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The Turn to the Market in UK Food Policy 2002-2015 and its Impact on the Vegetable Sector in England

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SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN
FOOD POLICY

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DECLARATION

I declare that the work presented in this thesis, except those elements specifically declared, is all my own work carried out and finished at City University London.

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to understand how ideas about markets and marketing have shaped food policy. It focuses on the vegetable sector in England in the early years of the new millennium. The study takes the 2002 Report of the Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food (Curry Commission) as its starting point. It explores how the Curry Commission's 'Turn to the Market' call was interpreted and acted upon by vegetable production in England, and by UK Government (in practice English) Food Policy 2002-2015. It attempts to understand why and how policy makers turned to the market, what they meant by it, and how it changed how those involved in vegetable production thought about and responded to the marketing challenges they faced. The study centres on theoretical understandings of how food policy develops, and draws in marketing theories to contribute to that policy analysis.

The study used qualitative methods - a combination of documentary analysis and fieldwork interviews with practitioners, policy-makers and analysts. Two research questions were formulated from the literature review: (1) how have ideas about markets and marketing shaped UK Food Policy since the Curry Commission?; and (2) what impact did the Curry Commission - and the policy that followed - have on English vegetable production? An analysis was conducted of policy documents of the period 2002 – 2015. Interviews were held with 23 key informants who were experts on and/or actors in English policy and vegetable production. The research adopted a realist and critical pluralist approach to food policy development.

The research explored: how particular ideas of markets and marketing shaped wider UK Food Policy 2002-2015; how the marketing themes in UK Food Policy evolved; how UK Food Policy understood and framed the priorities for the vegetable sector which then opened up particular solutions and foreclosed others; and how the marketing ideas in UK Food Policy 2002-2015 affected how those involved in English vegetable production understood and responded to the marketing challenges they encountered.

The findings show that UK Food Policy evolved from a proactive 'Turn to the Market' Food Policy under New Labour to a reactive 'Market Dominated' Food Policy under the Coalition government (2010-15). Policy framed the problems for the vegetable sector as a failure to market and devised policy mechanisms to support better marketing using ideas from orthodox marketing. The policy based on better marketing did halt the decline in the vegetable sector and helped it engage in more environmentally benign production practices. Growers still found it challenging to generate sufficient profit to reinvest and they felt that support for better marketing did not always work in practice.

The thesis concludes that the marketing concepts do enrich food policy understanding. A markets-as-networks (MAN) analysis is proposed to provide a better way of understanding the marketing problems in the context of buyer dominated vegetable supply networks, where interaction is an important feature of supply relations and where exchange is embedded in on-going relationships. The research discussion considers the extent to which markets-as-networks (MAN) ideas offer a better framework for policy goals to increase the production of vegetables in England as part of a sustainable model for agriculture. Relationship marketing, from orthodox marketing, displays some features in common with the MAN tradition. By proposing this common ground between orthodox and heterodox marketing, the thesis offers directions for a revitalised market-oriented understanding of UK Food Policy and its development.

Key words: UK Food Policy, vegetable production, markets, marketing, heterodox marketing, markets-as-networks, England

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AFS Assured Food Standards

AHDB Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board

ARA Actors, Resources and Activities (model of markets as networks)

ARFF Applied Research Forum for Farming and Food

AUK Agricultural Statistics UK

B2B Business to business

BEUC – Bureau Européen des Unions de Consommateurs, the European Consumers' Association

BHS Basic Horticultural Statistics

BRC British Retail Consortium

BSE Bovine spongiform encephalopathy

CAP Common Agricultural Policy

CFPA Council of Food Policy Advisors

CMO Common Market Organisation

DEFRA Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs

EAGF European Agricultural Guarantee Fund

EEB Bureau Européen de l'Environnement

EFFP English Farming and Food Partnership (now European Farming and Food Partnership)

EU European Union

F&M Foot and mouth disease

F&V Fruit and vegetables

FCC The Food Chain Centre

FDF Food and Drink Federation

FMCG Fast moving consumer good

FSA Food Standards Agency

FVPO Fruit and vegetable producer organisation

GMO Genetically modified organism

GPMO Grower-packer marketing organisations

HDC Horticultural Development Council

IGD Institute of Grocery Distribution

IMP Industrial Marketing and Purchasing (Group)

MAFF Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

MAN Markets-as-networks

MO Market orientation

NFU National Farmers' Union

NGO Non-governmental organisation

NPM New public management

PO Producer Organisation

PPP Plant protection products

PORFEL European Association of Fruit and Vegetable Processing Industries.

R&D Research and development

RBR Rural Business Research

RM Relationship marketing

RMO Relationship marketing orientation

RPA Rural Payments Agency

RT Red Tractor

SDC Sustainable Development Commission

SFFS Sustainable Farming and Food Strategy

VPM Value of production marketed

WTO World Trade Organisation

PART ONE: SETTING UP THE PROBLEM

Chapter 1 Thesis Introduction and Overview

This chapter introduces the subject and scope of the thesis, the industry and policy context, and the approach adopted to the generation of knowledge. The research aims and objectives are then presented. Finally it also provides a breakdown of the thesis chapters.

