

The Parsnipship Ltd

Sustainable Business Review

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About the Sustainable Business Review:

The Sustainable Business Review provides small food companies with a straightforward method of acknowledging, communicating and demonstrating the variety of ways they are contributing to a sustainable future.

This review process has been informed by business, peer reviewed, and designed by experts in sustainable business and food supply chains. The Review is open and free to use for all food companies, is completed by self-assessment and independently moderated.

Buyers and consumers will be able to seek out businesses that have completed the Review and the steps they are taking to become a more sustainable business, through a unique weblink and directory that is planned for 2015.

Find out more at www.sustainablebusinessreview.org.uk

This report has two sections:

- Section 1 provides information about the company, a statement of current performance, future plans, and their ongoing commitment towards becoming a more sustainable business.
- Section 2 contains a detailed breakdown of the company's responses to the Sustainable Business Review.

1.0 About us:

The Parsnipship Ltd produces and sells high quality, handmade vegetarian food for sale at farmers markets, food fairs, festivals and to wholesale customers. It also offers bespoke catering for private events, such as weddings and runs cookery school days. Within the past seven years, The Parsnipship has grown from a "one-man" home-based business to a small company operating from a production kitchen in Ogmores Vale, employing 4 full time staff and two owner/directors. Currently, the company is diversifying to include e-commerce, with an online shop for retail customers, which it plans to be operational this Autumn. The company is accredited by the Vegetarian Society as a member of their Food and Drink Guild, which involves adhering to a number of criteria: excluding the use of ingredients resulting from animal slaughter, being free from GMOs, only using free range eggs, no cross-contamination from non-vegetarian products during production and being cruelty free (no animal testing).

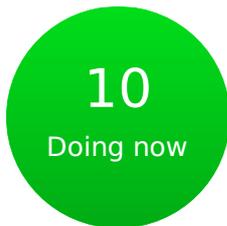
1.1 Our sustainable business goals:

In completing this review, we have identified our business goals as follows.

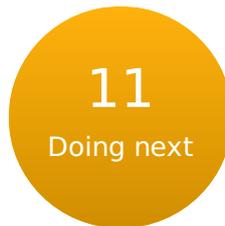
- To develop a sustainable business strategy
- To support our marketing strategy
- To identify ways to reduce operating costs
- To increase sales to private sector buyers
- To increase sales to public sector buyers
- To increase direct sales
- To improve how we communicate with customers and buyers
- To prepare our business for new market opportunities, particularly online sales. To grow the wholesale side of the business.

1.2 Our contribution towards becoming a sustainable business:

We have defined the actions we are taking to becoming a more sustainable business by categorising 21 indicators of sustainable business, as follows:



Maintaining regional food culture
Working to responsible environmental and social values
Being innovative
Providing healthy food choices
Staying ahead of quality standards and accreditations
Raising awareness of good practice
Trading locally
Participating with local communities
Providing decent employment
Building a clear and consistent brand



Using water efficiently
Measuring impacts
Efficient distribution runs
Reducing reliance on fossil fuels
Working with responsible suppliers
Encouraging responsible land use
Preventing pollution
Preventing food waste
Appropriate packaging use
Having a sustainable business strategy
Co-operating within supply chains



1.3 Our ongoing commitment:

Doing business sustainably provides ways for small food companies to innovate along their supply chain, to save money and gain competitive advantage. It opens doors to new markets because larger buyers will actively seek out suppliers that can help them meet their corporate social responsibility targets and legal obligations.

We have made a commitment to regularly review our contribution to a sustainable future.

This Review is valid for a period of 6 months from the date shown above.

2.0 Our responses to the Sustainable Business Review

2.1 Doing Now

In this section we say more about how we address each indicator of business sustainability.

Firstly we rate how we are performing against the activities we are doing now.

Maintaining regional food culture

The extent our company uses produce, recipes and production techniques that define our region

Products are made using traditional recipes

1

Products are made using specialist local production techniques

1

Products are made using regional produce

2

Other steps we are taking to maintain regional food culture

Trying to source our fresh ingredients as locally as possible; working with others in Welsh food networks; one of our key products is our Glamorgan Crumble, our twist on a local dish; we are hoping to work with the project "Food Adventures", which aims to provide Welsh food "experiences" to tourists.

Working to responsible environmental and social values

Ways our company demonstrates an approach that considers the environment and communities

Our environmental objectives are clearly defined and communicated

1

Our social objectives are clearly defined and communicated

3

Our progress is reported and published regularly

1

Steps we are taking to ensure we work towards responsible environmental and social values

We promote vegetarianism and veganism, the benefits of eating seasonal, healthy food; we are members of the Vegetarian Society's Food and Drink Guild and we regularly provide editorial content for their magazine; we provide value for money; we try to use low impact materials where possible; this year and last we have worked with Greenpeace as part of their farmers market at Glastonbury Festival.

