ORGANIC RESEARCH CENTRE

Joining the dots

SUSTAINABLE FOOD CORNWALL

Agenda

Part 1: Update on findings and scenarios

- Context and objectives - Katie
- Buying priorities - Rob
- Key findings from survey - Rowan
- Distribution scenarios- Alastair
- Potential suppliers options - Rob
- Financials, Profit and Loss - Alastair

Clarifying questions / comments in chat

Quick Break: 5 min

Part 2: Discussion and action plan

- Feedback and thoughts - which scenarios to take forward?
- Action plan - What support is needed? What are the priorities?
- Funding options
- 1:1 Agroecology support - climate / nature / people / place
- Next steps

Context / overview

- Local growers identified **challenges with logistics / buying in produce** - interested to explore collaborations
- Meetings at Newquay Orchard and initial research discussed at the Ecopark in November
- **Group interest to pursue a collaborative distribution model** - focus on collaborating on wholesale starting point.
- Set up **Working Group as part of Sustainable Food Cornwall** - meeting in Dec with GFL
- **FIPL Funding was secured** Phase 1 Feb - March to look into options in more detail. Survey, interviews, financial scoping and scenario development

Collective objectives

Short term

- **Working together to buy in organic / agroecological produce** - share distribution costs and practicalities (local and wholesale) particularly field veg and during the hungry gap.

- **Maximise opportunities for more efficient distribution** - save time, fuel costs and emissions. Sharing journeys, building on existing efforts / infrastructure (initially buying in veg, other produce and deliveries in future?)

Wider ambitions / longer term;

- **Support local suppliers of organic / agroecological veg** plug gap left by retiring field veg producers - collective buying to make it more viable. Enable more grower-grower sales, reduce waste. Expand to meat / dairy etc

- **Help catalyse a resilient and thriving local food system** e.g. establish a wider collaborative food distribution network / wholesaler; scaling up and linking food hubs; delivery to consumers / retail / catering / public procurement?; raising awareness and building demand/ local supply; including a wider range of produce; linking with food access efforts.

NB Catalysing local food system is part of a wider objective bringing together many partners across Cornwall - Sustainable Food Cornwall Action Plan

FIPL Phase 1 Work

Coordinated by Rob (Goonown Growers)/ Alastair Cameron (Falmouth Food Coop)/ Rowan (ORC) and Claire (Sustainable Food Cornwall)

Focus on collaboration on buying in and distribution. Based on key data needs raised in Porthtowan in November.

- **Data collection (including identifying opportunities for enhancing agroecological production)**

Survey and targeted interviews on journey costs, demand / collective buying power,, existing hubs and infrastructure, and identifying interests for grower support in phase 2 (1:1 agroecological / nature recovery).

- **Scoping business models for a collaborative distribution network**

Rapid scoping study on potential distribution scenarios / business models. Talking to local stakeholders and reviewing similar initiatives from across the UK. Barriers (including regulatory) and basic financial profit and loss.

- **Develop an action plan and applications for Phase 2 of the work**

Brief report of findings and action plan mapping out next steps for Phase 2 of the project. Including an outline of agroecological support and farm opportunity plans for growers.

Challenge - limited time for an ambitious project!

Buying-in priorities

- **Price**
  - Produce prices per kg / per pc
  - Transport cost => how much volume is required to make transport cost viable
- **Range**
- **Provenance** (inc how much detail)
- **Convenience / logistics**
  - Delivery day(s) & times
  - Admin involved
  - Short-notice / long-notice lead time
- **Quality**
- **Reliability**
  - Correct amounts / specification
  - Last minute changes
  - Easy to get hold of or not
- **Organic status**

= difficult to satisfy everyone! BUT plenty of opportunities

Suppliers

Every potential supplier will have different strengths

Broadly speaking, we're looking at 4 different types of suppliers:

- Very local direct suppliers
  - Wanting to encourage as much as possible
  - Don't want to affect these supply relationships
- **Local / regional indirect suppliers**
  - For anyone that can't get delivery or go and collect
- **Short lead-time wholesalers**
- **Long lead-time wholesalers**

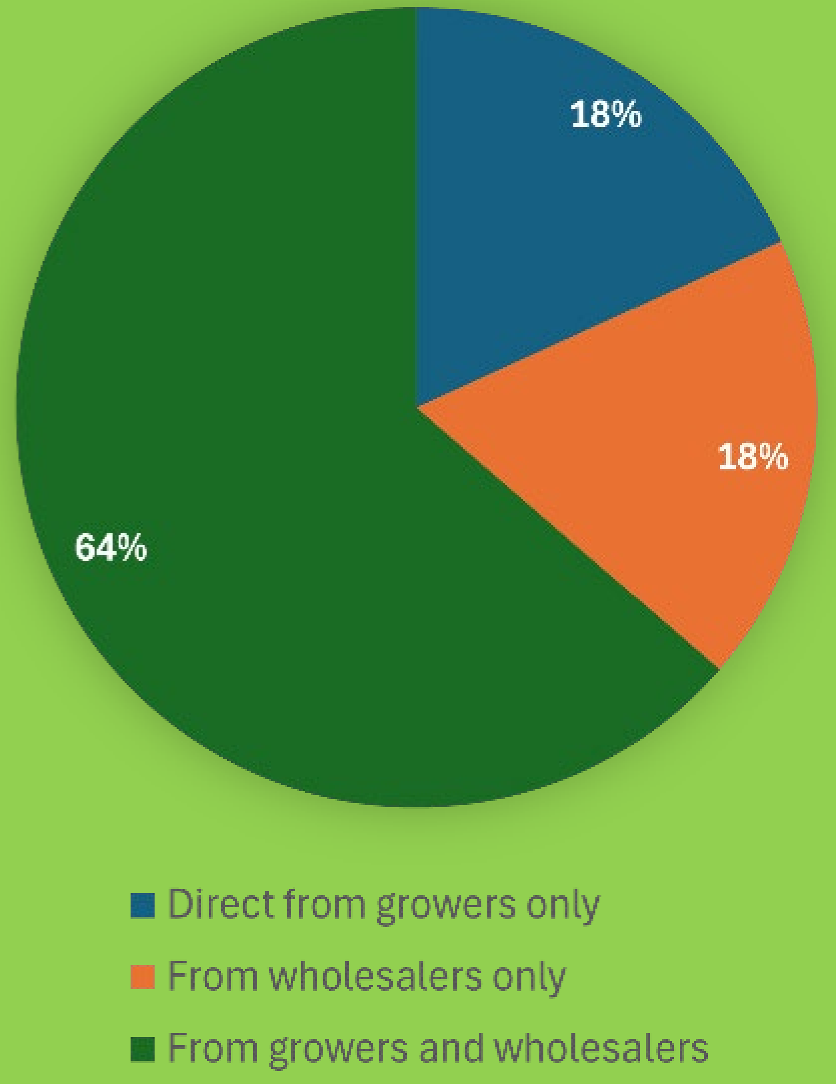
The survey findings

- 15 respondents - 13 of which are actively involved in retail.