The Subject of the Thesis

What should a government do to support a vegetable sector in decline? The aim of this study is to explore the impact on vegetable production in England of a turn to the market in UK Government (in practice English) Food Policy 2002-2015. At the end of the twentieth century British farming was in crisis and the vegetable sector was in serious decline. UK Food Policy suggested that farming (including the vegetable sector) had become dysfunctional because it had become detached from the rest of the economy and the environment. In 2002 UK Food Policy turned to market solutions to deliver efficient coordination of agricultural resources. The way to address the problems in the vegetable sector in England, it was argued, was through better marketing. Growers needed to compete better and to work more closely with those involved in their supply chains, especially the grocery retail multiples, the supermarkets. But agriculture affects many issues beyond the efficient transformation of natural resources into food, and in recent times sustainability has become an important influence on UK Food Policy. UK Food Policy not only has to ensure an affordable, safe and secure food supply for the nation, it also needs to ensure the protection of natural resources, not just for long term food security but for other activities such as leisure and tourism, and even for the landscape's intrinsic value. Food has an obvious and well documented impact on health and so, given the importance of vegetable consumption to health, and if only to address the costs to the state of ill health (some argue that there are intrinsic reasons why the state should ensure the health of its citizens too), UK Food Policy also needs to consider how domestic production of vegetables might contribute to a healthier nation. What is the ideal structure for vegetable production in England to achieve these multiple and sometimes contradictory sustainable development goals for health, economic and the environment. What can and should UK Food Policy do to bring it about?

So whilst the theme of the thesis might appear simple, the reality is that it involves understanding what happened to UK Food Policy 2002-2015, how it evolved to address complex health, economic and environmental challenges, how its scope widened and retreated, which policy mechanisms were favoured and why, and what impact they had on the marketing that was practiced in the

vegetable sector. In other words it attempts to understand why and how policy makers turned to the market, what they meant by it, and how it changed how those involved in vegetable production thought about and responded to the marketing challenges they faced. In doing so, it is necessary to explore the contested and at times contradictory theories relating to the benefits and limitations of markets, and the nature of the marketing processes and activities that take place within them. The benefits and limitations of markets are typically presented in terms of a dichotomy. At one extreme there is an orthodox marketing explanation of the benefits to society of free markets based on neo-classical economics. At the other extreme, there is a critique of markets based on a radical perspective, in which free markets are seen as inimical to societal welfare. The thesis uses evidence from key policy documents and explores how orthodox conceptualisations of markets and marketing influenced UK Food Policy 2002-2015. It shows how the turn to the market evolved. Post 2010 UK Food Policy remained market oriented but increasingly government relied on key industry players such as the grocery retailers to shape the agenda for UK Food Policy in the era of austerity. It reveals how marketing ideas were used by comparing and critiquing an orthodox perspective with an alternative radical account. As well as providing an abstracted explanation of the impact of marketing on UK Food Policy, the thesis also explores the impact of UK Food Policy on the vegetable sector in England. Thus the thesis uses interviews with experts on vegetable production and policy to assess the impact of UK Food Policy on the sector in terms of whether and how a market oriented UK Food Policy encouraged better marketing, to understand how the vegetable sector responded, and to assess whether policy support for better marketing in the vegetable sector worked.

Returning to the question at the start that asked what a government should do to support a vegetable sector in decline, the thesis considers a third perspective, the markets-as-networks (MAN) theoretical tradition, from what might be termed the heterodox wing of the marketing discipline. Using insights from the analysis of the empirical evidence, it considers whether and how a MAN perspective on marketing can build on the successes - and address the shortcomings - of more than a decade of market oriented policy to provide a way forward for UK Food Policy for the vegetable sector in England as it reconciles and balances multiple sustainability goals for health, economics and the environment.

[Policy Context for the Thesis](#)

The thesis takes as its starting point the publication of *"Farming and Food: A Sustainable Future, Report of the Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food"* in 2002 (Defra, 2002a) which became known as the Curry Report. In January 2002 the Policy Commission on the Future of

Farming and Food published its vision for a sustainable model of agriculture in the UK, what became known as the Curry Report (Defra, 2002a). It was a significant moment in UK Food Policy because it was a break from the production-oriented policy led by Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) and signalled sustainable agriculture as a new priority. Instead of a policy centred on farmers and production, it would be a market-oriented and environmentally conscious approach where farmers' production decisions were guided by market signals.

UK Food Policy had adopted market-oriented solutions in the past, for example, in the 1930s, but after the experiences of food shortages during the Second World War, agriculture was afforded a special status in the British economy. The dominant approach from the late 1940s onwards had been based on exceptionalism for agriculture. Agriculture was afforded a special and protected role in society. Governments took an active role in planning and supporting UK agricultural production to ensure not only efficient production but to deliver an adequate and resilient food supply providing food security for the nation. Farmers were incentivised to increase production and protected from the vagaries of the market with production subsidies. Then a series of farming crises culminating in the outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease precipitated MAFF's decline and a re-think on UK Food Policy. Finally in 2001 the Curry Commission was appointed to: *'...make the trauma of the last year a watershed.'* (Defra, 2002a) page 6. It sought to break with a policy based on production subsidies, to encourage farmers to use market signals to determine what to grow and it also sought to highlight the role of agriculture in protecting the environment. This was in line with the prevailing mood in the European Union. The MacSharry reforms of the EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) endorsed a move away from production-linked support for farmers to a system based on support for rural development and protection of natural resources (Cardwell, 2004). Although by 2000 MAFF had begun to take steps to measure sustainability in agriculture (Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food, 2000), it was the Curry Report that articulated a new UK Food Policy based on efficient production *and* environmental protection:

'Farming needs to become more business focused. It can become a vibrant, profitable business, attracting investment and new entrants — by listening to the people who consume its products, and conserving its most valuable asset: a healthy and attractive countryside.' (Defra, 2002a) page 17

A key aim was to help farmers as they made the transition from a production-subsidy model of agriculture to one that produced commodities in line with market demand. It asserted that the role of government was not to pay farmers to produce, but to support a liberal trade model. The government would help farmers by making sure that markets functioned well with some

safeguards to protect the environment, and by helping farmers to become more competitive by engaging in more effective marketing.

Industry Context of the Thesis: Why Focus on Vegetable Production in England?

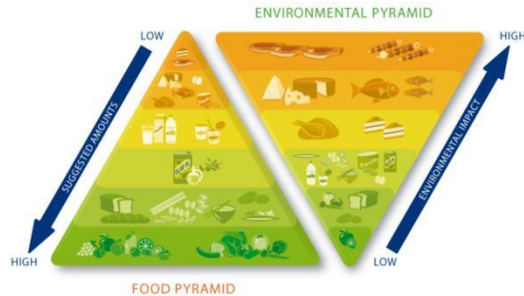
Vegetable production in England has been chosen as the context for an evaluation of UK food and farming policy because of its centrality to a sustainable future for farming and food. There is broad agreement on its potential to contribute across multiple sustainable development goals, environmentally, economically and in terms of health (Barilla Center for Food & Nutrition, 2010). And whilst it is unlikely that complete self-sufficiency in the production of vegetables is necessary or appropriate in order to achieve sustainability goals, there was a consensus that a thriving vegetable production sector, one capable of meeting most of the forthcoming demand for indigenous vegetables in the UK, would be a cornerstone of a sustainable model for UK agriculture; but as will be shown later, vegetable production in England had experienced a very serious decline throughout the last decade of the twentieth century. An effective model for sustainable agriculture in the UK, whether based on a turn to the market or not, would have to address the problems in vegetable production.

As mentioned above, the Curry Commission was distinctive because it articulated a Food Policy based on sustainable development. At first glance it would seem that increasing home production of vegetables could potentially have a positive environmental impact, and provide economic actors with an incentive to engage in marketing activities to increase consumption. The Barilla Centre's double pyramid visually demonstrated the two-fold benefits to health and the environment of a diet rich in fruit and vegetables (Barilla Center for Food & Nutrition, 2010). The intervention of Barilla, the world's largest pasta company, into this policy terrain was (and remains) interesting. It provides an illustration of a point made by Mason and Lang (2017), and Lang and Heasman, (2015) of how big food businesses began to realise the significance of how health advice and environmental science pointed to new business messages relevant to horticulture. A dynamic, innovative domestic vegetable production base has the potential to deliver across the broad range of sustainability goals relating to environmental, health and economic concerns. Thus it seems appropriate to examine in more detail domestic production of vegetables and how UK Food Policy can support its development to deliver across a range of sustainability priorities relating to health, the environment and economic development.

A dynamic, innovative domestic vegetable production base has the potential to deliver across the broad range of sustainability goals relating to environmental, health and economic concerns. Thus

it seems appropriate to examine in more detail domestic production of vegetables and how UK Food Policy can support its development to deliver across a range of sustainability priorities relating to health, the environment and economic development.

Figure 1-1 The Barilla Center Double Pyramid



Source: Barilla Center for Food and Nutrition (2010)

The initial focus for the thesis was the entire fruit and vegetables sector, however, given the heterogeneous nature of this sector it was decided to frame the scope of the thesis to a narrower group of commodities, and to focus on domestic vegetable production in England because: i) despite its heterogeneity in terms of produce, it was a cohesive collection of producers as perceived by policy makers; ii) the domestic vegetable growing sector was sufficiently large to be of concern to policy makers: most of the fruit consumed in England comes from overseas, whereas most of the vegetables consumed are home grown and many of the popular varieties of vegetables are potentially suitable for domestic production; iii) vegetables are likely to play an important role in the shift towards sustainable agriculture (Foresight, 2011); and iv) English producers were the focus because policy in this area had been devolved to the regional administrations.

At the time of the publication of the Curry Report, horticulture (including vegetable production) received very little in the way of subsidies from the British government or from the EU compared to other sectors of agriculture such as cereals and livestock. The domestic vegetable production base thrived or declined depending on the effectiveness of growers in meeting the needs of the buyers of their produce. By the turn of the new millennium vegetable production in England was in serious decline as its major customers, the grocery retail multiples, turned to overseas producers that could provide produce that better suited their requirements. So, given the pivotal role of vegetable production in achieving sustainability goals across a range of health and environment issues, and given the serious problems the sector was facing at the beginning of the 21st century, it seems appropriate to examine how a market-oriented UK Food Policy has impacted

on domestic production of vegetables, and how marketing ideas have been used to support the development of a sector so important for sustainability.

