

# INTRODUCTION

Ghent has been a pioneer in the field of sustainable food (policy) for many years now.

In 2013 the City launched the food strategy **Gent en Garde** in cooperation with numerous stakeholders. Soon afterwards the **Food Council**, the participatory policy body of Gent en Garde, was established. In the years that followed, the food policy was further developed, gaining the City of Ghent various international awards.

This brochure will tell you all about the **objectives** of the Food Council and the initiatives we take to achieve them. Some of the objectives have been updated so as to correspond to today's challenges. We use them as a framework to determine Ghent's food policy and to evaluate results.

But it's not all just theory: this brochure also contains numerous **examples** of local citizens, enterprises and organisations that contribute to the evolution toward a more sustainable food system. Hopefully they will inspire you to take action yourself!

# The 3 strategic objectives



# A short, sustainable food chain



# Sustainable food for everyone



# No food waste





















Partner day of the Food Council in 2021

# THE GHENT FOOD COUNCIL

The Food Council is the **participatory policy body** of Gent en Garde. Since 2015, we have invested, together with the City of Ghent, in making the entire food chain more sustainable, from production and distribution to consumption and waste disposal.

The food strategy Gent en Garde allows a **holistic approach** to food. A good food policy has a positive impact in a variety of areas: climate, health, agriculture, culture, education, economy etc.; hence our cooperation with actors from the entire food system.

# A pioneering role

The Food Council consists of some thirty enthusiastic actors who, each in their own way, are involved in the Ghent food system: agricultural organisations, associations, knowledge institutions, representatives of the business and hospitality sectors etc.

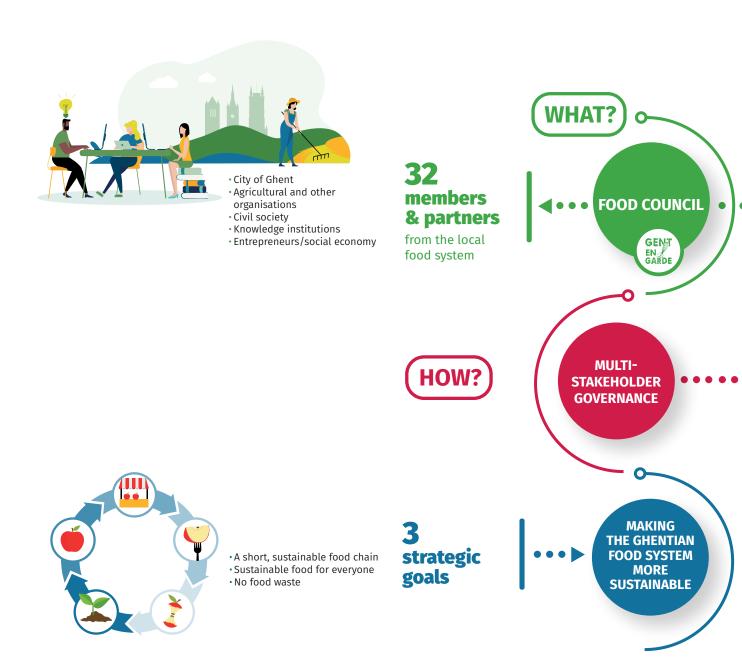
Over the past few years we have played a pioneering role in shaping the municipal policy. Together we are the **sounding board** for the City's food policy. We also come up with **new ideas**, **give advice** on projects, discuss the strategic vision and act as **ambassadors** to put food production and consumption on the agenda.

In 2018 the Food Council received its **own operating budget** to support innovative concepts. In the years to come, we will continue to help shape Ghent's food policy and organise projects to achieve the objectives of Gent en Garde.



Do you want to get to know us better? Discover us online.

# **OPERATION OF THE FOOD COUNCIL**





- INITIATOR
- Developing a local food strategy
- · BRIDGE-BUILDER Building networks and exchanging ideas
- · AMBASSADOR

Sharing our knowledge and enthusiasm

- · SOUNDING-BOARD
- Providing input for the urban policy
- INNOVATOR

Supporting new and existing projects





- Participation and co-creation
- Flexible working groupsOwn budget
- · Supported by the City of Ghent
- External facilitator







**DETERMINING OPERATIONAL GOALS** & INDICATORS

# **3 QUESTIONS ABOUT URBAN FOOD SYSTEMS**

# Why are initiatives relating to food so important?

Our current food system is facing major challenges. By 2050 there will be **9.7 billion people** in the world, two thirds of whom will be living in cities. More than 800 million people suffer from hunger, whereas 650 million are obese.

