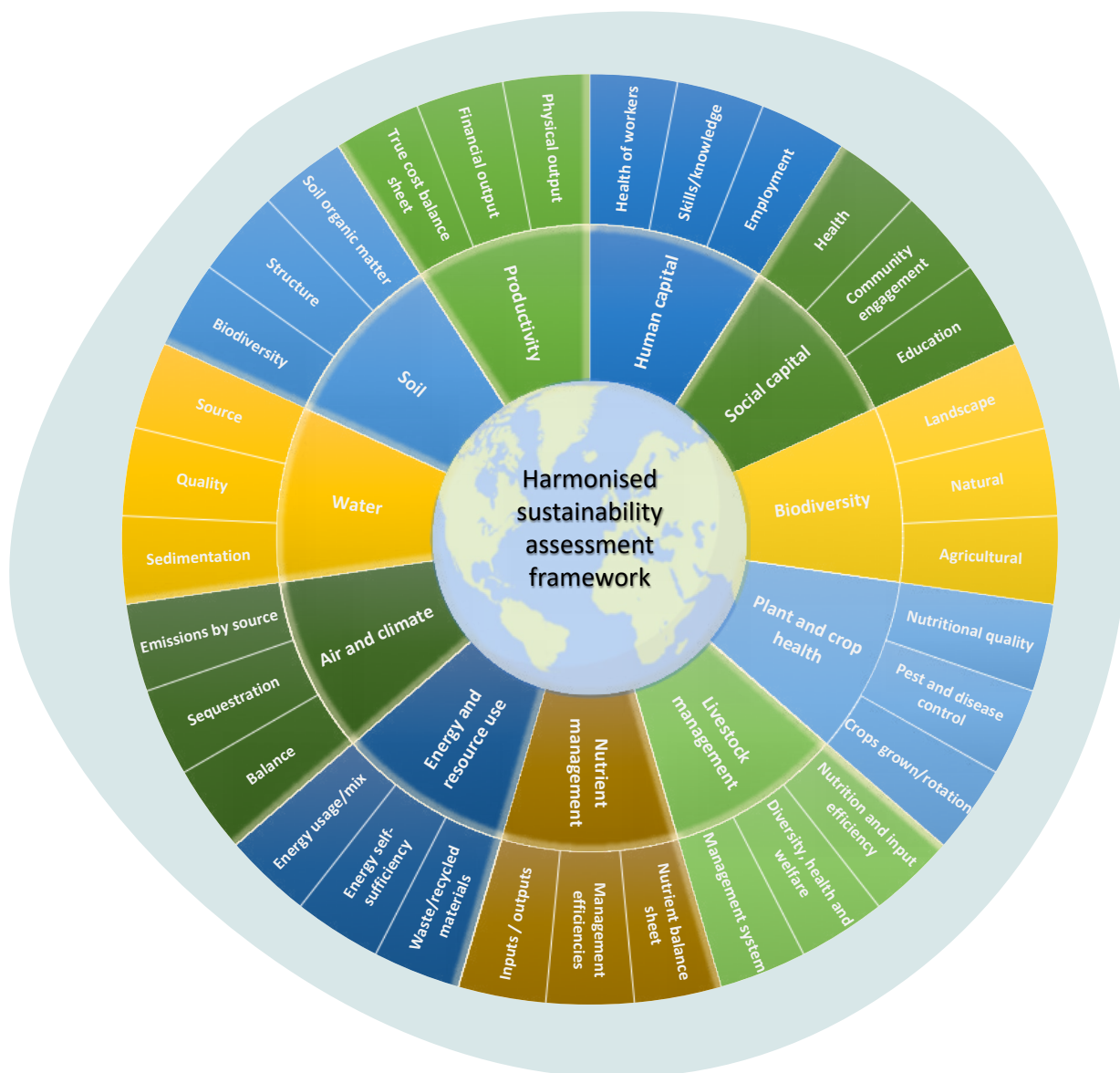
Our aim is to create a globally agreed framework of metrics for assessing and measuring food and farming sustainability. We believe such a framework could be a game changer in speeding up the much-needed transition to more sustainable food and farming systems, giving power to farmers, consumers, governments and businesses to make the right choices.