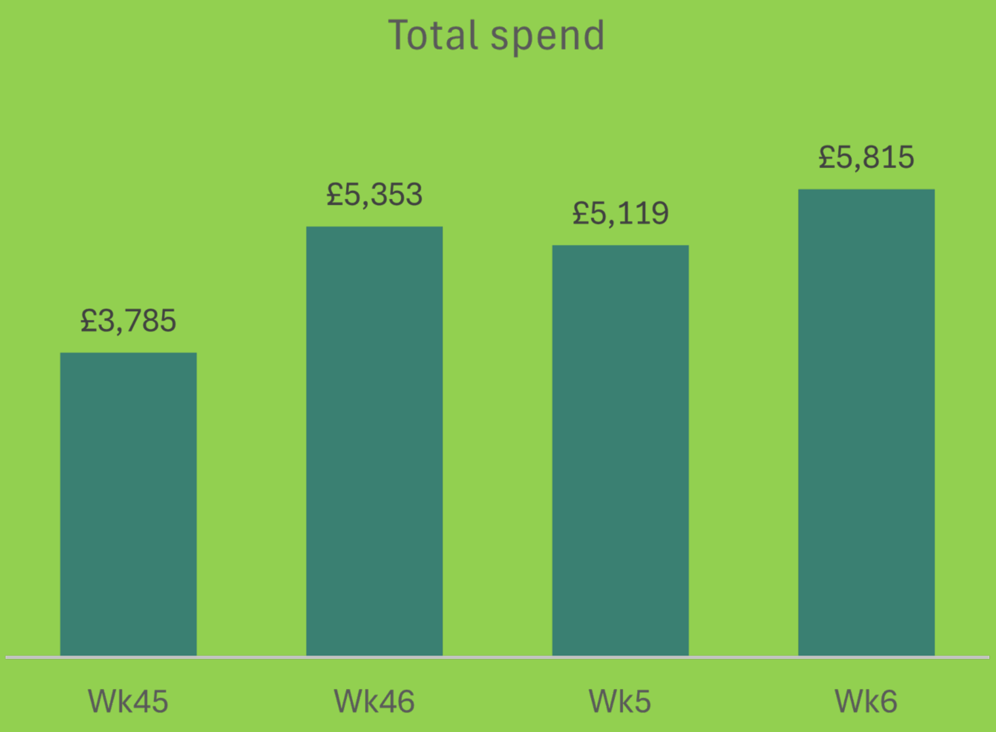
- 12 out of 15 respondents growing their own produce

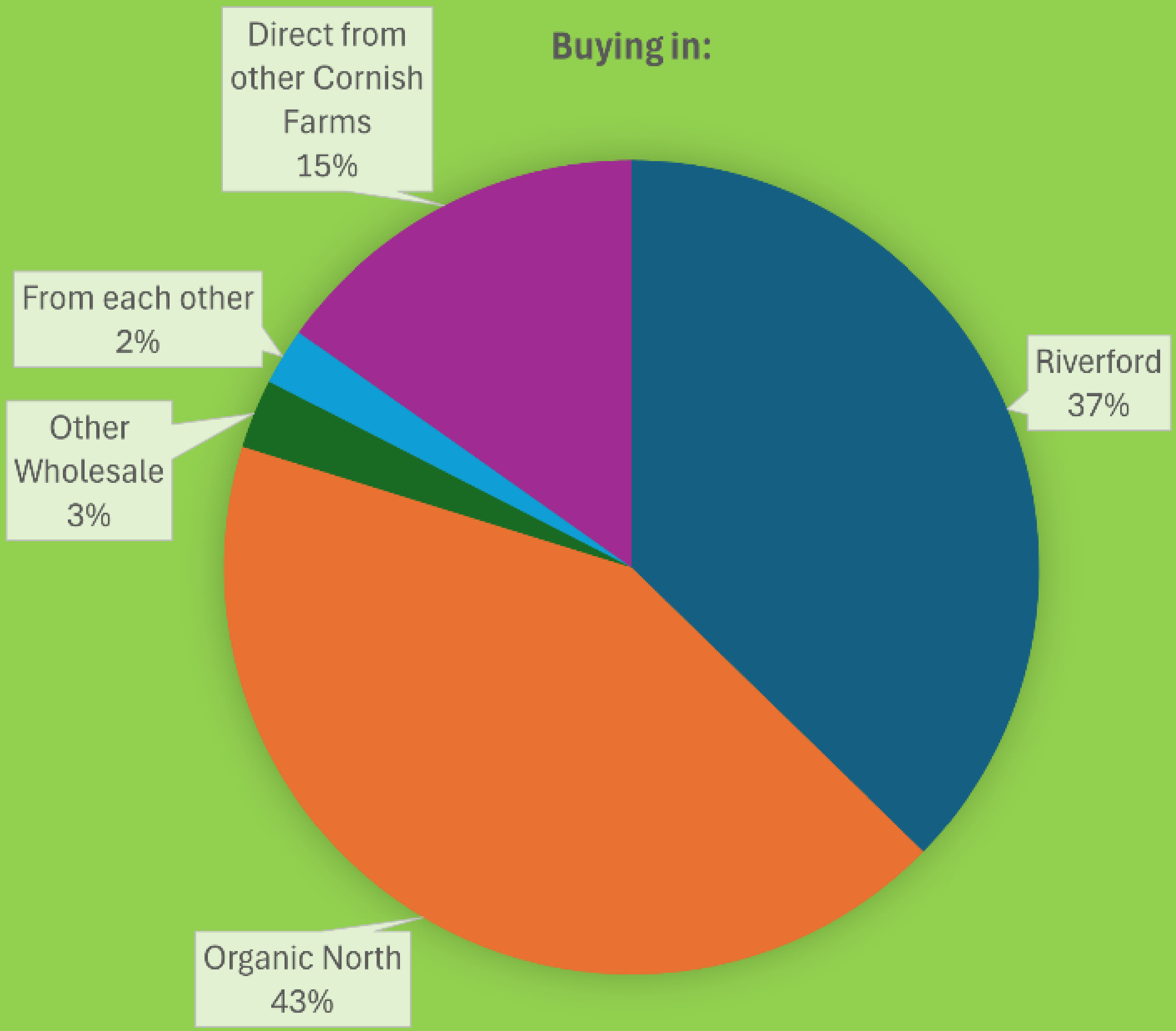
- Point of sale is predominantly box schemes and shops