Food production is currently responsible for **more than 25** % **of global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions**. Half of the earth's habitable surface is used for agriculture, while we throw away one third of our food.

It's clear that a more sustainable food system is a top priority. Nations all over the world are joining forces. The UN, for instance, launched the **Sustainable Development Goals** or SDGs in 2015: 17 objectives and 169 targets to end poverty in the world and to increase the planet's sustainability on an economic, social and environmental level. Objectives like zero hunger, good health, sustainable cities and responsible production are inextricably linked to (urban) food systems.

# What is a sustainable food system?

A sustainable food system is a system that is sustainable on an environmental, social and economic level.

A sustainable food system **guarantees the right to food** and makes it possible for everyone to have enough food and maintain a healthy diet at a reasonable price. The producers receive a fair price for their products, and production and processing are environment-friendly and socially responsible. In addition, such a system respects the principle of **food sovereignty**: it gives the people who produce, distribute and consume food control rather than the companies and institutions dominating the global food system.

Furthermore, raw materials and resources (including labour and natural resources like soil, water and biodiversity) are used without exhausting them. The creation of a sustainable food system requires the commitment of **all links** of the food chain.

# What's the role of cities in the food system?

Not only national governments are committed to the transition to a sustainable food system. Local and regional authorities increasingly play a key role as well. Cities all over the world are taking the lead today and are looking for solutions. Local governments are able to take action quickly, have a lot of concrete impact in the field and are close to their citizens. They can shape the food sector, tackle inequality, promote a healthy and sustainable diet and so much more.

#### The commitment of cities

In 2015 the **Milan Urban Food Policy Pact** was launched: a commitment of cities to develop a sustainable local food strategy. After 8 years more than 200 cities worldwide have already accepted the challenge. In 2021 various cities launched the **Glasgow Food and Climate Declaration** in the run-up to the Glasgow climate conference. With this initiative local authorities renew their commitment to tackle the climate crisis via the food policy and call upon higher policy levels to take action.

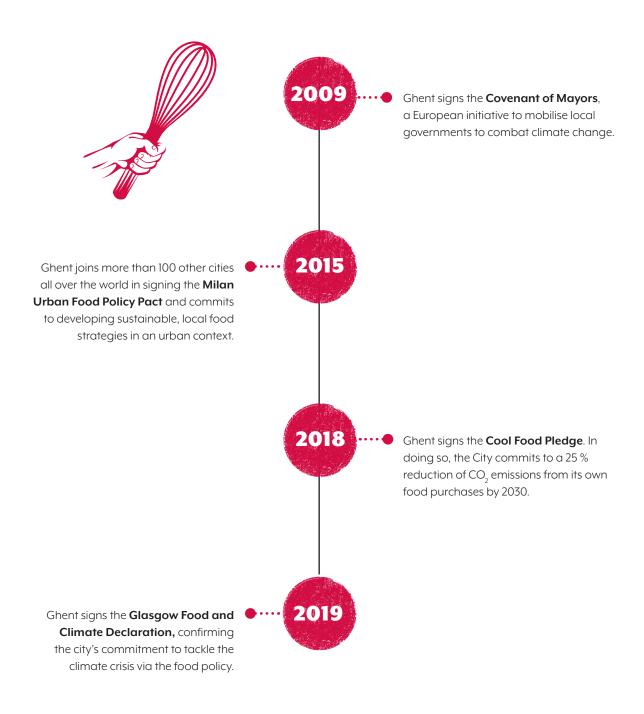
The City of Ghent signed both agreements and was one of the first cities to develop a local food policy. These past few years, Ghent also took the lead in the global movement, which earned the city the **Global Climate Action Award** of the United Nations. In the years to come, Ghent intends to play a pioneering role (inter)nationally and be a source of inspiration for other cities.



In 2019 the City of Ghent received the UN Global Climate Action Award

'Ghent wants to inspire other cities to work on a sustainable food system.'

