

Reducing Meat Consumption: Pilot Project

Vision: We aim for a world that consumes a diet that has minimal negative impact on human and environmental health.

Mission: We plan for the Knowledge Quarter to consume 15% less meat by 2020.

Background

Food production is directly or indirectly responsible for nearly a third of global greenhouse gas (GHGs) emissions, uses 70% of available freshwater, and is a major source of environmental pollution. Livestock production is the largest global source of methane (CH₄) and nitrous oxide (N₂O) – two particularly potent GHGs. Additionally, diets high in animal products are associated with an increased risk of non-communicable diseases such as heart disease, diabetes and several forms of cancer. In comparison, plant-based protein (e.g. pulses) have a much lower environmental footprint and contain high levels of protein. By 2050, consumption of meat is expected to have risen 76% against a 2005–2007 baseline and is therefore, a critical driver and central challenge of global human and environmental health.

Pilot project

Wellcome wants to improve the food system to protect and improve both human and environmental health. This pilot project aims to influence how much meat people choose to eat. Starting small and piloting the project with Wellcome and one other organisation in the Knowledge Quarter (KQ), the project team will learn how to i) make positive shifts to reduce meat consumption by increasing plant-based protein consumption and ii) have impact on an organisational scale. Learning would then be used to roll out the initiative across other organisations in the KQ, Borough of Camden, Islington and beyond to increase its impact.

Objectives of pilot:

- 1) Reduce meat /increase plant-based protein consumption of Wellcome employees and those of one other partner organisation within the KQ
- 2) Record learnings and evaluate the pilot project
- 3) Develop a toolkit on how to reduce the environmental and health impact of diets that can be rolled out to other organisations in the KQ

Main questions being addressed in pilot:

- Who needs to be involved in an organisation to make change happen?
- What other stakeholders and perspectives are needed to make change happen?
- What design and behaviour change theories are most effective?
- What aspects of human habit and which behaviours are prohibiting the reduction in meat consumption?
- What sort of intervention would support the needed change?
- What intervention is effective in producing change?