During 2020, we have seen a significant growth in support of this idea within the farming, environment, consumer and business communities. The Welsh Government has committed to introducing an annual sustainability assessment for farmers based on the harmonised framework and Defra are currently trialling the idea as part of the 'Environmental Land Management scheme' (ELMs).

Food businesses are also starting to see the huge opportunity in coming together to co-evolve an industry standard which can aid sourcing strategies as well as a possible unified 'kite mark' on food products.

So far, we have seen interest from a number of retailers and food companies including Morrisons, Tesco, Sainsbury's, Waitrose, Nestlé, Danone, Unilever and Arla. Banks and investors are also interested in being involved as they could use the framework to inform future ESG standards and lending requirements.

In light of this interest, we are now in the process of setting up a 'Harmonised Farm Sustainability Metrics Working Group' with representation from all of the above stakeholders as well as Minette Batters, President of the NFU and Henry Dimbleby, who is leading the National Food Strategy. We are also hoping to showcase the framework at the upcoming UN Food Systems Summit and COP26.

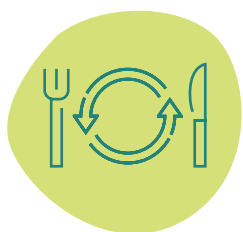
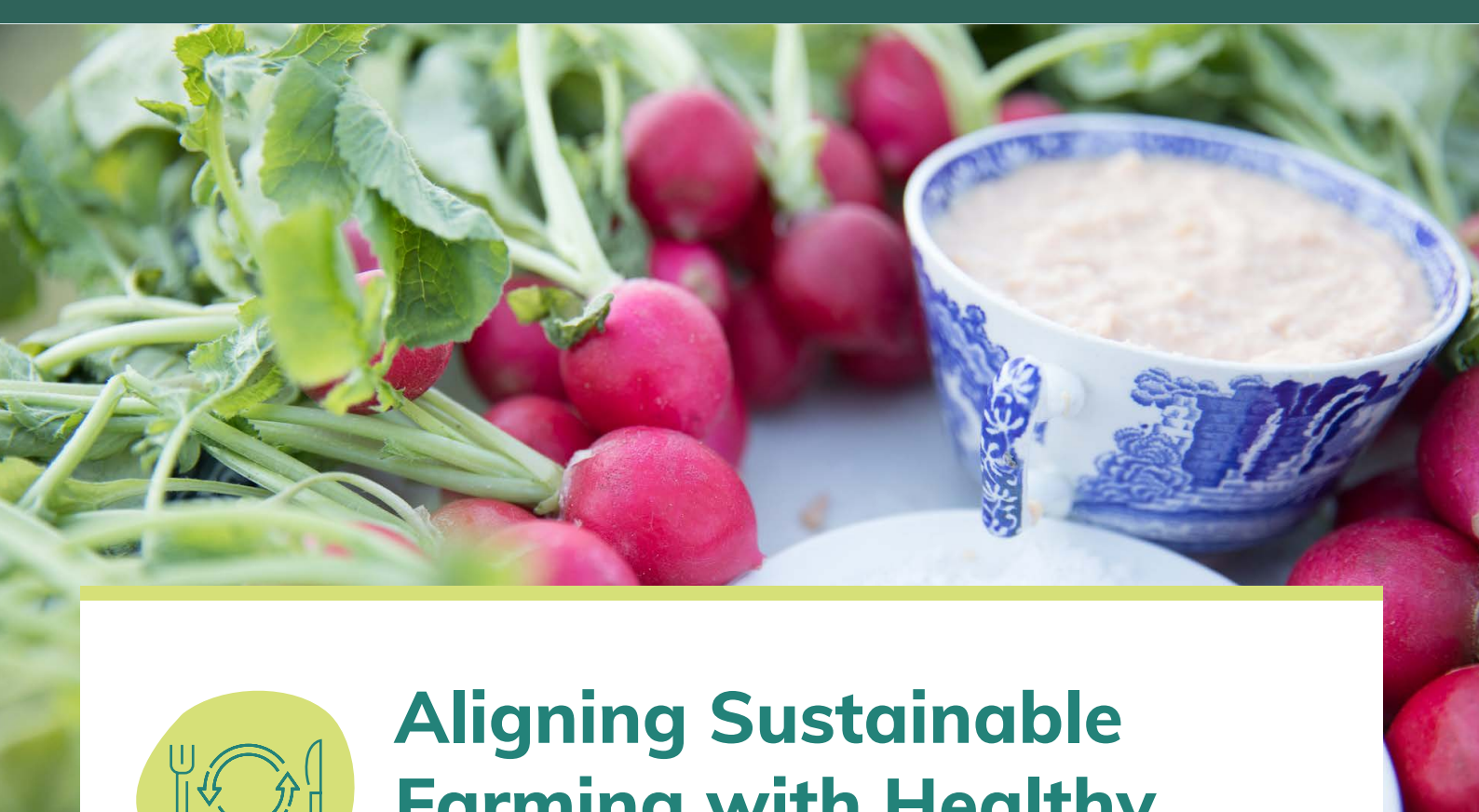