- 12 out of 15 buying in produce and almost all respondents looking for better supply of organic products

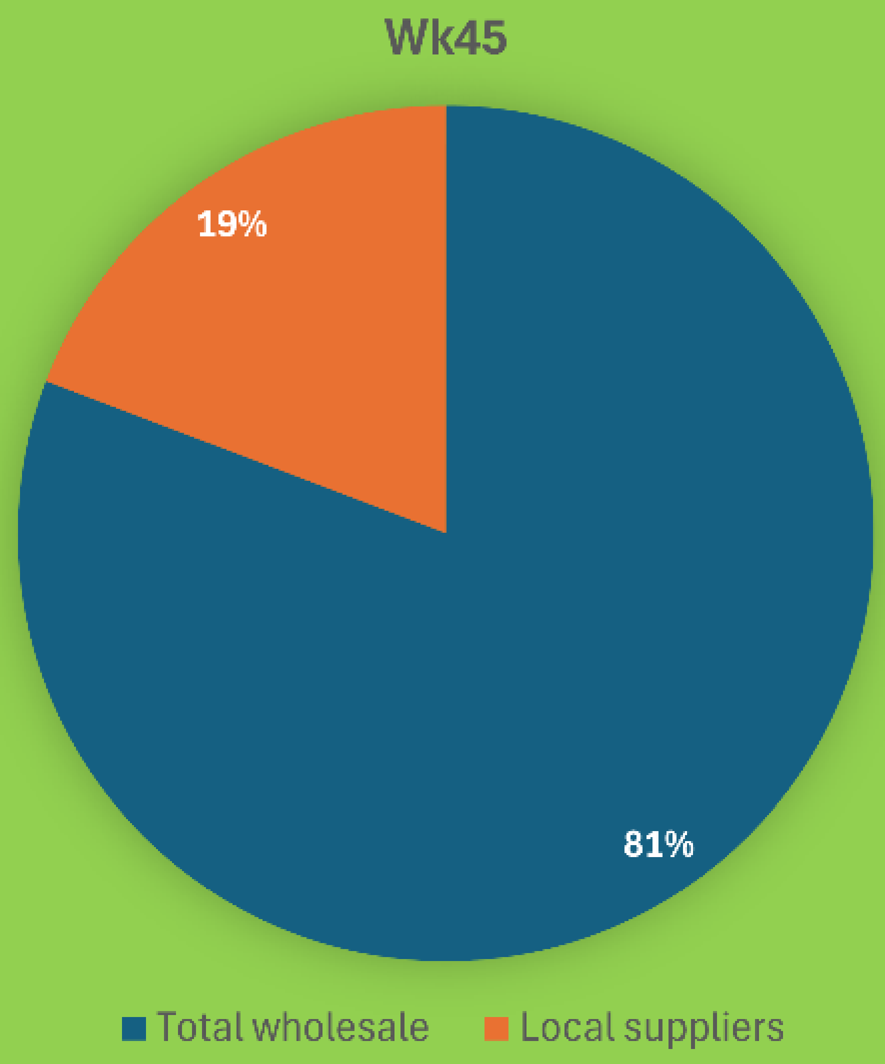


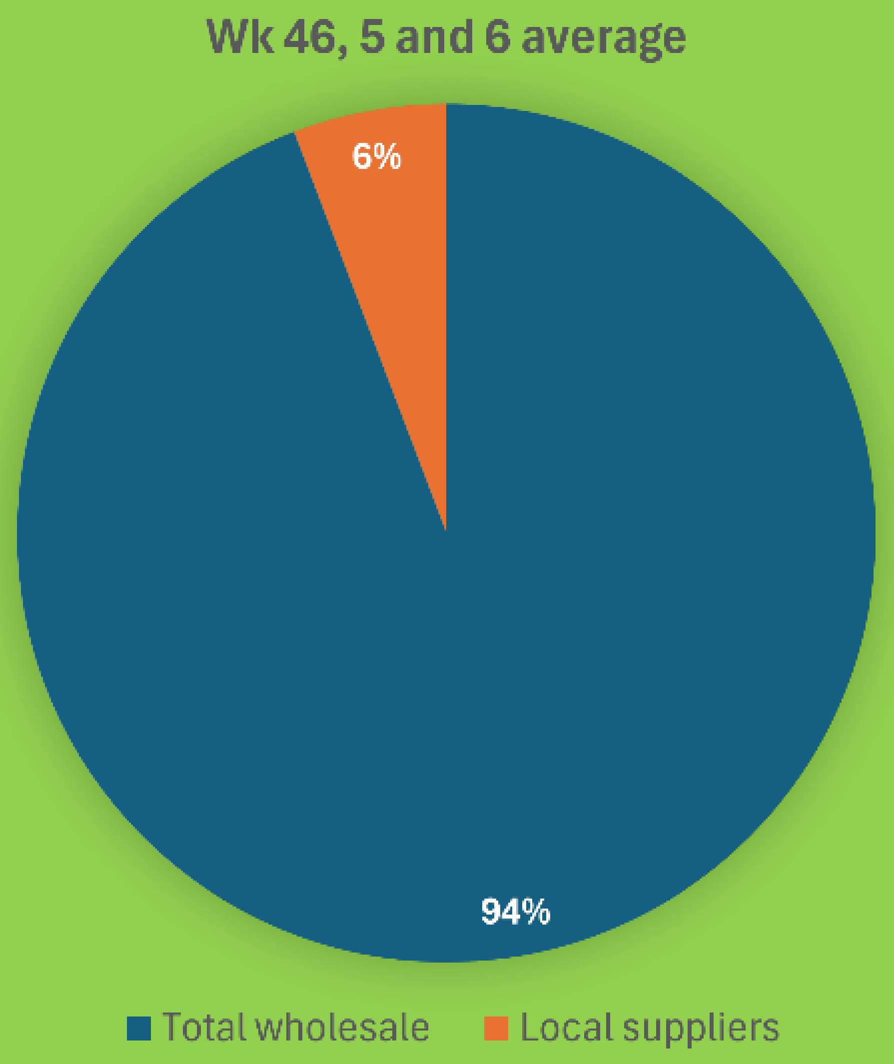
Buying in fruit and veg





Local supply of organic F&V





What is being bought from wholesalers

- 117 different products being bought in across the weeks sampled

- Main delivery/drop off days are Tuesday and Thursday

- Over £1250 spent on delivery fees in weeks sampled and £250 on VAT in orders.
  - Conservative estimate of £12,000 collective spend on delivery fees between October and May

What is being bought from wholesalers

Top five products for each week:

November week 1: Carrots (£376), Mushrooms (£357), Sweet Potato (£227.85), Desert apples (£220), Pears (£201)

November week 2: Onions (£597), Carrots (£479), Squash (£393), Potatoes (£359), Desert apples (£255)

January week 1: Squash (£506), Carrots (£490), Onions (£397), Mushrooms (£330), Desert apples (£316)

January week 2: Mushrooms (£485), Onions (£413), Carrots (£371), Potatoes (£299), Broccoli (£290)

What respondents are looking to buy more of as organic/agroecological

- Greatest need was for better supply of organic fruit (7/15)
  - Then vegetables (4/15)
  - Dairy (4/15)
  - White meat (2/15)
  - Pre/part cooked products (2/15)
  - Red meat (1/15)
  - Soft drinks (1/15)
  - Pantry staples (1/15)

