



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

# *What is a community food initiative?*

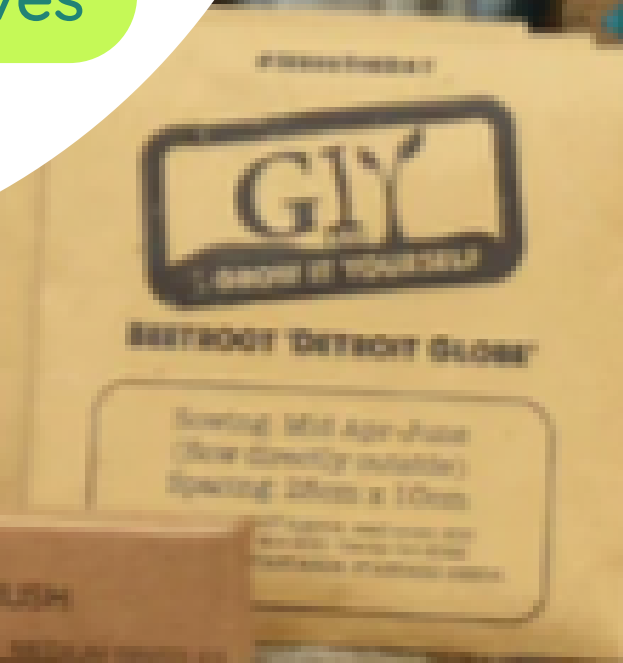
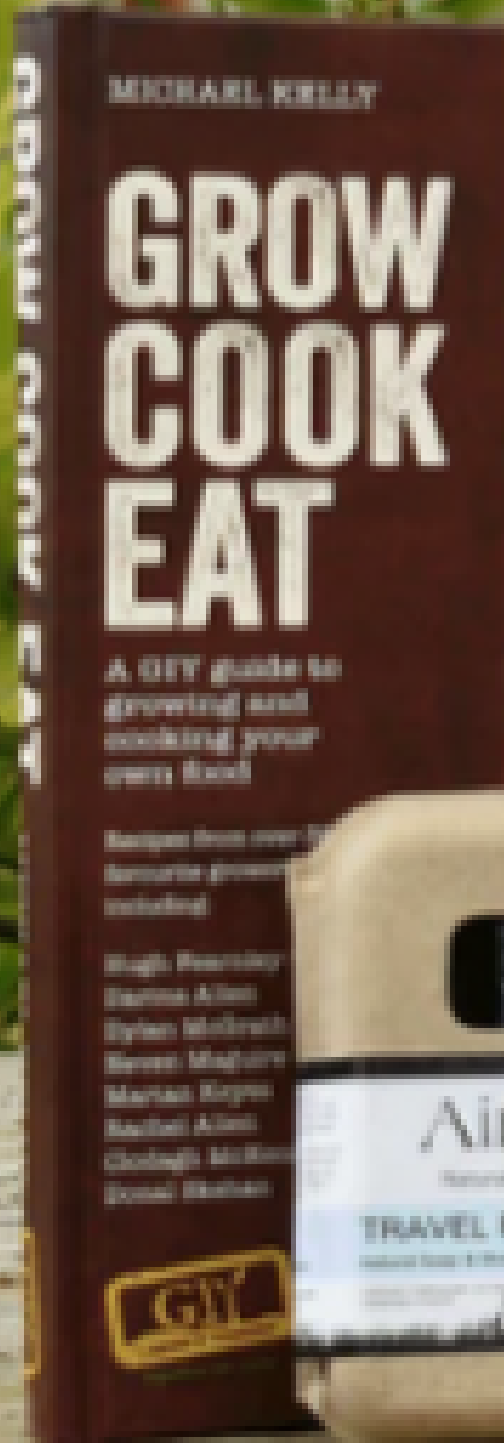
Community Food Initiatives foster communities where everyone has access to an equitable, inclusive, and thriving local food systems.

Here is an example...



# Case Study

Community Food Initiatives



# Project Background and Objectives:

GIY (Grow It Yourself) was founded in 2008 by Michael Kelly and started life as a voluntary community group in Waterford, Ireland set up as a way for people of the city to come together to learn how to grow food.

In 2009, GIY itself was established as a social enterprise to support community food growing projects and promote food growing as a lever to a more sustainable lifestyle.

GIY is now a leading social enterprise supporting people around the world to live healthier, happier and more sustainable lives by growing some of their own food.

Their vision is for a regenerative food system which nourishes people and the planet. Their stated purpose is a world where everyone grows some of their own food and they have a mission to inspire, educate and enable a global movement of food growers, through various campaigns, programmes, products and educational platforms.

## Future Plans:

In line with the United Nations 'Decade of Action' for Climate Change, the goal at GIY is to inspire 100 million people around the world to grow some of their own food by 2030.

They feel that this ambitious goal will help create a tipping point where all food is produced and consumed for the benefit of people and planet.



[Grow It Yourself HQ](#)

[GROW Box for sale via  
GIY's online shop](#)

[UN Decade of Action](#)



## Project Achievements and Benefits Provided:



The GIY team see the benefits they deliver as wide-ranging including building community, promoting well-being and delivering education around food.

Their approach is based on research which shows that when people grow some of their own food this shifts their knowledge, attitudes and behaviour around food in a profound way.

GIY call this new way of thinking “food empathy”, as it gives participants ownership over how to make healthier and more sustainable food choices.

Through a range of activities, GIY seek to inspire, educate and enable a movement of food growers, whose collective actions will help to create a healthier and more sustainable food system.

Their approach to Climate Action is that every 1sqm of Food grown equals the potential to yield 1kg of food and in turn reduce carbon emissions by 1kg.

*They report that Food Growers are:*



**43%**

less likely to  
waste food



**57%**

more likely to  
eat a plant-  
based diet



**129%**

more likely to  
eat a mostly  
local diet



**59%**

report improved  
mental health



**68%**

report great  
physical  
benefits



# Project Challenges and Key Learnings:

GIY have identified that, like many NGOs, one of the most challenging aspects of growing the initiative has been to create a sustainable funding model, and to ensure the organisation is not reliant on any one single funder or donor.

In the last 5 years they have developed B2C (business to consumer) and B2B (business to business) products and services that have generated income and had a positive impact at the same time. In the B2C space, for example, they have starter growing kits called GROWBox available online, as well as seeds and books.

In the B2B space they have created an employee engagement programme focussed on food sustainability called GROWCircle, whereby employees learn about the food system by growing some of their own food. The service offering includes physical growing kits (GROWBox) supported by online courses, the GIY app, podcast and a range of webinars and sustainability learning.

GIY has been supported by agencies of state in Ireland including the local enterprise office in Waterford and has run food growing programmes on behalf of Healthy Ireland, and the Libraries network. They have also received support from a number of national and global social entrepreneurship eco-system supporters including ReThink Ireland, Social Entrepreneurs Ireland and Ashoka.

*GIY say that one of their key learnings has been “the importance of resilience – in our team, in our ambition and creating resilience in our food system”.*



[giy.co.uk](http://giy.co.uk)



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participating in this case study*