We are engaging with certification bodies, discussing how to create a unified on-farm inspection scheme and have partnered with LEAF (a UK certification scheme) and Hummingbird (an agri-tech company), to develop open-source software encompassing the SFT harmonised framework and LEAF's Sustainable Farming Review, funded by Innovate UK, to be trialled by Defra in 2021.

In addition, we are working closely with programme partners, such as FWAG South West, Eating Better and the Royal Agricultural University, to understand how our harmonised framework for measuring sustainability can support natural capital mapping, and the subsequent creation of engaging communication

materials. We are also exploring how our metrics model will help accelerate the provision of sustainable food through local authority food service providers, ensuring sustainably produced food is available to as wide a proportion of the population as possible.

We feel strongly that we are facing a pivotal moment of opportunity. With significant change on the horizon for food and farming policy, coupled with a greater awareness amongst the general public about the need for healthy food and farming, there is now a great opportunity to work towards consensus on developing a unified approach to measuring and communicating on-farm sustainability.



Aligning Sustainable Farming with Healthy Diets

The Sustainable Food Trust believes that transitioning towards an agroecological approach to farming is essential if the UK is to forge a more sustainable food system. It is often questioned, however, whether this approach can adequately feed a growing population.

Addressing these concerns is crucial if a widespread transition towards agroecology is ever to be realised. For this reason, we have set out to calculate how much food the UK could produce if all of its farmland were to be managed in an agroecological fashion.

Our approach has been guided throughout by what we see as the fundamental principles of a sustainable food system.

Based on these principles, we have developed a methodology centred around a representative set of farming systems, designed to reflect the wide

variation in agricultural land capability across the UK.

Work on this study began in early 2020 and is now at an advanced stage. We plan to publish our findings in the early summer of this year. There has been considerable interest in this study from various quarters, and we are hoping to share our findings at events surrounding this year's UN Food Systems Summit and COP26. While we are still to finalise the results, we hope that this study will help galvanise much wider support for agroecology.



Informing Policy

An enabling policy environment is essential to accelerate the transition to more sustainable food systems. Influencing policy is therefore an important part of the SFT's work.

