



Food Agendas in a Post-Brexit Future: BSUFN Annual Symposium 2017

Monday 6th of February 2017
9:00 – 17:20

Auditorium, Brighthelm Centre, North Road, Brighton, BN1 1YD

Time	Session
9:00-9:20	Registration, tea/coffee
9:20-9:30	Welcome
9:30-10:15	Provocations Brexit Implications for Food Agendas
	Speakers to include: Brighton & Hove Food Partnership, The Linseed Farm, University of Sussex, University of Brighton, and the Institute of Development Studies
10:15-11:15	Session 1 – Policy Dynamics
	<u>Prof. Erik Millstone</u> The future of UK food & agricultural policies post-Brexit
	<u>Peter Senker</u> Post-Truth Politics and Food Poverty in the UK after Brexit
11:15-11:45	Tea/coffee break
11:45-13:15	Session 2 – Panel Discussion – Learning from Global Discourses Three 15-minute presentations followed by 45 minutes of open discussion
	<u>Dipak Sarker</u> Use, History and Promises, Both True and Untrue, of Genetically-Modified (GM) Crops: Reflections Post-Brexit

	<u>Jennifer Constantine</u> Prospects for the Sustainable Development Goals in post-Brexit Britain: learning from Brazil's experience with food and nutrition governance
	<u>Rachael Taylor</u> Finding the Future in the Past: Agroecology and Remnants of Colonialism in Senegal
13:15-14:15	Lunch
14:15-15:00	Future Food Agendas Synergies for Policy, Practice and Research
15:00-16:00	Session 3 – Sustaining Farming through Brexit
	<u>Adrian Ely</u> Transforming Food Systems in Brighton and Hove – Local Opportunities within a Changing Global Context
	<u>Helena Howe</u> Farming through Brexit
16:00-16:20	Tea/coffee break
16:20-17:20	Session 4 – Ecological Knowledge and Policy
	<u>Elise Wach</u> What scope for food sovereignty in a post-Brexit Future?
	<u>Jeremy Evans</u> A radical Regionalisation of fisheries quota for LIFE: developing new mechanisms of emancipatory fisheries governance
17:20	Close – move to Earth and Stars, 46 Windsor Street, Brighton, BN1 1RJ for a social evening

Provocations

Brexit Implications for Food Agendas

The day will begin with a series of short provocations. The provocations will be given by invited speakers from a range of disciplinary and sector backgrounds. The provocations are intended to be just that, provocative. It is hoped that this will initiate conversations throughout the day and introduce the diversity and complexity of issues associated with food agendas and Brexit implications.

Session 1 – Policy Dynamics

Professor Erik Millstone

The future of UK food & agricultural policies post-Brexit

The outcome of the Brexit Referendum has thrown UK food and agricultural policies into disarray. The two main UK government departments with responsibility for food and agricultural policies, DEFRA and the Food Standards Agency, do not yet know the direction in which the government will want them to go, nor do they know how they will navigate in the eventual direction once it has been decided. This presentation will review the key variables, and provide an up-date on progress (or the lack of it), and indicate the key choices facing the UK, and the implications for producers and consumers of the trajectories that may be chosen.

Peter Senker

Post-Truth Politics and Food Poverty in the UK after Brexit

Capitalism and neoliberal ideology have extended domination over mass media from commercial marketing (1) to “democratic” politics. President Trump secured victory in the American presidential campaign through skilful use of social media. In Britain mass circulation newspapers owned by rich capitalists gave powerful support to the campaign for Brexit in the referendum.

The evidence that Brexit will damage the British economy and have significant adverse effects on poor people is overwhelming. The recent sharp drop in the international value of sterling will inevitably increase prices of imported foods. During the last 40 years, Government neoliberal policies in both Britain and the United States have transferred income from poor people to corporations and their shareholders: they have appropriated any gains from GDP growth. In recent political campaigns in both countries, responsibility for this was attributed successfully to scapegoats, principally immigrants.

In Britain, such effects were mitigated by membership of the European Union which had encouraged immigration and the entry of well-managed foreign firms keen to gain privileged access to the huge EU market. This has stimulated economic growth, principally by alleviating pervasive skill shortages. These had arisen from persistent failures over 150 years to educate and train enough people with modern skills in numerous sectors, from the motor industry to the NHS; and at most levels from top management downwards. . Brexit is likely to cause exit from Britain of large numbers of companies and the jobs which they have created. The result will be economic stagnation.

Poor people including those with low level skills will be the principal UK victims of economic stagnation. Needs for food banks, for meals-on-wheels services and lunch clubs which Government austerity policies have cut, and needs for beds in already hard-pressed hospitals for people suffering from malnutrition are already growing fast. Brexit is likely to exacerbate these problems which will be discussed in the presentation.

