

Food, sustainability and alternative food networks

Session 1 – Introduction

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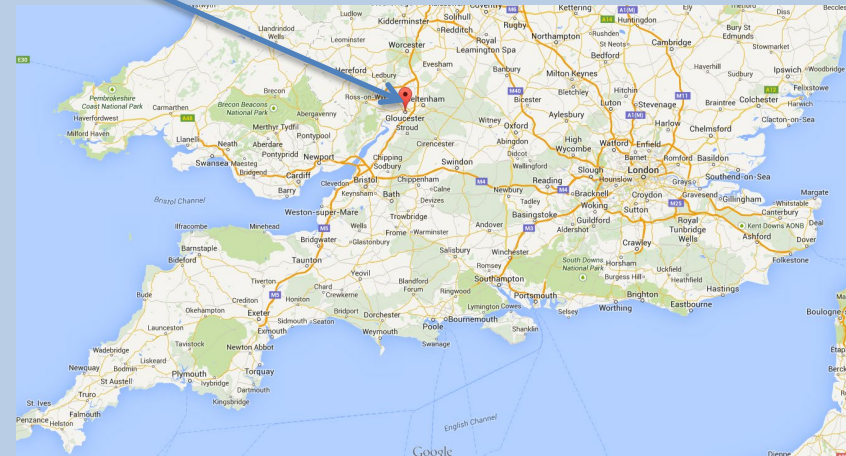


Masaryk University, Brno, 28th March – 1st April 2022



University of Gloucestershire

- Small university in SW England
- Originally est. in 1847
- c. 9000 students + 1000 PG
- Specialisms: fine arts, applied sciences, sport, business, education
- Four campuses in two adjacent towns



Countryside & Community Research Inst

- Since 1986 one of UK's largest rural research centres. Now more broadly based around social innovation, environment, sustainability and policy.
- Masters teaching and PhDs
- Research within EU partnerships
- Transdisciplinary methods



Introductions (1 min)

- Your name
- Where are you from?
- Study areas
- What interests you about this course?

Overview of the week

Together we will:

- Explore the changing narratives about food over recent decades in public, scientific and policy debates.
- Examine 'alternative' and community food provision models in urban and rural locations.
- Carry out independent research which aims to help students demonstrate and communicate their grasp of issues covered.

Course progression (1)

Session 1: Mon 28th March, 16.00 (CET)

- Introductions, overview, research exercise.
- Changing narratives: debates about sustainability and food security

Session 2: Tues 29th March, 16.00

- Urban focus

Cities as spaces of food production / provisioning drawing esp.
on two case studies: De Site (Ghent) and Bamberg (Germany)

Course progression (2)

Sessions 3: Wed 30th March, 10.00

- Rural focus

How some AFNs revive cultural landscapes and develop solidarity-based agri-environmental business models.

Session 4: Thurs 31st March 16.00

- Group presentation preparations, informal discussions.

Session 4: Fri 14th March 8.00

- Student presentations of food diary and assessment.

Food diaries/diet records as a research tool

Food diaries are highly useful ways of gathering research data in fields including psychology, marketing, cultural geography, sociology, nutrition. For example:

- Harrington et al. 2001 – comparison between eating habits in the north and south of Ireland
- Bellisle et al. 2003 – dietary contrib'n of snacks vs. meals in France
- Kniazeva and Ventakesh 2007 – symbolism of food in US
- Brown and Paszkiewicz 2016 – role of food in Polish migrant journey

Sadella and Burroughs 1981 (quoted from Almerico 2014) – *'People who eat fast food and synthetic food were classified as religious conservatives who often wore polyester clothing. Health food personalities were characterised as antinuclear activists... Vegetarians were likely to be ... pacifists who drive foreign cars...'*

Research exercise

Keep a diary keep of what you eat from breakfast on Monday 21st March until lunch on Thursday 31st March (hopefully you have started). **When you are buying food and eating, what things do you look for, which contexts inform your actions?**

The table shows some examples of considerations:

Preference	Reason	Indicator
I buy ready-meals.	I don't enjoy cooking.	Cooking instructions
I buy the cheapest food available.	I am a student with not much money.	Price
I try to buy organic food.	I believe it's better for your health.	Certification label



Research exercise – food diary

Buying: What decisions were involved in making your purchases? Did you make any compromises or trade-offs?

Menu: What did you cook and eat and what decisions were linked to this (preferences, religion, memories, occasion)?

Sustainability: Consider the sustainability issues of your meals and purchasing in this period. Food chains - human and non-human issues; lifestyle adaptations, tensions. We are not trying to define the ideal sustainable diet but to explore how sustainability relates to the ways we eat.

Alternatives: What would you like to change if you could? How would you achieve that? What/who needs to act for changes to happen, in your opinion?

Example of food diary record

Monday 28th March 2022

Breakfast – Tea, oatmeal porridge with honey.

Lunch – Vegetarian meal from university canteen: soup, potato salad and cheese sandwich. Chocolate bar.

Evening meal – Frozen pizza and frozen chips from the supermarket.

Comments – My aunt's honey. Always buy fair-trade tea. I'm a vegetarian. Just can't resist chocolate! Quick evening meal, I am meeting friends tonight. Afternoon coffee plus rhubarb cake at new local produce street stall run by people I know. *(for example)*



Food diary verbal report

This is based on your diary in the form of an oral presentation to the rest of the group. Need to divide into groups.

Can be simply speaking, power-point, phone video, excel sheet... all this is fine. But draw out critical questions or dilemmas which you have encountered or find interesting. For example:

- Health: do labels influence your choices? How?
- Environment: did you throw lots of food away? Packaging?
- Ethics: fair-trade is essential; or an apology for neo-liberalism...
- Meat: climate disaster; or a way to save cultural landscapes...
- Social: no fresh fruit and veg in my neighbourhood; grow my own...
- Lifestyle/gender – class of 2016... vegan/protein and changing trends class of 2013 (home), 2018 (cafes)
- Economic: does sustainable food cost more?*
- Has COVID changed what you would normally do?

Be as honest as possible – this is data collection, not an ethical contest.

Food diary oral presentation on Friday

Don't just describe what you bought/ate. Draw out critical reflections based on what we have discussed. Do you need a structure for the presentation? *For example:*

1. Introduction: who is in your group? Same/different habits?
2. What method did you use in data recording / analysis / presentation (and why)?
3. 2 or 3 key findings from your data (quotations, pictures...)
4. Conclusions

You can decide how you present your work. Remember you have only about **10 mins per group.**

Any questions/comments so far?