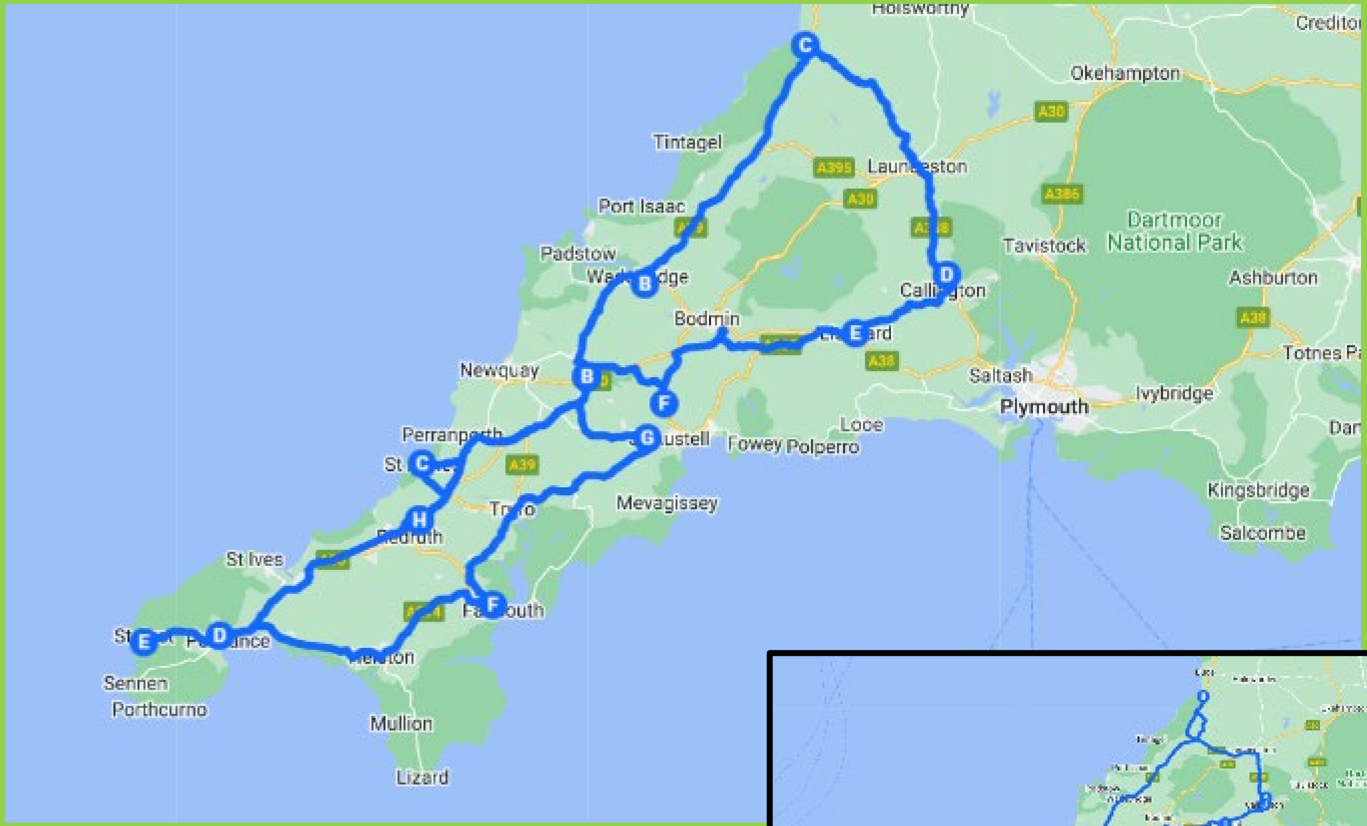
Distribution options

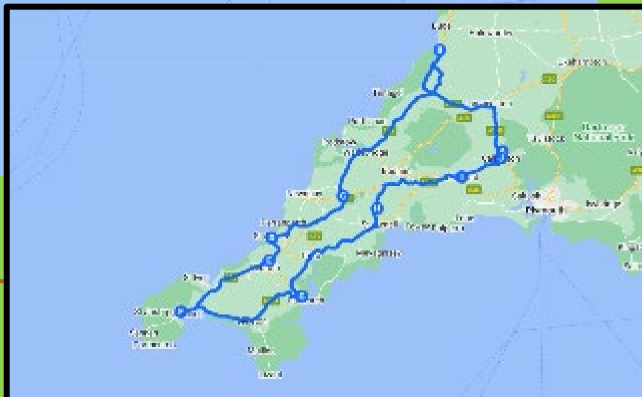
Small clusters

- Informal networks of individual businesses collaborating together to buy and distribute items in their local area.
- Business model varies to local arrangement
- Flexible and low cost but lacks scale to improve margins

Central Hub

- Centralise purchase of wholesale items to single central storage hub (e.g. Fentenfenna / CFB)
- Distribution from central hub over two routes / days
- Tie in ‘Kernow Food Loop’ model of higher value goods
