Understanding participation in community food activities

Report 1: A systematic literature review of motivations, barriers and enablers

Coventry University

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About this report

This report is the first in a series of three reports commissioned by the Soil Association's Food for Life Get Togethers programme presenting our research findings on understanding the motivations, barriers and enablers for participation in community food activities. In this report (Report 1), we present the findings from the systematic literature review. Report 2 (Saxena *et al*. 2021a) includes the findings from our empirical study, and Report 3 (Saxena *et al*. 2021b) a synthesis of the research findings.

The reports are available at https://www.coventry.ac.uk/research/research-directories/completed-projects/2021/understanding-motivations-barriers-and-enablers-for-participation-in-community-food-activities/

Our research is primarily aimed at understanding how facilitating organisations, such as charities or anchor organisations, and community organisers or other practitioners active in community-based food activities can more effectively motivate and enable participation in these activities among diverse communities. We hope that the findings will also be relevant to local authorities, funders, policymakers, and generally those interested in enabling and supporting practical community action towards making a collective shift to food systems, which are good for all people and our planet, sustain cohesive and resilient communities, and enable food citizenship.

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1. Introduction

Food citizenship is an important concept for an emerging movement that seeks to mobilise a shift from a 'consumer mindset' to 'citizen mindset' in which people participate in and shape the food system collectively, not just as individuals or as consumers (Food Ethics Council 2021). Academic and practitioner research highlights the positive impacts of food citizenship on communities through a shift in (local) food systems and the re-establishment of connections with good food, *i.e.*, food that is good for people and the planet.

However, one area in which our current understanding is limited relates to those factors that strengthen food citizenship in diverse communities, especially for social groups experiencing different forms of social exclusion and marginalisation. There is currently no systematic analysis available on the drivers and barriers to participation in *food citizenship*. Therefore, it is highly relevant - from both research and practice perspective - to enhance our understanding of motivations and barriers and to identify effective ways for enabling participation in food citizenship. A better understanding and translation into practice will spread the benefits and positive outcomes for communities and, furthermore, will help counter the additional social challenges of increasing food insecurity, social isolation and loneliness currently presented by Covid-19.

The Soil Association has commissioned this research to investigate the following question:

What motivates, supports or creates barriers to participation in social food citizenship activities, such as Food for Life Get Togethers activities, amongst diverse communities?

Aiming to answer the above question, our research design included two components. First, a systematic review of literature to identify the motivations and barriers to participation in *social food citizenship* activities. Second, an empirical study which focused primarily on understanding the experiences of those organising and participating in the Food for Life Get Togethers (FFLGT) programme run by the Soil Association and of a few other community organisers and organisations engaged in these activities in the UK context.

At the outset of this study, we found that *social food citizenship* is not explicitly discussed in academic discourse, and it is rather loosely interpreted in practitioner circles. For the purposes of this research, therefore, we have attempted to interpret social food citizenship as one of the three inter-connected dimensions of food citizenship that focuses on the social (including cultural and political) domain to distinguish it analytically from the other two domains -- the ecological and economic. From this perspective, one of the social ways for re-establishment of connections with good food is through participation in community food activities.

Community food activities include bottom-up community-centred or community-based activities, which have a distinctly social element, *i.e.*, -- which bring people together for a shared food activity such as community food growing, (social) cooking and eating, sharing of food (which is also the focus of FFLGT programme), and which take place in various community settings (e.g., schools, community kitchens, cooking clubs, housing associations, neighbourhood community groups). We have thus framed our research on social food citizenship around understanding the drivers and barriers to participation in community food activities for the purposes of this study.

The findings from our research are organised into three reports. In this report (Report 1), we present the findings from the literature review. Report 2[1] showcases the findings from our empirical study, and Report 3,[2] a synthesis of the findings.

We begin this report with a brief conceptual review of food citizenship and the understanding of social food citizenship in relation to participation in community food activities which sets the context of this study (section 2). The methodology we used for the systematic review of literature is presented in section 3. In sections 4-6, we describe the motivations, barriers and enablers for participating in community food activities respectively. In section 7, we bring together the findings and key insights on participation by diverse groups from our analysis of the reviewed literature. We explore community participation in the broader context of different pathways to social/community change drawn from wider literature in section 8. In section 9, we present the outlines of a social ecological approach which offers a useful multi-level framework to consider for understanding and fostering community participation. We summarise the report in section 10.

[1] See Saxena *et al.* 2021a [2] See Saxena *et al.* 2021b

2. Food citizenship

Over the last couple of decades, a citizenship movement has emerged as a response to the shortcomings of the industrial/neo-liberal agro-food system and for addressing community-level food insecurity, health inequalities, social injustice, and sustainability challenges. Welsh & MacRae (1998) developed the concept of food citizenship in collaboration with the local Food Policy Council in Toronto and a community of practitioners, advocates, academics and politicians to emphasise the "need to move beyond food as a commodity and people as consumers" (p.239). They conceptualised food citizenship as closely linked with the concept of "food democracy":[3]

..."food democracy" or "food citizenship," ... emerges from people's active participation in shaping the food system, rather than by accepting the system as passive consumers.
(Welsh & MacRae 1998: 238)

There are two key aspects here -- the **decommodification of food** (see Vivero Pol 2017) and **active participation** by people in shaping the food system. The first aspect emphasises that food is far more than a commodity to satisfy hunger or to be traded. It is also an integral part of the social and cultural identities of individuals, families and communities, and embodies peoples' experience of a 'sense of place' (Delind 2006; Lockie 2000). In relation to the second aspect, active participation in shaping the food system, Welsh & MacRae (1998) made the distinction between the notions of 'consumer' and 'citizen':

...the concept of consumer is far too limited in that it acknowledges a person's interests and power primarily in terms of his or her ability to buy or reject products and services. The language of citizen implies some complex membership in a society, with both rights and responsibilities. Citizens have capacities (rights and responsibilities) beyond those of consuming goods and services.
(Welsh & MacRae, 1998: 240)

There is clearly a push to move beyond consumer identities, however, Welsh & MacRae (1998) also acknowledge, "... consumers can act with a larger sense of citizenship" (p. 240). This move to repositioning *consumers* into more active citizens is based on earlier works by Bennett (1987), Gussow and Clancy (1986), and Beavin *et al.* (1980) whose writings centred around "consuming with a conscience, with attention to all human beings, to other species and to the earth" (from Welsh & MacRae 1998: 240). Hence, consumer interest is reframed to include "(i) the health of both the producer and consumer, (ii) environmental sustainability, and (iii) fair pay and treatment of workers involved in the production of goods and services" (p. 240). The concepts and practices of 'ethical consumption' (Weatherell *et al.* 2003) and 'conscious consumption' (McEachern *et al.* 2010) reflect these notions to various degrees. They focus on a shift from a 'passive' consumer mentality to an 'active' one that aligns with food citizenship concerns to "address the general question of where our food comes from, how it is manufactured, and the impact of individuals' food choices on others (O'Kane 2012; Seyfang 2006)" (Shifren *et al.* 2017: 3).

In the academic literature, a widely used starting point for reflections on food citizenship is Wilkins' (2005) definition that describes food citizenship as

... the practice of engaging in food-related behaviours that support, rather than threaten, the development of a democratic, socially and economically just, and environmentally sustainable food system.
(Wilkins 2005: 271)

The key aspect in this definition is food citizenship as a **practice** that supports a sustainable food system. This emphasises the importance that food system actors can have in furthering a wider uptake and realisation of food citizenship.

Our review of practitioner literature from the UK reveals that the emphasis on moving beyond food consumerism to a **'citizen mindset'** gathered momentum after 2016-2017.
A strategy and consultancy company, the New Citizenship Project[4] had collaborated with the Food Ethics Council and six other organisations (COOK, Co-op, FAI Farms, National Trust, Food Standards Agency and RSPB) to explore a more authentic participation in the food sector. The output from this collaborative process was a Food Citizenship report and

[3] For the purpose of this study, we use the terms interchangeably. [4] https://www.newcitizenship.org.uk/what-we-do

toolkit.[5] In these documents, they describe the 'Consumer Mindset' as "corrupting and corrosive, making us 'think small'", and, in contrast, the "Citizen Mindset", as one "that makes us 'think big" and opens up a whole new approach to meaningful change in the food system". This shift of attention underpins the emerging food citizenship campaign in the UK, which is described as follows:

Food citizenship is a movement of individuals and organisations across the food system. It is rooted in an increasingly shared belief that people want to and can shape the food system for the better, given the right conditions.
(https://foodcitizenship.info/about)

Further, this desirable shift to a "Citizen Food System" is driven by **bottom-up processes** instead of the top-down approach to food that is described as 'food control by a powerful few' (Lang and Heasman 2004; Patel 2007).

In the UK, linked to the innovative work done by the Soil Association, the Food Ethics Council has been a leading voice in championing this movement by challenging the problems faced in the agro-industry food sector and by working for "a food system that is fair, sustainable, humane and healthy for people, animals, and the environment" (foodethicscouncil.org).

As citizens, we care about animals being treated humanely, about the wellbeing of the environment, and about the livelihoods of those who grow and make our food. It matters to us that all have access to healthy, sustainable food. By shifting the way we think of ourselves towards a citizen mindset, where we are more active participants in society, we unlock our ability to steer the food system towards one that is resilient and fair for people, animals, and the planet.
(https://foodcitizenship.info/about)

In their programmes such as 'Out to Lunch' and 'Food for Life', the Soil Association has adopted the Food Ethics Council definition of food citizenship, emphasising that "we are not just consumers at the end of the food chain, but participants in the food system as a whole" (Food Ethics Council 2021). In recent years, food citizenship has also undergone a reframing as being **more than a 'mindset'**, as can be seen in the following definition:

Food citizenship is more than a mindset. It is a tool to help us unlock potential and to reframe the critical challenges we face today. Is food waste an issue of overproduction or imbalance in power between producers and distributors? Is poverty simply a financial issue or disempowerment?
(FEC 2019: 24)

The importance of food citizenship as empowering agency, both individually and collectively, and as a tool for **community empowerment** is further emphasised in the following definition by a practitioner:

Food citizenship is much more than having the privilege to choose good food. It is about having individual and collective agency within a society where capitalism, social inequities, and a complex food web intersect.
It demands of us a responsibility to be truly humanitarian, to be protectors of nature and to stand for real democracy and human rights. Our food citizenship places us as rights bearers at the heart of the right to food, to hold our government accountable to its duty to ensure all people are able to access culturally appropriate, healthy, sustainable and just food.
(Dee Woods, Co-founder of Granville Community Kitchen and member of the Food Ethics Council, from FEC 2019: 5)

This interpretation of food citizenship is reflected in work that is more recent by researchers (such as Gómez-Benito and Lozano 2014) which focuses on **rights** (e.g., the right to food and the right to participate in food governance) and obligations and responsibilities (e.g., by taking into account the rights of others, across space and time). This interpretation also puts people across all groups (including in organisations, businesses, and government) as **'food citizens'** at the centre of driving changes in the food system.

Food citizenship/food democracy, as brought together by Hassanein (2003, 2008), includes five dimensions as summarised below:

Firstly, food democracy entails* *collective cooperation* *towards sustainability of the food system. Besides, food democracy also means that there is space for* *sharing and discussing ideas*. *Thirdly, citizens within food democracy should have* *sufficient knowledge* *about food. Fourthly, the development of* *efficacy* *is needed, which is about citizens who define their own relationship to food and the food system. Finally, food democracy requires that citizens are focused on the* *community good* *and not just on their individual interests.

We draw on these different understandings of food citizenship to interpret food citizenship as incorporating social, ecological, and economic domains, which we elaborate in section below. This allows for a practical analysis of the diversity that is observed in food-related practices; however, we also acknowledge that such a distinction between domains risks ignoring existing nuances and complexities and might also distract from the more holistic vision of food citizenship as a movement towards creating an economically and environmentally sustainable and socially just food system.

[5] https://foodcitizenship.info

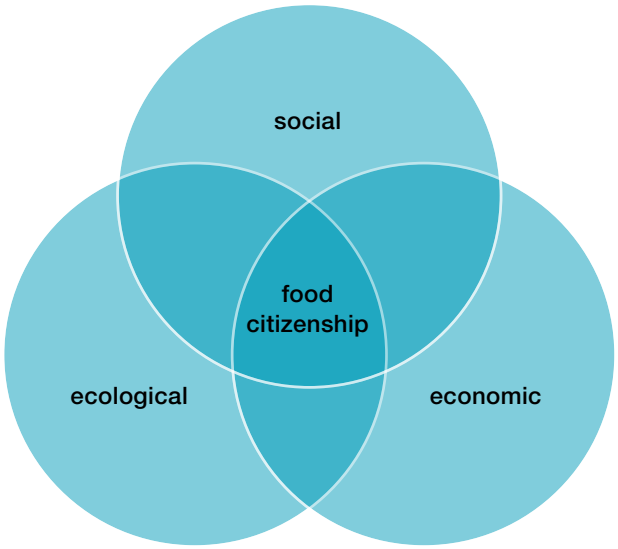
2.1 Food citizenship domains

Notwithstanding the growing attention on food citizenship in recent years, and the vision behind it, we aimed to illustrate in the section above that there is limited shared understanding of the conceptual bases and empirical applications of food citizenship. Baldy & Cruse (2019), in their review of food democracy found that it has been "poorly operationalized for empirical research" (p. 70). Furthermore, we did not find specific references to social food citizenship in the academic literature.

Social citizenship, on the other hand, is a well-established concept (Marshall & Bottomore 2002; Dwyer 2010) which describes social rights within citizenship literature: the right to work, the right to housing, to education, to safety, to health, to social protection, to culture, to a healthy environment, and to food (Gómez-Benito and Lozano, 2014: 140). Although it is argued that "Social citizenship ... involves the link between the legal-political status of citizenship and its socio-economic surroundings (Peña 2000), something that has profound implications for identity and for the constitution of food citizenship" (Gómez-Benito and Lozano 2014: 140), the latter has not been addressed further in the literature.

In this research, we draw on the various definitions and interpretations of food citizenship as discussed above to arrive at an interpretation of social food citizenship that aligns with the use of the term by some practitioners.

As illustrated in the three overlapping circles (see Figure 1), we distinguish social food citizenship as one of the three inter-connected domains of food citizenship (with the other two being ecological and economic). This conceptualisation reflects sustainability thinking, which comprises of three pillars – social, economic, ecological. It acknowledges the role of food citizens as those "prepared and able to make food-related decisions that help to improve the sustainability of our modern food system" (O'Kane 2016: 674). A sustainable food system in this context is understood as one that "conserves and renews natural resources, advances social justice and animal welfare, builds community wealth, and fulfils the food and nutrition needs of all eaters now and in the future" (Tagtow & Harmon 2009: 2).



Social: Reconstructing or restoring of social connections within food system (e.g., sharing food skills, building a local food culture; creating a shared sense of belonging, addressing issues of social exclusion and injustice); connecting people with other people; community empowerment

Ecological: Reconnecting people with the producers and places where food comes from; balancing of food production with environmental concerns (e.g., sustainable food farming, reduced carbon and/or ecological footprint, elimination of greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture, reduction of food waste, reduced meat consumption)

Economic: Connecting people with all actors engaged in producing food, in bringing food from farm to table; empowering people to exercise their rights to produce, distribute, access and eat good food (e.g., fair and equitable prices for farmers, secure employment for all actors along the food supply chain, alternative business models, fair and sustainable trade)

Figure 1: The three domains of food citizenship

2.1.1 Social food citizenship

Essentially, food citizenship is about actively participating in the food system at different levels, going beyond simply purchasing food as individual consumers to engaging in practices such as food growing, food sharing, cooking, wasting less food, and participating in food policy making. It is about acting collectively to address the critical issues endangering the sustainability of food and farming, health and wellbeing of people, animal welfare, and our planet's ecosystems.

Social food citizenship focuses on food-related practices in the social domain (including cultural and political) which reconstruct or restore 'social' connections with food and the food system. For example, it includes practices ranging from keeping traditional food skills alive, strengthening local food cultures, to promoting the values of a sustainable food system. It incorporates food related activities for improved health and well-being, and the building of a shared sense of belonging through networks and peer-support, whilst also addressing issues of social exclusion and social injustice. It includes all those community food projects and initiatives or activities which utilise food as a vehicle for connecting people with other people - across generations and diverse communities, engaging with concerns such as access to food (food security), nutrition, public health, and sociocultural aspects (e.g., community building, social isolation, social cohesion, social inclusion).

This idea of social food citizenship thus aligns with using the power of **food as a tool for social change**, the reframing of food as a social connector and for directing resources towards connecting communities, and for strengthening food solidarity (https://foodcitizenship.info).

For actively participating in shaping the food system, however, social food citizenship requires citizens to be well-informed about food system issues and to be actively involved in determining food system policies and practices at all levels of government (Hassanein 2003, 2008). Gómez-Benito and Lozano (2014) thus argue that the concept of food citizenship is inherently political, concerned with legislations, regulations, and institutional issues of power relations. They define a **'food citizen'** as an:

> ***...individual who has access to enough healthy, quality food or who mobilizes himself [sic] to achieve it. [who has] an active interest in defining and exercising his food preferences... but also about the conditions and the processes of the production and distribution of food throughout the food chain. [They are] aware of the implications of social and environmental equity and of the wellbeing of animals, all of which is summarized in the expression "sustainable food." ... whose personal food practices are coherent with these value orientations and these cognitive frameworks, and who participates in some way in collective actions oriented in this direction, and someone who attempts to participate in the governance of food affairs.***
> (Gomez-Benito & Lozano, 2014, p. 152)

Drawing on the wider literature, including Marshall's (1950) concept of 'social citizenship' alluded to earlier, social food citizenship can thus also be interpreted as communities having the civil, political, and social rights to shape their food system along with an emphasis on state responsibility to guarantee the fulfilment of those rights. It is, therefore, as much about the awareness and agency of being a 'food citizen' – which is about rights and obligations – as it is about issues of identity and the role of the state.

2.1.2 Ecological food citizenship

Ecological food citizenship confronts ecological concerns in the food and farming sector that are linked to the negative environmental impacts of the industrial food system. This includes, for example, animal welfare concerns, climate impacts, and food waste. It is allied to the concepts of **ecological citizenship** (Curtin 2003) and **green citizenship** (Gabrielson 2008).

It includes food-related practices that focus on the ecological domain, for example, 're-connecting' people with the producers and places where food comes from and with the natural ecosystems which are the foundation of food and farming. More broadly, ecological food citizenship focuses on strengthening the relationships between soil, plants, animals, and people. It includes making changes to the food system, that, for example, foster sustainable food farming, reduce the carbon and/or ecological footprint, eliminate greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture, reduce food waste, and reduce meat consumption. Ecological food citizenship aims to balance food production with environmental concerns (such as through agroecology and permaculture).