# **GLOBAL COMMITMENTS OF GHENT**





Did you know that more than 20 % of the territory of Ghent is used for **agriculture**? That's quite a lot. The farmers of Ghent and the surrounding area are important partners in our local food strategy.

Our aim is to evolve towards ecological and social agriculture that is economically viable with the help of all local farmers and producers. By keeping the number of links between producers and consumers as limited as possible, we create **fair and transparent food chains** and the citizens of Ghent discover the real value of the food on their plates. This increases the appreciation producers and consumers have for each other.

We also create **space to produce food in and around the city** – be it in a private or collective, recreational or professional context. For that purpose we align supply and demand, protect farmland and use public space for sustainable, city-oriented production.

A sustainable food chain is also a social food chain. Our aim is to create optimal **added value for society**, for instance in the field of social employment, care or education.

# Why is agriculture in and around the city so important?

Because it connects
people and offers a lot of
opportunities! It allows people
living in the city centre to
reconnect with the production
sector, for instance. And
farmers who focus on the city
in turn discover new ways to
sell their produce and services, set up collaborations and
generate a fair income.



# 1.1 Know the producer

In a short and sustainable food chain, **consumers know who the producers are**. This guarantees a more personal connection, mutual trust and stronger involvement. Furthermore, farmers get more respect and appreciation from those who buy their produce.

In order to tighten the bonds with local producers, we focus on awareness, causing consumers to get better acquainted with farming practices and the story behind the products via **storytelling**, **food fairs** and **events**.

### 1.2 A more accessible market for local products

Our aim is to make sure the citizens of Ghent have easy access to local products. That's why we are developing a **network of local partners** to bring food products to consumers via a short supply chain. We also organise strong and lively farmers' markets, where farmers and local processors can sell their products. And we encourage restaurants and large-scale kitchens to put dishes with local ingredients on the menu.

We are always looking for **new solutions with respect to logistics and distribution**, as the main challenge for city-oriented farming is how to efficiently bring local products to the consumers. **Food hubs** can play an important role in this respect. These are physical or virtual places where producers and consumers meet, different initiatives are combined and new collaborations are set up.

Finally, we want to **promote the local processing** of products from the Ghent area. We support farmers in the transition to a short supply chain, look into the possibilities for local producers and processors to work together and examine the potential of new (shared) infrastructure for the processing of agricultural products.

# Vanier shortens the food chain of hospitality and commercial businesses

Vanier is a web platform that establishes a connection between food producers and customers from the Ghent region. Hospitality businesses, shops and large-scale kitchens can buy vegetables, fruit, dairy products, meat and local specialty products without the involvement of wholesalers or other third parties. This way farmers get a fair price and the customers are certain that the products they buy are fresh as can be. By cooperating with local sellers and buyers, Vanier also reduces transport.



# **Gentse Goesting brings farmers and processors together**

In Ghent and its surrounding area, quite a lot of family-run agricultural businesses produce grain, milk, meat and potatoes for the long supply chain. Many of these farmers would like to sell their produce locally, but selling directly to consumers is not practicable for all of them.

That's why the association Bedrijfsgilde Schelde-Leie van Boerenbond, a farmers association, cooperated with Generation Food to organise the festival 'Gentse Goesting'; a networking event where local farmers and processors could get to know each other and set up collaborations.

# 1.3 Space for professional food production

What is needed first and foremost to provide new impetus to city-oriented, local food production is land and space. That is why we are investigating how to optimally use **land destined for agricultural purposes** for food production. Particular attention is paid to **public agricultural land**, as this land is important for urban policies with respect to food, agriculture, climate etc. Via a participatory project, we are also developing a strategic framework for the use of the **PCSW (Public Centre for Social Welfare) real estate portfolio**.

Through a single point of contact for requests for (urban) agricultural space we aim at obtaining an improved overview of these requests and a better alignment of supply and demand of farmland. We also focus on the efficient use of space in the city. In this respect new types of agriculture like vertical farming, rooftop farming and indoor farming or the use of mobile units offer a lot of potential. A further aim is to dedicate space to food production in newly developed areas.