- Tie in with other activities e.g. Fairshare / Gleaning
- Requires premises, vehicles, admin and scale of operation



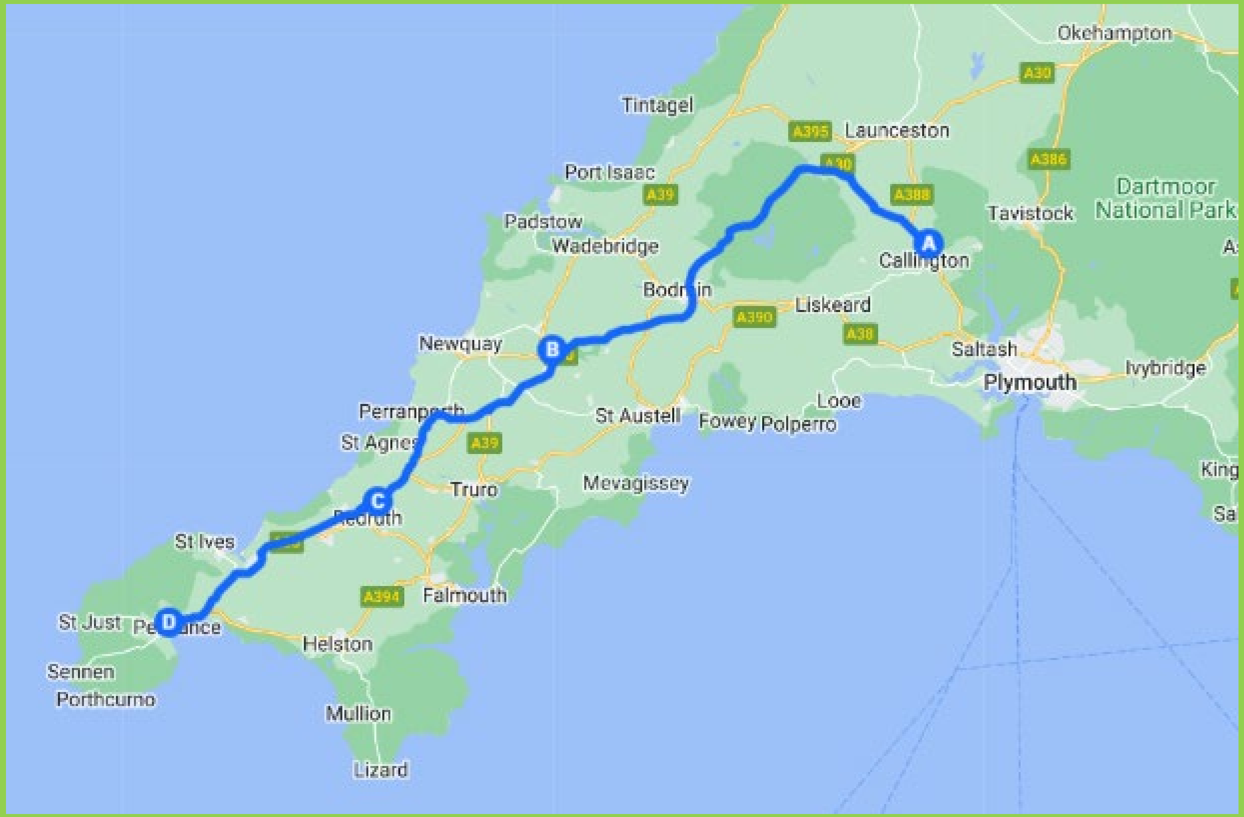


The Gleaning Route

- Making use of existing transport networks
- West to East gleaned produce / East to West wholesale
- Shared costs / supporting gleaning work

Kernow Line

- Single, simple route along A30
- Collection from drop off points instead of delivery
- Tie in with Good Food Loop to increase range of produce for retail
- Lowest mileage for distributor but more for users