Importantly, Gómez-Benito and Lozano (2014) argue that in the context of globalisation, the environmental consequences of the food production systems, the internationalization of the public agencies that regulate food, and the progressively international nature of food movements, food citizenship should be **"cosmopolitan"** in nature. In other words, food citizenship needs to be necessarily 'ecological' to avert the global consequences of ecologically unsustainable food systems. These authors emphasise the 'global' over the 'local' as shown below:

> ***… citizen action should operate in this globalized framework, attending to the rights of citizens who are far away from one another but united by shared and interrelated problems… a defense of universal and global rights, not just local ones… a defense of global obligations, not only local and individual ones; it must be global action, not just local action.***
> (Gómez-Benito and Lozano 2014: 151)

2.1.3 Economic food citizenship

Economic food citizenship emphasises connecting people with all the people engaged in producing food, in bringing food from farm to the table (*i.e.*, food supply chain actors), and in improving the sustainability of food supply chains. It addresses economic concerns such as fair and equitable prices for farmers, secure employment for all actors along the food supply chain, alternative business models, as well as fair and sustainable trade, amongst others.

Economic food citizenship can be seen as aligned with the discourses on **'food justice'** (Levkoe 2006; Alkon and Agyeman 2011), alleviating food poverty, and on building local food economies centred on equality within the food system which empower communities to exercise their rights to produce, distribute, access, and eat good food regardless of race, class, gender, ethnicity, citizenship, ability, religion, sexuality, and various intersectional identities. It has been argued that the 'demand' for food justice creates opportunities for food democracy since it provides opportunities to turn people from passive consumers into actively participating citizens (Levkoe 2006).

To summarise, we have presented food citizenship as a **multi-dimensional** construct with three inter-connected domains – social, economic, and ecological – which enables a citizen-led shift to a just and sustainable food system. Such a food citizenship approach would allow food system actors "to articulate new alternative economic spaces and transform the structures and organisation of the agro-food system" (Gómez-Benito and Lozano 2014:150). As a practice, it aligns with Curtin and Heldke (1992)'s "thoughtful practice" that "respects the ecological and human interests but also celebrates food-work and eating as transformative practices" (Welsh & MacRae 1998: 241).

For the purposes of this study which focuses on social food citizenship, we examine it in relation to community food activities that are enacted in "autonomous community spaces" and entail a high level of participation by communities in organising, managing, influencing and (co-)determining its environment (see Brody & Wilde 2020: 244).

3. Methodology

As a first step for this review, we conducted a **scoping exercise** to understand the academic discourse on 'food citizenship' (food democracy) and 'social food citizenship', results of which are presented in section 2 above. Food citizenship has mainly been looked at from the perspective of consumption behaviour, followed by food governance for local community-based food systems, and broadly food systems policy making.[6] However, there has been relatively little written analytically about food citizenship practices that focus on a social component, even less about what enables widespread engagement in such practices. Furthermore, we found no reference to social food citizenship as a concept, except for one paper which explicitly engages with social elements in the context of food citizenship by focusing on consumers "sense of place" (see Shifren *et al*. 2017). Hence, as described above (section 2), we have attempted to interpret social food citizenship in a way that adds to the current food citizenship discourse.

We then conducted a **systematic literature review** of peer-reviewed, practice-based case studies that describe real-world activities, initiatives or projects that support food-related practices, which reconstruct or restore 'social' connections with food and the food system.[7] We adopted a systematic search strategy to identify studies for the purposes of the review. We used an adapted PI(C)O strategy (Methley *et al*. 2014) and developed search terms collaboratively and iteratively (see Appendix 1). We searched for relevant English-language publications across:

- 4 electronic bibliographic databases (Scopus, Science Direct, Academic Search Complete, Sage Premier)
- Grey literature sources (Proquest Theses and Dissertations (PQDT), Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (NDLTD), EBSCO Open Dissertations)

In addition, we manually searched for reports and other relevant documents on relevant organisations' websites and social media outputs. These included, for example, Soil Association, Food Ethics Council, Sustain, Sustainable Food Places, Sustainable Food Trust, and Feedback amongst others.

The exclusion and inclusion criteria we applied are presented in Appendix 2, while a summary of the systematic review process is presented in Appendix 3. This process resulted in **40 academic papers** from thirteen different countries (see Appendix 4), which we reviewed and analysed. We used an interpretive methodological approach to extract motivations and barriers experienced by participants and organisers, and to identify participation-enabling factors from the reviewed literature.

Table 1 presents an overview of the **type of participants identified** in our reviewed case studies. The table demonstrates the wide diversity of participant groups as they were described in the literature. Specified participant groups included members of protected categories (UK Equality Act 2010), other marginalised or disadvantaged groups, and groups where different identities overlap, often described as intersectional. A few studies described their engagement with people with disabilities, different faiths, and from groups that are seeking asylum and from the refugee community.

The summary in the table also illustrates that community food activities appear to be more often addressing particularly specified groups (e.g., specific age groups, socio-economically disadvantaged groups) and less often spatially defined communities (*i.e.*, all living in a particular neighbourhood). Furthermore, we did not find in the reviewed case studies, people from some of the protected categories (gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; and sexual orientation) that a particular activity was purposefully aimed at. This also applied to people from different language backgrounds. While many case studies may have had participants falling into some of these categories of diversity, their participation and specific requirements were not explicitly described in the case studies. Despite some of these shortcomings, the diversity of participating groups within the reviewed case studies allowed us to identify motivations, barriers, and enablers from a large variety of experiences.

[6] See Renting *et al*. 2012; Anderson *et al*. 2014; Booth & Coveney, 2015; Hassanein, 2003, 2008; Lang, 2005; Perrett & Jackson, 2015; Renting, Schermer, & Rossi, 2012; Doherty *et al*. 2020, Lyson 2005; Rico Mendez *et al*., 2021; Zerafati-Schoae *et al*. 2020; Sijtsema *et al*. 2020

[7] The review did not include a systematic analysis of secondary literature on participation but focused specifically on case reports of food-related community-based social activities. We excluded case studies of food banks, and those based in institutional settings like hospitals.

Different protected and other categories, including intersectional aspects	***Case studies (References)***
Age	
Children with learning disabilities*	Marovelli 2019
Elderly people	Hennchen & Pregernig 2020; Middling *et al*. 2011
Middle-aged	Ohmer *et al*. 2009; Scheromm 2015
Middle-aged women*	Ohmer *et al*. 2009; O'Kane 2016
Socioeconomically disadvantaged adolescents*	Marovelli 2019
University students*	Anderson *et al*. 2018
Young people	Gatenby *et al*. 2011; Hennchen & Pregernig 2020
Disability	
Mental or physical disability	Engler-Stringer & Berenbaum 2007; Kruithof *et al*. 2018
People recovering from mental health issues	Whatley *et al*. 2015
Children with learning disabilities*	Marovelli 2019
Religion or belief	
Faith-based volunteers	Denning 2019
Sex	
Homeless/under-housed men*	Engler-Stringer & Berenbaum 2007; Pettinger *et al*. 2017
(Middle-aged) women*	Engler-Stringer & Berenbaum 2007; Ohmer *et al*. 2009; O'Kane 2016
Gender reassignment; Marriage and civil partnership; Pregnancy and maternity; Race; Sexual orientation	
No case studies were identified that explicitly worked with these specific protected categories to describe their participants.	
Other (non-protected) categories of diverse communities, including socio-economic, legal and educational status	
Disadvantaged urban communities	Brody & de Wilde 2020; Hennchen & Pregernig 2020; Jackson 2018; Kirkpatrick & Tarasuk 2009; Marovelli 2019; Middling *et al*. 2011; Milbourne 2012; Ramsden 2021; White & Bunn 2017
Ethnic minorities	Brody & de Wilde 2020
Food insecure people	Abbey *et al*. 2021; Lee *et al*. 2010
Homeless/under-housed men*	Engler-Stringer & Berenbaum 2007; Pettinger *et al*. 2017
Low socio-economic groups/disadvantaged groups	Chauvenet *et al*. 2021; Engler-Stringer & Berenbaum 2007; Jackson 2018; Kirkpatrick & Tarasuk 2009; Loopstra & Tarasuk 2013; Markow *et al*. 2014; Marovelli 2019; Porter & McIlvaine-Newsad 2013
Marginalised people	Ramsden 2020, 2021
Refugees, Asylum seekers	Bishop & Purcell 2013
Socioeconomically disadvantaged adolescents*	Marovelli 2019
University students*	Anderson *et al*. 2018
Population not specified	
Non-targeted	Armstrong 2000; Kingsley *et al*. 2019; McVey *et al*. 2018; Schanes & Stagl 2019

** Due to the intersectional/mixed nature of the community food activity's participants, some categories of participants (and references) have been repeated in this table. We have used the participant descriptions (categories) as used by the authors.*

Table 1: Type of participants in the reviewed case studies

In the reviewed literature, the case studies included a variety of community food activities, which are listed in Table 2. These activities include food growing initiatives, (social) cooking and eating activities, programmes to share and/or increase food knowledge, and food sharing activities. They took place in a variety of community settings across thirteen countries. These settings include schools, universities, community gardens, supported housing, and other accessible and sometimes dispersed community spaces [see details in Appendix 5]

Type of Activity	***Case studies (References)***
(Social) Cooking and/or Eating	
Community kitchens	Engler-Stringer & Berenbaum 2007; Hennchen & Pregernig 2020; Kingsley *et al*. 2019; Lee *et al*. 2010; Marovelli 2019
Cooking club	Abbey *et al*. 2021; Gatenby *et al*. 2011
Intergenerational lunch	Hennchen & Pregernig 2020
Social eating event	Kruithof *et al*. 2018; Smith & Harvey 2021
Food Growing	
Community/Urban gardening	Anderson *et al*. 2018; Bonow and Normak 2018; Brody & de Wilde 2020; Chauvenet *et al*. 2021; Draper & Freedman 2010; Harper & Afonso 2016; Hennchen & Pregernig 2020; Jackson 2018; Kingsley *et al*. 2019; Loopstra and Tarasuk 2013; Markow *et al*. 2014; Marovelli 2019; McVey *et al*. 2018; Middling *et al*. 2011; Milbourne 2012; Ohmer *et al*. 2009; O'Kane 2016; Pascoe & Howes 2017; Porter & McIlvaine-Newsad 2013; Ramsden 2020; Ramsden 2021; Sonti & Svendsen 2018; Suto *et al*. 2021; Wesselow & Mashele 2019; Whatley *et al*. 2015
Rural Community Garden	Porter & McIlvaine-Newsad 2013
Community allotment gardening	Bishop & Purcell 2013; White & Bunn 2017
Urban collective gardening	Scheromm 2015; White & Bunn 2017
Food sharing	
Food sharing Initiative	Davies *et al*. 2019; Marovelli 2019
Food swaps	Markow *et al*. 2014
Food waste sharing	Schanes & Stagl 2019
School holiday hunger project	Denning 2019
Food experiences	
Food discussions for wellbeing	Pettinger *et al*. 2017

Table 2: Food-related activities described in the reviewed case studies

The findings on motivations, barriers and enablers from our analysis of the reviewed case studies are presented in the following sections.

4. Motivations for participation in community food activities

Our review shows that there are multiple, often interwoven and shifting reasons for engagement with food-related activities: what motivates one person might be less relevant for another, and what motivates one person on one day might not remain the main motivating factor the next day. There are variations for motivations between individual participants, but also multiple reasons for one individual. Hence, it appears that those community food activities that can address several motivational factors at the same time – and respond to the complexity of motivations – can appeal to a more diverse range of participants.

Several of the reviewed studies on **community gardening** explicitly investigated what motivates community gardeners. For example, two decades ago, a survey of twenty community garden programme coordinators responsible for 63 community gardens across upstate New York revealed that "the most common reasons reported by the coordinators for participation in community gardens were access to fresh/better tasting food (90%), to enjoy nature (80%), and because of health benefits, including mental health (75%)" (Armstrong 2000: 322f). More recently, Sonti and Svendsen (2018) identified six distinct but interrelated themes of what motivated volunteers in New York City to take care of community gardens: these themes included enjoyment, personal history, improvement, community, food, and education.

In the UK context, Jackson (2018) found six interconnecting themes explaining motivations for participation in various gardening projects in a relatively deprived urban context in Lincoln: "social networks and isolation, health and well-being, environmental concerns and interests in gardening/cultivation, volunteering, and community issues, such as vandalism, and empowerment" (Jackson 2018: 534). Kingsley *et al.* (2019), in their case study of six community gardens in Melbourne distinguished six themes underlying the motivations for participation: (1) Family history, childhood and passion for gardening (2) Productive gardening, sustainability and growing fresh produce (3) Building social and community connections (4) Community and civic action (5) Stress relief (6) Building identity, pride and purpose. In a study of community gardens in Australia and Denmark, Pascoe & Howes (2017) also looked at slightly broader levels of abstraction and identified three main categories of motivations for community gardening, distinguishing between individual, community, and gardening-specific motivations.

In comparison, systematic analysis of what motivates participation in other types of community food activities was relatively sparse among the reviewed articles, but some authors, nonetheless, explored motivational factors. In an evaluation of monthly **social eating** events in Amsterdam, Kruithof *et al.* (2018) distinguished four types of participants with different motivations for participation. They were described as (1) the lonely participant, driven by a need to find companionship; (2) the activist participant, to enlarge their social network; (3) the satisfied participant, to enjoy social occasions and interested in diversifying their network of ties, and (4) the calculating participant, motivated by the desire for reduced cost food, and who did not appear to want to become more active in their neighbourhood.

Looking specifically at **food sharing** initiatives in London, Marovelli (2019) found social isolation and loneliness as the key drivers for participation. In contrast, Schanes & Stagl (2019) identified five core motivations for participation in food surplus sharing initiatives in Austria. These include (1) emotion and morality, including negative emotions towards the injustices in the food system, as well as joy and pleasure and appreciation of those they share food with; (2) identity and sense of community, including a high identification within the community, where even though food sharers came from diverse backgrounds, they had strong ties and connection with each other; (3) reward, *i.e.*, personal gain through, e.g. the high proportion of their food needs being met; (4) social influence, through personal connections like friends and family; and (5) instrumentality, *i.e.*, saving food from being wasted, food redistribution, food surplus prevention, and reinvigorating a new consciousness around food.

This overview of motivating factors shows similarities but also differences in the way motivations have been encountered, perceived and classified. It reiterates that motivations are **context-dependent**, meaning they depend on specific circumstances of the individuals, the composition of the group, the specific community context as well as the nature of community food activity.

In the following sections, we briefly describe the range of different motivations we identified across the reviewed case studies. It is important to reiterate that while we present these motivations separated into different types, many of these are **interconnected** and are separated here for a better understanding of their complexity.

4.1 Individual motivations for participation

We start with an overview of the motivations for individual participants and the respective case studies they are drawn from, as shown in Table 3. We further elaborate on the range of motivations in section below.

Individual motivations for participation	
For mental health and well-being	Armstrong 2000; Bishop & Purcell 2013; Chauvenet *et al.* 2017; Jackson 2018; Kingsley *et al.* 2019; Kruithof *et al.* 2018; Marovelli 2019; Milbourne, 2012; Pascoe & Howes 2017; Pettinger *et al.* 2017; Ramsden 2020; Ramsden 2021; Scheromm 2015; Smith & Harvey 2021; Sonti & Svendsen 2018; Suto *et al.* 2021
Access to (healthy) food, healthy eating, and physical health	Abbey *et al.* 2021; Armstrong 2000; Jackson 2018; Kingsley *et al.* 2019; McVey *et al.* 2018; Schanes & Stagl 2019; Scheromm 2015; Sonti & Svendsen 2018
Development of knowledge and skills	Abbey *et al.* 2021; Anderson *et al.* 2018; Gatenby *et al.* 2011; McVey *et al.*, 2018; O'Kane 2016; Ramsden 2020; Ramsden 2021; Suto *et al.* 2021
Self-identity, personal history and family connections	Chauvenet *et al.* 2021; Kingsley *et al.* 2019; O'Kane 2016; Pascoe & Howes 2017; Schanes & Stagl 2019; Sonti & Svendsen 2019
A sense of community and 'community identity'	Armstrong 2000; Bishop & Purcell 2013; Jackson 2018; Kingsley *et al.* 2019; Middling *et al.* 2011; McVey *et al.* 2018; Ohmer *et al.* 2009; Pascoe & Howes 2017; Ramsden 2020; Ramsden 2021; Schanes & Stagl 2019
Diversity, interaction, and integration between communities	Kingsley *et al.* 2019; Milbourne 2012; McVey *et al.* 2018; Marovelli 2019; Lee *et al.* 2010
Ecological concerns	Anderson *et al.*, 2018; Jackson 2018; Kingsley *et al.*, 2019; Milbourne 2012; O'Kane 2016; Porter & McIlvaine-Newsad 2013; Schanes & Stagl 2019; Scheromm 2015
Social and environmental injustices	McVey *et al.* 2018; Milbourne 2016; Porter & McIlvaine-Newsad 2014; Schanes & Stagl 2019; White & Bunn 2017
Motivations for volunteering	Anderson *et al.* 2018; Denning 2019; Marovelli 2019

Table 3: Overview of individual motivations for participation

4.1.1 For mental health and well-being

Across the reviewed literature, the improvement of an individual's mental health and well-being was a commonly identified motivation (Bishop & Purcell 2013; Jackson 2018; Kruithof *et al*. 2018; Milbourne 2012; Marovelli 2019; Ramsden 2020; Ramsden 2021). It was frequently mentioned as important among people who engaged with community gardening (e.g., Armstrong 2000; Chauvenet *et al*. 2021; Kingsley *et al*. 2019). For example, in North Carolina, a community gardener described engaging with the activity as stress relief:

Well, I in the garden, it is very different in the way that, very different in the way that it works here. But for me in the garden, for me it is a de-stressing experience. Because I am stressed and I leave to go to the garden and I destress, I destress a lot.

(Chauvenet *et al*. 2021: 8)

A community garden project engaging with those seeking asylum and fleeing persecution highlights that the participants were motivated by the therapeutic impacts of gardening (Milbourne 2012). A similar finding from Bishop & Purcell (2013) describes the 'value' that refugees experienced from their 'occupational engagement' in allotment gardening leading to 'occupational justice'. In another case study, one participant described how they came to the garden because it offered "tranquillity in the middle of a bloody housing estate" and it was essential to participants with "day-to-day challenges, including isolation, mental health issues, or caring for relatives" (Ramsden 2021: 288). Picking up on mental health challenges and the benefits community garden can provide, one participant in a Canadian community gardening project described the effects of the activities (Suto *et al*. 2021:6) as follows:

The angst that generally exists within this building tends to dissipate when you're out mucking around in the soil. The nature of working with dirt is, you know, you can tolerate your mistakes, you're working with dirt, you know, and most, you'll find most people with mental illness have a hard time making mistakes or, you know, terrified of making mistakes.