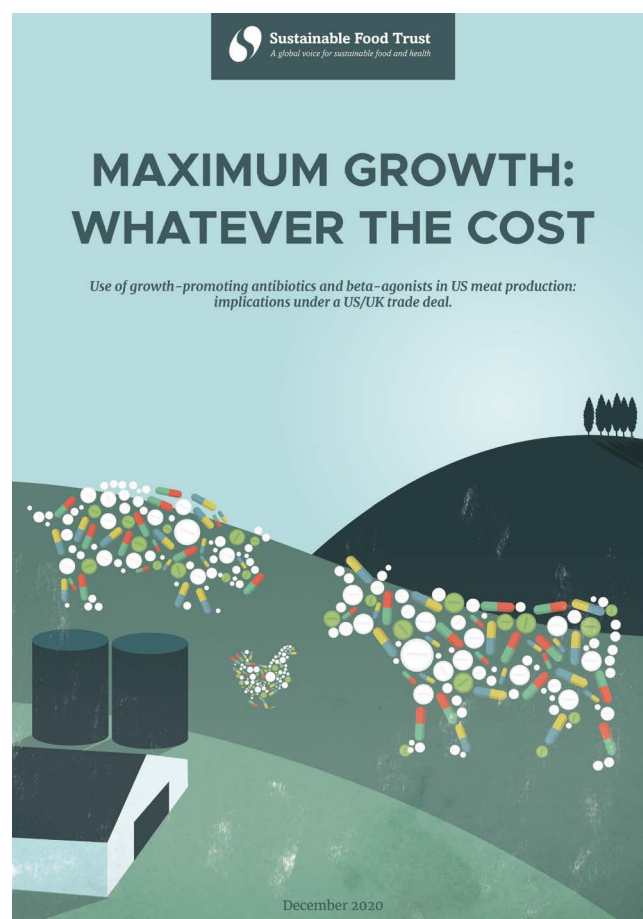
The year 2020 was a very important one for agricultural policy, with the UK Agriculture Bill and Trade Bill moving through parliament and with the government releasing further detail of their new 'Environmental Land Management scheme'. Through multiple forums, we voiced the need for future farming policy to be based on supporting truly sustainable, regenerative and circular systems of production, integrated with nature rather than seen as separate from it. Based on this, the SFT joined a coalition led by the NFU to suggest an alternative vision for the ELM scheme based on sustainable food and farming. We also published a briefing paper on the Agriculture Bill and joined other organisations in campaigning for UK standards to be protected post-Brexit. We are continuing to feed into these discussions.



Another key area of focus for the SFT is the UK's local abattoir network, which has been in decline for a number of years. The importance of this work cannot be understated, with significant progress being made in 2020, through influencing government at a high level, attending Defra Action Group meetings on small abattoirs and playing a lead role in establishing a new Abattoir Sector Group. Influenced significantly by our briefing to the House of Lords, we were also successful in getting Defra to confirm that

abattoirs would be eligible for funding under the Agriculture Bill.

In addition to these significant strands of work, we ensured our voice was heard on a wide range of important issues, from gene editing to methane and the recent Climate Change Committee report. In December, we published 'Maximum Growth: Whatever the Cost' which exposed the use of antibiotics in US livestock farming in ways which would be illegal in the UK.





The Harmony Project

The Harmony Project continues to form an integral part of the SFT's wider educational work and is part of its commitment to promote an understanding of the impact our choices and actions have on the world, in which everything is connected.

Early in 2020, we published the second edition of the Harmony Teachers' Guide with a foreword by HRH The Prince of Wales. More recently, we have launched an online hub for our teaching resources (theharmonyproject.org.uk/harmony-education).

Despite not being able to visit schools during 2020, we have continued to build our network of educators who are developing a Harmony approach to learning and we have recently launched a Harmony in Herefordshire county-wide project.

We currently work with around 50 schools across the UK, and are aiming to increase this number in 2021 and 2022. We also intend to establish an accreditation programme to acknowledge and celebrate the schools who are putting Harmony in education into action.

We have recently submitted a funding proposal for a three-year research project with Canterbury Christ Church University to explore the impact of our work in schools in the UK, the US and Japan.

Our online Harmony conference in September in collaboration with the University of Winchester

was a great success, with over 200 people in attendance. The positive response to that event has led us to create a series of monthly webinars with a range of partner organisations.