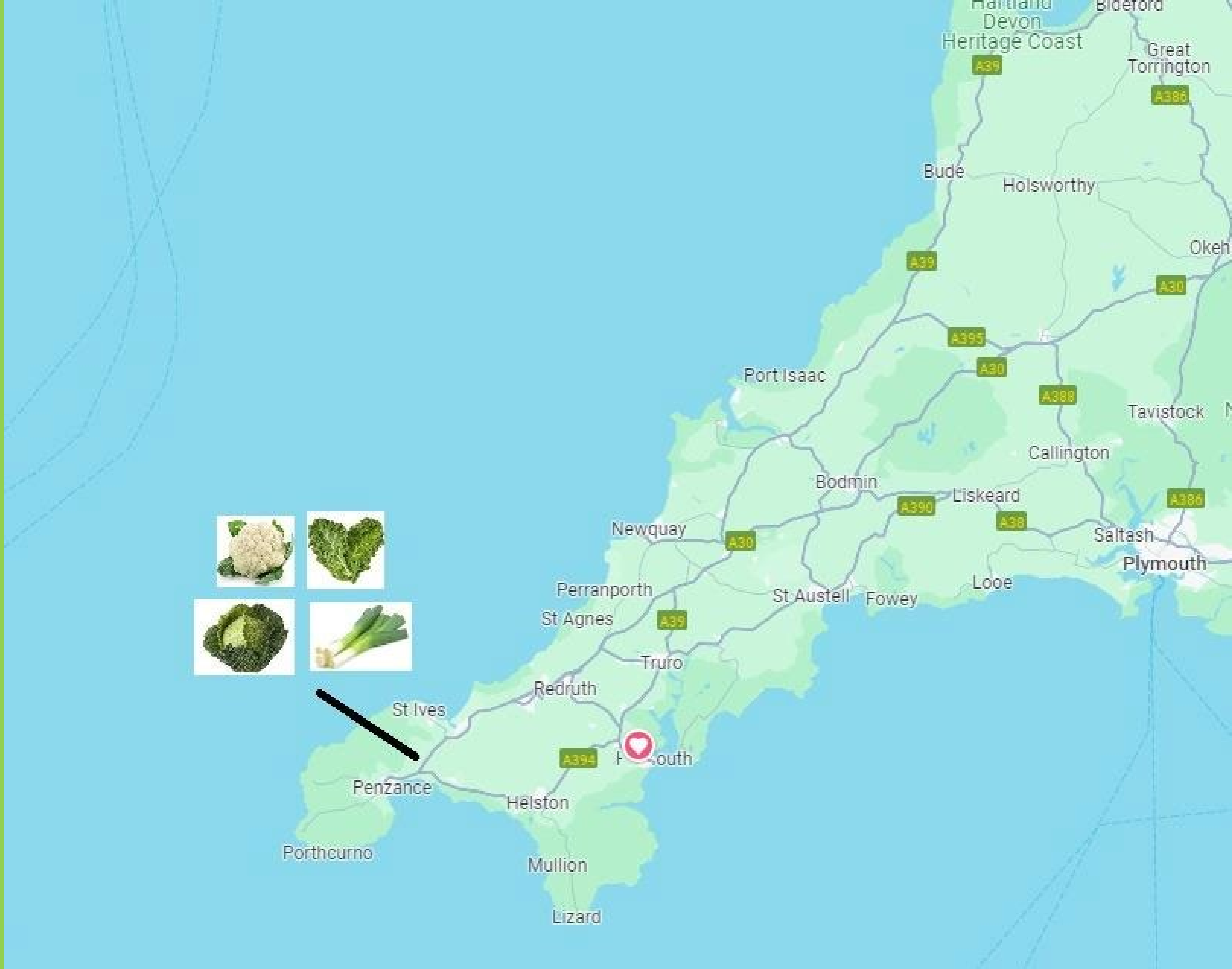
LOCAL SUPPLY

Organic growers who are wholesaling through winter

UP TILL NOW:

Cargease Farm, Penzance

- Caulis
- Leeks
- Cabbages
- Winter greens (spring greens, kales, PSB)



Local supply

Organic growers who are wholesaling through winter

NEXT WINTER:

Riviera Produce, Hayle
- Caulis

Tresemple Farm, Truro
- Caulis
- Cabbages
- Winter greens (spring greens, kales, PSB)

Coombe Lynher, Saltash
- Leeks
- Winter greens (spring greens, kales, PSB)

Local supply

Organic growers who are wholesaling through winter

MAYBES:

Trevelyan Farm

Gear Farm

Soul Farm

Who else could we bring on…?

Supply options

Long lead-time wholesalers

Organic North / Phoenix:

- no discount from combined ordering, so no advantage to replacing these orders
- our recommendation is for local clusters to combine on deliveries (extending what's already happening) to stay **as direct as possible**
- for anyone where that's not possible, then possibility to order through new Joining the Dots entity

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Supply options

Short lead-time wholesalers

Riverford / Langridge:

- discount from combined ordering can be negotiated, so one option is to include Riverford / Langridge offers on a new Joining the Dots offer list

RM Organics:

- Essentially a closed buying group of 10 buyers in Cornwall
- Buy almost everything via Langridge (at discount), some local supply
- Not up for collaborating, not up for taking on more customers
- No premises and only one delivery per week

Supply options

Our proposal is either:

1. Local suppliers only (Good Food Loop model)

Or:

1. Local suppliers + short-notice wholesale (Better Food Shed model)

Costs:

Food Loop only

		Per year	Per month	Per week	Per hour	
Income						
Produce (value to producer)	Wholesale produce		£0.00			
	Local grower produce		£15,000.00			
	Total		£15,000.00			
Margin			15.00%			
Produce (sales value)						
Margin value			£2,250.00			
Total Income						**£2,250.00**
Expenditure						
Rent						
Utilities	Electricity					
	Water					
Administration Costs printer, paper etc.)						
Banking						
Website fees						
Marketing						
Software - Open Food Network			£110.25			
Insurance	Van	£750.00	£62.50			
	Premises					
Bookkeeping / accountancy		£650.00	£54.17			
Van	Fuel		£480.00			
	Tax	£200.00	£16.67			
	Servicing, MOT	£250.00	£20.83			
	Repairs	£500.00	£41.67			
Depreciation	Van	£1,000.00	£83.33			
Wastage						
Staff costs						
Hours	Kernow Food Loop round					
	Deliveries			16		
	Admin			4		
	Marketing & development			2		
Wage rate					£15.00	
Total staff costs			£1,430.00	£330.00		
Total expenditure						**£2,299.42**
Net Profit						**-£49.42**

Costs:

Wholesale and Food Loop

			Per year	Per month	Per week	Per hour	
Income							
Produce (bought-in value)		Riverford / Langridge produce		£18,000.00			
		Local grower produce		£8,000.00			
		Total		£26,000.00			
Margin				15.00%			
Produce (sales value)				£29,900.00			
Margin value				£3,900.00			
Total Income							**£3,900.00**
Expenditure							
Rent				£200.00			
Utilities		Electricity					
		Water					
Administration Costs printer, paper etc.)							
Banking							
Website fees							
Marketing							
Software e.g. OFN							
Insurance		Van	£750.00	£62.50			
		Premises					
Bookkeeping / accountancy			£650.00	£54.17			
Van		Fuel		£480.00			
		Tax	£200.00	£16.67			
		Servicing, MOT	£250.00	£20.83			
		Repairs	£500.00	£41.67			
Depreciation		Van	£1,000.00	£83.33			
Wastage				£260.00			
Staff costs							
	Hours	Collections			12		
		Splitting and building pallets			8		
		Deliveries			12		
		Admin			6		
		Marketing & development			2		
	Wage rate					£15.00	
	Total staff costs			**£2,600.00**	**£600.00**		
Total expenditure							**£3,819.17**
Net Profit							**£80.83**

Any initial clarifying questions / comments?