(Suto *et al*. 2021: 6)

Outside of community gardening, other case studies also showed individuals were motivated to participate in food-related activities to improve their mental health and well-being. For example, Pettinger *et al*. (2017) identified food as a powerful medium to motivate people to change their lifestyle: in the case of homeless adults, a group generally considered as hard-to-reach, the participants felt able to engage with discussions about their food-related experiences and wellbeing. Pettinger *et al*. (2017) found that the food environment can be a critical social meeting place and food preparation can provide companionship and occupation. In the context of social eating events aimed at people with mild intellectual disabilities across

different districts of Amsterdam, some individuals, categorised as the "lonely participant", were motivated to attend these events driven by their "loneliness, looking for companionship" (Kruithof *et al*. 2018: 5).

The experience of mental health issues, social isolation and loneliness was also found to motivate individuals participating in food sharing events. In a study of these initiatives in diverse areas across London, many talked about their mental health challenges as motivations for attending and volunteering at food sharing events (Marovelli 2019: 199).

It is worth noting, however, that the positive well-being benefits were not always only described in terms of 'dealing with mental health challenges'. Frequently, participants also simply referred to 'pleasure', 'happiness', and 'enjoyment' that came from engagement with the community food activities, including community gardening and social eating (e.g., Pascoe & Howes 2017; Scheromm 2015; Smith & Harvey 2021; Sonti & Svendsen 2018; Suto *et al*. 2021).

4.1.2 Access to (healthy) food, healthy eating, and physical health

The perceived connection of community food activities with better personal health was not only linked to benefits for mental health, but also to improved (and more affordable) access to healthy, nutritious food and a related increase in healthy eating (Kingsley *et al*. 2019; Schanes & Stagl 2019; Scheromm 2015; Sonti & Svendsen 2018). In conjunction with reductions in stress levels and social isolation and - at least in the case of community gardening - an increase in physical activity, resulting improvements in participants' physical health were also described as a motivating factor (Abbey *et al*. 2021; Jackson 2018; McVey *et al*. 2018). At cooking and eating events, participants were motivated by the opportunity to socialise and access and cook healthier meals (e.g., Abbey *et al*. 2021; Engler-Stringer & Berenbaum 2007).

In their study of three community gardens in East Edinburgh (UK), McVey *et al*. (2018) found that although an improvement in physical health was not explicitly a primary motivation for the participants, many spoke of the other 'rewards' that came with doing the physical activity and access to healthy food, as described below:

… the physical aspects of health were symbolized by what was produced and the methods by which it was grown and later consumed. The food itself was considered healthy, therefore the consumption of it was also considered healthy.

(McVey *et al*. 2018: 53).

Both the production and access to fresh, better tasting, and organic food have long been identified as important reasons for participation in community garden programmes, along with the perceived health benefits of gardening as an exercise and a healthy activity (Armstrong 2000).

In the case study of a community-based cooking class in the US which engaged with participants experiencing food insecurity (Abbey *et al*. 2021), the motivation for participation was to learn how to cook from scratch as it was perceived to be healthier. Once they were engaged with the activity, participants suggested topics that they would like to learn more about, one of which was healthy meals on a budget. The satisfaction of preparing a good meal for themselves and others was considered as beneficial to their physical, psychological, and social well-being.

4.1.3 Development of knowledge and skills

The development and sharing of knowledge and food-related skills was another practical motivation for participation that was highlighted across many different community food activities (Abbey *et al*. 2021; Anderson *et al*. 2018; Gatenby *et al*. 2011; McVey *et al*. 2018; O'Kane 2016; Ramsden 2020; Ramsden 2021; Suto *et al*. 2021).

Exploring sustainable university-based community gardens, Anderson *et al*. (2018) noted that the most common motivating factor was "the desire to learn and increase knowledge, in particular around topics related to gardening, sustainability and healthy food" (p. 8). For students, it was also an opportunity to improve their employability; they were "motivated to volunteer by their desire to obtain benefits that would boost their employability prospects and future careers" (p. 8).

For community garden participants in Edinburgh (UK), the garden provided an opportunity to develop cultural diversity and knowledge exchanges, especially around cooking and eating, and a sharing of knowledge and skills with children, youth and the wider community through social events and organised community meals (McVey *et al*. 2018). This transmission of knowledge is also highlighted in another study of community gardens in Canberra (Australia) where some participants felt that it was important for children to get to know where food came from. Others valued it as a space to exchange views, experiences and practices of gardening; and a place to acquire hands-on learning and observational learning from the more experienced gardeners (O'Kane 2016). In the context of organising community-based cooking classes, Abbey *et al*. (2021) described the participants who were homeless expressing "a desire to acquire lost cooking skills and feel "normal" again" (p. 529) by engaging with cooking-related activities, "preparing a good meal for themselves and others" (p. 10).

4.1.4 Self-identity, personal history and family connections

In several studies, participants described their own self-identity, family history or existing family connections as a motivating factor for participation in specific type of activities (Kingsley *et al*. 2019; O'Kane 2016; Schanes & Stagl 2019, Sonti & Svendsen 2019).

At a community garden in Melbourne (Australia), participants were motivated by their past experiences from childhood and expressed having had a life-long interest in gardening projects (Kingsley *et al*. 2019). Similarly, community gardeners from New York reasoned, "I've been gardening all my life" or "I'm a farmer from the heart" (Sonti & Svendsen 2019: 1196).

Engaging in community gardening to keep family traditions alive was also relevant "as a way of feeling connected to family members who taught them to garden and who may have passed away" (Sonti & Svendsen 2019: 1196). This connection was also significant in rural areas of upstate New York, where Armstrong (2000) found 'the practice of traditional culture' (p.322) as a strong motivation to engage in community garden projects. In a different rural setting in North Carolina, as a community garden volunteer described:

We have a lot of elderly people that are ex farmers… and it just breathes life back into them to come out and get back down to the mother earth, pick up potatoes, or pick peas, but just to watch someone do it . . . they'll come out and pull up a chair into the row and watch you do it.
(Chauvenet *et al*. 2021: 8)

The motivation for transmitting knowledge about growing and eating good food to children and younger generations was also seen as significant for keeping family traditions going and for changing the food system for the better (O'Kane 2016; Pascoe & Howes 2017). In another context, that of food-waste sharing initiatives, the social influence of personal connections – such as friends and family - helped to alleviate initial scepticism and stigma related to sharing of food-waste (Schanes & Stagl 2019) thus motivating participation. Having family members or members of one's pre-existing social network already engaged with community food activities appears to support initial engagement.

4.1.5 A sense of community and 'community identity'

The importance of the social element of community food activities also emerges from another common motivation that frequently extends beyond the consideration of personal benefit(s): the desire to develop a sense of community and interact with the wider community. This came across strongly in the case studies of community gardens (Armstrong 2000; Bishop & Purcell 2013; Jackson 2018; Middling *et al*. 2011; McVey *et al*. 2018; Pascoe & Howes 2017; Ramsden 2020; Ramsden 2021; Kingsley *et al*. 2019).

Participants of a community garden in Lincoln (UK), living in an area with high levels of health deprivation and disability, discussed the desire to make their community more closely-knit, as it had been perceived to be for previous generations (Jackson 2018). In another disadvantaged community in East Hull (UK), some participants felt that supporting the garden was a way in which they could give back to their local community (Ramsden 2021). The social aspect of gardening valued by participants in a community garden in Melbourne (Australia), was an important reason for participation. They "acknowledged that community and subsequent social support was more important than the garden itself, regenerating wasted cityscapes and engaging marginalised communities" (Kinglsey *et al*. 2019: 6).

For other participants, motivation is linked to attachment to a place and the duty to look after the local community -- "I do feel... the quality of life of this neighbourhood is in part my responsibility" (Kingsley *et al*. 2019: 6). For elderly and recently retired individuals, the garden presented a chance to grow community connections -- "If I didn't have a plot here, I'd probably be... sitting at home... it really gives me a focus... an opportunity to find people that I can relate to" (Kingsley *et al*. 2019: 6). Motivations varied between individuals at this community garden but engaging with the wider community and creating connections between community members was a consistent theme throughout.

Similar views were echoed by those participating in a community conservation programme in Western Pennsylvania (USA). Ohmer *et al*. (2009) demonstrated that the most significant reasons for volunteer and partner involvement were to "beautify and give something back to the community" (pp. 394-395). They believed that their involvement in the programme helped to "make their communities more visually attractive, projecting a positive community image, and increasing community pride, green space and gardens" (Ohmer *et al*. 2009: 395).

In the case study of community allotment gardening by refugees, Bishop & Purcell (2013) found the motivating factor to be a sense of connectedness that incorporates sharing, support and collective problem solving. In their study of older people who were tenants of a sheltered housing scheme in a disadvantaged urban neighbourhood, Middling *et al*. (2011) described the community garden as 'something good for the community'. They emphasised the importance of living in a pleasant environment and were committed to improving their local area. In another study of community gardens in the urban neighbourhoods of Australia, Pascoe & Howes (2017) identified motivations which also included teaching the children to interact with the community in a safe place and as an enjoyable neighbourhood social activity overall.

For participants engaged in food surplus sharing, it was about creating a sense of community identity around the group of people involved as a "family trying to make a difference together" as well as around the activity (Schanes & Stagl 2019: 1496). Although the 'foodsavers' came from diverse backgrounds and social categories, their "shared interest in the topic of food (waste) and their shared goals (e.g., reducing food waste) and moral standards" (Schanes & Stagl 2019: 1496) made them participate in food sharing as it allowed them to make connections with a group of like-minded people.

4.1.6 Diversity, interaction, and integration between communities

Themes of diversity, interaction and integration between communities were also common, particularly in urban areas (Kingsley *et al*. 2019; Milbourne 2012; McVey *et al*. 2018; Marovelli 2019; Lee *et al*. 2010).

In the case study of a community garden in Melbourne (Australia), building social and community connections, regenerating the community and engaging with marginalised groups was viewed as more important than the garden itself (Kingsley *et al*. 2019). Community gardens were viewed as spaces where adults could connect with young people, respond to changing demographics, and foster integration between communities and generations. To illustrate, community gardens supported isolated women, such as Bangladeshi women, to have access to the outdoor and social spaces; they were also viewed as spaces that allowed faith-based communities to integrate with secular communities alongside responding to changing demographics linked to migration (Milbourne 2012).

McVey *et al*. (2018: 51) in their study of three community gardens in Scotland related diversity to the political-economic context. They found only one garden where the cultural diversity of participants reflected the community:

...not because the community itself had a higher migrant population, but due to the aims and agendas of the gardens... and the further the garden moves beyond food production and more toward places of action and political motivations, the weaker is the support from certain groups or individuals...

In the context of the other two gardens, they found that diversity was seen as much more than just knowledge exchange between different socio-cultural groups; it was about social cohesion and strong relationships that characterised communities in the idealized past.

In the case study of Skip Garden in London, most staff members and volunteers were not only women from different ethnicities and backgrounds, but there was also social and ethnic diversity among volunteers and participants. This was influenced by the organising charity's mission which had a "strong focus on community, conviviality and new ways of living together in the respect of nature" (Marovelli 2019: 194) and which was integrated into all the programmes they run.

4.1.7 Ecological concerns

Another motivation for many participants stemmed from their desire to engage with sustainable activities and to contribute to a sustainable food system (O'Kane 2016; Anderson *et al*. 2018; Kingsley *et al*. 2019; Schanes & Stagl, 2019). It was common for participants to have environmental concerns (Milbourne 2012; Kingsley *et al*. 2019; Jackson 2018). This motivated them to engage with what they viewed as environmental activism (Porter & McIlvaine-Newsad, 2013; Schanes & Stagl 2019). This mainly took the form of community gardening as our review has shown.

O'Kane (2016) found in her case study that the community gardening group members were motivated to participate in gardening as a lifestyle choice which was underpinned by their knowledge of the failures in the dominant food system and the importance of making right food choices in order to change the food system. This was made possible because of their skill set; availability of 'free time'; and their 'high' socio-economic status. For some, this also included a commitment to reducing food packaging, food waste, and to making food choices that respected animal welfare – which are consistent with ecological food citizenship practices.

Participants attending a university-based community garden ascribed some of their motivation to values linked to "supporting sustainable food systems or improving the nutrition and health of others" (Anderson *et al*. 2018: 8). Similarly, for participants at a community garden in Melbourne (Australia), "environmental consciousness was a driver for initial participation and sustained involvement" (Kingsley *et al*. 2019: 6). The same was true for participants at a community garden in Lincoln (UK) who expressed a wider concern regarding the environment. The participants wanted to make the urban area 'greener' rather than being a "bland, concrete jungle" (Jackson 2018: 536).

In a study of urban collective gardens in Montpellier (France), Scheromm (2015) found that motivations varied based on the socio-cultural profile and age of the participant. In this specific instance, those from "upper and intermediate socio-professional groups" were motivated by efforts to preserve biological ecosystems, adopting various approaches such as organic farming, agroecology, or permaculture (Scheromm 2015: 740). In contrast, the gardeners who were retired or employed were more likely to participate as a hobby or a form of leisure.

Outside of community gardening, food sharing initiatives that collect, manage and share food surplus are also based on ecological concerns. In Austria, participants of a food sharing initiative, the 'food savers', were motivated by their intention to reinvigorate "a new consciousness around food" which recognises the value of food and the importance of reducing the environmental impact of food waste and saving the resources that are going into producing food (Schanes & Stagl, 2019: 1495).

4.1.8 Social and environmental injustices

Across many studies, participants expressed a motivation to address social and environmental injustices, particularly at the local community level (Milbourne 2012; McVey *et al*. 2018; Porter & McIlvaine-Newsad 2013; Schanes & Stagl 2019; White & Bunn 2017). These motivations reflect some of the key dimensions of food citizenship that includes aspirations for community empowerment and system level changes.

Milbourne (2012: 943) described community gardening projects in disadvantaged urban neighbourhoods as "using ordinary forms of environmentalism to produce new socio-ecological spaces of justice within the city". This includes, for example, gardens where attempts are made to reclaim despoiled land or tackle the absence of green spaces in deprived neighbourhoods. Similarly, White & Bunn (2017) found residents and volunteers in the marginalised urban context of Glasgow motivated to organise and participate in community growing spaces because they recognised the wider role that such spaces can play in addressing social justice and climate change.

McVey *et al*. (2018) in their study identified that growing food as a right, the right to land, the act of claiming common land, and reclaiming waste and unused land, and the sources of community empowerment this provided, were viewed as a key motivation. In the Scottish context, reclaiming land to alleviate the anxieties around land ownership and reform was itself an important motivator. Linking to the food insecurity faced by vulnerable social groups, another motivation for participants to engage in community gardening was the desire to have access to fresh produce in order to alleviate social injustice (Porter & McIlvaine-Newsad 2013). In the case of those engaged in food-waste sharing initiatives, the sharing of food surplus activities provided a way by which participants believed they could challenge environmental and social injustice in the food system (Schanes & Stagl 2019).

4.1.9 Motivations for volunteering

Although most of the studies focused on participants engaged in the activities, a few looked at the motivations of volunteers supporting the activities. In their study on a university-based community garden in Australia, Anderson *et al*. (2018) found that very little is known about volunteer engagement in such setting. Based on focus groups with a cohort of volunteers, they identified that some participants, especially the student volunteers, were motivated by their desire to obtain social and educational benefits that would boost their employability prospects and future careers. In another study on volunteers supporting "Lunch", a Christian-based project responding to children's holiday hunger in a school kitchen setting, Denning (2019) found that volunteers were primarily motivated by their personal faith to volunteer. Further, their *persistence* in volunteering was "a continual process of motivation, action and reflection in which different factors from the past, present and anticipated future feed into volunteers' motivations to continue volunteering or not" (p. 3).

A few studies, however, noted that it was difficult to distinguish between the participants and volunteers as some individuals considered themselves in both these roles. Marovelli (2019), for example, found that many participants in the food sharing initiatives talked of how they experienced mental health issues at some point of their lives and "feeling depressed was commonly listed as motive for attending and for volunteering at food sharing events" (p. 199). Having similar experiences and motivations helped to build mutual support during activities and supported the development of meaningful connections between those who prepared food and those who consumed the food. Overall, the motivations for volunteering we could identify from the literature appear similar to those for participation and can include for example, knowledge development, social connections, and concerns for community.

4.2 Motivations for engagement by organisers and organisations

Similar to individual participants of community food activities, organisers of these activities were also motivated by a range of factors. Organisational motivations (perhaps better described as the goals that the organisers and organisations hope to achieve) are linked to the focus of individual organisations and to the specific food activities or community groups they engage with (e.g., developing cooking skills and healthy eating habits of youths, growing fresh fruit and vegetables locally). However, they often also include broader goals and diverse ranges of activities (e.g., to facilitate well-being, create a sense of community, support engagement).

Based on our review, we identified four broad categories of motivations. We present an overview of these motivations and the case studies they are drawn from in Table 4. In the sections below, we start with motivations that focus primarily on improving specific abilities, health or other positive outcomes for individuals, followed by broader goals linked to improvements at the environmental and social (communal) level.

Organiser and Organisational Motivations	
Food-related education, skills training and knowledge sharing	Gatenby *et al*. 2011; Jackson 2018; Lee *et al*. 2010; Suto *et al*. 2021; Wesselow & Mashele 2019
Health and social inequalities	Chauvenet *et al*. 2021; Marovelli 2019; Pettinger *et al*. 2017; Ramsden 2020
Sustainability/Ecological	Anderson *et al*. 2018; Davies *et al*. 2019; Harper & Afonso 2016; Hennchen & Pregernig 2020; Marovelli 2019; Porter & McIlvaine-Newsad 2013; Schanes & Stagl 2019
Building community	Gatenby *et al*. 2011; Hennchen & Pregernig 2020; Jackson 2018; Lee *et al*. 2010; Middling *et al*. 2011; Pascoe & Howes 2017

Table 4: Overview of organiser and organisational motivations

4.2.1 Food-related education, skills training and knowledge sharing

Several organisations and some organisers running community kitchens or cooking classes in the reviewed case studies were motivated to provide food-related education or training, with the aim of promoting healthy eating. Those organising an after-school multicultural cooking-class in Leeds (UK), for example, worked with diverse schools to improve pupils' ability to cook healthy meals (Gatenby *et al*. 2011). In this case study, two of the schools that had pupils from a predominantly white British background were paired with schools that had "above twice the national average of ethnic minority students and a high number of students for whom English was not their first language" (Gatenby *et al*. 2011: 109). By pairing schools up, they were able to raise both cultural awareness and improve cooking skills of the pupils. Organisers of two community kitchens in Victoria (Australia) were motivated to promote healthy eating for residents, and although participants came from a variety of backgrounds, one in five reported that they had been affected by food insecurity (Lee *et al*. 2010).

