

# **OVERVIEW OF THE LOCAL PRODUCE INDUSTRY**

**Don Cranfield, Plumpton College**

- **Increasing interest in local food for local people**
- **Self-sufficiency movement, now mainstream**
- **Important business opportunity**
- **Local food superseded organic?**

# How local is local?

- **Transport - food miles**
- **Eating seasonally**
- **Supermarkets - even so-called local food may well have been transported long distances to and from central distribution depots**
- **Local food is the concept of the location of production being as close as possible to that of consumption**

# **Local *and* Sustainable?**

- **Sustainable Food takes the concept of local food a step further**
- **There needs to be a balance between local production of food and the inputs – fertilizer, chemicals, etc required**
- **But transport, and the packaging required to keep food fresh and in good condition during transport, remain some of the highest inputs**
- **It's a balance**

# Economic Benefits of Local Produce

- **Producer: improved margins; selling locally offers an alternative to commodity sales to supermarkets**
- **Produce not conforming to supermarket requirements for uniformity can be sold**
- **The Multiplier Effect: local businesses supported so local jobs saved and money circulated within the local economy**
- **Tourism**



# **Marketing Benefits**

- **Local produce brings the grower closer to the consumer and knowledge of their preferences**
- **Networking and cooperation – is there a value for local food producers in joining forces?**
- **Can include marketing a local product, or range of products**

# **Community Benefits**

- **Local Food promotes local diversity and a sense of place**
- **Fresher food, know exactly where it has come from**
- **Positive impact of economic benefits on the community - jobs**

# Issues to explore:

- Continuity of Supply
- Efficient organisation of supply
- Educating to eat seasonally
- Overcoming the misconception that local produce is more expensive
- General development of sales and marketing, and the skills needed for this