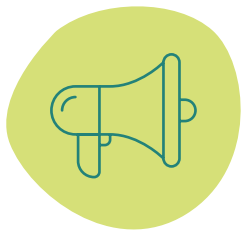
More recently, we have published The Harmony Project's 'Greener Prisons' report, looking at mental health and wellbeing in prisons. The report links closely to the work we are now developing with Her Majesty's Prison Bristol. We began a first module of learning with residents at Bristol prison in February and hope to engage further prisons during the year.



An Action Plan for Greener Prisons

Accessing nature in prisons:
Benefits to wellbeing & rehabilitation





Informing Public Opinion

Communicating with a wide audience is key to the SFT's mission. We do this in a number of ways, from our popular newsletter and informative website, to our active social media channels, podcasts and films.

As COVID-19 spread throughout the world in 2020, digital communications grew in importance and we were in a better place than many to adapt to an increasingly virtual world. We began our podcast series in March 2020 and have been honoured by the number of influential guests that have so far featured in our episodes. These include: George Monbiot, Caroline Lucas, John Humphrys, Will Harris, Minette Batters, Isabella Tree, Vandana Shiva, Stanley Johnson, Jonathon Porritt, Livia Firth, James Rebanks and Darina Allen, to name only a few and with many more to come!

We further adapted by increasing the frequency of our newsletter to weekly throughout the early stages of the pandemic, switching our content to address key concerns such as how to shop locally, the impact of COVID-19 on farmers and food supply chains, the surge in self-sufficiency and questions about health. The number of our subscribers has continuously risen, growing from

9,131 last January to 10,715 in January 2021.

We continue to be a go-to organisation for comment and have featured in plenty of media coverage throughout 2020, from The Guardian, The Telegraph and The Independent to the BBC Today Programme.

Our social media platforms have also witnessed a steady rise in engagement over the past year, providing us with opportunities to engage with a broader range of demographics. Our fastest growing platform is Instagram - gaining on average 65 followers every week - which, out of all our platforms, has the youngest audience, with 44% of our Instagram followers aged 25-34. We hope to increase our following across all platforms over the coming 12 months.

| Digital comms data | Nov-19 | Mar-20 | Jun-20 | Oct-20 | Jan-21 |
|-------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Twitter followers: | 25,700 | 26,504 | 27,147 | 27,609 | 28,060 |
| Facebook likes: | 27,177 | 27,346 | 27,411 | 27,552 | 27,589 |
| Instagram followers: | | | 3,657* | 4,273 | 5,044 |
| Newsletter subscribers: | 8,977 | 9,449 | 9,914 | 10,481 | 10,712 |

* We have only recently started tracking Instagram followers.



Future Activities

Growing public concern about the impact of industrial agriculture on climate change, biodiversity loss and damage to public health is, in combination, presenting a moment of unprecedented opportunity for the SFT to play a key role in accelerating the transition to a more sustainable food and farming future.

Over the next three years, we will strengthen our policy work in a number of ways, with plans already in place to participate in international events such as COP26, the UN Food Systems Summit and Convention on Biological Diversity; promote regenerative agriculture's role in the future of farm policy; continue to shape post-Brexit agricultural policy in the UK; promote true cost accounting and the introduction of the polluter pays principle; and campaign for re-localised food systems, including the infrastructure required to do so.

We foresee our harmonised framework for measuring on-farm sustainability being rolled out worldwide, with all farmers being able to participate, measure and improve their farming practices, thereby driving sustainable farming in an inclusive way.

We will develop and refine the framework, review and test how this can be applied within different sectors - including farmers, retailers, food businesses, finance, government and consumers - and develop a plan (including governance structures) for roll out in the UK, as well as increase international support for the metric.