A Realist Approach

A realist perspective is adopted. Based on the early ideas of Roy Bhaskar (Bhaskar, 1975) and developed for policy contexts by Ray Pawson (Pawson, 2006), a realist perspective is often adopted in the social sciences, and is recommended as a theoretical framework for policy analysis by NatCen Social Research, the National Centre for Social Research (Ritchie et al., 2014). It stresses the role of abstraction and conceptualisation in developing an understanding of which policies worked for which groups, in what circumstances and with what impact. Realist research scrutinises the 'reach and scope' of the conceptualisations themselves that are assumed in the policy making process. In this case it means questioning how policy problems were perceived, and examining the taken for granted assumptions that were adopted, in particular on the nature and role of markets and marketing. For example, what did the Curry Commission have in mind when it advocated reconnection and market-oriented solutions? What did a turn to the market entail? Did the policy mechanisms change how growers perceived the marketing opportunities for their farm businesses? Did a market-oriented UK Food Policy bring about the changes that were needed for the vegetable sector in England? If not, why not?

A realist approach considers the question of practical adequacy (Sayer, 1984) so the thesis assesses whether the market-oriented policy of 2002-2015 worked. It examines whether the conceptualisations of markets and marketing that shaped UK Food Policy yielded new insights into the problems and viable solutions for the vegetable sector in England. It also explores the impact that market-oriented policy mechanisms had on how those in the vegetable sector in England responded.

Mindful of the benefits of adopting a critical pluralist perspective in uncovering the interplay of structure and agency in industrial contexts (Nicholson et al., 2014), the thesis applies theoretical lenses from orthodox, critical and heterodox perspectives to develop insights into how marketing works and could work better in the unique context of UK Food Policy and vegetable production in the early years of the new millennium. By exploring different perspectives, it seeks to provide a synthesis that enriches all values in contention (O'Driscoll, 2008). It demonstrates how the MAN, markets-as-networks, approach from the heterodox wing of the marketing discipline, and usually applied in complex industrial market contexts, offers a way of resolving tensions in marketing and policy theory and practice. It brings to UK Food Policy novel ways of conceptualising markets,

organisations and the marketing that takes place in/between them that may have been unexplored by both growers and policy actors in the vegetable sector.

The thesis aims to understand the role of conceptualisations of markets and marketing, their impact in terms of the proposed policy solutions that were favoured, how these changed the practices of those involved in the vegetable sector, and the distributional outcomes that became manifest in the context of vegetable production in England. It adopts an interdisciplinary perspective that draws on both the policy and marketing literature to assess how the turn to the market has impacted on policy attempts to create a sustainable model for vegetable production in England. The thesis assumes that the actors involved in the production of vegetables, and those involved in shaping policy, are self-interpreting individuals who have the capacity to learn and change how they make sense of real life problems. It assumes a realist ontology to critically examine how those involved in policy and production conceptualise marketing issues related to UK Food Policy and the production of vegetables. It explores how conceptualisations of markets and marketing affect how the problems for the sector are understood, and shape what solutions are perceived as desirable and feasible. It concludes that whilst orthodox marketing has influenced UK Food Policy, and whilst there have been critical challenges to a market-oriented UK Food Policy, marketing theory from the heterodox wing of the discipline, in particular the markets-as-networks (MAN) perspective, can provide more practically adequate explanations of growers' marketing issues and offer new insights for UK Food Policy in its quest to create a sustainable model for agriculture.

Research Aims, Objectives and Research Questions

Research Aim

Reconnection - to markets, the supply chain and the natural environment - had become a key theme in UK food and farming policy since the publication of the Curry Report in 2002. Policy makers wanted farmers and farming to be more integrated with the rest of the food supply system. The Curry Commission set out a sustainable food and farming policy for Britain in which farmers would become both more market oriented and more connected to their role as protectors of environmental resources. In the decade or so following the publication of the Curry Report, a series of policy documents and actions attempted to develop a market-oriented vision of a reconnected, sustainable system of agriculture and food supply. ***The aim of this study is to explore how a market oriented UK Food Policy evolved, and its impact on the production of vegetables in England.*** Impact may be assessed in terms of actions, decisions and strategies adopted but the

study is distinctive because it assesses the impact of taken for granted marketing theoretical frameworks on policy. So it considers to what extent did growers change how they perceived their competitive environment and their place in it in response to UK Food Policy?

Research Questions

Research question 1

How have ideas about markets and marketing shaped UK Food Policy since the publication of *“Farming and Food: A Sustainable Future, Report of the Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food”* (the Curry Report)?

Research question 2

What impact did an evolving market oriented UK Food Policy, based on particular notions of market reconnection, have on the production of vegetables in England, in particular on how those involved in growing vegetable crops perceived and understood their marketing challenges?

