



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:

Mach Maethlon is a community organisation based in the Dyfi Valley which combines “3 projects with one shared purpose”. These are:

- Mach Veg Box - a seasonal veg-box scheme supporting community access to land for growing
- Edible Mach - 14 edible public spaces around Machynlleth run by volunteers
- Dyfi Land Share - matching people who want to grow with available land

Bwyd Dyfi Hub – was a 20 week Pandemic response project, set up in August 2020 as a one-stop online shop where businesses could buy wholesale direct from growers and producers who are using regenerative farming methods, all over the Dyfi Biosphere.

Mach Maethlon are also involved in Planna Fwyd and run Pathways to Farming – aiming to increase the number of horticultural food producers in North Powys and create new markets for local produce.

They facilitate community connections such as linking up land owners with potential growers, and offer a software platform to match vegetable suppliers with local businesses wanting to purchase nutritious & healthy fresh produce from the area, to feature in their venues such as cafés, shops or restaurants.

They aim to support people who wish to adopt sustainable farming practices, or set up market garden businesses, and offer training schemes which recruit new cohorts of trainees annually.



The team behind Mach Maethlon offer hands on management of the various schemes in which they are involved, as well as online learning resources to ensure long-term success.

Project Achievements and Benefits Provided:



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Edible Mach has 14 sites actively in use for growing around the town of Machynlleth.

The Veg Box scheme is well established and activities have expanded to cooking workshops, harvest parties and lunch clubs.

They say “We still find food is the perfect way to bring people together in our community from different backgrounds, it’s the perfect leveller”.

Their Pathways to Farming was originally due to end in Dec 2020 but the scheme was extended with an additional course running from Sept 21 to Sept 22.

Mach Maethlon operates as a cooperative and their Veg Box project is self-funding.

They acknowledge many supporters who have helped them get established and in the summer of 2021 they received £99,952 from Wales Community Lottery Fund to support a further 2 ½ years work. They also fund raise via Powys Loto.

Their Bwyd Dyfi Hub was funded by the Community Foundation Wales Coronavirus Resilience Fund.

Project Challenges and Key Learnings:

Mach Maethlon's 2019 Report for Pathways to Farming outlined some of the key challenges they have encountered:

- The initiative lost producers due to a challenging combination of competition from low food prices in the conventional supply chain, high delivery costs, land insecurity and land unsuitability.
- They have found it challenging to match up the quantities and types of produce available with the timings and other needs of potential buyers.
- Buyers were reluctant to purchase as they had the perception that food provided through Mach Maethlon projects would be too expensive and uncompetitive.
- Obtaining access to good quality growing land is an ongoing barrier to extending production, and they also fully recognise that there is a lack of relevant land based growing and horticultural skills

Future Plans:

- Edible Mach are developing a show allotment to demonstrate growing techniques and opportunities and run weekly volunteer sessions to engage with the local community.
- They are recruiting 2 part-time staff to help run cookery and food growing projects.
- Current fund raising efforts include supporting some of the hard-hit households in Machynlleth through donations to help cover the cost of their Solidarity Veg Box scheme.
- Their "Land Army" volunteer programme aims to help small scale farmers and growers through visits from a volunteer labour force.





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*With thanks to Mach Maethlon for
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