In a therapeutic community garden project in British Columbia (Canada), structured weekly group sessions included "... combined education on edible gardening with social interaction, and peer-to-peer and facilitator-led learning" (Suto *et al*. 2021: 3). In George (South Africa), the main driver for the development of a network of urban gardeners had originally been "to facilitate access to fresh and nutritious produce by encouraging people to grow their own organic vegetables" (Wesselow & Mashele 2019: 857). As in the case of other community food activities their aims evolved as the network grew and they expanded to include wider environmental values. Members emphasised how they were excited about empowering people to grow their own produce and encourage greater self-reliance. In another context, at the Green Synergy community garden located in a relatively deprived urban ward in Lincoln (UK), organisers were motivated by the central objective to create an environment where participants can "socialise, learn and thrive" (Jackson 2018: 532).

4.2.2 Health and social inequalities

'Be Enriched', a charity that runs community kitchens in London was mainly motivated to reduce health and social inequalities by redistributing food surplus and by providing training (*i.e.*, kitchen skills for children with learning disabilities) to vulnerable populations. (Marovelli 2019). Although it did not target a specific population, despite their overarching goal to fight food poverty, it was concerned about "perpetuating stigmatisation and social exclusion around eating donated food" (Marovelli 2019: 194). The canteens/kitchens were frequented by many mainly elderly people and from a wide range of diverse ethnic backgrounds. The aim was to improve community capacity by enabling residents to share and learn new skills (Marovelli 2019).

A community garden manager operating in a rural economically disadvantaged community in the United States, discussed how the activity organisers perceived the garden as a method to improve community health,

… through gardening, we can, we can deal with the diabetes, we can deal with obesity, through working manually, you're gon' stay tone. You're gon' keep your weight down, now we can eat healthy. That's, that's central.

(Chauvenet *et al*. 2021:7)

In Hull (UK) The Green Prosperity project that supported marginalised people through, for example, community gardening, worked with the "broad aims to increase sustainable living, reduce poverty and improve the environment" (Ramsden 2020: 175). Also in the UK, Food as a Lifestyle Motivator project in Plymouth aimed to facilitate the engagement of homeless men in wellbeing conversations. Those who attended the activities had experienced high levels of both social and economic inequities and suffered disproportionally from poor nutrition. In a focus group setting, the project utilised creative methods (Photo-Elicitation through a Photo-Dialogue exercise) as a way of encouraging participants to reflect on their own personal food related experiences. The study identified that food provided a "'catalyst to empower individuals in discussions about their wellbeing... and ultimately influence nutritional health inequalities" (Pettinger *et al*. 2017).

4.2.3 Sustainability and ecological concerns

Some organisations were also found to be explicitly motivated by sustainability and ecological concerns. This was found in those organising community gardening or other growing projects. Anderson *et al*. (2018), for example, describe how people organising a community garden on a university campus were motivated by a desire to support a "sustainable food supply on campus" (Anderson *et al*. 2018). Similarly, for a "participatory garden" in Southern Germany, the motivation was to raise awareness for sustainable and healthy food production (Hennchen & Pregernig 2020). In a different case study, activism was a key motivation for students, researchers and local actors working on a gardening project for environmental justice (Porter & McIlvaine-Newsad 2013). In Lisbon (Portugal), a neighbourhood-level NGO AVAAL aimed "to foster what it calls ecológia civica (civic ecology) through community and school gardens among other programmes" (Harper & Afonso 2016: 7).

Ecological motivations were not just confined to activities revolving around community gardening and food growing. City-based 'Foodsharing' initiatives in Austria, Germany and elsewhere in Europe are motivated by the goal to prevent food waste and to raise awareness of unsustainable, wasteful food (and other) practices (Davies *et al*. 2019; Schanes & Stagl 2019). 'Skip Garden and Kitchen', a temporary food growing space within Kings Cross urban regeneration site in London, organises a variety of projects including a 'Junior Chef Club', 'Friday Night Out, and 'Lunch and Learning'.
The motivation was to provide "environmental education, promoting a reflection about a more harmonious human and non-human interaction, sustainable diets and the environmental impact of food choices" (Marovelli, 2019: p. 195). For another London-based initiative that provides opportunities to grow food, cook and eat together, the aim was "to create healthy, integrated and environmentally responsible communities" (Davies *et al*. 2019: 11).

4.2.4 Building community

Building community is another organisational motivation that emerged from the reviewed literature. This took many forms ranging from fostering a sense of community and belonging to creating a physical and social space in which individuals can feel safe and are able to build positive relationships with one another. Organisers of a community garden in Lincoln (UK) hoped to create "inspiring and therapeutic environments... in which... people can socialise, learn and thrive" (Jackson 2018: 532). For other organisers, such as those running community kitchens, it was about creating volunteering opportunities for residents that facilitated participation in community life (Lee *et al*. 2010). In southern Germany, joint practices of gardening as well as cooking and eating were about developing a communal space in which participants could be reconnected to their natural roots (Hennchen & Pregernig 2020). In other studies, organisers were motivated "to enact a sense of civic duty" to improve the resources or integration of the community by supporting community gardening (Pascoe & Howes 2017).

In non-gardening contexts, social events were organised to improve multicultural cohesion. An after-school multicultural cooking class in Leeds (UK), for example, provided children with the opportunity to cook meals linked to different cultural events (Gatenby *et al*. 2011). The motivation to connect participants with policymakers and researchers to build a community was described by Middling *et al*. (2011) as part of a participatory action research project. Across a range of community food activities, the organisational intent behind them was to build and strengthen the community using food-related activities to bring people together from a diverse range of communities.

4.3 Summary

- Motivations for participation in and engagement with community food activities range from the aim to access or provide healthy food and (food-related) knowledge and skills as well as opportunities for better mental and physical health and well-being, to the desire to contribute to better communities and better environments. Motivations are both intrinsic (driven by values, beliefs, and attitudes) and extrinsic or instrumental (with a specific benefit in mind).
- The different case studies involving different social groups reveal no single motivation or set of motivations as most important. Instead, there are multiple motivations behind participation depending on the type of activity, who the participants are, and how the activity is organised/initiated.
- For individuals, and within specific groups, motivations vary – with some driven more by personal motives and others more by environmental or other concerns; however, most have a variety of motivations for participation and engagement. The distinction between different motivations is often not that clear-cut or explicit. Furthermore, motivations are not static and can vary over time.
- A diverse range of expected or experienced benefits from an activity (as in the case of community gardening) is itself a key motivation for participation, which – through a broader appeal to a wider range of people - can attract more diverse participation.

5. Barriers to participation in community food activities

In order to achieve greater participation and greater diversity in participation in community food activities, it is not only important to organise those types of community food activities that are of relevance to local communities (*i.e.*, respond to the needs and motivations of community members) but also to consider the barriers that individuals might be facing that hinder them from engaging with community food activities. For example, studying a cohort of food-insecure households in Toronto (Canada), Kirkpatrick and Tarasuk (2009) found that only very few of these households utilised community-based food initiatives like community gardens or community kitchens.

Interestingly, across the reviewed studies, only very few explicitly analysed barriers to participation (Abbey *et al.* 2021; Loopstra and Tarasuk 2013). However, through a close reading of the case studies, we identified a variety of barriers (actual and potential) for individuals.

5.1 Barriers for participation by individuals

We start with an overview of the barriers for individual participants and the respective case studies they are drawn from, as shown in Table 5. We further elaborate on the range of barriers in section below.

Individual Barriers to Participation	
Lack of time/competing priorities	Abbey *et al.* 2021; Anderson *et al.* 2018; Engler-Stringer & Berenbaum 2007; Hennchen & Pregernig 2020; Loopstra and Tarasuk 2013
Access (location, costs)	Abbey *et al.* 2021; Lee *et al.* 2010; Markow *et al.* 2014; Loopstra and Tarasuk 2013
Lack of awareness and communication	Anderson *et al.* 2018; Loopstra & Tarasuk 2013; Markow *et al.* 2014
Social expectations and concerns	Kruithof *et al.* 2018; Loopstra & Tarasuk 2013
Nature of activity	Bonow & Normark 2018; Jackson 2018; Loopstra & Tarasuk 2013; Smith & Harvey 2021
Disadvantaged individuals, families & neighbourhoods	Brody & de Wilde 2020; Engler-Stringer & Berenbaum 2007; Hennchen & Pregernig 2020; Jackson 2018; Marovelli 2019; Middling *et al.* 2011; Milbourne 2012; Ramsden 2021

Table 5: Overview of individual barriers to participation

5.1.1 Lack of time and competing priorities

A lack of time and competing priorities was a common barrier to participation. Activities such as community gardening can be time consuming and organised at times that are not accessible to everyone. This was true, for example, for community garden initiatives in Southern Germany, where some – especially financially disadvantaged - participants felt unable to dedicate the time required to maintain the garden (Hennchen & Pregernig 2020). Among low-income families in Toronto, 1-in-4 expressed a lack of time as a reason for not taking part in food gardening activities, and 1-in-5 for not using a community kitchen programme (Loopstra and Tarasuk 2013).

For participants at a community garden based on a university campus, it was the timing of events that created challenges, as those events often coincided with other commitments like studies or work (Anderson *et al*. 2018). Timing of activities can be a particularly significant barrier to those from disadvantaged groups. Cooking classes in the Northwest of the USA, designed for those experiencing food insecurity, struggled to organise events at a time that was convenient to participants due to already busy schedules:

They wouldn't be able to leave their kids. I'd assume it would have to be in the evening cuz most people work during the day, and then they'd be leaving their kids right at dinnertime to go to a cooking class.

(Abbey *et al*. 2021: 528)

Similarly, family commitments were identified as a potential barrier for single mothers attending a social collective kitchen activity. Mothers found it difficult to socialise if they did not have childcare or if it was not provided at the activity venue (Engler-Stringer & Berenbaum 2007). Time limitations can both be a constraining factor due to the overall amount of time that partaking in a specific activity requires, or due to the specific scheduling of community-activities that can clash with other commitments.

5.1.2 Access challenges due to location and costs

Another barrier for participants is related to physical access to an activity, linked to the specific location or venue of the activity. Lee *et al*. (2010) found financial costs and lack of access to suitable transport were barriers in their study of community kitchens in Victoria (Australia). The participants identified location as a key factor in decision-making. Even if venue sites may have had all the equipment they needed, when the location was not accessible to community members, potential participants were dissuaded from engaging with the activity.

In combination with a lack of time as discussed earlier, having to travel a distance to an event or activity posed additional constraints (Abbey *et al*. 2021; Markow *et al*. 2014; Loopstra and Tarasuk 2013). For those participants who lived in rural areas, with limited transportation, they were unwilling to attend if they had to pay a fee to attend. The unaffordability of activities was often described as a barrier for individuals to engage with the activities. In the case study of a community cooking class in the US (Abbey *et al*. 2021: 7), access barriers to participation included: "cost, accessibility (e.g., lack of transportation, disability), and scheduling difficulties (e.g., inconvenient time of day, lack of childcare, inclement weather)."

5.1.3 Lack of awareness and communication

For some participants, there was a lack of knowledge or awareness of what types of food –related activities there were in their area or how to become engaged in them. Amongst 359 families not using a community garden programme, 28.4% lacked knowledge about how or where to participate and 11.7% did not know what the programme was. The same study found a similar lack of awareness amongst families not using a community kitchen programme, where 33.2% did not know how or where to participate, and 13.2% did not know what the programme was (Loopstra & Tarasuk 2013: 56f). Whilst attempting to understand participation in a community-based food system, Markow *et al*. (2014) found that amongst low-socioeconomic status groups, there was a lack of awareness of activities and how they operated.

In the context of a university-based community garden (Anderson *et al*. 2018), several participants discussed a general lack of awareness and promotion of the garden in the wider university community. Additionally, communication with volunteers was sometimes inadequate, all of which contributed to feelings of disengagement. For some participants, not knowing who the key contacts for the garden were, for example, or even knowing where the garden was located were barriers to engagement. While effective and regular communication was critical to volunteering, issues around modes of communication used and the various preferences of volunteers were also raised as a barrier. Some participants described the limitations of email communication, for example, which relies heavily on the volunteer actively checking their inbox frequently or those instances where emails were sometimes not received. Others discussed a preference for a "in your face" reminder system such as text messaging or calendar reminders to assist them in remembering when gardening sessions were on (Anderson *et al*. 2018).

5.1.4 Social and institutional expectations and concerns

Joining a new social group or network can be a challenge in and of itself for many potential community food activity participants. When asked about the reasons for not joining community garden or kitchen programmes, some people in Toronto (Canada) "spoke of disliking sharing communal space to garden or cook, having to work alongside strangers or people they did not get along with" (Loopstra and Tarasuk 2013: 58). In another case study from Amsterdam, participants were motivated by the desire to build friendships and to strengthen their social connections, but the fear or disappointment of not being able to build these connections itself became a barrier. At the 'Communal Table', a group-orientated intervention that organises monthly dinners for adults with mild intellectual disabilities, participants were left disappointed if friendships failed to materialise, reducing the likelihood that they would participate again (Kruithof *et al*. 2018).

In a project at a residential homeless centre in Plymouth (UK), which focused on creating food dialogues for changing lifestyle among homeless adults, the participants found institutional regulations imposed on their food environment to be a barrier to their social engagement with food (Pettinger *et al*. 2017). The structured mealtime routines, and strict guidelines on curfews, and check-in times, were described as inhibiting the development of natural routines and social connections around food.

5.1.5 Specific nature of activity

The nature or perceptions of a specific community food activity can become a barrier for participation, especially affecting (hindering) initial engagements, *i.e.*, before people have made a first attempt at an activity. Hence, despite participants describing their experience with community gardening as "an 'equal' 'simple activity'" (Jackson 2018: 536), leading to positive outcomes even for the more vulnerable participants, the notion of gardening itself can create barriers since the activity may not naturally appeal to everyone. Participants at community gardens in Lincoln (UK) described how they were trying sometimes unsuccessfully to get others involved: "'as soon as you say gardening, they say oh I can't be bothered'. In particular, the physicality of gardening and connected perceptions that it is 'too much hard work', were given as reasons not to participate" (Jackson 2018: 536). This points to the social-cultural construction of activities with their associated meanings and values which could pose as barriers. This was also seen in the context of participation in social eating and community kitchens (Loopstra and Tarasuk 2013; Smith & Harvey 2021).

The specific type of community activity can also create a barrier if people, for example, feel insecure about engaging, about their own abilities, or about health concerns. One resident in Toronto, for example, explained about their reason for not considering community gardening: "'I'm in too much pain with arthritis to plant even flowers'" (Loopstra and Tarasuk 2013: 58). In some instances, a lack of actual or perceived knowledge around food growing can create a barrier for participation, restricting the potential scaling-up of such initiatives if these concerns remain unaddressed (Bonow & Normark 2018).

5.1.6 Disadvantaged individuals, families and neighbourhoods

In the reviewed literature, disadvantaged urban neighbourhoods were often identified as areas in which barriers to participation were experienced acutely (Brody & de Wilde 2020; Hennchen & Pregernig 2020; Jackson 2018; Marovelli 2019; Middling *et al*. 2011; Milbourne 2012; Ramsden, 2021). Here, changing the current food system and its unequal outcomes is of greatest urgency; however, the accumulation of multiple disadvantages (poverty, language barriers, intersectional racisms, educational and other inequalities) creates substantial barriers to participation in community food activities.

Considering specifically disadvantaged individuals, despite many perceived benefits, participation in collective kitchens was problematic for homeless or underhoused people, who did not have access to a refrigerator or freezer to store cooked food (Engler-Stringer & Berenbaum 2007). In a study of older people in disadvantaged urban neighbourhoods, Middling *et al*. (2011) emphasise how 'disadvantages' accumulate across the life course, making the elderly disproportionately prone to a range of forms of social exclusion in terms of material resources, social relations, civic activities, and basic services – which often overlapped to produce forms of 'multiple disadvantages.' Disadvantages are also felt across generations, impacting, for example, the participation of school aged children attending an after-school multicultural cooking class. At the cooking class, children were offered materials to take home in order to replicate the class. Those from more disadvantaged backgrounds, however, were less likely to take up the offer as they felt they were unlikely to get an opportunity to cook the dish at home (Gatenby *et al*. 2011).

5.2 Barriers to engagement for organisers and organisations

Like the barriers to individuals' participation, organisational barriers have also not been discussed in much detail in the reviewed case studies. Nonetheless, the barriers faced in organising community food activities that were described often mirror those experienced by individuals. These include challenges or obstacles that hinder initiating (new activity), supporting and maintaining (ongoing) community food activities as well as challenges to encouraging participation by community members, including those from diverse backgrounds. Given the community-focused nature of the organisational activities, in many instances, these two types of barriers (the ones affecting effectiveness of the organisation, and those affecting the organisations' effectiveness in reducing participants' barriers) are closely interwoven. Hence, we do not distinguish between them but, where applicable, highlight the multi-directional effects of barriers.

Following an overview of the barriers and the respective case studies they are drawn from (see Table 6), we elaborate further in section below.

Organiser and Organisational Barriers	
Access to infrastructure/resources	Abbey *et al*. 2021; Armstrong 2000; Kruithof *et al*. 2018; Lee *et al*. 2010; Markow *et al*. 2014; Ramsden 2020; Ramsden 2021
Exclusion of specific communities	Brody & Wilde 2020; Engler & Berenbaum 2007; Hennchen and Pregernig 2020; Kingsley *et al*. 2019; Loopstra and Tarasuk 2013
Differences in opinions, motivations or agendas	Bonow & Normark 2018; Hennchen & Pregernig 2020; Jackson 2018; Kingsley *et al*. 2019; McVey *et al*. 2018
Lack of community representation	Hennchen & Pregernig 2020
Institutional regulations	Bonow & Normark 2018; Davies *et al*. 2019; Harper & Afonso 2016

Table 6: Overview of barriers for organisers and organisations

5.2.1 Access to infrastructure/resources

Whilst location proved to be a barrier at the individual level, it can also hamper the effectiveness of organising activities (Kruithof *et al*. 2018, Lee *et al*. 2010, Markow *et al*. 2014; Abbey *et al*. 2021). For example, collective kitchens in Canada often did not have the resources to advertise, which meant that they had limited capacity to reach out to those who needed them most (Engler-Stringer & Berenbaum 2007). In a similar case of a Canadian community kitchen in Victoria, organising social cooking and eating events required access to a kitchen space. However, this was not often easily available in the community in which those activities were being considered. For organisers, it was difficult to find locations that fulfilled a number of important criteria including easy access for the community, and the possibility to accommodate larger groups (Lee *et al*. 2010). Another factor that might become a barrier was in relation to selected spaces needing suitable accessibility for those with disabilities (Abbey *et a*l. 2021). For some garden programmes in upstate New York, the lack of control or ownership over the land created uncertain conditions: community garden programme coordinators considered seven (11%) of the 63 reviewed gardens as endangered. Some of these gardens were still relatively new (three had existed for 1-5 years) where others had already a long history in their respective communities (three others had existed for 18-21 years) (Armstrong 2000).