Structure of the Thesis

This thesis covers the following: It begins by exploring how particular marketing ideas, and their links to sustainability, influenced contemporary British food policies in the early years of the new millennium. It proceeds to address how UK Food Policy, influenced by particular conceptualisations of marketing and sustainability, understood and framed the problems for farming and food, focusing on those issues that particularly impacted on domestic vegetable production. It then examines the policy mechanisms proposed and implemented for vegetable growers in England, and assesses whether the solutions pursued were successful in achieving a sustainable reconnection to markets for the English vegetable sector. In short, the thesis explores the question: did the turn to the market in UK Food Policy work for English vegetable growers? In attempting to assess the impact of a market-oriented UK Food Policy, it is necessary to explore what was meant by a turn to the market as well as its impact.

Breakdown of the Thesis Chapters

The thesis is organised into four parts and consists of eight chapters that cover the following: rationale, scope and aims of the thesis; the features of vegetable production in England; the policy context prior to 2002; the theoretical marketing and policy concepts on which the study is based and extant literature in these fields; an explanation and justification of the realist ontology

adopted and the methods used; an analysis of the data gathered to address the research questions; discussion of the findings and conclusions to the thesis; and reflections on the research process.

PART ONE: SETTING UP THE PROBLEM

Chapter 1 presents a rationale for the thesis and introduction to the policy context.

Chapter 2 outlines trends in English vegetable production and describes vegetable production in England prior to the publication of the Curry Report and beyond. It explains the UK policy context of the period up to 2002, explains the role of the Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food, and outlines the key UK food policy milestones 2002-2015. It also outlines the key features of the recommendations from the Curry Commission.

Chapter 3 critically examines the intersection of the marketing and policy literature. It examines the research published on marketing and policy and it explores marketing practises in the vegetable sector in England at the time of the Curry Commission.

PART TWO: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Chapter 4, the research design and methodology chapter, outlines the realist theoretical framework adopted in the thesis together with an explanation and justification of the methods adopted for the study, and also presents details on how data required to address the research questions were collected.

PART THREE: FINDINGS

Chapter 5 examines the findings of how marketing ideas influenced UK policy as the policy evolved from the publication of the Curry Report to the end of the Coalition government. The findings include a textual exegesis of how marketing ideas shaped policy, using policy documents supported by interview data from key informants with specialist knowledge of the Curry Commission and UK horticultural policy.

Chapter 6 presents the findings from the expert interviews on the impact of policy mechanisms for a more competitive supply base.

Chapter 7 presents the findings from the expert interviews on the impact of policy mechanisms designed to address supply chain and consumption challenges that growers faced.

PART FOUR: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Chapter 8 discusses the findings in the context of the marketing and policy literature, and explores how the findings address the research questions of the thesis.

Chapter 9 presents the conclusions of the thesis and reflections on the process of engaging in the doctoral process.

Chapter 2 The Policy Problem in the Real World: Policy and Governance for the Vegetable Sector in England

Chapter introduction

This chapter sets out the industry and policy and governance context for the thesis. Using government and official published data, it describes the state of vegetable production in England in the years leading up to the publication of the Curry Report and beyond. It also describes the key national and EU governance structures for the sector, before moving on to outline the broad policy context and key policy milestones prior to the Curry Report and those that followed up to the end of the Coalition Government of 2010-2015. It also provides a description of the key recommendations of the Curry Report. In attempting to understand UK food and farming policy, it is also necessary to set out the EU context so this chapter also describes key EU institutions and policy that affected the vegetable sector 2002-2015.

Sector context: vegetable production in England

Trends in Vegetable Production in England

The information on vegetable production in England presented here is derived from published data from the grey literature, mainly from government sources but also from industry directories and market reports. Aggregate trends in output, land use and farm performance in the vegetable production are examined covering the years prior to and after the Curry Commission. Details of sources are explained in the methodology chapter, Chapter 4.