# De Goedinge takes organic produce to the heart of the city.

Organic farm De Goedinge is situated in Afsnee, a village on the edge of Ghent. When the delivery van of owners Wim and Maarten was due for replacement, they invested in an electric boat powered by solar energy. They now use this boat to take their fresh produce via the river Lys to the city centre, where subscribers can collect their vegetable boxes. Bike cargo trailers are used for the last leg of the deliveries to restaurants and caterers. Another important element is the social aspect: De Goedinge offers employment opportunities to mentally or socially vulnerable people.



# 1.4 Space for individual and collective non-professional production

The local food strategy is not only aimed at creating possibilities for professional farmers. There are a lot of ways for individual citizens, local communities, associations and schools to produce food on a **smaller scale**. In the city we want to support neighbourhood vegetable gardens, communal gardens and shared gardens. On the **online platform Gent en Garde** we match the supply and demand of gardening spots.

In an urban environment, there are a lot of possibilities for small-scale food production in residual areas like roof-tops, façades and vacant plots of land. We promote the **efficient use of space** and investigate the possibilities offered by the urban context.

### **Nursing home De Vijvers gardens with the neighbourhood**

Behind nursing home De Vijvers in Ledeberg is a large vegetable garden with a few plots available for people living in the vicinity who are interested. They can grow or harvest vegetables and fruit there, individually or together with the people from the nursing home. The garden is also used to teach the children of local school Het Anker how to grow vegetables. With this project, De Vijvers and Velt, a local ngo, aim at bringing several generations from the Ledeberg neighbourhood together, so they can get to know each other in a fun and informal way. And what about the harvest? That's turned into delicious dishes for young and old to enjoy!

# 1.5 Food producers and processors use sustainable production methods

The ecological sustainability of farms in Ghent is crucial to minimising their climate impact. That's why we focus on **sustainable production and processing methods**. Socioeconomic agricultural models like organic farming and agroecology are a source of inspiration.

# Farmers join forces for a more sustainable landscape

In 2020 a few farmers from the area around Ghent created the agricultural management association Schelde-Leie. Together they work on sustainable landscape management and invest in sustainable machinery. They even developed their own machine to sow flowers on the edges of fields. In addition, the group carries out assignments in the Parkbos and its surrounding area, e.g. mowing privately owned plots of land. By working together the farmers can exchange knowledge and learn from each other.

**Ecological sustainability** is not a concept that is entirely separate from **economic and social sustainability**. Quite the contrary: a resilient, healthy agricultural sector is essential for the supply of locally produced and sustainable food. It makes a food system more resistant to crises like the Covid-19 epidemic in 2020.

That's why we have launched a participatory project to develop an **ambitious vision of agriculture**, which sets out a framework for the future of the agricultural sector in Ghent. We define concrete objectives for agriculture in and around Ghent and try to identify the tools we can use to achieve these objectives.



# 1.6 Societal and social added value via food production

The added value of healthy and sustainable food production goes far beyond the scope of mere foodstuffs. A sustainable food system also provides opportunities for **social employment**, not only in the agricultural sector, but also in social restaurants, social grocer's shops, catering enterprises and organisations that process and distribute surplus food.

We stimulate green care and other forms of broadening agriculture focussing on social inclusion, experience, recreation, education or landscape management. This is how we provide **societal and social added value** via food production.

Public farmland offers a lot of opportunities for the realisation of this social added value: it contributes to social employment, awareness, social cohesion etc.

Foodsavers (see p. 28) works with people who have difficulties accessing the labour market.



In Ghent we attach great importance to sustainable food. At home, in restaurants, at work or at school... We make sure sustainable food is available everywhere, making it an easy choice.

Healthy and sustainable food should not be a privilege. That's why we want it to be **available**, **accessible and affordable** for everyone.

Within the context of the Ghent protein strategy (see p. 24) we aim at a better proportion between plant-based and animal-based protein consumption. In addition, we focus on **knowledge**, **skills and behavioural changes** among the citizens of Ghent, from a young age. We also want to bring people closer together, and what better way than by cooking together or sharing a meal?

#### What is a sustainable diet?

The Flemish Institute for Healthy Living (Vlaams Instituut Gezond Leven) and the Department Environment & Spatial Development (Departement Omgeving) of the Flemish government included the following recommendations for a healthy and environment-friendly diet in the food pyramid:

- Increase the proportion of plant-based vs animal-based food you eat.
- Consume as few empty calories as possible.
- Avoid food waste and reduce consumption.