Being innovative

The extent to which our company is actively creating new market opportunities

New products and services are subject to continuous improvement and regular customer feedback

3

New marketplaces are regularly found for existing products and services

3

New supply chain partnerships are actively sought and regularly built

3

New approaches to promotion are regularly developed

3

Other steps we are taking to be an innovative company

Developing new products regularly; constantly seeking new markets and opportunities; we endeavour to adapt our products and services to our customers (e.g. weddings, events and cookery courses) providing tailor made menus when required; we involve creative people across our company's activities; we use design and images which we hope communicate our distinctiveness.

Providing healthy food choices

Our company offers products that benefit human health and well-being

The food we supply is fresh and in season

2

The food we supply contributes to a healthy balanced diet

3

The food we supply is affordable and accessible by all

2

Steps we are taking to promote healthy food choices

All our food is relatively healthy; we help our customers choose the healthier/low-fat options if they are interested in this; for bespoke events we can cater for specific food allergies/intolerances.

Staying ahead of quality standards and accreditations

The extent our company is meeting and exceeding industry benchmarks

Awareness of quality and accreditation schemes for our industry

2

Going beyond industry standards for animal welfare, sustainable fishing or production

3

Going beyond legislation for our industry

3

Steps we are taking to stay ahead of quality standards and accreditation

We constantly monitor production processes and review our practices where necessary; we are preparing our premises to meet SALSA standards; we're signed up to receive updates from the Foods Standards Agency, e.g. re: changing food information and labeling requirements. We have prepared documentation and trained our staff to comply with the changes required from 13 December 2014 for the communication of allergen information.

Raising awareness of good practice

Steps our company is taking to communicate effectively and get positive results

We are recognised for and associated with best practice

2

Employees are advocates of sustainable practices

1

Customers purchase our products due to ethical or sustainable considerations

2

Other steps we are taking to raise awareness of good practice

We try to do this in our communications, such as our website and newsletter, and social media, but have not tested our success. We provide ongoing training for our staff to promote good practice across our organisation.

Trading locally

How far the supplies that we buy and sell contribute to the local economy

Proportion of primary produce that we use originates from our region

1

Proportion of other inputs and services that we use are provided by suppliers in our region

2

Proportion of our final sales outlets that are in our region

2

Other steps we are taking to support local trading

We trade at local markets and events throughout the year; we are beginning to supply local independent delis and cafes; we try to buy goods and services locally as much as possible.

Participating with local communities

Ways our company interacts, contributes and engages with the local community

Local communities are aware of our business activities

2

Local people are actively involved with our business activities

2

The impacts of our business activities on local communities are considered in our business planning

1

Other steps we are taking to encourage local people to participate with us

Advertising for staff locally, trading locally ourselves and using local trades people for their services.

Providing decent employment

Ways our company ensures it is a good employer

Local people are informed and encouraged to apply for employment opportunities

3

Employees are paid a decent wage that is regularly checked against the local cost of living

3

Workplace is a safe, clean and welcoming place to work and regularly checked to maintain Health and Safety standards

3

Other ways we ensure we are a good employer

Most of our employees are paid above the living wage and all exceed the current minimum wage levels; we try to empower staff by ensuring they know their input is welcome; all staff have areas of responsibility which are important to the business; we have an open management style and a flexible approach to working hours requests.

Building a clear and consistent brand

Accurately reflecting our company's good practice in ways that are easily understood by our customers

Sustainable practices are reflected through our brand

1

Sustainable practices are published and made accessible to all

0

Our brand is recognised for and associated with best practice

1

Other steps we are taking to maintain a clear and consistent brand

We use a consistent logo, style and recognisable images, of our products across our marketing materials and communication channels; we have developed a tagline to accompany our logo to make clearer what is important about our business; we are members of the Vegetarian Society Food and Drink Guild & display their recognisable logo, which many people look for when buying vegetarian products. Our involvement as a case study for the Sustainable Business Review project is enabling us to develop and communicate our sustainable practices.

2.2 Doing Next

Here you considered the type of activities you plan on doing next. We'd expect you to rate fairly low in most cases if activities are not yet underway.

Using water efficiently

Steps our company is taking to manage, monitor and reduce water use

Water use is regularly recorded and measured

2

Reduction targets are in place

0

A person is assigned to drive improvements

3

On-site systems are installed to capture, recycle and reuse water

0

Other steps we are taking to use water efficiently

We have assigned Flo Ticehurst to drive improvements with the help of Leianne Matthews (our kitchen assistant)

Measuring impacts

Steps our company is taking to measure & manage the social and environmental impacts of our activities

The carbon footprint of our business activity is regularly measured

0

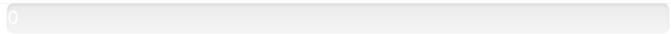
The carbon footprint of delivering our products is regularly measured

0

The social impact of our business activity is regularly measured

0

The social impact of delivering our products is regularly measured



Other steps we are taking to measure our impacts

We are starting to think about how we can measure our social and environmental impact.