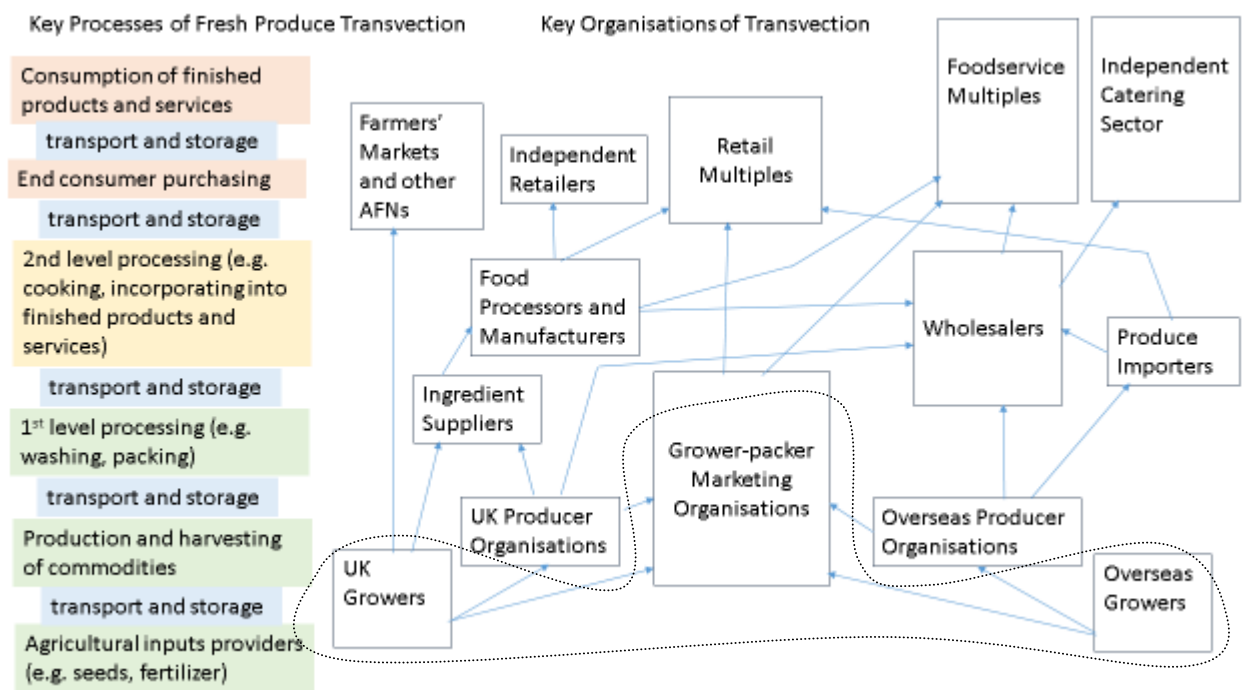
Supply of vegetables

Vegetable production in England covers a wide range of individual varieties of vegetables. These are produced in fields or in protected environments using conventional or organic production methods. The Fresh Produce Consortium's (FPC) directory provides product details on over 340 fruit and vegetables including 185 different varieties of vegetable produce (2011).

Alderson used the term 'transvection' to describe the sorting and matching processes of transforming natural resource inputs into consumable products and services (Wooliscroft et al., 2006). Vegetables grown for human consumption have to be harvested, cut, washed and packed. Some are peeled or prepared. Refrigeration, storage and transportation of perishable

produce may require carefully coordinated processes to ensure that they arrive at the point of purchase by end-consumers in good condition, although some produce such as carrots and onions may be less susceptible to damage and decay than other vegetables such as salads and tomatoes. Some end up in retailer outlets for purchase by consumers whilst others are ingredients for food processors and foodservice organisations. Vegetables may be sold fresh, frozen or canned, some are sold loose or in packs. Some are offered for sale in a ready to eat form but most require washing, peeling, preparing and cooking at home. (Wycherley, 2000) provides the basis for a diagrammatic summary of the main organisations involved in the UK vegetables supply network at around the time of the Curry Commission. The flow lines indicate how the product flows 'down' a chain, and the colour-coded process (on the left of Figure 2-1) refer to the key processes of transvection.

Figure 2-1 An Overview of the Fresh Produce (Vegetable) Supply Organisation and Processes



Source: Author, adapted from: Wycherley, I. (2000) page 3. The development of relationships in the UK organic food sector. IMP Conference. Bath, page 3 and from Hingley (2005a) Power Imbalance in UK Agri-Food Supply Channels: Learning to Live with the Supermarkets? Journal of Marketing Management, 21(1,2), 1. page 72

Mintel estimated the value of the UK fruit and vegetables sector to be £16 billion by the end of 2014, having grown by 16% between 2009 and 2014 (Mintel, 2014) with most vegetables sold to end consumers via the retail multiples. Table 2-1 provides a list of the main vegetable suppliers to the retail multiples. The list was compiled from the data on the FPC website listing (major suppliers of UK vegetable produce to UK retail multiples may be classified as packers although these organisations also grow produce as well as packing their own and other growers' produce).

Table 2-1 Key Supermarket Vegetable Suppliers, UK Based, Supplying UK Produce

Organisation	Main role in vegetable supply *
Albert Bartlett & Sons Ltd	vegetables packer
Brookerpaks Ltd	vegetables packer
Fenmarc Produce Ltd	vegetables packer, (specialist in prepared vegetables)
The Fresca Group – including: DGM Growers M&W Mack Ltd Manor Fresh (50% owned) Thanet Earth Marketing	vegetables packer, vegetables grower
Freshtime UK Ltd	vegetables packer
IVG White Group (Keeling International)	vegetables packer
Jack Buck Growers	vegetables packer, (also vegetables grower)
Moulton Bulb Company Ltd/Oldershaw Group	vegetables packer, (also vegetable grower (onions))
NFT Distribution Operations Ltd	vegetables packer
AH Worth Group – including: QV Foods Worth Farms Ltd Manor Fresh (50% owned) HMC (peas)	vegetables packer (also vegetable grower)
Suncrop Produce Ltd	vegetables packer
Total Produce Limited	vegetables packer
Univeg U.K.	vegetables packer