A noticeable challenge for many organisations was the precarious nature of financial resources and the insecurity of long-term funding (Ramsden 2020, 2021). The case study of a community gardening project located in a disadvantaged urban area in Hull (UK) struggled with long-term planning, whereby the future of the community gardens was “fragile” and the “marginalised participants were vulnerable to outcomes not being sustained” (Ramsden 2021: 283).

5.2.2 Exclusion of specific communities

In their comparative analysis of urban food initiatives, Hennchen and Pregernig (2020: 9) found that "if food initiatives primarily address a specific target group, they will—almost essentially—exclude other groups of people", intentionally or not. Exclusion and inclusion of participants might change over time. In the case of the Intergenerational Lunch activity that provided the elderly community lunch in a family-like environment, 'permitted' participants had changed over time. In its initial phase, participants of all ages were encouraged to join, but after gaining more attention, increasing demand and hence facing capacity issues, the organisers limited the lunch offer to elderly people and children.

In another context, activities designed for specific communities unintentionally excluded others. In their research on community gardening projects in Amsterdam, Brody & Wilde (2020) found that those managed by "green NGOs" did not attract a diverse group despite being in socio-economically and ethnically mixed neighbourhoods and despite specific engagement efforts by the NGOs. The researchers suggest that it could be ascribed to the environmental consciousness and sustainability concerns espoused by the organisers aligned with the political-economic context of Amsterdam and the membership-based access, which - although unintended - excluded locals who were indirectly discouraged from participating in "controlled spaces" (p. 254).

On the other hand, in a review conducted on 'cook & eat projects', those which targeted vulnerable individuals reported finding the recruitment of people challenging as people in difficult circumstances found it hard to make regular commitments. "The users themselves said they would come only if they were interested in the activity, not necessarily because they thought it would help them. In addition, such targeting also meant the activity itself took a lot of energy and time to manage" (McGlone *et al.* 1999: 22). This example also reiterates the importance of making community food activities relevant to diverse groups of people, e.g., by building on good social relations and an awareness of different communities' needs.

For some of the activities, organisers struggled to reach out to isolated community members. There was a lack of knowledge of how and where to access community members (Engler & Berenbaum 2007; Loopstra and Tarasuk 2013) and insufficient resources to reach out to them (Kingsley et al. 2019). Building an understanding of the community in which these activities operate was considered as imperative when attempting to reach out to isolated and hard to reach communities.

5.2.3 Differences in opinions, motivations or agendas

Another barrier relates to differences in opinions or visions between some people involved in specific projects or across projects (Hennchen & Pregernig 2020; Kingsley *et al.* 2019; Bonow & Normark 2018; Jackson 2018). This was identified in some community garden projects where disagreements and tensions over the general character of garden plots occurred: in Southern Germany, there were disagreements over the nature of the community garden, with some participants suggesting that it should be organised as a private garden, others insisting on keeping the community approach (Hennchen & Pregernig 2020). Similarly, in Melbourne (Australia), participants discussed challenges related to "clashes of opinion, competition, and communication" (Kingsley *et al.* 2019: 8). Here, one participant reflected how she felt that others did not always arrive "'with the best of intentions... if someone's being unreasonable, you have to be really diplomatic ... I wish the space was just more straightforward'" (Kingsley *et al.* 2019: 8). Although community gardens are often portrayed and experienced as spaces of "Do-it-yourself citizenship" (Crossan *et al.* 2016), tensions can emerge. In another context, strongly promoted political and environmental aims of community gardens were identified as creating structural barriers to participation, especially from the migrant population, whose main motivation was food production and community engagement (McVey *et al.* 2018).

5.2.4 Lack of community representation

Another barrier to participation was linked to questions of representation and diversity within the staffing of organisations and a lack of community representation at the organisational level. This lack of representation most often resulted in activities that were designed for communities without understanding what they wanted to engage with. Broadly speaking, "taking part in these activities leaves participants with the mere choice of whether to accept what is offered or stay away" (Hennchen & Pregernig 2020: 10).

5.2.5 Institutional regulations

Harper & Afonso (2016) in their study of urban gardening found 'institutional conflicts' on getting permanent access to public land for gardening as a major barrier. A study from Stockholm found that although both formal and informal advocacy groups were collaborating in setting up community gardens, they often had different agendas and motivations leading to "vague responsibilities, lack of leadership and unclear expectations of the outcome", thus creating a barrier to stability and long-term engagement with such initiatives (Bonow & Normark 2018: 509).

In the case of urban food sharing initiatives, Davies *et al*. (2019) found in their study of twelve initiatives across three cities (London, Dublin, Berlin) that identifying and navigating various regulations from across sectors and scales was considered as a challenge, even in those places where local mechanisms for food governance was more developed. They found that stringent regulations and the lack of supportive policy frameworks for citizen-driven food provision made the participation precarious in nature. This was particularly experienced in the context of community food growing which is subject to statutory planning regulations (as in land use). In each of the three cities, the policies in place were not designed to facilitate their practices. In Berlin, food policy councils were identified as key to developing a supportive policy environment, but their impact was limited "without engagement with established multi-scalar legislative frameworks" (Davies *et al*. 2019: 17).

5.3 Summary

- Barriers to participation in community food activities range from access difficulties (e.g., due to lack of time, financial constraints), lack of awareness and effective communication, unmet social expectations and concerns, perceptions and requirements of the specific activity, to disadvantages that some individuals, families and neighbourhoods face which are challenging or impossible to overcome if no specific enabling measures are in place.
- The case studies from different contexts reveal that there is no single barrier which is most important, instead, they vary in terms of their impact on participation with the type of activity, who the participants are, and how the activity is organised/ initiated.
- A common barrier faced by organisers and organisations is access to key resources and infrastructure. Other identified barriers include the organisational strategies adopted for an open or targeted approach resulting in unintentional exclusion of specific communities; differences in the opinions, motivations and agendas of those engaging; lack of community representation; institutional regulations.
- Few studies that described organisational aspects indicate that barriers are related to the way activities are organised, whether, for example, by charities, housing associations or community groups in their sole capacity or in collaboration with other stakeholders.
- Issues of power and inequality lie behind some of the barriers to initiate participation and long-term engagement. Although not always made explicit, acknowledging these issues is critical to understanding how and why people get involved and stay involved.
- Even when opportunities exist, the uneven distribution of power, social capital and other resources can broadly shape participation, and simultaneously benefits from participation may not be equally felt. Wider literature on participation points to the barriers and challenges that arise from persistent and structural socio-economic inequalities, which cannot be removed without systemic changes in the wider society (See Pathways through Participation project reports).

6. Enablers for community food activities

Analysing the motivations and barriers for community members, community organisers and organisations is fundamental in order to understand what enables community food activities to take place. Drawing on the reviewed case studies, we present an overview of identified factors that enable participation in Table 7 and elaborate further in section below.

6.1 Enablers for participation by individuals, organisers, and organisations

Enablers for Community Food Activities	
Organise at a convenient time	Anderson *et al*. 2018; Engler-Stringer & Berenbaum 2007; Markow *et al*. 2014
Affordable provision	Abbey *et al*. 2021; Engler-Stringer & Berenbaum 2007; Gatenby *et al*. 2011; Lee *et al*. 2010; Markow *et al*. 2014
Practical and social support	Bishop & Purcell 2013; Lee *et al*. 2010; Marovelli 2019; Middling *et al*. 2011
Regular and effective communication	Anderson *et al*. 2018; Engler-Stringer & Berenbaum 2007
Involve communities	Gatenby *et al*. 2011; Hennchen & Pregernig 2020; Loopstra & Tarasuk 2013; Ramsden 2021; Whatley *et al*. 2015
Networking	Hennchen & Pregernig 2020; Kruithof *et al*. 2018; Lee *et al*. 2010; Marovelli 2019; Ramsden 2021
Facilitators /"community champions"	Bonow & Normark 2018; Davies *et al*. 2019
Organisational profiles	Brody & de Wilde 2020; Hennchen & Pregernig 2020

Table 7: Overview of enablers for community food activities

6.1.1 Organise at a convenient time

For activities such as community gardens, time, or lack of, has been identified as a barrier for individual participation. In their analysis of a university-based community garden, Anderson *et al*. (2018) recommended that sessions need to be organised at a convenient time. It would benefit organisers to include "flexibility in dates and times... and developing strategies that allow volunteers to participate in their own time and autonomously" (p. 14). This view was echoed by individuals from low socio-economic and other disadvantaged groups participating at a community garden in South Australia. They suggested that operating and opening hours were key areas for improvement, proposing that community gardens could provide members with access out of hours (Markow *et al*. 2014). It is equally important to consider caring responsibilities (e.g., childcare) of (potential) participants, and put supportive arrangements in place (Engler-Stringer & Berenbaum 2007).

6.1.2 Affordable provision

The costs of participation, as noted earlier (section 5.1.2), were identified as a potential barrier (Abbey *et al*. 2021; Lee *et al*. 2010; Markow *et al*. 2014). The general recommendation to consider possibilities to make participation more affordable needs to include both direct (e.g., activity costs like ingredients) as well as indirect costs (e.g., travel costs). For example, in a Leeds (UK), after-school cooking club that involved pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds, teachers had found that the provision of cooking ingredients in class benefited the children by removing the barrier of ingredient costs (Gatenby *et al*. 2011: 111). Providing financial support for those in very low-income groups was also seen as enabling participation in collective kitchens, since some participants found the costs of ingredients prohibitive (Engler-Stringer & Berenbaum 2007). It was also recommended that organisers reach out to other organisations to reduce their own costs in the running of the activity. In the case of a community kitchen in Victoria (Canada), the kitchen was recommended to link up with food donations and community gardens to minimise the financial cost of ingredients and ensure the sustainability of the activity (Lee *et al*. 2010).

6.1.3 Practical and social support

Providing practical and social support was perceived to be especially vital by vulnerable groups in disadvantaged urban neighbourhoods. Bishop & Purcell (2013), in their study of refugee-run community allotment gardening, describe the critical support provided by the refugee organisations. In addition to providing information on horticulture, they provided practical and social support (such as signposting members to other courses, groups and organisations), thus creating a supportive environment for social inclusion. This was particularly relevant in the context of language barriers, where – thanks to the support from project staff – many who originally felt vulnerable and lacking in confidence speaking English, became confident enough for engaging with the activity. In a similar vein, Middling *et al*. (2011) observed in the case of older tenants in a sheltered housing scheme that community initiatives were more likely to succeed when they had the support of key stakeholders in the local community.

Each activity identified within the literature was context specific and support was found to be tailored to specific groups that were participating. ‘Skip Garden and Kitchen’, which works predominantly with young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, developed programmes that connected young people with businesses and facilitated access to information and places that participants would not normally have access to. These approaches were multifaceted as they sought to “reduce social exclusion, but they also increase the resilience and the impact of the initiatives themselves” (Marovelli 2019: 199).

In a case study on community kitchens, accessibility of the kitchen site and necessary equipment as well as a socially comfortable environment were considered vital to the setting up and sustainability of community kitchens (Lee *et al*. 2010). In order to build trust in community kitchens or at other social eating events, it was recommended that kitchen spaces are visible to everyone as this can enable social interactions between guests and those cooking (Marovelli 2019). Overall, social and practical support was identified as contributing to trust and positive relationship building, elements identified as important for long-term participation.

6.1.4 Regular and effective communication

In order to keep participants engaged, maintaining regular communication was considered significant. This is especially relevant during the initial development stages of activities when there are less opportunities for participation (Anderson *et al*. 2018). Notwithstanding the diverse mediums of communication that exist, it was recommended that differences in individual preferences and communication needs must be considered to enhance the potential for participation. In the case of collective kitchens for isolated and vulnerable new immigrants, the organisers reasoned that "very isolated women were unlikely to participate unless multilingual information was distributed door to door" (Engler-Stringer & Berenbaum 2007: 99).

In the case of community food projects more broadly, direct contact and word of mouth were found to be a popular recruitment method, and "probably the most efficient at generating loyalty … users either knew the volunteers involved, or already used the building or centre where the project was located" (McGlone *et al*. 1999: 23). Similarly, for the Youth Eats and Cooks programme, a cooking and eating activity offering a weekly lunch for school children from low-income and/or immigrant backgrounds, participation from teenagers was boosted because they heard about it from their peers at school (Hennchen & Pregernig 2020). Despite the frequent effectiveness of 'word of mouth', in order to reach a diverse audience outside specific social networks - and to avoid key people being unaware of activities (see 5.1.3) - it is important to consider appropriate communication strategies to reach out further (see also 6.1.6 and 6.1.7 as possible enablers of wide-reaching communication).

6.1.5 Involve communities

To facilitate meaningful participation, the active engagement of community members in the planning and development of activities has been recommended in most studies as it allows both organisers and community members to interact and potentially overcome barriers. For example, in Southern Germany, at a participatory garden designed to raise awareness for sustainable and healthy food production, a series of events were planned together with refugees and parts of the city's immigrant population to give different people the opportunity to interact and develop events (Hennchen & Pregernig 2020: 8).

Advantages of such involvement are echoed in the analysis of a community gardening project working with disadvantaged communities in Hull (UK), where volunteers also described "how they felt they were active participants in shaping the project rather than responding to pre-determined goals and plans" (Ramsden 2021: 294). In another study, at the Mind Sprout community garden in inner-city Melbourne, it was the learning approach adopted by the organisation that included "workers' practices of 'guiding' and 'coaching' rather than 'directing' that created opportunities for authentic social inclusion" (Whatley *et al*. 2015: 435).

For the 'Communal Table' activity in Amsterdam (a social eating event which provided monthly dinners to adults with mild intellectual disabilities), it was recommended that interventions should be "tailored to their pre-existing social networks and related personal motivations", closely responding to their community's needs (Kruithof *et al*. 2018). This was crucial as the participating adults may have difficulties functioning in large groups or interacting with groups of new people. Additionally, it was important that individuals were not seen as a homogeneous group.

Analysing participation in community food programmes from low socio-economic neighbourhoods in Toronto (Canada), Loopstra & Tarasuk (2013: 58) highlighted how programmes need to be designed to match "the needs and interests of low-income, food-insecure populations". By involving communities in the design of programmes, organisers and organisations can become better placed to understand the demands and barriers facing potential participants (*i.e.*, scarce resources, childcare, single parenting, chronic health conditions, and un/employment).

This involvement can also be extended to the household level. At an after-school cooking class in Leeds, UK pupils from "the most disadvantaged backgrounds did not take up the offer to bring home ingredients" (Gatenby *et al*. 2011: 111). This was because pupils felt although they would not have the opportunity to cook the dishes again at home. To counter this and to facilitate engagement, it was suggested that further consideration should be given to involving parents/family members in cooking sessions in order to increase household interest in the events.

6.1.6 Networking

Reaching out and collaborating with other organisations was a common recommendation to increase participation and ensure the sustainability of activities. For social eating initiatives, the close links with public institutions were considered beneficial in attracting participants as they facilitated the acquisition of adequate kitchen spaces (Hennchen & Pregernig 2020). It was also recognised that there was a need for public authorities to encourage activities, for example "advertising best practices... or fostering multisector collaboration across the urban food system" (Hennchen & Pregernig 2020: 14). Similarly, the Intergenerational Lunch activity in Southern Germany, which offers elderly people and children from a local kindergarten the opportunity to eat together, attracted participants because of close cooperation with the local church community, where coupons were given out which served as an invitation for a free meal and positive social experiences.

Integration with public institutions was also seen to enable participation by providing access to necessary infrastructure, such as pre-installed kitchen spaces in public buildings (Hennchen & Pregernig 2020: 8). This is not just applicable to public institutions. Across different neighbourhoods in London, the 'Be Enriched' community kitchens and canteens were often hosted in the premises of other organisations (Marovelli 2019). It was also suggested that participant interest and attendance could be easier retained if other programmes are being run concurrently (Lee *et al*. 2010). By networking with similar organisations, participants were also seen to benefit from access to multiple interrelated programmes.

Networking was also recommended to decrease participation costs. For example, by linking with community gardens, community kitchens were able to access fresh produce (Lee *et al*. 2010). At a strategic level, it was recommended that a long-term approach be built on "effective joint working between the funder, the lead charity and its partners, volunteers, wider support networks and the local council" (Ramsden 2021: 294).

6.1.7 Facilitators and "community champions"

Bonow & Normark (2018), in their study of community gardening in Stockholm (Sweden) found that successful gardening projects were built on cooperation between informal gardening groups and other stakeholders, including the district administration. Based on their analysis, they suggested the formal employment of knowledgeable 'facilitators' to work with various stakeholders such as the municipality, housing companies and various NGOs. These 'facilitators' ensured that projects were managed properly, collaborated with stakeholders to maintain community gardens, and were viewed as "a kind of employed version of enthusiasts that [kept] other farms going" (Bonow & Normark 2018: 513). In this Swedish context, "relying on enthusiasm for gardening as the driving force for developing community gardens" (Bonow & Normark 2018: 515) was not considered sufficient for stability or long-term engagement with such initiatives, instead it required a formalised role for a person responsible for facilitating and coordinating resources, planning and knowledge.

In the case of food sharing initiatives, Davies *et al*. (2019: 18) point to research where having "champions for food sharing initiatives alongside a web of supports from other community organisations" was considered key to creating a "more resilient ecosystem of sharing". In New York, those organising community gardens worked alongside 596 Acres (an organisation that advocates for public access to public land) to seek reclassification of their projects as "green spaces protected through planning regulations" (Davies *et al*. 2019: 17). This enabled them to take on the complexities of urban planning processes, thus alleviating barriers related to institutional regulations. The emphasis on identifying community leaders and activists who are passionate about their local area as a key first step to building community capacity and fostering participation is equally found in practitioner literature (e.g., Research in Practice 2021).

6.1.8 Organisational profiles

According to Hennchen & Pregernig (2020)'s study on urban food sharing initiatives in London, organisational characteristics can influence the type of community engagement and participation. Their analysis reveals five key dimensions: institutional integration, recruiting mechanisms, goal setting, time management, and types of knowledge, which determine the type of 'communitization' that takes place (p.: 13). They found that organised 'cooking and eating together' initiatives achieve 'a low sense of community' as participants are loosely affiliated with the group, come together for a specific, time-limited purpose, and the specific activities do not significantly affect the participants' worldviews or "irritate" their personal lifestyles. In contrast, the organisational profile of urban gardening initiatives led to 'a high sense of community' - by providing an environment where members could identify with the practices, values and political ambitions that the initiatives stood for, and stay engaged/committed to the activities. They further emphasised that the different organisational profiles also influenced the type of support they needed in relation to four key areas: "access to resources; integration into urban food politics; support in mobilization of membership; and leverage in overcoming general stereotypes among city decision makers and the broader public" (p. 13).