Efficient distribution runs

Steps our company is taking to reduce vehicle use and improve fuel efficiency

Supply and delivery transport is planned to minimise fuel use and mileage



Fuel-efficient vehicles are used and kept in good working order



Delivery runs are shared with other local businesses



Other steps we are taking to make our distribution more efficient

Planning delivery runs; investigating shared delivery runs; aiming to work with a distributor in the near future.

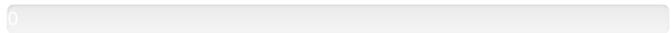
Reducing reliance on fossil fuels

Steps our company is taking to improve resource efficiency

Gas, electricity and vehicle fuel use is regularly recorded and measured



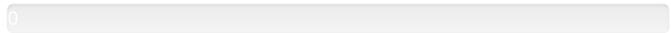
Reduction targets are in place



Reducing fossil fuel use is a role assigned to a specific person



On-site renewable energy systems are installed



Other ways we are reducing our reliance on fossil fuels

We have assigned Flo Ticehurst to drive improvements in this area; we have invested in a more efficient oven to reduce energy use and speed up cooking times; we are trying to find other producers to share delivery runs with.

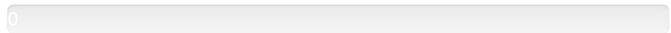
Working with responsible suppliers

Steps our company is taking to encourage good practice within our supply chain

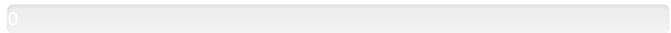
We have a buying policy in place which reflects our commitment to working with responsible suppliers



Suppliers are checked regularly to ensure they meet sustainable practices



Codes of conduct are in place with suppliers



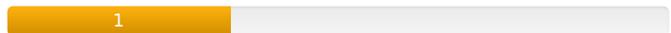
Other steps we are taking to encourage responsible practices by our suppliers

None at the moment.

Encouraging responsible land use

Steps our company is taking to ensure our primary food supplies originate from farms engaged in responsible land practices

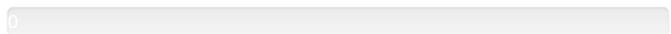
Primary food ingredients are produced to Organic, Fair-trade, LEAF, Freedom Foods or similar certified standards



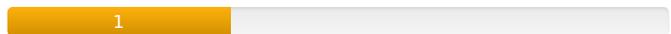
Primary food ingredients are from farms that are engaged in biodiversity or agri-environment schemes



Primary food ingredients are from farms whose soil health is regularly checked and maintained



Primary food ingredients are from farms where chemical use is monitored and minimised



Other steps we are taking to encourage responsible land use

We try to buy fresh ingredients from low impact sources where/when possible.

Preventing pollution

Steps our company is taking to manage, monitor and reduce pollution

Emissions to land, air and water are monitored and recorded	0
Areas of risk are identified along our supply chain	1
Reduction targets are in place	0
Pollution reduction is a responsibility assigned to a specific person	3
Other steps we are taking to prevent pollution	We recently assigned Flo Ticehurst to consider how we might begin address this.

Preventing food waste	
Steps our company is taking to manage, monitor and reduce food waste	
Weight and type of food waste is regularly monitored	1
All food waste is separated for collection or composting	0
Food waste hotspots are identified along supply chain	2
Reduction targets are in place	2
Other ways we are preventing food waste	We monitor sales and finished products left unsold so we can minimise waste but as our business is heavily weather dependent at the moment, sales can be unpredictable; we donate unsold food to homeless charities when possible; we have found a local composting company to accept food waste but still need to set a process in place to use this service.

Appropriate packaging use	
Steps our company is taking to ensure packaging protects products and the environment	
Packaging is checked to ensure it meets functional requirements	2
Packaging weight is minimised	2
Packaging is designed for re-use or can be recycled	2
Packaging materials used by us and our suppliers are checked against environmental criteria	1
Other steps we are taking towards environmentally friendly packaging	We aim to ensure any packaging we use is as minimal as possible and as environmentally friendly as possible, within our budget. We are currently considering packaging options for our wholesale business and for our planned online sales.

Having a sustainable business strategy	
Our company is actively working towards clearly defined sustainable goals	
Environmental and social aims and objectives are written down and in place	0
Management and staff all understand and take ownership of these aims	2
Objectives are understood and implemented across the whole organisation	1
Other steps we are taking to develop and implement a sustainable business strategy?	By taking part in this project and assigning Flo Ticehurst with responsibility for the development and implementation of this.

Co-operating within supply chains	
Ways our company is working with other organisations to achieve mutual benefits	
Working with others to bulk buy	0
Working with others to share delivery vehicles	1

Working with others on joint marketing initiatives

1

Working with others on production

0

Other steps we are taking to co-operate with others in our industry

We participate in networking activities with other food producers and are actively looking for opportunities to share delivery runs and work with others on production.

This initiative has been funded by Welsh Government under the Supply Chain Efficiencies programme of the Rural Development Programme for Wales, supported from EU.

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