1. See Senker, P., 2015, *The Triumph of Neoliberalism and the World Dominance of Capitalism*, Prometheus.

Session 2 – Panel discussion – Learning from Global Discourses

Dipak Sarker

Use, History and Promises, Both True and Untrue, of Genetically-Modified (GM)

Crops: Reflections Post-Brexit

As Britain prepares to leave and finally does leave the EU some topics related to imported goods become more controversial. Policies that Britain has no impact in swaying begin to impact on the UK. Genetically modified (GM) crops represent a highly topical and controversial aspect of modern agriculture and farming practices and therefore foods and food ingredients. GM food (from GM crops) has been said to represent for consumers in both the developed and developing worlds a salvation and a scourge. Certainly the “monopoly” of seeds sales and distribution has some highly ethical implications. Large organisations such as Monsanto sit right in the middle of concerns over Horizontal Gene Transfer (HGT) and unfettered unfavourable genetic characteristics going unchecked. There are concerns over, some methods used in genetic engineering, tampering with “nature”, of “super-weed” propagation and of traits, which may ultimately harm consumers, such as hidden oncogenes.

Jennifer Constantine

Prospects for the Sustainable Development Goals in post-Brexit Britain: learning from Brazil’s experience with food and nutrition governance

In 2015, all 198 members of the United Nations agreed on the Sustainable Development Goals, a set of 17 ‘global goals’ and 169 targets which are designed to provide a framework for a new approach to ‘universal’ development. That is, ‘development’ is no longer something which only happens in developing countries, but everywhere, including the UK. For people working on social issues this makes perfect sense: poverty affects people everywhere, not just low- or middle-income countries. The SDG agenda is meant to be effective in concluding the Millennium Development Goals, and to provide a viable guide to global efforts addressing the structural drivers of poverty, inequality and unsustainable development to achieve a more just and sustainable world. However, in the year since the SDGs were passed, the world has changed, and it is not clear that a post-Brexit UK Government will prioritise the domestic implementation of the SDGs, or indeed provide leadership at the global level for this type of global public good agenda, as it has in the past. This is highly relevant to food agendas: 12 of the 17 SDGs contain indicators linked to food and nutrition. Based on research and a learning exchange carried out and facilitated by the authors between policy actors working on food and nutritional security in the UK and Brazil, we would like to share some examples from Brazil’s successful experiences in tackling food insecurity; as well as relevant good practices from the international food policy, which can inform the development of a UK framework for the SDGs, and help secure UK leadership in policies which benefit food and nutrition security both at home and abroad. We will also reflect on our experiences of the learning process which took place between the IDS and Food Foundation

members involved in this Brazil-UK knowledge exchange, highlighting what did and didn't work, and sharing considerations for future multidirectional learning.

Co-authors: Mariana Santarelli (CERESAN-CPDA, Federal Rural University of Rio de Janeiro-UFRRJ); and Luciana Marques Vieira, University of the Sinos Valley-UNISINOS

Collaborators: Anna Taylor (Food Foundation) and Robin Hinks (Food Foundation), Nick Nisbett (IDS), Dolf te Linteloo (IDS)

Rachael Taylor

Finding the Future in the Past: Agroecology and Remnants of Colonialism in Senegal

Agroecological food production presents an alternative model to mainstream agriculture in southern Senegal. A recent research project has worked with a 'jury' of local farmers from the region of Casamance in southern Senegal, to identify opportunities to move towards an agroecological food system. In seeking to transition to more agroecological food systems in Casamance, the farmers' jury identified agroecology as originating with traditional knowledge from their ancestors' past. In southern Senegal, agroecology represents a cultural heritage, good nutrition, and environmental sustainability.

This presentation outlines existing agroecological knowledge in Casamance, southern Senegal, and how this sits in opposition to political protocols. Drawing on findings from recent research, the presentation will explain how colonialism disrupted traditional sustainable forms of food production and remnants of a colonial mind-set continue to present barriers to agroecological producers. The presentation will end with a vision for the future of agroecology in Casamance, based on an 18-month action plan developed by the farmers' jury and local stakeholders. The farmers' jury have sought to make agroecology a key agenda for policy and practice in order to preserve their cultural, healthy, sustainable future.

Future Food Agendas – Synergies for Policy, Practice, and Research

This session will provide a space for dialogue and open exploration of existing or potential future synergies between policy, practice and research within food systems. The session will be more interactive and will explore themes as they emerge. The discussions and outputs from this session will help to inform the ongoing activities of BSUFN in response to emerging issues following Brexit.