Going beyond organisational profiles, Brody & de Wilde (2020) in their analysis of 19 community gardening projects in Amsterdam emphasise the importance of the relations between gardeners and four types of food governance actors -- local government, welfare organisations, green NGOs and housing associations. This was seen to "… both impair and enable the civic participation of gardeners, the inclusive potential of gardens and an alternative, local food provision and distribution" (Brody & de Wilde 2020: Abstract).

6.2 Summary

- Given the context-specificity of each community food activity with its own individual and organisation-centred barriers and motivations, and with context-specific organisational and regulatory structures and processes, there is no specific set of enablers applicable across all activities nor communities.
- The most effective way of increasing participation needs to be (co)designed and adapted to each specific context; however, the reviewed case studies have revealed a range of enabling factors that need to be considered.
- Enablers for participation include organising community food activities at a convenient time; their easy accessibility and affordability; practical and social support to community members (such as signposting people to other activities, groups, and organisations); regular and effective communication; involvement of communities in the planning and development of activities; networking; support of facilitators and 'community champions'; and organisational resources and capabilities.

7. Participation by diverse groups

7.1 Understanding of diversity

Considering pathways to increase diversity in participation in community food activities by diverse groups is one of the key foci of this review. However, this is no easy task given the diversity of understandings of the term 'diversity'.

The UK's protected categories (see Table 1) can offer one lens; however, other categories can also be considered important, including socio-economic status, immigration and 'no recourse to public funds' status, the political spectrum, linguistic and cultural background. Also, among the reviewed case studies, diversity has been differently understood, with some community organisers or organisations aiming to run events for specific, targeted (*in-need*) groups of people (e.g., homeless men, middle-aged women, refugees), and others aiming to appeal to a group of people as heterogeneous as their respective communities. While the former initiatives use a 'targeted approach' and aim to cater to the needs and engage with those considered *hard-to-reach* or *most-in-need*, the latter's explicit goals often include being open to all and 'building' community and community cohesion across all its diversities. Already this distinction highlights the need for an explicit consideration of 'what diversity' is meant when community food activities and programmes are being developed. Further, as with the more generic enablers discussed in Section 6, considering enablers for an increase in participation from diverse communities equally requires a very specific analysis of an organisation's motivations, goals, barriers, organisational and community context.

In our review, diversity in participation comes across in different ways with community food activities enabling the getting together of people from different backgrounds with different experiences, motivations and barriers. The participants are from different socio-demographic groups, from urban and rural contexts, and from disadvantaged and well-off neighbourhoods.

7.2 Diversity of contexts

In the reviewed literature, diversity in community food activities consisted, predominantly, of different types of community or urban gardening initiatives, followed by community kitchens and by activities centred around food sharing, cooking and/or eating together. As described earlier, the very nature of different community food activities influences the nature of participation (see Hennchen & Pregernig 2020 for a comparative analysis of community gardening initiatives vs cooking and eating together initiatives). In an analysis of cooking classes, Dyen and Sireix (2016) focused on the potential of such classes by their very nature of being open to attract people from different social and cultural backgrounds.

Our research indicates the necessity to recognise that people participate from a variety of different starting points. Their decision to get involved and to *stay engaged* (the latter not systematically addressed in the literature) is influenced by diverse motivations and the barriers people face, highlighting the key role of enabling conditions for participation in the different contexts (section 6). This also indicates the **impossibility of finding a one size-fits all approach** for increasing participation in community food activities.

Even within distinct groups, homogeneity does not necessarily exist (Bracketz 2007), as amply shown, for example, by Kruithof *et al*.'s (2018) study which emphasises that different levels of participation are determined by the participants' pre-existing networks and individual needs. Furthermore, although **intersectionality** did not come up explicitly in the reviewed literature (*which warrants attention in future research*), there is a growing body of research that recognises how social identities such as socio-economic status, race/ethnicity, gender, and location intersect to shape the barriers and opportunities in participation across various contexts, including in food studies more broadly (see Williams-Froson & Wilkerson 2011). Given the numerous challenges associated with 'social exclusion' or 'marginalisation' and a range of associated vulnerabilities, participation is thus influenced by individual circumstances and the social context.

In their evaluation of a communal eating intervention, called the Communal Table, for people with mild intellectual disabilities (MID) in Amsterdam, Kruithof *et al*. (2018) found that it was inclusive in terms of attracting a diverse and loyal group of participants. They describe 'diversity' in relation to the differences in how the participants were embedded in pre-existing social networks ranging from those with 'weak ties' to 'strong ties' (Granovetter 1973). They pointed out that people with MID should not been seen as a homogeneous group. In order to be effective, social network interventions should instead be tailored to participants' pre-existing networks and related individual needs. Their findings align with "the general literature on social work interventions which "stresses the need of focusing on groups rather than on individual characteristics of people (Loeffler *et al*. 2004; Lynn 2006), given the contradiction of achieving social inclusion for the excluded by focusing on the individual (Lomas 1998)" (Kruithof *et al* 2018: 2).

In their research with an urban gardeners' association in Lisbon, Harper & Afonso (2016) focus on how a coalition of residents and gardeners from diverse socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds led to reclaiming land "to grow vegetables and to re-grow 'community' by forging shared experiences in the neighbourhood" (Abstract). The association included older gardeners from rural Portugal and Africa, young urban professionals interested in sustainable cities, and gardeners with disabilities. It was described as "a microcosm of the people and projects that make up urban gardening in Lisbon... All share a common interest in sharing and using the spaces left behind by the big developers of the city, but they bring different motivations and attach different meanings to the urban gardening community of practice" (p. 8)

Our review has shown that community food activities are **locally contextualised**, and various stakeholders are engaged at different stages of organising and running the activities. These include civil society organisations (CSOs), sometimes working in their sole capacity or in partnership or with the support of community groups (such as associations, youth clubs, etc.), the local government, and - in some cases - researchers at universities. By their very nature, CSOs occupy a key role as they are actively shaping and mediating community food activities. Hence, their role as **'civic enabler'** in the communities of practice is a key consideration for increasing community participation in social food citizenship. CSOs are important components of the 'community', influencing the social and physical environments, and exerting influence over the choices people make and over their access to resources that aid them in those choices. However, as our review also shows, although a great deal of research is available on the motivations and outcomes, only few of the studies examined organisational aspects surrounding the activities (e.g., Hennchen & Pregerning 2020; Brody & de Wilde 2020; Bonow & Normark 2018). Even these case studies did not describe the processes of engagement and inclusion or recruitment of participants in sufficient detail.

7.3 Overcoming challenges for diversity in participation

Social inclusion is not without its challenges. Adopting a place-based approach, in their study on a sustainability-focused community food hub in Stroud (UK), Franklin *et al*. (2011) pointed to the "difficulties encountered by local initiatives that attempt to operate across a range of social groupings while also overcoming cultural differences about the value of local food" (p. 701). They emphasised that local food initiatives should be placed in the broader **social context** of the community in which they are located. They make the case for further research into groups that get excluded and point to the importance of building **alliances** within localities as much as to the building of alliances between them (DuPuis and Goodman 2005). Their focus on 'alliances' resonates with our focus on networks (section 6.1.6) that were seen as enablers in the studies we reviewed.

In research on civic engagement, studies have long thrown light on inequality in participation in **urban deprived neighbourhoods**. This inequality at the neighbourhood level corresponds to national trends.[8] Tonkens & Verhoeven (2019) state that there is little evidence on how those on the front-line (*i.e.*, volunteers engaged in citizen initiatives promoting social aims) can successfully focus on reaching underrepresented groups.

Among the few studies that did look at social inclusion strategies, Durose (2011) proposed two strategies: **reaching and enabling**. *Reaching* concerns identifying marginalised and excluded groups; and *enabling* concerns engaging with marginalised groups to build transferable skills, in order to develop their capacity to engage. In this context, acknowledging the diversity of people's backgrounds has been seen as critical to a 'cohesive community' (Lowndes and Thorp 2011).

In their recent work based on a study of 39 citizens' initiatives in the deprived neighbourhoods of Amsterdam, Tonkens & Verhoeven (2019) developed the **ACLR-framework**[9] which provides a strategy to combat inequality in participation. The ACLR-framework has four factors -- Ask, Can, Linked, Responsive. In the context of community food activities, the first step would require paying attention to those who are not actively participating, and asking them about their aspirations, perspectives and ideas for themselves and/or their neighbourhood in relation to community food activities (Ask). The second step requires providing support to people to strengthen their resources, skills and knowledge, with a particular focus on those with limited education and/or language problems (Can). There is growing research that

[8] See Tonkens & Verhoeven 2019 for literature in this area. [9] The authors refer to ACLR as an adaptation of CLEAR framework - 'a diagnostic tool for assessing official schemes to encourage participation and discusses remedial measures that might be taken to tackle problems' (Lowndes *et al* 2006).

ascribes differences in skills and resources between deprived and well-off neighbourhoods as underpinning inequality in civic engagement to a large extent (see Foster-Fishman *et al*. 2013; Ghose and Pettygrove 2014). The third step is about providing support to people to reach out and connect initiators to other people, organisations, institutions and networks (Linked). The final step involves making sure that potential participants experience the system as responsive, that is, they are supported in navigating rules and regulations (Responsive) which our review has also shown is one of the key barriers identified (section 5.2.7).

In the wider literature, the **'ladder of citizen participation'** (Arnstein 1969) has been influential in policy planning and service delivery discourse by describing the move from non-participation to community engagement, and community empowerment, indicating progressively increasing power over decision-making by participants. It places emphasis on addressing barriers which range from deeply entrenched social inequalities (such as racism, paternalism and resistance to power distribution) to the sense of "futility, alienation and distrust" at the individual level. Another relevant source is the Community Planning Handbook (Wates 2014) which developed a **'participation matrix'** on (a) the level of community involvement and (b) four stages in the planning process: initiation, planning, implementing and maintaining. The connections to 'place' and 'networks' – as we have noted in our review as influencing motivation – is developed into a framework by Manzo and Perkins (2006), which focuses on the social context shaping intent and action by individuals.

In grey literature, there are many sources which provide guidelines with the aim of **social inclusion** and integration of specific groups in the wider society or much more broadly on community engagement and participation. In the case of **ethnic communities and migrants**, for example, guidelines to develop a suitable, effective range of outreach strategies include direct engagement with the groups; engagement with key stakeholders; and engagement through well trained community champions; overcoming prejudices, preconceptions and misconceptions about the groups; and a joined-up attitude among stakeholders' capacity (including training programmes) (BEMIS Scotland 2015). These considerations were identified as key to sustaining an inclusive approach towards diverse groups. These align with the findings identified as enabling factors in our review. There are also other reports and interventions that have specifically focused on addressing racism which Black and People of Colour communities face in accessing land and within the environmental sector more broadly (see for example, Land in our Names).[10]

Another source (Tiratelli 2020), although directed at public institutions, directs attention to four separate approaches that organisations can take in order to mobilise communities. These include:

> ***An Individuals-based strategy, which begins with the needs of specific people and works out how community assets can be built and deployed to improve their lives; A Groups-based strategy, which looks to pre-existing groups within communities and strives to build up and empower them; A Place-based strategy, which tries to make an area as conducive to community mobilisation as possible. This means thinking about things such as infrastructure, assets and the practices of local government and the public sector; and A Service-based strategy, which looks to empower people who interact with services and have ideas of how to improve them. It then helps build the capacity of those people to contribute to their own communities (p. 36).***

In a similar vein, McGlone *et al*. (1999) in their report on how local food projects are set up in the UK had distinguished two main factors which influence the processes of how a project is organised and the outcomes, which is relevant in the context of community participation. The factors include "the source of the original idea, and whether or not other community-based projects exist in the area" (McGlone *et al*. 1999: 10). While the first factor determines who is involved (thereby defining the resources, skills, and expertise to which the project has access), the second relates to presence/absence of social networks. The latter also includes the availability of volunteers from the local people, for example, who may have had already gained skills, expertise and confidence, or alternatively 'fatigued' or 'resentful' from prior experiences in activities already in the community.

These different approaches to influencing motivations and addressing barriers in order to increase diversity in participation, suggest the localised and contextual nature of community participation. Although there are commonalities across the various contexts, every context is also unique.

[8] https://landinournames.community

8. Pathways to positive social change

'Community participation' may be the most widely used pathway to social change and, in the context of this study, key to fostering food citizenship. However, in the wider literature, it has also been described as a "minefield": its meaning always being contextual and partial, reflecting varying understandings and commitments to the term and different degrees of community involvement (Skovdal 2013: 10). In the context of urban gardening, for example, critics have pointed to its potential of reinforcing hierarchies of race and class (DeLind 2011; Guthman 2008), thus raising questions about the implicit assumptions of positive outcomes of community participation in all contexts. Further, as pointed out two decades ago, "participation can be sustainable only as long as the relevant actors remain committed, and the socio-political and economic environments remain conducive to the process" (Morgan 2001: 223).

Literature on understanding behaviour and behaviour change (e.g., Skovdal 2013; Glanz & Bishop 2010) suggests additional pathways for positive social change, which are not mutually exclusive. We found these pathways hinted at across the case studies we reviewed, underpinning organisational aims, motivations, and the recommendations made for enabling participation, even though the later were often not stated explicitly. We will describe some of these pathways below. They include:

- Critical consciousness
- Social Capital
- Asset approach
- Multi-stage process
- Participatory approach

8.1 Critical consciousness

This pathway is rooted in practice that emerged in Latin America during the colonial period. It has also become popular in adult education, and youth and community work in the UK. Critical consciousness is based on Freire's (1973) critical transitivity concept derived from his 'critical thinking stages' conceptual framework. It is argued that the sense of **'empowerment'** derived from it increases the likelihood and interest to translate awareness into collective action to instigate change.[11]

Across the reviewed case studies, in certain contexts, some community food activities have been found to create the necessary opportunities for developing critical consciousness leading to further action. To illustrate this, urban gardening in Lisbon (Portugal) brought together a diverse group of citizens, enabling them to learn from one another "not only about horticulture but also about urban politics, self-management of shared spaces and social entrepreneurship" (Harper & Afonso 2016: 7). They also learnt to "negotiate the meanings of urban space and their own efforts to transform it through gardening" (Harper & Afonso 2016: 12). Community gardening, it has been indicated, can create new 'socio-ecological spaces of justice' for disadvantaged and vulnerable groups within the city (Milbourne 2012). Community kitchens and urban food sharing initiatives facilitate people getting together over food.

From the perspective of increasing the number and diversity of groups participating in community food activities, arguably a key aspect of food citizenship concerns not only equal and effective opportunities for participation in shaping the food system, but also the "**knowledge** about the relevant alternative ways of designing and operating the system" (Hassanein, 2003: 83). In an analysis of participation processes, Baldy & Cruse (2019: 71) show that "knowledge about food and the food system is both a starting point as well as an outcome of food democracy processes". Lacking knowledge about food system issues and the rights and responsibilities of being food citizens can "hinder people from participating in transformation processes in the first place and risks excluding issues relevant to a sustainable food system… "(ibid.). It has also been argued that it is only through harnessing diverse forms of **citizens' knowledge** – and by ensuring that diverse needs and preferences are met (in designing interventions) – that sustainable food systems can be built (e.g., DeSchutter 2014). Against this background, conscientisation can be seen as an important pathway to foster a critical understanding of agri-food system issues and a stronger sense of civic engagement and collaboration (Levkoe 2006). Communication, outreach, activism, advocacy coalitions, and social capital are some of the ways by which this has been addressed in the wider literature.

[11] For a discussion in relation to health promotion, see Skovdal 2013.

8.2 Social Capital

In this pathway, the focus is on the development of social capital. Social capital is described as the community cohesion that results from "networks, norms and social ties that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit" (Putnam, 1995: 67). Communities with high levels of social capital are described as "having a high number of active community organisations and networks, strong commitments to civic engagement or participation within these networks, as well as an ethics of care and reciprocal support, and a sense of solidarity and trust between community members" (Skovdal 2013: 11).

Skovdal (2013) argues that the pathways of conscientisation (discussed above) and community participation contribute to the development of social capital. They create contexts where people can come together, connecting not only with those of similar social-demographic characteristics (such as age, class, gender) but also connecting with others beyond their normal social circles, thus achieving outcomes that are described as **'bonding' and 'bridging'** social capital, respectively.

In our review, for example, Jackson (2018) explored community gardens in a relatively deprived urban context from a social capital approach and found that for the creation and sustaining of gardening groups, social connections and networks were key at both the individual and the group level. Gardening provided a 'participatory landscape' (Saldivar-Tanaka and Krasny 2004: 538) with opportunities for building 'new forms' of social capital through the 'bonding', linking and 'bridging' functions it provided. In this context, volunteering was often an integral part of the collective action and driving 'mutual benefit' (Putnam 2000), both within the gardens and the wider community. Further, the recommendations across the reviewed studies also clearly indicate the importance of social networks as enablers for participation in community food activities. These activities do not only provide opportunities to build social capital, to promote interactions and social inclusion, but they are also an integral outcome of social capital.

This pathway emphasises the importance of strengthening connections between individuals, groups, CSOs, and other actors in the food system (including state and market) and of creating different opportunities and spaces for bringing people together across a diversity of backgrounds. In this context, **coalition-building** (Hassanein 2008) and building **collaborative capacity** (Foster-Fishman *et al.* 2001) to increase participation has been discussed in the literature.

8.3 Asset approach

This pathway suggests a necessary focus on 'community assets' and on understanding which asset or combination of assets are most important to leverage for achieving positive social change, overcoming the socio-economic, structural, and environmental disadvantages that many communities face. The three main types of **community assets** include – supportive relational (family and friendship networks, neighbour networks, inter-generational solidarity), supportive symbolic (role models), and supportive material and institutional (infrastructure, equipment, resources) (see Skovdal 2013:18). In other words, this pathway emphasises "building on the strengths of individuals and communities and mobilising them to come together to realise and develop their capacity, skills, knowledge and connections" (Research in Practice 2021: 3).

This approach, which is **strengths-based** in contrast to a deficit-based approach, is aligned with the community development framework (see Whatley *et al.* 2015, McVey *et al.* 2018 in our review) which places emphasis on community empowerment (Israel *et al.*, 1994; Wallerstein, 1992), community capacity (Goodman *et al.*, 1998), and community competence (Eng and Parker 1994). Framings based on a "sense of community" (see Armstrong 2000) and also **"place-making"** build on this approach and are considered as key to local level grassroots action (Agyeman *et al.*, 2016; Devine-Wright and Howes, 2010; Franklin *et al.* 2011).