We aim to build a body of informed public opinion, one where all can access and understand the benefits of sustainably produced foods. Our plan is to curate a 'Healthy Food Campaign', based on a narrative that resonates with the general public. This will respond to the perfect storm of climate change, the threat to our health and nutrition from cheap, low standard imports driven by industrial farming, and the risks to our country's security from pandemics and geo-political tensions. We will continue to actualise an alternative future for food and farming, one that is local, sustainable and in harmony with nature, and one designed for the health of people, communities, future generations,



and the planet. This will begin with the development of a compelling 'Food and Farming Manifesto', with clear recommendations for action.

We will engage key players in co-creating this campaign - from food businesses and the finance sector, to government, conservation NGOs and consumer groups - and publish reports highlighting the damaging consequences of the existing system and the benefits of a healthier food future. We will also host key events for the food and farming calendar, from influential meetings to conferences and webinars.

In 2021, we aim to co-evolve an international agreement with the private sector, farmers, environmentalists and consumers in support of embedding our harmonised framework, either in the form of a voluntary agreement or a more formal arrangement between governments. We see discussion at the COP26 negotiations and UN Food Systems Summit as key moments that can build consensus for this.

Bringing this all together, The Harmony Project will continue to focus on inspiring and enabling education leaders to embed Harmony principles into their programmes of learning, highlighting the opportunities for schools and universities to apply Harmony principles to their on-site practices and encouraging schools to introduce Harmony

principles into their curricula of learning, with a particular focus on food and farming.





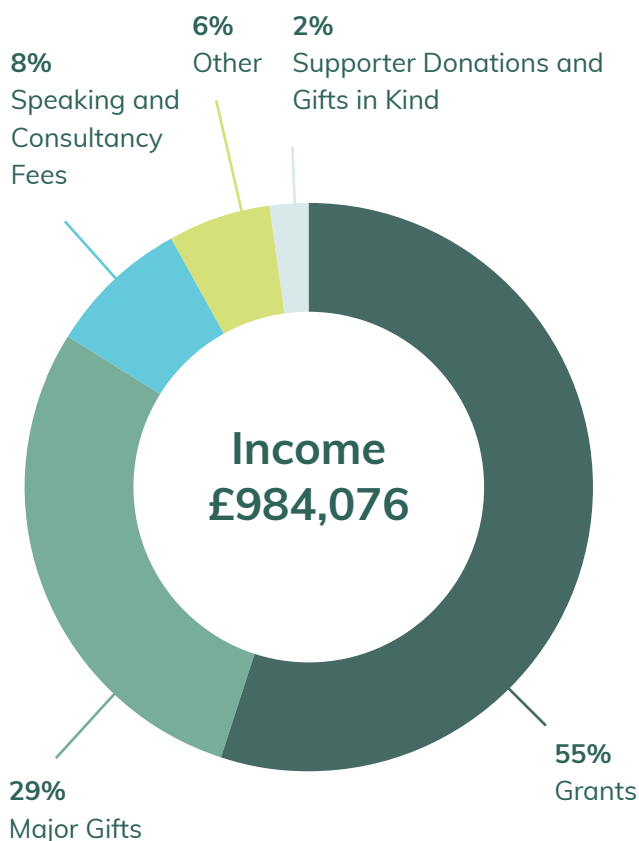
Organisation, Governance and Financial Review

The SFT is governed by a board of six trustees who bring a wealth of food and farming experience from different sectors and global regions. We are a small organisation with a staff team of fifteen that work from our headquarters in Bristol, UK.

