



Federal Ministry  
of Education  
and Research



Bildung für  
nachhaltige  
Entwicklung

# Food is how you make it

Training for sustainability in the skilled food trades



## Sourcing raw materials

Sustainable food is produced using sustainably produced and processed ingredients. This supports biodiversity and the livelihoods of farmers all around the world. Sustainable nutrition contributes to the health of consumers and offers a wide variety of tastes and flavours.

Sustainable production involves paying attention to animal welfare, fair working conditions, and protecting soil fertility (for example, by avoiding the use of synthetic chemical fertilizers).

“Trainees at Kathi learn about aspects relevant to sustainability all along the food production chain. This includes knowledge of the raw materials and their transportation and a focus on quality and regionality: Nearly 85 % of our raw materials are sourced from our region. As a family business, acting responsibly is part of our identity and is a guiding principle that we pass on to all our employees.”

**Marco Thiele, Managing Director,  
Kathi Rainer Thiele GmbH**

# Food processing

Digitalization offers opportunities to improve technical processes or to optimize the coordination of production and delivery schedules. This in turn helps save valuable resources.

This has the twin benefits of reducing the environmental burden and saving costs. Sustainable food production also involves the use of environmentally friendly packaging as well as social employment policies, for example promoting the reconciliation of work and family life.

“Think global, act local” – this company philosophy is an integral part of the training that we give our apprentices in order to make them aware of the environmental impact of the company’s and their own behaviour. Every measure we take in our food processing to save energy, reduce resource use, avoid waste etc. helps reduce the global environmental burden, which benefits all living beings and nature.

**Marcus Hildebrandt, Junior Manager,  
Landfleischerei Hildebrandt (country butchers)**

# Logistics

The transport and the storage of food can be designed to be sustainable and optimized accordingly. Regional products avoid the need for long-distance transportation. Shorter distances mean less energy consumption.

Low-emission transportation, for example by rail or electric delivery vehicles and combined transport, can save costs and reduce carbon footprints, and thus make a positive contribution to climate protection.

“At Wernsing Feinkost, we have been paying attention to conserving resources in the production of our products, such as French fries, salads and sauces, for decades. The sourcing of raw ingredients from the local region using reusable systems, fully automated storage logistics, paperless document management, as well as resource-efficient vehicle fleet management is a matter of course for us. Our trainees experience sustainability in action on a daily basis and contribute many ideas of their own.”

**Jessica Beuse, Personnel Officer,  
Wernsing Feinkost GmbH**

# Retail

Retailers can use their product ranges and marketing to stimulate the interest of consumers in sustainably produced foods, create attractive offers and thus support sustainability.

Certifications and standards (organic and fair-trade labels etc.) help customers to identify sustainable food. Retailers offer certified food and provide advice and information on its origin, production and ingredients. This enables consumers to support sustainability in their food shopping choices, because – you are what you eat!

“The retail food sector is also calling on the dairy industry to act sustainably. The demand for sustainable milk products has been increasing continuously in recent years. The milk processing companies therefore see training in dairy technology as an important step towards sustainable development. The aim is to make use of training to help transfer knowledge about sustainable production into companies.”

**Dr. Helmut Steinkamp, Director,  
Institute for Food Quality, LUFA Nord-West**

# Vocational education and training for sustainable development...

Sustainable development in vocational education and training means taking responsibility for the environment and society in a competent and sustainable way while also paying attention to the commercial interests of the company. Knowledge about the possibilities and criteria for selecting sustainable alternatives makes it possible to take informed decisions that are viable for the future.

It is not just management who assume this responsibility but also their employees as well as trainees and trainers in their everyday work. In this way, sustainability is put into practice by the many small decisions taken at workplaces on a daily basis.

Many occupations in both small-scale and industrial food production offer the potential to produce foods (more) sustainably. There is increasing demand from consumers for sustainably produced food.

We want to encourage people to play their part when it comes to shaping a sustainable future in their everyday work, taking a number of examples along the production chain.

**Play a part: Try out sustainability!**

## ...in small-scale and industrial food production

Contributions to sustainability can be made at all stages of the production chain. Choices about raw materials, production conditions, packaging, transportation, product range and customer service all provide scope for sustainable decision-making.

In some food production businesses this is already part of everyday training. The examples given here show how this can be applied in practice.

“An important part of the training in our facility is producing products made from ecological and fair trade ingredients. We teach our trainees that consumers are paying ever more attention to quality standards. Public transparency is also becoming increasingly important. Organic, vegan and “Demeter” are familiar concepts for our trainees and accompany them on their path to working life. We are carrying out continuous research on products with environmentally friendly and recyclable packaging made of paperboard. Naturally, our trainees are part of this team. Certification labels used by our company such as “Naturland”, “Bio” or “Fairtrade” show that we are committed to a sustainable future and this is the message that we want our trainees to take with them into their careers.”

**Yvonne Böhm, CEO,  
Wikana Keks und Nahrungsmittel GmbH**

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**Orders**

in writing to  
Publikationsversand der Bundesregierung  
Postfach 48 10 09, 18132 Rostock, Germany  
E-Mail: publikationen@bundesregierung.de  
Internet: bmbf.de  
or by phone: +49 (0)30 18 272 272 1  
Fax: +49 (0)30 18 10 272 272 1

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**Eat aware!  
Try out  
sustainability!**



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**Sustainable vocational education and training...**

in the occupations baker, pastry cook, confectionery technologist, dairy technologist, wine technologist, brewer and maltster, distiller, butcher, process technologist for the milling and grain production industry, specialist in food technology, etc.

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