Take a break - back in 5 mins :)

Discussion

- Overall Feedback and comments / concerns?
- Preferences for options 1 or 2 / distribution scenarios?
- Is there interest to take this forward / developing a pilot?

If yes....

Action plan

- Where do we focus and what is needed to take this to next phase?

- Who to engage? Who to lead? Delivery / research partners?

- Funding needs and potential sources..

Potential funding options

- **FIPL** - Funding ends March 31st 2025. Next grant panel meeting in June. Link in with 1:1 Agroecology Support. Needs to be co-funded (especially capital works) and paired with longer term
- **Good Growth / CIOS (Shared Prosperity)** - may be all committed
- **UKRI / Farm Innovation Fund** (Feasibility studies/business led small scale R&D)
- **Esmee Fairburn** (Hard to get but flexible funding)
- **Sylvia Waddilove Foundation** (funds capital costs of promotion and education of organic farming)
- **Community Infrastructure Levy**
- **Dean Organic Fund -** 0 interest loans for infrastructure / vehicles etc

Tie in with Growing Schemes Working Group of SFC - part of a wider bid led by SFC including Green Skills etc?

Other suggestions?

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FIPL - Agroecology support

- **Phase 2 logistics work** - potential to combine with funding for 1:1 grower support for Climate / Nature / People / Place

- **Key survey findings:**
  - Most growers **already using some agroecological practices** and have ideas for **nature recovery actions**, but **lack the time, land area and capital** to do more
  - **Integrated agroecological practices** offer most opportunity due to small land areas / tight margins. Particular interest in composting / compost tea; agroforestry / orchard planting; mulching / woodchip; cover crops; soil monitoring; min / no till; wildflower strips
  - **Actions to protect climate / water / air** e.g. buffer strips; renewable energy, water collection /storage
  - Interest in **habitat creation and management** where possible e.g bird boxes, wildflower meadows, tree planting and woodland management, hedgerows, ponds and small wetlands
  - Many already **engaging the community**, would like to do more (e.g. feasts / Wassail / bioblitz etc)- but lack time to coordinate. Also function as potential marketing opportunities
  - Invest funding in **identifying opportunities and helping growers implement** rather than developing detailed plans e.g grants for equipment / materials / time (most fall outside of BPS 5ha min)

- **Make sure to tie in with other work** being done in this area e.g. Growing Schemes / Green Skills etc and signposting other funding

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FIPL - Agroecology support

Baseline monitoring

Community Engagement: Bioblitzes, volunteer days and feasts

Agroecosystem design and NR opportunity mapping

Grants: actions and equipment

Next steps….

- **Meet up in person?** More detailed development of action plan.
- **More detailed P&L / scenario development** on chosen options
- **Bid development..**
- **Individual actions?**

Thank you! :)

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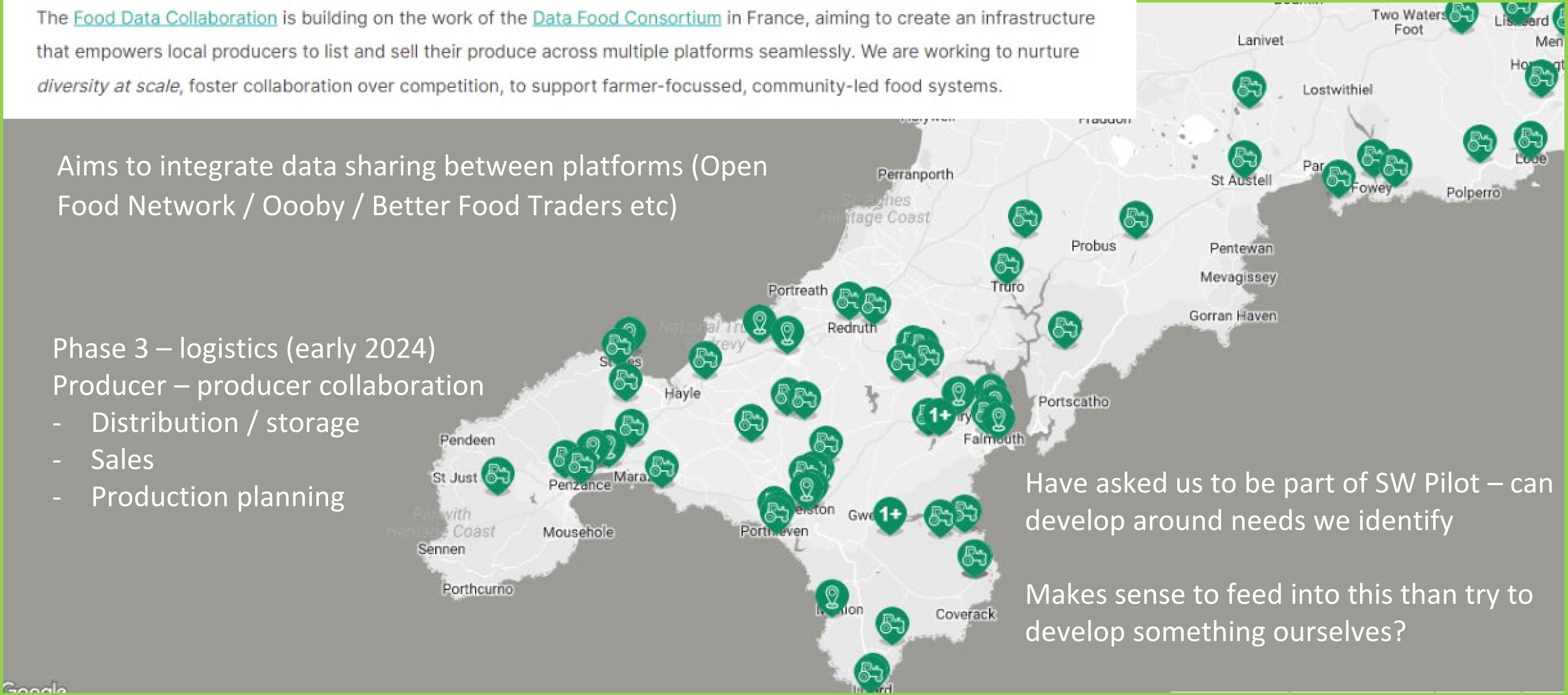
Food Data Collaboration