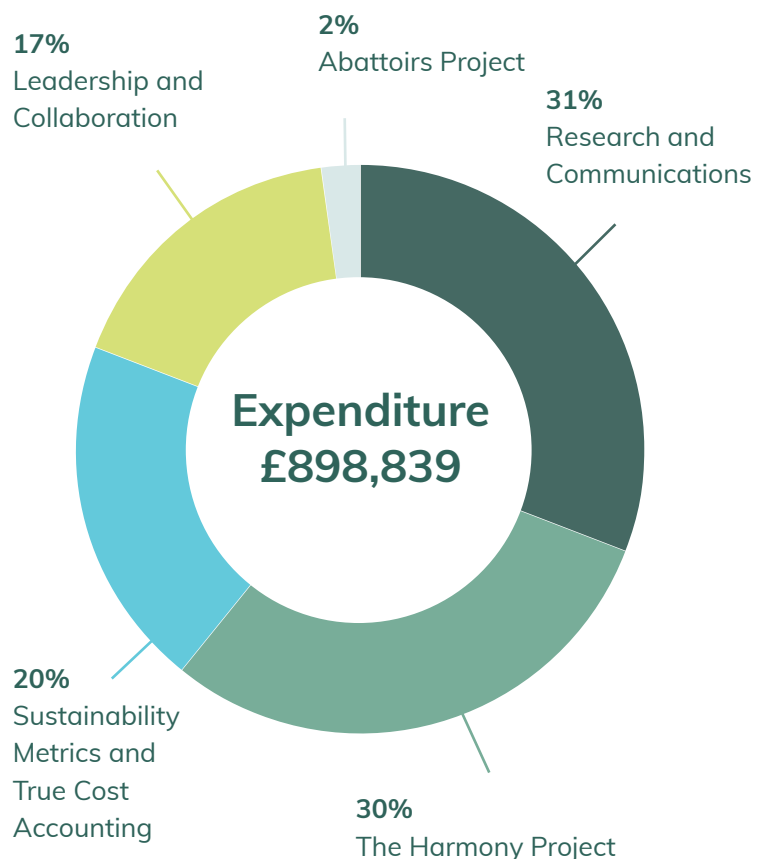
We work very closely with the Sustainable Food Alliance, a US 501(c)3 organisation that shares our mission to accelerate the transition to more sustainable food and farming and acts as our fiscal partner in the US.

Income and Expenditure

**Funding Sources of Support
Income 2019-20**



**How Your Support Was Invested
Expenditure 2019-20**



Thank you

We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to all those who have supported our work over the past year, including the following list of Foundations and Grant Making Trusts, Individuals and Organisations, along with our growing number of regular supporters.

Foundations and Grant Making Trusts

- Farming the Future
- Innovate UK
- The Ashden Trust
- The B&J Lloyd Family Charitable Trust
- The Catalysts Foundation
- The Dolphin Charitable Trust
- The Esmée Fairbairn Charitable Foundation
- The Frances and Benjamin Benenson Foundation
- The Garfield Weston Foundation
- The Owsley Brown III Philanthropic Foundation
- The Prince of Wales's Charitable Fund
- The Pureland Foundation
- The Raphael Trust
- The Rothschild Foundation
- The Ruskin Mill Land Trust
- The Sustainable Food Alliance, Inc
- The Tides Foundation

Individuals and Organisations

- Anonymous donors
- Bevis Gillett
- Camilla Davidson
- Dr John Cavill
- Joan Brinch
- John Moussouris
- Jonathan Dimpleby
- NatWest Group
- Roger Pauli
- Rosemary Fitzpatrick
- Sir Alan and Lady Parker
- Yeo Valley

We hope you have enjoyed reading about the progress we have made through 2020.

The past year has, without doubt, been exceptionally challenging for everyone. But, in many ways the pandemic has helped shine a light on the urgent need for sustainable food and farming systems, to not only address the worsening global climate crisis but also improve our health. With the help of our many friends and supporters, we will continue to embrace this pivotal moment in history to facilitate change.

Thank you for all of your support. If you would like to continue to help fund our work, or become a new funder, you are welcome to visit our website:

www.sustainablefoodtrust.org/donate

or contact our Deputy CEO Adele Jones: adele@sustainablefoodtrust.org

Finally, thank you to Graham D Brown for the beautiful front cover image, as well as Richard Dunne, Megan Perry, Saskia von Diest, Chloe Edwards Photography and Steph French Photography for taking many of the photos featured throughout this report.