However, environmentally responsible consumption is not enough to have a real sustainable consumption pattern. Sustainability is characterised by 3 pillars: an ecological, a social and an economic pillar. Sustainable consumption patterns therefore not only have a low climate impact, they also respect fair prices, make optimal use of natural and human resources, care about biodiversity and animal welfare etc.



The City of Ghent offers schools various workshops on healthy and sustainable food

### 2.1 More sustainable and healthy offer

We want to encourage caterers, hospitality businesses, large-scale kitchens and shops to make their offer **as sustainable as possible**. The more sustainable products and food are available, the easier it is for consumers to make good choices.

Ghent sets the example with its procurement policy. The city commits to a 25 % reduction of the climate impact of food purchases by municipal departments by 2030. These are major steps toward sustainability that may inspire schools, hospitals, enterprises etc.!

### Tasty, healthy meals at school

Ghent commits to have schools offer sustainable meals. This means more organic and seasonal products, more fair trade ingredients and finally, more plant-based proteins. That's why all municipal schools started serving so-called **half-half meals** in 2021. At least half of the proteins in these meals are plant-based and are for instance derived from legumes, nuts and soy. After the introduction of the weekly veggie day, this is a new step toward tasty, healthy meals at school.



# UGent opts for sustainable catering

Are you invited to a lunch meeting or reception of UGent? Then it is highly likely that you will be served sustainable sandwiches or appetisers. Because staff members often don't know how or where to order these products, the university set up a collaboration with dozens of Ghent-based caterers, who now all offer the 'Sustainable UGent option'. This option includes meat with a low carbon footprint or fish from responsible fishing. A list including all sustainability aspects of each supplier makes it even more easy to choose.

# Gent Fair Trade highlights sustainable hotspots

Gent Fair Trade is an initiative of the City of Ghent, Oxfam World Shop Gent-centrum and a large group of partners. Together they want to make fair trade visible in the city and put it on the map. Quite literally: restaurants, pubs and shops who work in an ethical manner are recognised as hotspots and get extra attention via an interactive map.

## 2.2 More knowledge, skills and behavioural change

In Ghent we are working on **raising awareness** among citizens, organisations, municipal departments, enterprises and hospitality businesses. We stress the importance of sustainable consumption patterns and the choice of plant-based or alternative proteins, products originating from organic farming, fair trade products and local and seasonal food products. In this context our aim is to improve **food literacy** in the broadest sense of the word.

For that purpose we make use of **targeted communication** and collaborate with several organisations so as to reach various target groups. In addition, we support Ghent citizens who come up with concrete and **innovative concepts** that make structural behavioural change possible.

We also want to bring **children** into contact with sustainable food from a young age. Next to the family, school and childcare facilities play a crucial role in learning and teaching about healthy and responsible eating habits. The **School Food Council Ghent** brings partners from different fields relating to education and food together. This to help us to assist schools in their search for healthy, sustainable and accessible food.

### **Customised coaching with SchoolFood4Change**

Via SchoolFood4Change the City of Ghent works with some 40 other European cities and partners to provide healthy and sustainable food in schools. School is the perfect place for children and adolescents to learn about, experiment with and discover healthy food and a sustainable food culture.

We work on making school meals even more sustainable by means of innovative tender procedures. Thanks to the 'whole school food approach', we build support for healthy and sustainable school meals. Schools that want to set up a GoodFood@School project receive individual coaching on how to involve the pupils, the teachers, the board, the parents etc. The schools are free to choose the topic they want to work on (drink more tap water, reduce food waste, offer healthier snacks...) and then use this integral approach to embed it in their daily operations.



The Ghent School Food Council

# 2.3 Better access to healthy and sustainable food

In order to make sustainable, locally produced and healthy food more accessible, we develop initiatives in accordance with what we call the '5B' model: it's important that people are aware (Bewust) of what a healthy diet is. In addition, healthy and sustainable food must be affordable (Betaalbaar) for everyone. Furthermore, good nutrition should be available (Beschikbaar) and accessible (Bereikbaar), which means that there must be an accessible offer of food products nearby. And finally, working together on the theme of good nutrition connects (verBindt) people.