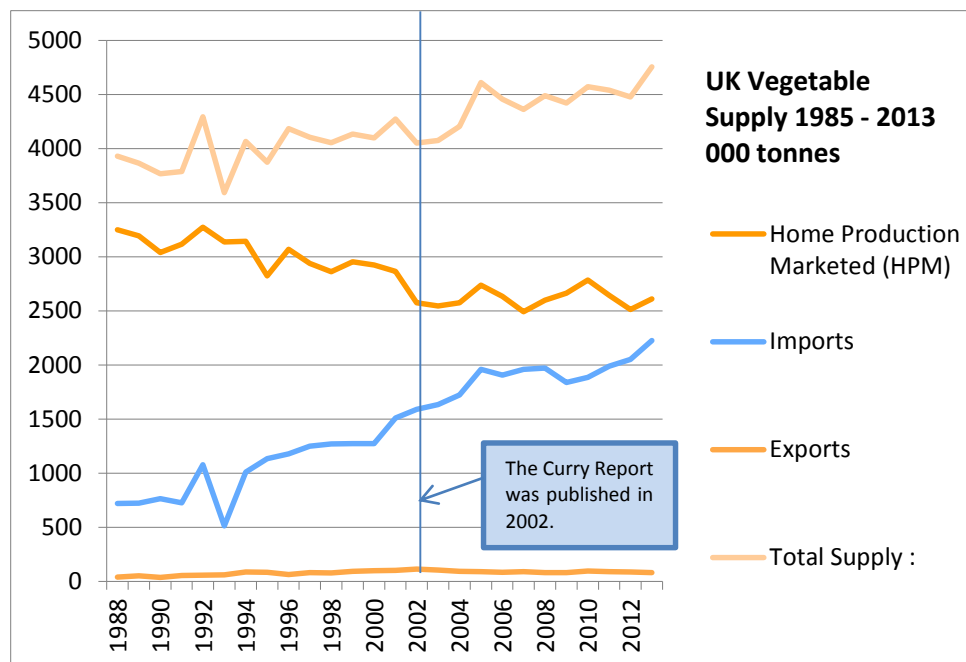
Source: Data based on FPC online directory:

<http://www.freshproduce.org.uk/members/>, Last accessed 07/04/16

* as listed in the FPC directory

Defra has documented figures for vegetable production since the mid to late 1980s. For completeness the entire data set is displayed in the charts but the discussion here focuses on levels of production in the period prior to the publication of the Curry Report (where possible, the focus is on vegetable production in England for human consumption excluding potatoes). The data show that in the period 1988-2002 the volume of home production marketed (HPM) declined by a third according to Basic Horticultural Statistics (BHS) (2014b). Total supply fluctuated in the period 1988-2002 around four million tonnes, but imports increased by two thirds during that time (2014b) (see figure 6.4). Exports are small in comparison to HPM and to imports. The export figures increase slightly – from a low in 1990 of nearly 39 thousand tonnes to 113 thousand tonnes in 2002 (2014b).

Figure 2-2 UK Vegetable Supply 1985 – 2013

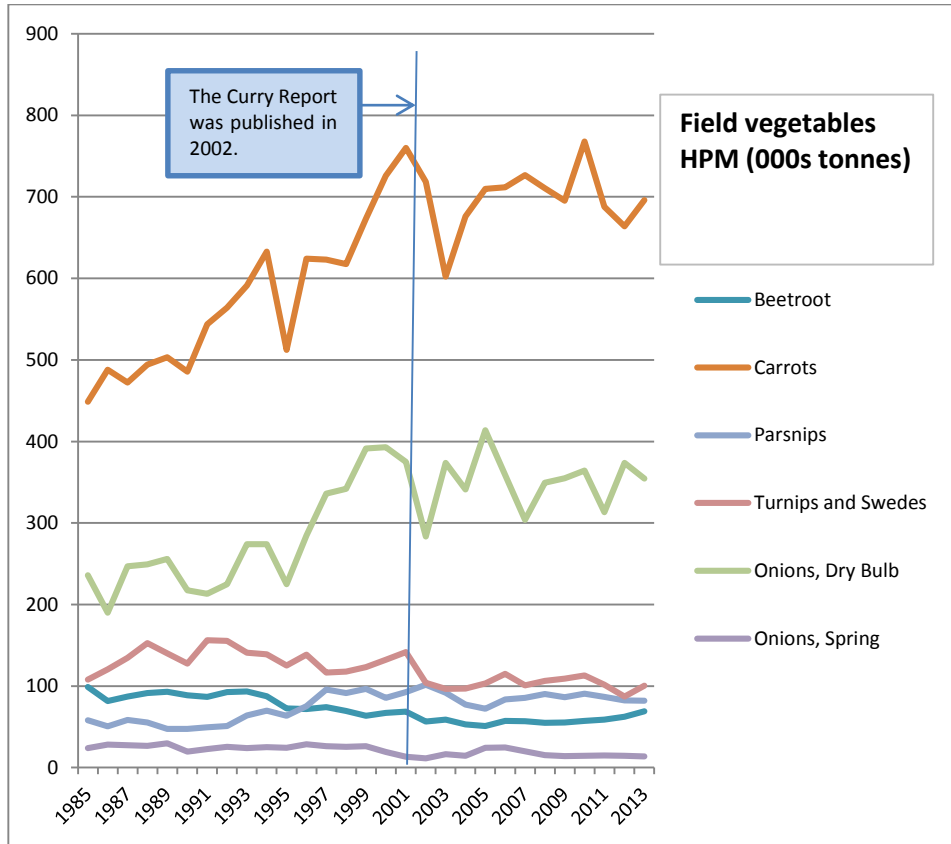


Source: Defra. (2014). Basic Horticultural Statistics 2014. London table 2 (Defra, 2014b)