Substantial practitioner and grey literature point to the wide use of this approach in the area of community development, especially in relation to addressing social isolation and socio-economic inequality, and for creating stronger, more connected communities (e.g., Harrison *et a*l. 2019, Sutton 2018).

8.4 The multi-stage process

More recent literature on understanding behaviour and behaviour change point to change as a multistage process (see Glanz & Bishop 2010). This is drawn from over three decades of health research findings, 'that the relationships among knowledge, awareness of the need to change, intention to change, and an actual change in behaviour are very complex, and sustained health behaviour change involves multiple actions and adaptations over time.' (Glanz & Bishop 2010: 411). If we extend this to food-related practices, this pathway suggests considering changing circumstances of individuals who want to participate by supporting their changing needs through various stages of readiness and decision-making for action.

In the context of 'undoing' practices that support the current unsustainable food system and making the shift from 'consumer mindset' to 'citizen mindset', Lewin (1951)'s model of change can be seen as relevant. It emphasises the need to support three stages: first, it is about 'unfreezing' the old behaviour; second, it is about moving to a new behaviour; and third, it is about 'refreezing' or stabilizing the new behaviour.

In the context of community food activities, as we noted earlier, such activities ('changes') are often initiated by key **'movers and shakers'** in a community. As such, supporting such individuals and groups who are taking leadership to activate change can constitute an important approach to sustaining such new activities and practices. Levels of participation and **'ownership'** of projects are also known to be interrelated. For example, the greater the level of community participation, the more likely it is that community will have a sense of ownership over the project. As such, **coproduction** between organisations and communities from the start of community projects is another vital aspect to maintain levels of community participation and ownership.

8.5 Participatory approach

Participatory approaches share many of the values associated with the critical consciousness approach discussed above. These approaches are often mobilised to work with groups of people who have experienced oppression and marginalisation. It does so in the recognition that marginalised groups are often disempowered, and their voices do not often matter in mainstream society. To overcome this **marginality**, specific marginalised groups are a pivotal part of knowledge processes and practices as those with the lived experience of exclusion are the experts in their lives and thus understand from their situatedness, the conditions which contributes to their exclusion (Fals-Borda 1987; Fals-Borda and Rahman 1991; Glassman and Erdem 2014; Williams and Lykes 2003).

Centring projects on the **lived experience** and needs of marginalised groups is therefore a key and critical component in the design and delivery of participatory approaches. Furthermore, engaging with lived experiences is viewed as the starting point of creating processes that enable priorities to be set and, importantly, the creation of spaces for co-learning amongst groups of communities and with CSOs. In other words, the knowledge and actions produced during these processes enhance mutual understanding, and questions and solutions to problems are coproduced (Kindon *et al*. 2007; People's Knowledge Editorial Collective 2017; Wakeford and Sanchez Rodriguez 2018). It is also important to note that diversity approaches focusing on the 'lived experience' are often informed by ideas from Black feminism (Collins 2009; Crimshaw 1989).

The focus is thus on **co-production** – and to extend to social food citizenship, this involves working with community members to be effective partners in designing, shaping and implementing community food activities which are then place-based, socio-culturally relevant and led by community needs and priorities. A key aspect of this pathway includes valuing and integrating citizens' knowledge and **co-learning** (Israel *et al*. 1998) which suggests building in processes and procedures to facilitate and validate expertise that emerges from within the community (Israel *et al*. 1998; Jolly 2009).

The methods used in participatory approaches are varied and, unlike traditional forms of engagement, favour **creative** approaches. These include, for example, citizens juries, participatory photography, participatory theatre and participatory video which have all proven to be effective creative methods (Byrne *et al*. 2016; Erel *et al*. 2017a; Kindon 2003; Malik *et al*. 2020; Wakeford 2002). These creative methods have been successfully mobilised in conducting processes where communities can narrate their perspectives and their needs. To illustrate, participatory theatre has proven to be a meaningful method to engage with people who are seeking asylum. The participatory approach and method have enabled these groups to express their narrative in an aesthetic way, alongside showing the important aspects of their lived experiences, demonstrating in a nuanced and intimate way, how they negotiate their life goals through a range of societal and structural barriers (Erel *et al*. 2017a, 2017b; Malik *et al*. 2020). This pathway to community engagement has been used in public health (Israel *et al*. 1998), climate-change vulnerability assessment (Fazey *et al*. 2010), and informal science education (Bell *et al*. 2009; Jolly 2009) [from Pandya 2012] as well as in youth and community work.

Different types of creative methods, and the principles of participatory approaches, have also increasingly been utilised in food related contexts, prioritising the inclusion of marginalised groups and their knowledges (see People's Knowledge Editorial Collective 2017; Doherty *et al*. 2020 for citizens' assembly in local food policy making).[12] In our review, for example, Harper & Afonso (2016) demonstrated using Photovoice as a process for exploring motivations of a diverse group of citizens in planting informal and community gardens on public land while they continued to build new civic identities around gardening and made political claims to gain access and control over vacant land. Pettinger *et al*. (2017) used Photo-Elicitation to engage effectively with a harder-to-reach group of homeless service users, demonstrating that the food environment is a critical social meeting place in which food holds meaning, elicits emotions, and exerts power.

[12] It is important to note that the literature around participatory approach is extensive, international, and spans over decades. For a snapshot, and from a UK perspective, the reader is directed to the Connected Communities website (https://connected-communities.org/), and the participatory organisation, Involve, (https://www.involve.org.uk/resources) that between them contains a wealth of resources and methods on participatory approaches with communities.

9. A Social Ecological approach to community participation

Our findings show that no single factor or set of factors adequately explain the motivations and barriers to participation in community food activities. They range from personal (*i.e.*, food-related, activity-related, health and well-being); social/community (including social relationships, social networks); ecological; and economic (such as employability and skills) factors twinned with the geographical context (urban/rural). As such, participation in community food activities is both complex and evolving in nature.

At a broad level, however, our review shows that increasing participation in community food activities requires consideration of three inter-connected dimensions:

(1) Increasing the number and diversity of individuals/groups to participate or get involved with organising/participating in community food activities, including from those communities who are socially excluded. This requires attention at the individual level (*i.e.*, the motivation (s) to participate, the opportunity, and resources to overcome barriers, and how meaningful the activity is, and how the activity relates to the everyday experiences, for as we noted earlier, these are social practices which are made in a social context).

(2) Increasing the diversity and number of community food activities through increasing the opportunities for multiple, diverse 'spaces of connection' (Barron 2016) where none exist, creating "the connections of shared 'language', space, interest and skills, and creating bridging and bonding links within the community that did not previously exist" (Jackson 2018). This requires a focus on the relational level (how individuals relate with each other and with the social, institutional, and physical geography comprising of social networks/social capital, and the advantages/disadvantages of the neighbourhoods where they live).

(3) Enabling capacity of organisations as 'civic enablers' to support the above two considering their own motivations, capacities and resources, and importantly their processes of engagement with the community. Although as we have noted, there were few studies which focused on organisational aspects, they have pointed to the significance of different types of arrangements between organisers and participants leading to different forms of interaction and different levels of commitment from participants.

These three dimensions taken together align with 'communities of practice' which is described as 'a system of relationships between people, activities, and the world' (Lave and Wenger 1991: 98). It places emphasis on three key aspects -- mutual engagement, a feeling of joint enterprise and a shared repertoire of symbols, rituals and stories (Wenger 1998). It draws attention to relationships and interaction between the people and the social context.

Given the multiple and interacting influences operating at various levels, we found that the Social Ecological (SE) approach (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Stokols, 1996) provides a holistic and structurally cognisant conceptual framework, which speaks to the layered complexity of enabling social food citizenship. It "... situates the community within a broader and vertical context, locating the community at the intersection between individuals and their immediate family and wider socio-political and cultural factors..." (Skovdal 2013:3-4). What this approach highlights is that participation at a community level is dependent on wider social influences and individual-household level factors. In other words, it suggests the need to act across multiple levels at the same time in order to sustain social practices leading to change/behaviour over time and achieve the desired outcome. This approach underpins influential contemporary perspectives, which stress multiple determinants and multiple levels of determinants in intervention research on social change in areas as varied as prevalence, prevention, and evaluation of programming, and policies in public health, health education, environmental conservation and management (see Glanz & Bishop 2010; Golden & Earp 2012; Kilanowski 2017).

In contrast to individual-oriented analysis, this approach emphasises the 'environment', which has been increasingly acknowledged in research and practice as one of the key determinants of behaviour and behaviour change in varied sectors as described above. This environment includes the social, organisational, political, institutional, cultural, and the physical/geographical depending on the social change context where the framework has been used. Particularly in the context of food and eating among diverse social groups, the social context is significant in addition to individual choice (Delormier *et al*. 2009). Pettinger *et al*. (2017) in our review point to a "more progressive solution for social exclusion" offered by the 'social cooperative model' (Villotti *et al*. 2014). This aligns with the SE approach and "fosters a 'co-production' philosophy (Slay and Robinson, 2011), seeing people as assets and tackling issues of power and transparency, which may help mitigate experiences of food insecurity (Douglas *et al*., 2015)" (p. 564).

In the context of Citizen Science programmes, for example, which explored motivations for participation by diverse groups, studies have found 'external' factors such as levels of social engagement, training and the complexity of activities to be more important predictors than individual socio-demographic characteristics (August *et al*. 2019). Other Citizen Science studies have found that participation is made more accessible and meaningful for demographically underrepresented participants if the study methods are aligned with the partnering community's local political dynamics, culture, context, communication style, and relevant technology (see Davis *et al*. 2020). Research more broadly on participation (individual, public, and social) has also recognised that

"participation needs to be looked at in its wider context because people do not operate in a vacuum; their participation is situated in time, place and space" (Pathways through Participation 2011:2).

In the context of our review, the SE approach offers a multi-level framework for addressing participation in community food activities. The different levels include individual, household, community, organisational, and wider societal level. Participation at the individual level is shaped by individual (sometimes referred to as intrapersonal) factors such as age, gender, education, income (socio-economic status), knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, beliefs, motivations, expectations, perceptions. At the household level (sometimes referred to as interpersonal), participation is influenced by close relationships, such as family members, friends, co-workers, and immediate social circle, family norms and traditions/customs. At the community level, participation is influenced by where the people live and work such as schools, workplaces, community centres, organisations/businesses, small groups, the neighbourhoods (e.g., levels of deprivation, social inequities, community resources and infrastructure), the social relationships/social networks (formal, informal) and also physical aspects related to geographical advantages/disadvantages, and rural/urban. The societal level (sometimes referred to as structural or systemic) influences includes institutions (such as social and cultural norms, socio-economic policies, political ideologies). The 5-level form of this framework, relevant in the context of our study includes an organisation level that takes into account participation influenced by the organisational aspects (structure, processes and operations) of CSOs that we identified amongst the organisational motivations and barriers.

For increasing participation in community food activities by diverse groups, this approach therefore requires identifying and acting not only on 'downstream' influences (factors at individual, household level) but also on influences 'upstream' (such as organisational approaches, statutory policies, societal norms, food production and distribution systems). In other words, it is not simply about targeting individual motivations (which, to make it more complex may also vary with time and space), but it also involves identifying the environmental conditions that need to be present for individuals/groups/organisations to be motivated to initiate, organise, or participate, and to stay engaged with community food activities. It is also not simply about targeting specific social groups based on socio-demographics or other characteristics, but it is also about creating diverse spaces and opportunities to reconnect with food that enable people to participate, and to go further, be empowered to support sustainable food systems, and which offer a clearer path to food citizenship.

Among the studies in our review, O'Kane (2016) in her study based in Canberrra used a socio-ecological framework to identify factors that enabled and created barriers to food citizenship for five different groups of food procurers (which included community gardeners). She concluded that for a significant shift to take place towards food citizenship, changes were required at the wider societal level addressing social and cultural norms and values about role of paid work and food-related activities in people's lives. Jackson (2018) in her study of community gardening similarly revealed multi-layered connections that developed between the individual, community and environment in the dynamics that exist within community gardens in the specific context of a relatively deprived urban context in the UK. In an evaluation of outcomes from a healthy cooking and eating intervention, notably Torrence *et al.* (2018) used a social ecological approach to demonstrate its effectiveness at increasing and improving individual healthy behaviours and addressing community-level barriers in low-income rural communities. Story *et al.* (2008) used the framework to examine influences on eating behaviour.

From the perspective of organisations, the importance of the social environment within which organisations operate and how that influences community engagement and participation from a social ecological perspective is more well researched in literature outside of food studies. For example, in the context of public health, agencies that undertake health promotion activities (see Green & Kreuter 2005, Riley 2001) acknowledge multiple determinants on the work they do. These include (1) their predisposition (motivation) to organise the activities; (2) their capacity (skills and resources) to undertake the activities; (3) internal organisational factors (human and financial resources, structures, processes for community engagement and facilitation, collaborative planning with community agencies, coordination of individual programmes leadership); and (4) external factors (partnerships, inter-organisational relationships, support activities to enhance community capacity and community competencies, knowledge, skills and resources for local organisations and groups; and contextual factors).

Our review suggests an equal potential for considering the social ecological approach in programme planning and design by CSOs for community engagement with the aim of increasing participation in community food activities.

9.1 Outlines of a systemic framework

As O'Kane (2016) alludes to in her conclusion, the 'pathways to food citizenship' are neither direct nor smooth (p. 685). The multiple pathways as discussed above (section 8) draw attention to recognising different approaches and the use of different methods that potentially can increase participation in social food citizenship.

Guided by the social ecological approach, we propose that increasing community participation by diverse groups in community food activities require a systems perspective, which considers participation within a socially embedded context. We place participation at the intersection of "upstream" drivers that create supportive environments and 'downstream" behaviours, at the individual and organisation level, shown by five overlapping circles of change -- behaviour change, social change, social mobilisation, organisational change (internal and external) and advocacy for system change (see Figure 3). This builds on organising our review findings into three key focus areas:

(1) at the individual level (how the activities are meaningful to them and whether they have the motivation(s) to participate and resources to overcome barriers)

(2) at the relational level (how individuals relate with each other and with the social, institutional, and physical geography comprising of social networks/social capital, and the advantages/disadvantages of the neighbourhoods where they live) and

(3) the organisation of the activities (who is involved, their motivations, capacities and resources, and importantly, their processes of engagement with the community).

Next Steps:

Following this literature review, the second phase of this piece of research includes doing an empirical study on participation in community food activities in the UK context. The aim is to map the findings from the empirical study against the social ecological framework as outlined in section above and identify some effective ways for increasing participation in community food activities.

An overview of a 'systemic' framework from a social ecological perspective aimed at enabling participation in community food activities, outlining the focus areas and strategies and mechanisms for change is proposed in Table 8. An illustration of the framework is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: A social ecological framework for increasing participation in community food activities

Enabling participation in social food citizenship	Focus	Stratergies
Behaviour Change	- Individuals - Families/households - Small groups	• Focuses on individual motivations (knowledge/awareness, self-efficacy, skills) & supportive relationships • Use of interpersonal communication, mass and digital social media, group activities – a mix of info-based (communication) and engagement-based mechanisms
Social Change	- Groups of individuals in communities	• Focuses on enabling groups of individuals to engage in participatory processes to create ownership of community food activities among individuals and communities • Emphasis on creating spaces and opportunities for citizen engagement, for sharing of ideas, knowledge, resources & experiences; on dialogue to change food practices on a large scale, including norms and structural inequalities which pose barriers • Use of info-based (communication), engagement-based and facilitation-based mechanisms
Social Mobilisation	- community and national leaders/ policymakers - Community groups/ organisations - Public and private partners	• Focuses on uniting partners at the community and national levels • Emphasis on collective efficacy and empowerment • Uses dialogue, coalition-building, group/organisational activities -- a mix of info-based (communication), engagement-based and facilitation-based mechanisms
Organisation change (internal)	- Organisation staff - Programme planners & implementers - Volunteers	• Focuses on human & financial resources, structures, processes for community engagement and facilitation, collaborative planning with community agencies, coordination of individual programmes, leadership • Uses - consultation & training, rewards & incentives, and feedback on performance-based mechanisms
Organisation change (external)	- Organisation staff - Programme planners & implementers - Partners - Stakeholders	• Focuses on partnerships (inter-organisational relationships), support activities to enhance local community capacity and community competencies, knowledge, skills & resources for local organisations & groups, and contextual factors (local, regional, national; social/physical characteristics of communities, community priorities, community assets, and trends in the food policy environment) • Uses coalition-building, community mobilisation, and communication of evidence- based justifications for programmes - a mix of info-based (communication), engagement-based and facilitation-based mechanisms
System change (Advocacy)	- Policymakers and decision-makers - Programme planners and funders - Programme organisers - Community leaders	• Focuses on policy environment and seeks to develop or change laws, rules, & regulations (local, national) • Uses coalition-building, community mobilisation, and communication of evidence- based justifications for programmes - a mix of info-based (communication), engagement-based and facilitation-based mechanisms

Table 8: Overview of a systemic framework to increase participation in community food activities

10. Conclusion

In recent years, there has been increasing interest among CSOs, practitioners and researchers in food citizenship for supporting a societal shift towards more inclusive, resilient and sustainable food systems by transforming "passive consumers" to "active food citizens" for individual, community, social, and ecological benefits. However, a deeper understanding of what constitutes food citizenship, what motivates people to become food citizens, and what enables food citizenship has largely been lacking.

In line with the pre-determined scope of our study, we focused on the drivers and barriers for *social food citizenship* activities. However, a scoping review of studies in the area of food citizenship revealed that in addition to a limited shared understanding and empirical operationalisation of *food citizenship*, there is no conceptualisation of social food citizenship in academic discourse. The latter appears to be a term which has emerged and been interpreted loosely in practitioner circles. For the purposes of our study, we therefore used an interpretative approach to social *food citizenship*. Corresponding broadly to distinctions made in sustainability discourses, we consider *social food citizenship* as one of the three inter-connected dimensions of food citizenship (the other two being ecological and economic), and it is aligned to the social (including cultural and political) domain of food-related practices.

With the above understanding of social food citizenship, we conducted a systematic review of academic, practitioner, and grey literature on social community-level food activities. Our inclusion criteria led to the identification of forty academic publications. These include case studies on community growing, (social) cooking and eating, sharing of food, and sharing 'food experiences', from across thirteen countries.

