

# Creating a Healthy Food City

## Birmingham and the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact

Dr Justin Varney  
Director of Public Health  
[Justin.varney@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:Justin.varney@birmingham.gov.uk)

Kyle Stott  
Service Lead: Places  
[kyle.stott@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:kyle.stott@birmingham.gov.uk)

Shaleen Meelu  
Public Health Nutritionist  
[Shaleen.meelu@Birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:Shaleen.meelu@Birmingham.gov.uk)



# Milan Urban Food Policy Pact

- Milan Urban Food Pact which is an international partnership for action on creating healthy food environments in cities and towns.
- Birmingham joined as one of the founding partner cities and won an award for its work with Pune on food in 2015.
- The partnership enables connection with a network of 206 cities across the world to share learning on approaches to food in urban environments.



# MUFPP Pact Statement

**Acknowledging that cities which host over half the world's population have a strategic role to play in developing sustainable food systems and promoting healthy diets**, and because while every city is different, they are all centres of economic, political and cultural innovation, and manage vast public resources, infrastructure, investments and expertise;

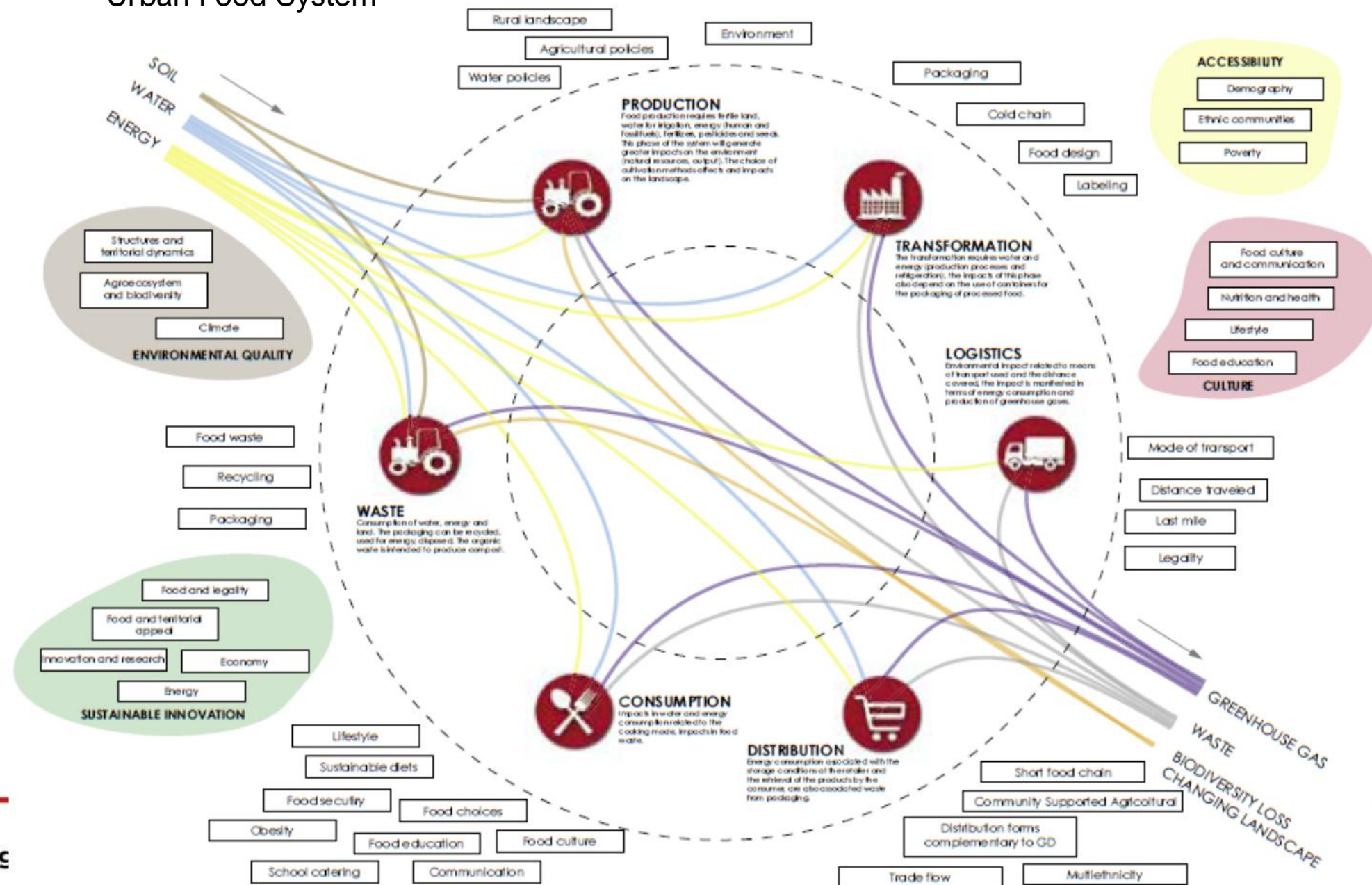
By signing the Pact there were 7 commitments, including:

We will work to develop sustainable food systems that are inclusive, resilient, safe and diverse, that provide healthy and affordable food to all people in a human rights-based framework, that minimise waste and conserve biodiversity while adapting to and mitigating impacts of climate change;

We will encourage interdepartmental and cross-sector coordination at municipal and community levels, working to integrate urban food policy considerations into social, economic and environment policies, programmes and initiatives, such as, inter alia, food supply and distribution, social protection, nutrition, equity, food production, education, food safety and waste reduction;

We will engage all sectors within the food system (including neighbouring authorities, technical and academic organizations, civil society, small scale producers, and the private sector) in the formulation, implementation and assessment of all food-related policies, programmes and initiatives;

# Urban Food System



# MUFPP Framework for Action: 6 Pillars

1. Governance
2. Sustainable diets and nutrition
3. Social and economic equity
4. Food production
5. Food supply and distribution
6. Food waste

## Monitoring Framework

- 44 indicators linked to the six pillars of the framework for action to track progress
- Further work being piloted with three cities to develop more granular framework of indicators to track progress and impact



# Governance Pillar

- **Facilitate collaboration across city agencies and departments** and seek alignment of policies and programmes that impact the food system across multiple sectors and administrative levels, adopting and mainstreaming a rights-based approach; options can include dedication of permanent city staff, review of tasks and procedures and reallocation of resources.
- **Enhance stakeholder participation** at the city level through political dialogue, and if appropriate, appointment of a food policy advisor and/or development of a multi-stakeholder platform or food council, as well as through education and awareness raising.
- **Identify, map and evaluate local initiatives** and civil society food movements in order to transform best practices into relevant programmes and policies, with the support of local research or academic institutions.
- **Develop or revise urban food policies and plans** and ensure allocation of appropriate resources within city administration regarding food-related policies and programmes; review, harmonize and strengthen municipal regulations; build up strategic capacities for a more sustainable, healthy and equitable food system balancing urban and rural interests.
- **Develop or improve multisectoral information systems** for policy development and accountability by enhancing the availability, quality, quantity, coverage and management and exchange of data related to urban food systems, including both formal data collection and data generated by civil society and other partners.
- **Develop a disaster risk reduction strategy** to enhance the resilience of urban food systems, including those cities most affected by climate change, protracted crises and chronic food insecurity in urban and rural areas.

# Governance Indicators

Indicator	Progress in Birmingham to date	RAG
1. Presence of an active municipal interdepartmental government body for advisory and decision making of food policies and programmes (e.g. interdepartmental food working group, food policy office, food team)		
Indicator 2: Presence of an active multi-stakeholder food policy and planning structure		
Indicator 3: Presence of a municipal urban food policy or strategy and/or action plans		
Indicator 4: Presence of an inventory of local food initiatives and practices to guide development and expansion of municipal urban food policy and programmes		
Indicator 5: Presence of a mechanism for assembling and analysing urban food system data to monitor/evaluate and inform municipal policy making on urban food policies		
Indicator 6: Existence of a food supply emergency/food resilience management plan for the municipality (in response to disasters; vulnerabilities in food production, transport, access; socio economic shocks, etc.) based on vulnerability assessment		

