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Thought for Food in Surrey

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The first Surrey Food Summit took place at the WWF Living Planet Centre in Woking last week. Surrey County Council organised the event to bring together stakeholders across the local food system, including farmers, local food businesses, food caterers and local food initiatives in Surrey to begin sharing different perspectives on challenges, including related health inequalities, in our food system and explore ideas for addressing them together.

The council is in the process of developing a food partnership and whole food system strategy to ensure it can provide nutritious, affordable, local and sustainably produced food for residents. The food summit is an opportunity to better understand the local food system, and to co-produce the whole-system food strategy. Recognising the current economic climate, the strategy aims to have an initial focus on addressing food poverty and sustainability challenges.

Those in attendance heard from a number of speakers during the event, including Emily O'Brien of Sustainable Food Places, Cllr Marisa Heath, SCC lead member for environment and CEO of Plant Food Alliance, and David Edwards, Director of Food Strategy at WWF. There was also an opportunity to engage in a food system mapping activity, to draw together our priority areas of action and build on existing work.

Carolyn McKenzie, Director of Environment and Project Sponsor for the food strategy said: "The food summit was an important event to bring together our key stakeholders and build a vision for a sustainable food system in Surrey."

For further information please visit the Surrey Food Partnership – Healthy Surrey webpage or contact the food strategy leads at Surrey County Council – Jane Semo (Jane.Semo@surreycc.go.uk) or Negin Sarafraz-Shekary (SarafrazShekary.Negin@surreycc.gov.uk).

Surrey County Council news

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