Our review reveals diverse social groups that participated in the community food activities across different identities, some belonging to protected categories (as defined by UK law), and some to other, non-protected categories (Table 1). It also demonstrates that community food activities frequently address targeted groups (e.g., specific age groups, socio-economically disadvantaged groups) but rarely others, including some groups with protected characteristics (e.g., groups who identify as LGBTQI) who were rarely strategically, *i.e.*, with explicit intention, included. Some studies described the inclusion of people with disabilities, different faiths, different language and cultural backgrounds, and immigration status, but provided little detail on how they were included and enabled to participate. The case studies also highlighted a gap in terms of looking at identity in a more nuanced and intersectional way. Furthermore, few studies engaged with diversity within organisations or institutions, which could be addressed to facilitate stronger models of inclusion. Overall, very few studies engaged with the organisational structures and processes and their influence on diversity in participation. Despite these shortcomings, the diversity of case studies included in our review allowed us to identify the range of motivations, barriers, and enablers from a wide variety of experiences and contexts.

We summarise our key insights here.

Our findings on motivations for engaging with the activities (section 4) reveal that no single motivation or set of motivations is most important. Instead, there are multiple motivations behind participation depending on the type of activity, who the participants are, and how the activity is initiated and organised. Motivations range from personal, social and community-focused, to ecological and environmental concerns. The multiplicity of motivations highlights the different individual, community, and social meanings attached to food-related activities that people and organisations engage and participate in, going frequently beyond simply the utilitarian aspect of food which might initially bring them together.

Barriers to participation in food activities are both individual- and organisation-centred (section 5). They range from a lack of time due to competing priorities; physical and economic constraints affecting access; lack of awareness and effective communication; lack of community representation, to funding insecurities and institutional barriers. Although there was no in-depth analysis of neighbourhood disadvantages, marginalised urban neighbourhoods are considered particularly challenging when addressing different forms of social exclusion and prevalent vulnerabilities. There was an awareness that organising activities designed for specific communities could unintentionally exclude others, especially when they were designed *'for'* participants and not *'with'* them. Equally, aiming for very broad participation without a 'target group' might, nonetheless, lead to a lack of consideration for specific requirements, and lead to a physical or social environment in which not everyone feels comfortable.

Further, motivations and barriers to participation differed within social groups, between organisers and community members, and between the different types of activities. Although these differences in motivations and barriers to participation across different activities are not necessarily surprising (as the activities are locally embedded), it suggests the importance of not decontextualising food-related practices and of recognising their 'social embeddedness' and place-based nature as some of their critical defining features. It also suggests that there is no one size-fits-all approach to increasing participation in community food activities; differences and diversity require careful and nuanced consideration.

Although few studies focused on organisational aspects, several point to the significance of different types of arrangements between organisers and community member participants, leading to different forms of interaction and to different levels of commitment from participants. There is a general perception that participation and longer-

term engagement in community food activities will take place as long as all involved (individuals, organisations and other stakeholders) can fulfil their respective expectations (*i.e.*, their evolving motivations and goals for participation continue to be met). Key enabling factors include sufficient resources (including funding, time); easy and affordable access; capacity building (knowledge and skills); support of facilitators or community champions; regular and effective communication; community involvement; networking; the reconciling of different agendas; institutional support as well as effective organisational processes of engagement.

Going beyond the specific focus on 'community participation', we have identified other pathways for positive social change, which we consider relevant for mobilising collective action for food citizenship. These pathways include critical consciousness, social capital, the asset approach, a multi-stage process, and the participatory approach. These resonate to various degrees across many of the studies in our review, even though they are not explicitly addressed in most cases.

At a broad level, our review shows that the opportunities that community food activities provide for social interaction and cultivation of relationships, for building a sense of community, and for 'place-making' are related to three key aspects:

(1) the individual level: how the activities are meaningful to individuals and whether they have the motivation(s) to participate and resources to overcome barriers;

(2) the relational level: how individuals relate with each other and with their social, institutional, and physical geographies comprising of social networks/social capital, and the advantages and disadvantages of the neighbourhoods where they live; and

(3) the organisational level of the activities: who is involved, their motivations, capacities and resources, and importantly, their specific processes of engagement with the community.

We found that the Social Ecological (SE) approach offers a useful multi-level framework for capturing systematically these multiple and interacting influences on food-related activities, whether it is growing, cooking, eating, or the sharing of food. Seen as social practices, they are learned from and enacted with others, and as collective practices, we consider it important that they are understood in the context of the wider environment and within the everyday experiences in which such practices take place. We emphasise the potential of the SE approach for identifying the most relevant points of leverage for increasing (diversity in) participation in a particular context -- by placing food-related practices against "upstream" drivers that create supportive environments and against 'downstream" behaviours. This approach is underpinned by influential contemporary perspectives, which stress multiple determinants and multiple levels of determinants in various contexts, such as health and education. It is now also receiving increasing levels of attention within food studies.

Lastly, guided by the SE approach, we propose for consideration the outlines of a strategic framework. This framework looks at enabling participation in community food activities at five levels -- behaviour/individual change, social change, social mobilisation, organisational change (internal and external) and advocacy (for system/policy change). We aim to map the findings from the literature review (*i.e.*, the findings reported here) and results from the empirical phase of the research (Report 2) against this framework and arrive at a synthesis of findings (Report 3), which we hope will help develop guidelines that will be of use to practitioners.

Limitations in our research arise from the broad scope and exploratory nature of our systematic search strategy in an emerging area of interest where our findings are limited to the studies identified by this specific search strategy and selection criteria. The case studies that satisfied our review process criteria led mainly to those on community gardening. Other categories – food sharing, cooking, and eating – were

less frequently represented. Our approach to analysis, however, ensured that we could draw out insights common to the several types of community food activities. This naturally did not allow for an in-depth understanding of each of the several types of activities and their settings across thirteen countries in their own right. The combination of 'place' and 'people' in different environments in the different countries is clearly unique for each reviewed case study, but we also see value in the combined approach as that enables shared learnings from across different contexts.

It is pertinent to note that none of the community food activities articulated their goals and activities as 'social food citizenship.' Nonetheless, as place-based, food-related collective practices, we consider them as belonging to the social domain of food citizenship since they demonstrate socially 'meaningful' interaction for participants at the community level.

Critical questions that lie beyond the scope of this study, however, remain, including questions about the extent to which the level and depth of engagement and community participation in the diverse activities relate to elements that are key aspects of a citizen-led shift to a sustainable food system. For example, to what extent can *active* participation, the right to food, sustainability, and empowering individuals and communities to shape the food system co-exist in these practices? Can internationally increasingly popular food sharing activities in urban foodscapes, for example, that are based on the redistribution of food surplus from a wasteful food system (see Davies *et al*. 2019) be considered 'food citizenship' practices? Is enabling people to come together for 'sharing food' sufficient to create communities of practice around good food -- which is good for both people and the planet? Does community participation in social food citizenship need to be 'measured' by increasing the number of regular participants and/or by increasing the number of activities? Are longer-lasting activity outcomes more important, *i.e.*, that there are sustained changes in eating, cooking, and sharing of good food behaviour or practice? As our review has shown, the complexity and diversity of specific contexts, the diverse understandings of food citizenship, and a limited shared understanding of social food citizenship across research and practice clearly require further interrogation.

We identified a few gaps in the research literature. Most of the reviewed case studies did not present the theoretical approach or perspective underpinning the community food activity or intervention that they described or examined. It cannot be directly assumed that it was absent altogether, but we could possibly argue that this points to a trend in empirical research on community food activities that underplays the significance of social and behavioural science theories. Yet, there is increasing evidence that theory-informed interventions have been found to be more effective than those lacking a theoretical base in many sectors, such as health promotion and education (see Glanz & Bishop 2010).

Another gap in the literature, in our view, arises from the fact that most of the identified case studies focused primarily on a description of the community food activities with limited details on the actual processes of engagement with community members, and between organisations and participants in diverse contexts. Sparseness of such detail makes learning across different settings difficult. It was also difficult to assess how specific geographies might have influenced participation since there was often only a broad reference to it, such as 'disadvantaged urban neighbourhoods', without the provision of further detail. More generally, the neglect of analysing or reporting on processes that shape participation or mediate influences within the context of communities made it less possible for us to assess the studies for lessons about good organisational practices in increasing participation. Some of the few studies on community gardening that described engagement processes, however, suggest that the nature of processes facilitating the organisation of and participation in community food activities significantly influences the sustainability of participation and the activity (see Draper & Freedman 2010). This points to the closer attention we need to pay to the key role that organisations have in enabling participation in community food activities.

Overall, we found few relevant case studies that elaborated on interactions with the other two important food system actors – the state and the market – and how they may have influenced participation in community food activities. It is worth noting though that Baldy & Kruse (2019: 75), who looked at *state-driven* participation processes, describe this neglect aptly: "food democracy research should not necessarily conceptualize state actors, local entrepreneurs and citizens as opponents, but rather, should reconsider how these various actors can drive food democracy and citizenship in a supportive and coordinated way". This is especially relevant in the context of government actors at the local level who are increasingly engaging with various food policy initiatives, such as sustainable urban food strategies (Hebinck & Page 2017, White & Bunn 2017), or shaping "creative city politics" (Cretella & Buenger 2016) in support of food system transformation.

We have been able to identify key motivations, barriers and enablers from across the reviewed literature, which – adapted to the local context – provide pointers for increasing diversity in participation in community food activities. However, the still somewhat limited understanding from the existing scarce literature on participation processes in relation to community food activities - and on food citizenship more broadly (from a multi-actor and multi-level perspective) - calls for further systematic research in this area.

LOVE

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Systematic review search string

Population: Commun* OR "Drivers* Commun* OR Disadvantages*

Intervention: Food Growing; Edible Landscapes; Community Gardening; Community Kitchen; Community Growing; Urban gardening; Food preparation; Food distribution; Food sharing; Food Skills.

Outcome: "Participation" OR "Engagement" OR "Resilience" OR "Community Cohesion" OR "Food Citizenship" OR "Food Democracy" OR "Improved Nutrition"

Appendix 2: Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion Criteria Studies were included if they	**Exclusion Criteria** Studies were excluded if they were
I: contained at least one food-related activity	not specific case studies (*i.e.*, those providing an overview or context) (29)
S: described at least one community setting	focused on individual consumption or only individual participants (*i.e.*, no social activities) (11)
P: were organised by an individual or a community group/civic society organisation as a group-based activity	not at a community level (e.g., only household-based) or in the wrong setting (e.g., studies on alternative food outlets such as local farmers' markets, CSAs, food coops, produce stands) and civic food networks which focus on consumers engaging in food citizenship (26)
described at least one motivation for participation	the wrong intervention or study design (8)
described at least one associated barrier to participation	specific nutritional studies or interventions that were focused on individuals or in a curriculum context where voluntary participation was limited (9)
described at least one positive change/outcome related to food citizenship (e.g., social, nutritional, environmental, health, civic engagement, educational, social inclusion)	only focusing on outcomes but not on the process of the activity, or if barriers and motivations of participants were not discussed (16)

Appendix 3: Review Summary

PRISMA screenshot of Covidence review process

Appendix 4: List of Studies included in review

[for full details of publication, see References above]

1. Abbey *et al*. 2021. Perceived Facilitators and Barriers to Participation in Community-Based Cooking Classes among Mobile Market Patrons: Exploratory Research.
2. Anderson *et al*. 2018. Building sustainable university-based community gardens: Volunteer perceptions of enablers and barriers to engagement and benefits received from volunteering in the moving feast.
3. Armstrong 2000. A survey of community gardens in upstate New York: Implications for health promotion and community development.
4. Bishop, & Purcell 2013. The value of an allotment group for refugees.
5. Bonow & Normak 2018. Community gardening in Stockholm: Participation, driving forces and the role of municipality.
6. Brody & de Wilde 2020. Cultivating food or cultivating citizens? On the governance and potential of community gardens in Amsterdam.
7. Chauvenet *et al*. 2021. A Qualitative Study of Rural Low-Wealth Participants' Experiences with Community Gardens.
8. Davies *et al*. 2019. Food sharing initiatives and food democracy: Practice and policy in three European cities, Politics and Governance.
9. Denning 2019. Persistence in volunteering: an affect theory approach to faith-based volunteering.
10. Draper & Freedman 2010. Review and Analysis of the Benefits, Purposes, and Motivations Associated with Community Gardening in the United States.
11. Engler-Stringer & Berenbaum 2007. Exploring social support through collective kitchen participation in three Canadian cities.

12. Gatenby *et al*. 2011. Cooking Communities: Using multicultural after-school cooking clubs to enhance community cohesion.

13. Harper & Afonso 2016. Cultivating civic ecology: A photovoice study with urban gardeners in Lisbon, Portugal.

14. Hennchen & Pregernig 2020. Organizing joint practices in urban food initiatives-A comparative analysis of gardening, cooking and eating together.

15. Jackson 2018. Growing the community - A case study of community gardens in Lincoln's Abbey Ward.

16. Kingsley et al. 2019. "You feel like you're part of something bigger": Exploring motivations for community garden participation in Melbourne, Australia.

17. Kirkpatrick & Tarasuk 2009. Food insecurity and participation in community food programs among low-income Toronto families.

18. Kruithof *et al*. 2018. Eating together as a social network intervention for people with mild intellectual disabilities: a theory-based evaluation.

19. Lee *et al*. 2010. Process evaluation of Community Kitchens: Results from two Victorian local government areas.

20. Loopstra & Tarasuk 2013. Perspectives on community gardens, community kitchens and the good food box program in a community-based sample of low-income families.

21. Markow *et al*. 2014. Improving Access to Community-Based Food Systems in Adelaide, South Australia: Strategies to Encourage Low-Socioeconomic Status Groups to Participate.

22. Marovelli 2019. Cooking and eating together in London: Food sharing initiatives as collective spaces of encounter.

23. McVey *et al*. 2018. The motivations and experiences of community garden participants in Edinburgh, Scotland.

24. Middling *et al*. 2011. Gardening and the social engagement of older people.

25. Milbourne 2012. Everyday (in)justices and ordinary environmentalisms: Community gardening in disadvantaged urban neighbourhoods O'Kane, G. (2016). A moveable feast: Exploring barriers and enablers to food citizenship food citizenship.

26. Ohmer *et al*. 2009. Community gardening and community development: Individual, social and community benefits of a community conservation program.

27. O'Kane 2016. A moveable feast: Exploring barriers and enablers to food citizenship.

28. Pascoe & Howes 2017. A growing movement: Motivations for joining community gardens.

29. Pettinger *et al*. 2017. Engaging homeless individuals in discussion about their food experiences to optimise wellbeing: A pilot study.

30. Porter & McIlvaine-Newsad 2013. Gardening in green space for environmental justice: food security, leisure and social capital.

31. Ramsden 2020. Shoots and leaves: Exploring the impacts and fragile sustainability of sustainable place-making projects working with marginalised people.

32. Ramsden 2021. "It's one of the few things that … pulls us together when the outside world is really tough." Exploring the outcomes and challenges of a charity-led community garden in a disadvantaged English city.

33. Schanes & Stagl 2019. Food waste fighters: What motivates people to engage in food sharing?

34. Scheromm 2015. Motivations and Practices of gardeners in urban collective gardens: The case of Montpellier.

35. Smith & Harvey 2021. Social eating initiatives and the practices of commensality.

36. Sonti & Svendsen 2018. Why Garden? Personal and abiding motivations for community gardening in New York City.

37. Suto e*t al*. 2021. Participation in community gardening: Sowing the seeds of well-being.

38. Wesselow & Mashele 2019. "Who needs money if you got hands, if you got plants" Forming community resilience in two urban gardening networks in South Africa.

39. Whatley *et al*. 2015. Enabling occupational participation and social inclusion for people recovering from mental ill-health through community gardening.

40. White & Bunn 2017. Growing in Glasgow: Innovative practices and emerging policy pathways for urban agriculture.

Appendix 5: Setting/Locations for the case studies reviewed

Setting/Location	
Australia	
Community gardens (+farmers' market+ CSA +two conventional food systems+ fresh food markets + supermarkets) in Canberra	O'Kane 2016
Community garden, East Coast	Pascoe & Howes 2017
Community garden in Melbourne	Kingsley *et al*. 2019
Community garden in Melbourne	Whateley *et al*. 2015
Community garden in Queensland	Anderson *et al*. 2018
Community-based food systems (farmers markets, CSAs, Community gardens, Food swaps) in South Australia	Markow *et al*. 2014
Community kitchen in Victoria	Lee *et al*. 2010
Austria	
Food sharing in Vienna and Graz	Schanes & Stagl 2019
Canada	
Collective kitchens in Saskatoon, Toronto and Montreal	Engler-Stringer & Berenbaum 2007
Community gardens in British Columbia	Suto *et al*. 2021
Community kitchens, community gardens in Toronto	Kirkpatrick & Tarasuk 2009
Community kitchens, community gardens	Loopstra & Tarasuk 2013
Denmark	
Community garden in Copenhagen & Odense	Pascoe & Howes 2017
France	
Urban collective gardens, Montpellier	Scheromm 2015
Germany	
Urban food sharing initiative, Berlin	Davies *et al*. 2019*
Urban gardening and joint cooking and eating activities in Southern Germany	Hennchen & Pregernig 2020
Netherlands	
Community garden in Amsterdam	Brody & de Wilde 2020
Social eating events in Amsterdam	Kruithof *et al*. 2018
Portugal	
Community Garden, Lisbon	Harper & Afonso 2016

Setting/Location	
Republic of Ireland	
Urban food sharing initiative, Dublin	Davies *et al*. 2019*
South Africa	
Urban gardening, Western Cape/South Africa	Wesselow & Mashele 2019
Sweden	
Community garden in Stockholm	Bonow & Normark 2017
United Kingdom	
After-school cooking clubs in Leeds	Gatenby *et al*. 2011
Community allotment in the UK	Bishop & Purcell 2013
Community garden + cooking classes in London	Marovelli 2019*
Community garden projects in Birmingham, Bristol, Cardiff, London, Manchester, Newport Nottingham, Salford and Southhampton	Milbourne 2012
Community garden in Edinburgh	McVey *et al*. 2018
Community garden in Hull	Ramsden 2020, 2021
Community garden in Lincoln	Jackson 2018
Community garden in Manchester	Middling *et al*. 2011
Urban agriculture (community gardening)	White & Bunn 2017
Food as a Lifestyle Motivator project in Plymouth	Pettinger *et al*. 2017
School holiday hunger project in the United Kingdom	Denning 2019
Social eating in Nottingham	Smith & Harvey 2021
Urban food sharing initiative in London	Davies *et al*. 2019*
United States	
Community garden in New York City	Sonti & Svendsen 2018
Community gardens in upstate New York	Armstrong 2000
Community gardens in North Carolina	Chauvenet *et al*. 2021
Community gardens in Western Pennsylvania	Ohmer *et al*. 2009
Community gardens in Illinois	Porter & McIlvaine-Newsad 2013
Community-based cooking classes in Washington	Abbey *et al*. 2021

**Please note that some studies cover multiple settings/locations.*