# Sustainable Diets and Nutrition Pillar

- **Promote sustainable diets** (healthy, safe, culturally appropriate, environmentally friendly and rights-based) through relevant education, health promotion and communication programmes, with special attention to schools, care centres, markets and the media.
- **Address non-communicable diseases associated with poor diets and obesity**, giving specific attention where appropriate to reducing intake of sugar, salt, transfats, meat and dairy products and increasing consumption of fruits and vegetables and non-processed foods.
- **Develop sustainable dietary guidelines** to inform consumers, city planners (in particular for public food procurement), food service providers, retailers, producers and processors, and promote communication and training campaigns.
- **Adapt standards and regulations to make sustainable diets and safe drinking water accessible** in public sector facilities such as hospitals, health and childcare facilities, workplaces, universities, schools, food and catering services, municipal offices and prisons, and to the extent possible, in private sector retail and wholesale food distribution and markets.
- **Explore regulatory and voluntary instruments** to promote sustainable diets involving private and public companies as appropriate, using marketing, publicity and labelling policies; and economic incentives or disincentives; streamline regulations regarding the marketing of food and non-alcoholic beverages to children in accordance with WHO recommendations.
- **Encourage joint action by health and food sectors** to implement integrated people-centred strategies for healthy lifestyles and social inclusion.
- **Invest in and commit to achieving universal access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation** with the participation of civil society and various partnerships, as appropriate.



# Sustainable Diet and Nutrition Indicators

Indicator	Progress in Birmingham to date	RAG
Indicator 7: Minimum dietary diversity for women of reproductive age		
Indicator 8: Number of households living in “food deserts”		
Indicator 9: Costs of a nutritious food basket at city/community level		
Indicator 10: Individual average daily consumption of meat		
Indicator 11: Number of adults with type 2 diabetes		
Indicator 12: Prevalence of stunting for children under 5 years		
Indicator 13: Prevalence of overweight or obesity among adults, youth and children		
Indicator 14: Number of city-led or supported activities to promote sustainable diets		
Indicator 15: Existence of policies/programmes that address sugar, salt and fat consumption in relation to specific target groups		
Indicator 16: Presence of programmes/policies that promote the availability of nutritious and diversified foods in public facilities		
Indicator 17: Percentage of population with access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation		

# Social and Economic Equity Pillar

- **Use cash and food transfers**, and other forms of social protection systems (food banks, community food kitchens, emergency food pantries etc.) to provide vulnerable populations with access to healthy food, while taking into consideration the specific beliefs, culture, traditions, dietary habits and preferences of diverse communities, as a matter of human dignity and to avoid further marginalization.
- **Promote decent employment for all**, including fair economic relations, fair wages and improved labour conditions within the food and agriculture sector, with the full inclusion of women.
- **Encourage and support social and solidarity economy activities**, paying special attention to food-related activities that support sustainable livelihoods for marginalized populations at different levels of the food chain and facilitate access to safe and healthy foods in both urban and rural areas.
- **Promote networks and support grassroots activities** (such as community gardens, community food kitchens, social pantries, etc.) that create social inclusion and provide food to marginalized individuals.
- **Reorient school feeding programmes** and other institutional food service to provide food that is healthy, local and regionally sourced, seasonal and sustainably produced.
- **Promote participatory education, training and research** as key elements in strengthening local action to increase social and economic equity, promote rights-based approaches, alleviate poverty and facilitate access to adequate and nutritious foods.

# Social and Economic Equity Indicators

Indicator	Progress in Birmingham to date	RAG
Indicator 18: Percentage of food insecure households based on the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES)		
Indicator 19: Percentage of people supported by food and/or social assistance programmes		
Indicator 20: Percentage of children and youth (under 18 years) benefitting from school feeding programmes		
Indicator 21: Number of formal jobs related to urban food system that pay at least the national minimum or living wage		
Indicator 22: Number of community-based food assets in the city		
Indicator 23: Presence of food-related policies and targets with a specific focus on socially vulnerable groups		
Indicator 24: Number of opportunities for food system-related learning and skill development in i) food and nutrition literacy, ii) employment training and iii) leadership		

# Food Production Pillar

- **Promote and strengthen urban and peri-urban food production** and processing based on sustainable approaches and integrate urban and peri-urban agriculture into city resilience plans.
- **Seek coherence between the city and nearby rural food production**, processing and distribution, focussing on smallholder producers and family farmers, paying particular attention to empowering women and youth.
- **Apply an ecosystem approach to guide holistic and integrated land use planning and management** in collaboration with both urban and rural authorities and other natural resource managers by combining landscape features, for example with risk-minimizing strategies to enhance opportunities for agroecological production, conservation of biodiversity and farmland, climate change adaptation, tourism, leisure and other ecosystem services.
- **Protect and enable secure access and tenure to land** for sustainable food production in urban and peri-urban areas, including land for community gardeners and smallholder producers, for example through land banks or community land trusts; provide access to municipal land for local agricultural production and promote integration with land use and city development plans and programmes.
- **Help provide services to food producers in and around cities**, including technical training and financial assistance (credit, technology, food safety, market access, etc.) to build a multigenerational and economically viable food system with inputs such as compost from food waste, grey water from post-consumer use, and energy from waste etc. while ensuring that these do not compete with human consumption.
- **Support short food chains**, producer organisations, producer-to-consumer networks and platforms, and other market systems that integrate the social and economic infrastructure of urban food system that links urban and rural areas. This could include civil society-led social and solidarity economy initiatives and alternative market systems.
- **Improve (waste) water management and reuse** in agriculture and food production through policies and programmes using participatory approaches.