With the help of **social restaurants** and **social grocer's shops** from Ghent, we are able to offer good food for people with a limited budget. We also work on making **affordable school meals** available for all children in the city. For people who need food aid, we look for a system that allows us to combine emergency aid with sustainability, well-being and social rights. This way **food aid** may offer a structural way out of poverty.

Finally, we map the **Ghent food sector** so as to optimise urban development.



Social grocer's shops offer food products at a low price

#### 2.4 Food connects

Sustainable food connects people of all ages, genders and stations. It's a good way to strenghten **social cohesion**. Our aim is to create social added value through food-related initiatives. In addition, we strive for inclusion and involve several groups in numerous initiatives. **Projects involving cooking together and sharing meals** appeal to many different target groups and offer opportunities for them to get to know each other.

Ghent is blessed with a wide range of **social initiatives involving food**: just think of the work of the PCSW, KRAS, Samenlevingsopbouw, the food banks, Velt, Burger Boef, the social grocer's shops, the community health centres etc. It goes without saying that we connect with these actors and the existing networks for our projects.

## 't Overeten transforms food surpluses into healthy meals

Every month the volunteers of 't Overeten drive their mobile kitchen to a location in the Dampoort neighbourhood. They work with food surpluses and prepare fresh meals for which people pay a voluntary contribution. This way they make healthy food affordable for everyone and enable (vulnerable) local residents to meet and get to know each other over an informal meal. The organisation is also looking into the possibilities of establishing a solidary neighbourhood restaurant in this part of the city.



The volunteers of 't Overeten employ their cooking skills in favour of residents of the Dampoort neighbourhood.

## Learn from each other about (food) education thanks to Ratatouille

How do I make my child adopt good eating habits? How do I prepare healthy meals for my family? What if my child is a picky eater? Young parents often struggle with these questions, especially if they are in a socially vulnerable situation. Ratatouille, a project of the Ghent neighbourhood health centres, is a support and cooking group that intends to change this. In various free sessions, the participants discuss a specific food- and education-related topic in depth. By cooking together and sharing meals, they learn a lot, not only from the coaches but also from each other.



The program of a session at Ratatouille

### THE GHENT GREEN BOWL, THE LOCAL PROTEIN STRATEGY

Out of all nutrients the world-wide production of animal proteins has the largest impact on the environment and the climate. It is therefore only logical that we focus on this issue within the context of our food strategy. Ghent was one of the first cities in the world to put the importance of a reduction of meat consumption on the agenda. As early as in 2009, the City and the non-profit organisation EVA launched the 'Thursday Veggie Day' campaign. With immediate success! More than 10 years later, the impact of this campaign is still visible: 40 % of the citizens of Ghent have at least one meat-free meal every week and no less than 7 % are vegetarian or vegan. These figures are well above the average in Flanders. Ghent is still regarded as the vegetarian capital of Europe.

#### A protein strategy for Ghent

If we want to be climate-neutral by 2050, more efforts are needed in the entire food chain. That's why in November 2021, Ghent was the first city to launch a local protein strategy: a plan to have a consumption and production pattern that is within the global limits and contributes to a healthy diet.

2030 is an interim milestone. By that time, we need to have a proportion of plant-based vs. animal-based consumption of 60 %/40 %. In 2014 this proportion was still 40 %/60 % in Flanders. At the same time, Ghent leads the way in sustainable protein production (plant-based, animal-based and alternative), allowing us to meet consumer demand and respond to the health and sustainability challenges.

#### **Ghent joins forces**

Producers, academics, retailers, hospitality businesses, innovators, sociocultural organisations... All stakeholders contribute to the transition towards a more sustainable protein consumption and production. We invite everyone to join the Ghent Green Bowl and to make their actions known. This way we can create a network that will enable us to set up collaborations and experiments.