The Food Data Collaboration is building on the work of the Data Food Consortium in France, aiming to create an infrastructure that empowers local producers to list and sell their produce across multiple platforms seamlessly. We are working to nurture *diversity at scale*, foster collaboration over competition, to support farmer-focussed, community-led food systems.

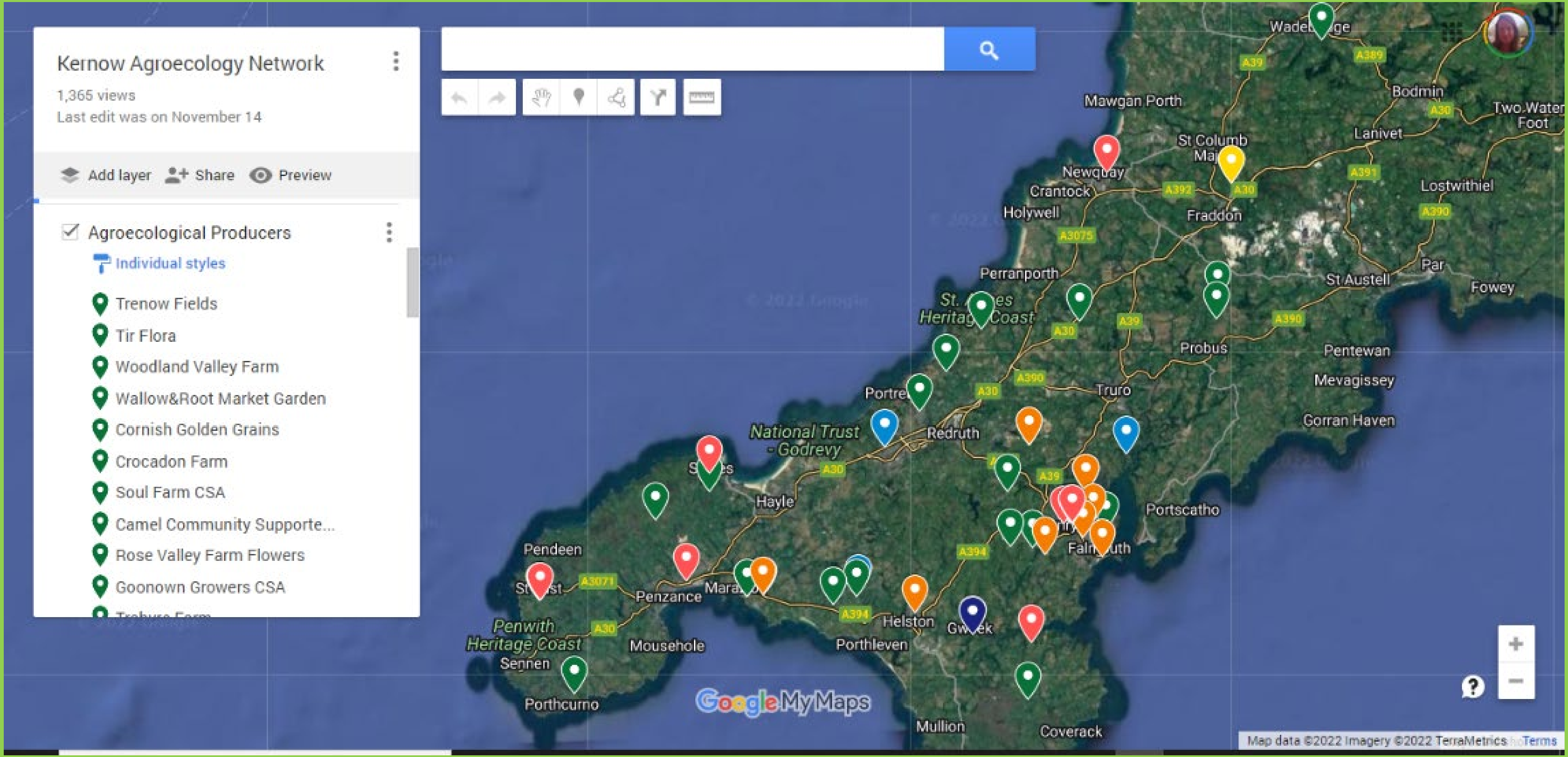


Aims to integrate data sharing between platforms (Open Food Network / Oooby / Better Food Traders etc)

Phase 3 – logistics (early 2024)
Producer – producer collaboration
- Distribution / storage
- Sales
- Production planning

Have asked us to be part of SW Pilot – can develop around needs we identify

Makes sense to feed into this than try to develop something ourselves?


Kernow Agroecology Network
1,365 views
Last edit was on November 14
Add layer
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Agroecological Producers
Individual styles
Trenow Fields
Tir Flora
Woodland Valley Farm
Wallow&Root Market Garden
Cornish Golden Grains
Crocadon Farm
Soul Farm CSA
Camel Community Supporte...
Rose Valley Farm Flowers
Goonown Growers CSA
Mawgan Porth
Bodmin
Two Waters Foot
Lanivet
Newquay
Crantock
Holywell
Fraddon
Lostwithiel
Perranporth
Par
St Austell
Fowey
Probus
Pentewan
Mevagissey
Truro
Gorran Haven
Redruth
National Trust - Godrevy
Hayle
Portscatho
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