Session 3 – Sustaining Farming through Brexit

Adrian Ely

Transforming Food Systems in Brighton and Hove – Local Opportunities within a Changing Global Context

The 'Pathways' Transformative Knowledge Network is a group of six hubs across the world that are working together to try to understand processes of social transformation in the domains of food, energy and water. This presentation focusses on the early activities of the UK hub (at the STEPS Centre, University of Sussex) that has been looking at food systems. In particular it reports and reflects on a project that aims to support local provision of agro-ecologically produced food to the city of Brighton and Hove. Informed initially by a co-design workshop in January 2015, the project has since undertaken interviews with small-medium sized farmers around the city and held a workshop to map out factors (positive and negative) influencing their ability to provide sustainable food to the city. Beyond reporting on the empirical findings of the local work, the paper looks at the local, national and global context. Brighton and Hove is a city with celebrated examples of civil society action working towards improved access to healthy and local foods, against a background of unacceptable food poverty and environmental impacts. More broadly, the city also finds itself within a country on the verge of disassociating itself from the European Union (whose Common Agricultural Policy has determined national legal frameworks since 1962), and a world in which increasing trade protectionism threatens to slow (at least) the globalisation of the food system. Do these changing national and global conditions provide windows of opportunity for social transformations towards more environmentally sustainable, localised food systems? The paper draws upon work from the UK and across the 'Pathways' Transformative Knowledge Network to examine this question, in the hope of provoking productive exchanges with the other presenters and participants present at the symposium.

Helena Howe

Farming through Brexit

The paper will discuss a project looking at the impact of Brexit on farmers in the South of England. The project aims to follow a small number of farmers who farm in the South Downs National Park (SDNP) area through the process of UK withdrawal from the European Union. Withdrawal from the EU may have significant impacts on farming and farmers, not least because UK farmers will no longer be part of the Common Agricultural Policy. Using a range of ethnographic methods, the project aims to capture the impact of this uncertain climate on the land management decisions of farmers in the SDNP over a four year period. The project aims to be a form of action-research informed by a resilience-thinking approach. By engaging with actors in the field over an extended period of time the intention is to better understand some of the complex interactions and responses to withdrawal which, in turn, might guide a post-Brexit governance framework for farming with the necessary adaptive capacity to enable the discovery and implementation of more sustainable agricultural practices.

Session 4 – Ecological Knowledge and Policy

Elise Wach

What scope for food sovereignty in a post-Brexit Future?

Evidence that there is a need for change to our food systems is overwhelming, in environmental, health, cultural and economic terms. Many of the problems have been blamed on shortcomings of EU policy. As the UK transitions away from the EU, however, there are questions about whether British policies and actions will address existing contradictions in meaningful ways. In our current situation of highly decoupled food production and consumption, minimal value capture at the farm level, and unequal distribution of land, one might argue that the system needs more than just slight reform. Yet the food system we have now has been centuries in its making – from the enclosures to colonial imports. The roots of our challenges to sustainably producing and consuming nourishing foods also go beyond agriculture to issues of social exclusion, knowledge and skills, employment conditions and housing prices. With so many challenges and interlocking issues, it can be difficult to know how to effectively realise more socially and biophysically regenerative food systems. This presentation will discuss the potential for concepts of food sovereignty to address these issues, including a focus on participatory deliberation and decision making processes and structures – in research, policy and practice – to both envision desired scenarios for future generations as well as take action based on where we are now. It draws on ongoing PhD research on the potentials of agroecology and food sovereignty in the Scottish Uplands, as well as a Participatory Systemic Inquiry initiative with farmers in England, Senegal and Nicaragua.

Jeremy Evans

A radical Regionalisation of fisheries quota for LIFE: developing new mechanisms of emancipatory fisheries governance

Under the changing tides of Brexit, there is an opportunity for a reorganization of UK fisheries whilst leaving the Common Fisheries Policy. With inshore fisheries under threat of collapse around Europe; newly established Low Impact Fishing Europe (LIFE) part of the social movement of inshore fishing, is responding to the challenge of survival. Through privileging of quota and access rights to high impact industrial fishing, governments of the EU have forgotten the external cultural ecosystem services of tourism, sense of place, community and local ecological knowledge that inshore fishing brings.

Consolidating understanding of what low impact fishing is; this paper aims to demonstrate why certain types of inshore fishing are better for the environment and local societies. By doing this it is more likely that Article 17 of the Common Fisheries Policy can be implemented in different countries, including the UK. Giving “special access criteria to the European’s Union’s requirement that states “include social, economic and environmental criteria when allocating quotas for fishing”. Currently the UK has yet to change their policy position on redistributing quota to low impact fishers.

This paper examines how what LIFE’s definition low impact fishing means is heavily contested, with vested interests in maintaining livelihoods and profit. Based on interviews understanding fisher local ecological knowledge of the seabed, where fishing gears affect habitats and ecosystems differently. It further it analyses how corporate

individual and cooperative ownership affect division of labour and the development of local ecological knowledge. Local ecological knowledge needs to be better integrated into the scientific process and governance. Bi-directional learning between fisher and scientific knowledge is important to facilitate any increase in quota for socially sustainable and low impact fishers. LIFE needs to go beyond conceptions of fishing gear to support these new mechanisms of governance.

Social Evening – Earth and Stars

Following the symposium please join us for a social evening at the Earth and Stars, a pub just over the road from the Brighthelm Centre, which serves locally-sourced organic food and drinks. The Earth and Stars is located at 46 Windsor Street, Brighton, BN1 1RJ. More details of the pub are available at: <http://www.earthandstars.pub/>