#### **Measuring is knowing**

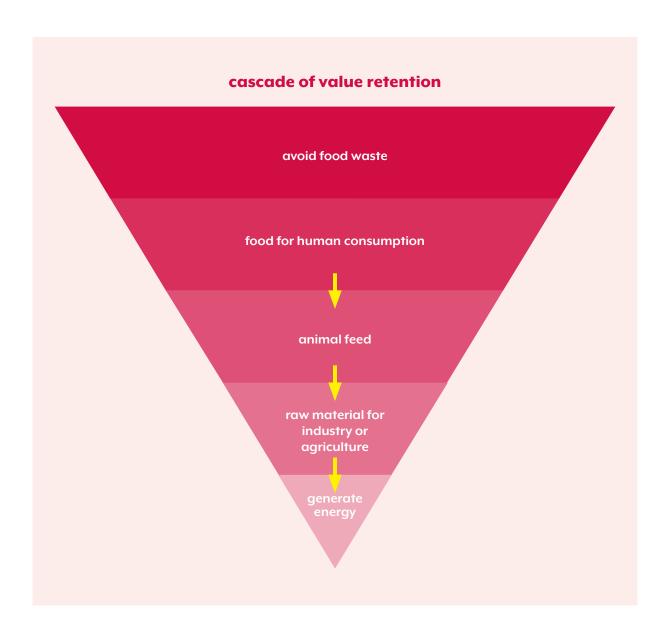
We define clear and measurable indicators for the proper monitoring and evaluation of this strategy. With the help of a number of Ghent-based knowledge institutions we are developing a scientifically justified monitoring system. This system enables us to measure the impact of actions we undertake and to better substantiate future policy choices.





Today, approximately **one third** of all food produced goes to waste world-wide, especially at the start and at the end of the chain.

In Ghent, we don't want this to happen and we are making every possible effort to increase the efficiency of our food system. In doing so, we work according to the principles of the 'cascade of value retention'. In this model, avoiding food waste and using food for human consumption are the priorities. If products are no longer suitable for human consumption, they are processed into animal feed. If that's not possible either, they are used as raw materials in the industrial or agricultural sector. Finally, if there are no other options left, they can be used to generate energy.



# 3.1 Reducing food waste

In our city we aim at less waste **in every link** of the local food chain. For that purpose we collaborate with relevant actors like food producers and processors, hospitality businesses, large-scale kitchens and supermarkets. We also offer support to organisations and enterprises that want to tackle this issue. In addition, we try to let as little food as possible go to waste in the Ghent schools and in the City's own kitchens.

We also focus on this theme at the **level of the households**. We want to help citizens and consumers in Ghent to be more conscious of what they buy and inform them on how to best store and process food. By means of workshops we teach children and youngsters from a young age how to be more conscious of their food.

# Take restaurant leftovers home in the Restorestje box.

You just aren't able to finish the delicious main course because you ate too much of the starter... It happens to everyone who eats out. Thanks to the Restorestje, this has not been a problem in Ghent for years. Since 2015 many restaurants have been giving their customers the possibility to take leftovers home without feeling embarrassed about it. And the practical compostable box they give you looks much better than the average doggy bag. That way you can enjoy the chef's culinary skills twice and you don't waste food.



#### **Let's Save Food**

Let's Save Food strives for a more sustainable food system and combats poverty by collecting food surpluses from shops every day. Bread and pastries are still perfectly fine to eat after one day but are most often thrown away. Volunteers fill the vending machines with surpluses from nearby shops every day. By offering them for sale in a vending machine, they are always available for everyone. The vending machines are spread all over the city, near community centres, cultural centres and university colleges.



### 3.2 Use of food surpluses

Whenever possible, we **collect, store and redistribute** any food surpluses. If that's not possible, we process them into products with a long shelf life.

Food surpluses can be used **in a social context** to combat poverty in the city and to give citizens better access to affordable healthy food. Redistribution is not the ultimate solution for poverty or food wastage. However, these social projects do offer temporary aid and employment to underprivileged groups via distribution platforms or social catering projects.

## Foodsavers, an ecological and social project

Foodsavers is an initiative of the City of Ghent and the PCSW to combat food waste on a large scale. The organisation collects food surpluses and distributes them among social organisations and social restaurants in the city, which in turn make meals and food packages for inhabitants with limited financial resources. Moreover, many of the employees of Foodsavers are people who have difficulties accessing the labour market. Thanks to this organisation, they gain a lot of experience in logistics in a short time. A win-win situation for everyone involved!