# Food Production Indicators

Indicator	Progress in Birmingham to date	RAG
Indicator 25: Number of city residents within the municipal boundary with access to an (urban) agriculture garden		
Indicator 26: Presence of municipal policies and regulations that allow and promote agriculture production and processing in the municipal area		
Indicator 27: Surface area of (potential) agricultural spaces within the municipal boundary		
Indicator 28: Proportion of total agricultural population –within the municipal boundaries- with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land for food production, by sex		
Indicator 29: Proportion of agricultural land in the municipal area under sustainable agriculture		
Indicator 30: Number of urban and peri-urban food producers that benefited from technical training and assistance in the past 12 months		
Indicator 31: Number of municipal food processing and distribution infrastructures available to food producers in the municipal area		
Indicator 32: Proportion of local/regional food producers that sell their products to public markets in the city		
Indicator 33: Annual proportion of urban organic waste collected that is re-used in agricultural production taking place within municipal boundaries		



# Food Supply and Distribution Pillar

- **Support improved food storage, processing, transport and distribution** technologies and infrastructure linking peri-urban and near rural areas to ensure seasonal food consumption and reduce food insecurity as well as food and nutrient loss and waste with an emphasis on diversified small and medium scale food businesses along the value chain that may provide decent and stable employment.
- **Assess, review and/or strengthen food control systems** by implementing local food safety legislation and regulations that (1) ensure that food producers and suppliers throughout the food chain operate responsibly; (2) eliminate barriers to market access for family farmers and smallholder producers; and (3) integrate food safety, health and environmental dimensions.
- **Review public procurement and trade policy** aimed at facilitating food supply from short chains linking cities to secure a supply of healthy food, while also facilitating job access, fair production conditions and sustainable production for the most vulnerable producers and consumers, thereby using the potential of public procurement to help realize the right to food for all.
- **Provide policy and programme support for municipal public markets** including farmers markets, informal markets, retail and wholesale markets, restaurants, and other food distributors, recognizing different approaches by cities working with private and public components of market systems.
- **Improve and expand support for infrastructure** related to market systems that link urban buyers to urban, peri-urban and rural sellers while also building social cohesion and trust, supporting cultural exchange and ensuring sustainable livelihood, especially for women and young entrepreneurs.
- **Acknowledge the informal sector's contribution** to urban food systems (in terms of food supply, job creation, promotion of local diets and environment management) and provide appropriate support and training in areas such as food safety, sustainable diets, waste prevention and management.
- **Assess the flows of food to and through cities** to ensure physical access to fresh, affordable foods in low-income or underserved neighbourhoods while addressing sustainable transportation and logistics planning to reduce carbon emissions with alternative fuels or means of transport.

# Food Supply and Distribution Indicators

Indicator	Progress in Birmingham to date	RAG
Indicator 34: Existence of policies/programmes that address the reduction of GHG emissions in different parts of the food supply chain		
Indicator 35: Presence of a development plan to strengthen resilience and efficiency of local food supply chains logistics		
Indicator 36: Number of fresh fruit and vegetable outlets per 1000 inhabitants (markets and shops) supported by the municipality		
Indicator 37: Annual municipal investment in food markets or retail outlets providing fresh food to city residents, as a proportion of total (investment) budget		
Indicator 38: Proportion of food procurement expenditure by public institutions on food from sustainable, ethical sources and shorter (local/regional) supply chains		
Indicator 39: Presence of food safety legislation and implementation and enforcement procedures		
Indicator 40: Existence of support services for the informal food sector providing business planning, finance and development advice		

# Food Waste Pillar

- **Convene food system actors to assess and monitor food loss and waste reduction** at all stages of the city region food supply chain, (including production, processing, packaging, safe food preparation, presentation and handling, re-use and recycling) and ensure holistic planning and design, transparency, accountability and policy integration.
- **Raise awareness of food loss and waste** through targeted events and campaigns; identify focal points such as educational institutions, community markets, company shops and other solidarity or circular economy initiatives.
- **Collaborate with the private sector along with research, educational and community-based organisations** to develop and review, as appropriate, municipal policies and regulations (e.g. processes, cosmetic and grading standards, expiration dates, etc.) to prevent waste or safely recover food and packaging using a “food use-not-waste” hierarchy.
- **Save food by facilitating recovery and redistribution for human consumption of safe and nutritious foods**, if applicable, that are at risk of being lost, discarded or wasted from production, manufacturing, retail, catering, wholesale and hospitality.

