

PRACTICE ABSTRACT

CASE STUDIES: Social Innovations in food provisioning

Ikšķile Free School

Private school established by sustainably minded parents
Focus on formal and informal environmental education
Set a legal precedent for systemic changes in school catering by normalising vegetarian meals for children

Description

Ikšķile Free School (IFS) is a private elementary school that was established and is run by parents. They follow holistic education principles and offer various formal and informal environmental education activities for children and adults. Moreover, to provide a sustainable vegetarian catering model, IFS participates in all stages of food procurement: gardening, collaborating with local organic farms, processing, and preparation of meals.

Issues addressed

IFS addresses three main issues. They tackle the unsustainability of traditional food systems by opting for using vegetarian products that are produced locally in organic farms or grown in the school garden. Furthermore, in order to address the increased body mass of the average child in Latvia and other negative effects of inappropriate diets, IFS follows strict standards regarding nutritional value in students' meals, as well as working towards educating the students for healthy habits in the future. Finally, the awareness of environmental issues in Latvia is critically low, so IFS participates in the community with various events that inform both children and adults about sustainable lifestyle solutions.

Impacts on sustainability

Environmental: Reduced food waste and packaging, shorter supply chains, decreased environmental impact due to vegetarian meals.

Social: Community building, healthy diets, strengthening ties with food producers.

Economic: Support and consistent demand for local organic farmers, reduced price due to direct purchases.

Full report (available in Latvian): http://www.bscresearch.lv/uploads/files/SINFO_IBS_pielikums_Nr3.pdf