## Rabot op je bord brings people together

The social grocer's shop Sociale Kruidenier in the Rabot neighbourhood sells vegetable and fruit surpluses from supermarkets at a reduced price. Rabot op je bord volunteers use the products that are not sold immediately to make delicious soup, marmelade, stew etc. For a lot of people these cooking sessions are an informal way to meet and learn Dutch, for instance. Because everyone is entitled to sustainable and healthy food, part of the freshly made dishes are sold at reduced prices to people with a low income.

Rabot op je bord

# 3.3 Upgrading food waste

Even food waste can still be used as **ingredients** for new, high-quality food or be transformed into other products. We intend to recycle both edible and non-edible waste flows as locally as possible and close circles, for instance by using agricultural waste as animal feed. We also investigate the possibilities of using non-edible waste in food production. Examples of this include coffee grounds used to grow mushrooms or CO<sub>2</sub> that is converted into proteins.

We try to match supply and demand of waste flows, build a network of **circular actors**, make circular projects visible and support circular business models.

The focus remains on **the selective collection of waste** with a clear distinction between organic and residual waste. In addition, we test several ways to upgrade waste flows from the Ghent hospitality sector. We also encourage composting, by individual households or as a neighbourhood effort.

# **Urban Biorefinery Project:** from coffee grounds to soap

How can we convert urban waste into new, valuable substances? Entrepreneurs and scientists are looking for answers to this question in cooperation with GLIMPS.bio, SUEZ Belgium and IVAGO. One of the first initiatives resulting from the Urban Biorefinery Project is Kaffee Circulair. Oil is extracted from coffee grounds collected from coffee bars and offices in Ghent and is used to make soap. The residue is used as a substrate to grow oyster mushrooms or is incorporated into soil improvers. That completes the circle of the biobased economy!



The coffee soap of the Urban Biorefinery Project

# A FEW PRINCIPLES OF THE GHENT FOOD POLICY

#### **Ghent connects and cocreates**

Food is not the exclusive responsibility of the City of Ghent or the Food Council. It's a topic that concerns everyone, a story we write together. In times when the food sector is increasingly dominated by large players, **food democracy** needs to be a more prominent feature on the agenda. Citizens, producers, retailers and the government must join forces to examine how food can be produced and distributed in a sustainable and fair manner.

Connecting and cocreation are therefore two basic principles of the Ghent food policy. The Food Council organises partner days and activities for **organisations**, **citizens and enterprises**. Our way of communicating about the Ghent food policy also needs to appeal to the different groups. Furthermore, the Food Council encourages and motivates Ghent citizens to play an active role. We give new business models a chance and enhance developments bottom-up.

# **Ghent supports, monitors and evaluates**

Building a resilient local food system is for the most part pioneering work. Over the past few years, **studies, analyses** and the collection of data has given us a better insight into various aspects of our strategy. Our aim is to continue this work in cooperation with Ghent-based knowledge institutions so as to even better substantiate our policy by scientific research.

Food policy is a relatively new area for cities world-wide. Setting feasible objectives, accompanied by the requisite monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, is a challenge.

Our intention in Ghent is to set clear, **measurable objectives** for our local food strategy for the years to come. The Ghent Green Bowl is a first concrete initiative with clear goals and a well-developed monitoring framework.

#### Ghent looks at the world

With Gent en Garde we make our voice heard on the international scene as well. We **share our experience** with other cities and learn from other countries. We enter into dialogue with higher authorities to report bottlenecks and join them in the search for targeted solutions. In this context we highlight the pioneering work of the Ghent players. We also actively strive to keep the role of cities in food policies on the **international agenda**. This way we contribute to the international debate.

# GHENT FOOD STRATEGY STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES

#### **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1**

#### A SHORT, SUSTAINABLE FOOD CHAIN

- 1.1 Know the producer
- 1.2 A more accessible market for local products
- 1.3 Space for professional food production
- 1.4 Space for individual and collective non-professional production
- 1.5 Food producers and processors use sustainable production methods
- 1.6 Societal and social added value via food production

#### **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2**

#### SUSTAINABLE FOOD FOR EVERYONE

- 2.1 More sustainable and healthy offer
- 2.2 More knowledge, skills and behavioural change
- 2.3 Better access to healthy and sustainable food
- 2.4 Food connects

#### **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3**

#### **NO FOOD WASTE**

- 3.1 Reducing food waste
- 3.2 Use of food surpluses
- 3.3 Upgrading food waste





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