# Food Waste Indicators

Indicator	Progress in Birmingham to date	RAG
Indicator 41: Total annual volume of food losses & waste		
Indicator 42: Annual number of events and campaigns aimed at decreasing food loss and waste		
Indicator 43: Presence of policies or regulations that address food waste prevention, recovery and redistribution		
Indicator 44: Total annual volume of surplus food recovered and redistributed for direct human consumption		

# MUFPP Annual Awards

- The aim of the **MUFPP** is to share knowledge and understandings on food systems toward the building of sustainable and inclusive cities. Above all, the annual **Milan Pact Awards** are one of the most important tools to involve cities around the globe through the Pact's framework of action (governance, sustainable diets and nutrition, social and economic equity, food production, food supply and distribution and food waste). The Milan Pact Awards are promoted by the **City of Milan** with the support of **Cariplo Foundation** that is the main partner of the Municipality in the implementation of the local Food Policy.
- Award categories map the six pillars of action.
- In 2019 there were **104 practices submitted**. These practices came from all over the world, 45 projects came from **Europe**, 23 from **Latin America**, 20 from **Africa**, 9 from **North America** and 7 from Asia.



# 2019 Monetary Award Winners

## Washington, DC, USA

### Highest Score Award

The city of **Washington DC** developed a powerful program “**Food as medicine**” that provides subsidies to residents participating in government health programs, for fresh fruit purchase in local markets.

The initiative developed educational and volunteering activities and mobilized an impressive number of people.

It reached over 9500 persons, mainly low-income residents, and catalyzed cross sector public/private partnership.

## Mezitli, Turkey

### Challenging Environment Award

The city of **Mezitli**, first city of Turkey that signed the Pact and participated to the Award, developed a very important action called “**Mezitli Women Producers Market**” that reduces gender-based barriers and increase working opportunities for women through food markets.

This initiative strengthened local female food producers: 650 women were able to develop the skills necessary to produce and sell food in 9 different female markets

# 2019 Special Mention Practices

## Governance

**Tel Aviv (Israel)** – The practice aimed to find sustainable solutions to the environmental impacts of food festivals and create guidelines for sustainable large-scale events. The initiative involved 50 food vendors, diverted 17 tons of waste from landfills, saved and donated food losses, collaborating with 60 chefs during an event with 500.000 visitors.

## Sustainable Diets and Nutrition

**Kazan (Russia)** – The city established a “Department on Food and Social Nutrition” to launch a reform in school canteens for improved sustainability and health, to fight obesity and other diseases. As part of this reform, the city built 2 centralized cooking centers, serving 160 schools and 150.000 meals per day, while maintaining a price control for breakfast and lunch – the lowest prices in the country.

## Social and Economic Equity

**Nairobi (Kenya)** – The city defined a urban early warning initiative to assess food insecurity levels in neighborhoods, thanks to a set of 5 indicators. This tool identified 203,000 households at risk in the city, providing them an innovative food security surveillance.

# 2019 Special Mention Practices

## Food Production

**Rio de Janeiro (Brazil)** – The city encouraged actions that promote urban agroecology and quality food production, at affordable prices and creating jobs opportunities. The initiative created 39 urban gardens that produce about 50 tons of organic food per year, involving about 100.000 citizens.

## Food Supply and Distribution

**Montpellier (France)** The city improved the sustainability of the whole food supply chain, by focusing on school canteens; Its initiative reached 50% of organic products, replaced plastic trays with compostable ones, provided 14.600 meals per day to vulnerable groups and reduced food waste by 24%.

## Food Waste

**Sao Paulo (Brazil)** – The city reduced food waste through the donation of food to vulnerable groups and create municipal food banks that collected 170 tons of food. The initiative established a partnership among 310 charities and reached 120.00 persons in need.

## Next Steps

- Use the framework to inform development of framework for creating a healthy food city.
- Learn from specific award winners and reflect on how practice can be adapted and adopted in Birmingham in a sustainable way.
- Pitch to host MUFPP Meeting in 2022 as part of the Commonwealth Games year of activity.