BHS classifies vegetables as field vegetables and protected edible crops. The field vegetables sector is much larger than the protected sector. Within the field vegetables sector there are three main types of crops: roots, which includes onions and carrots; legumes, which includes peas and beans; and brassicas, which includes broccoli, cabbages and cauliflowers. The charts below present statistics from the annual BHS report for 2014. Production volume figures for the period 1988-2002 suggest that the volume of home production marketed has declined for most varieties. However there are a few crops where output in volume terms has increased: root vegetables, onions and especially carrots, experienced good growth figures (see figure 2-

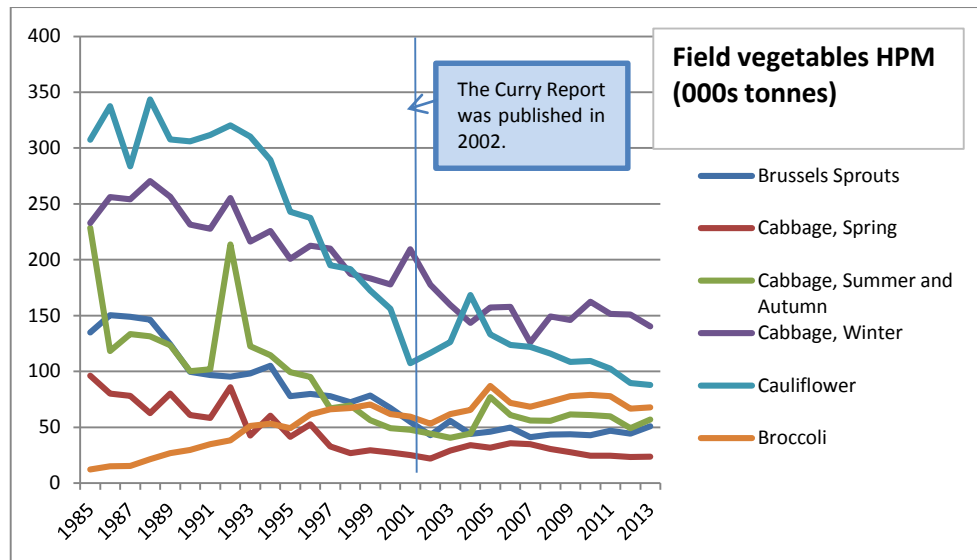
3). Nevertheless throughout the 1990s the overall volume of vegetables produced was in serious decline.

Figure 2-3 Home Produce Marketed for root vegetable crops (000 tonnes)



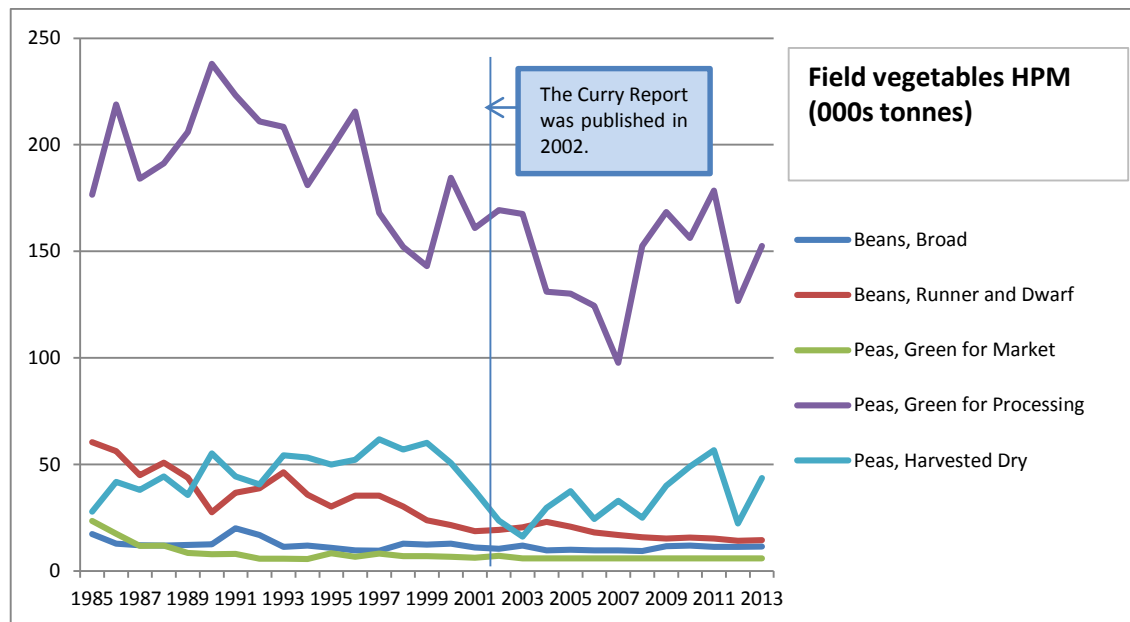
Source: Defra. (2014). Basic Horticultural Statistics 2014. London table 12 (Defra, 2014b)

Figure 2-4 Home Produce Marketed for brassica vegetable crops (000 tonnes)



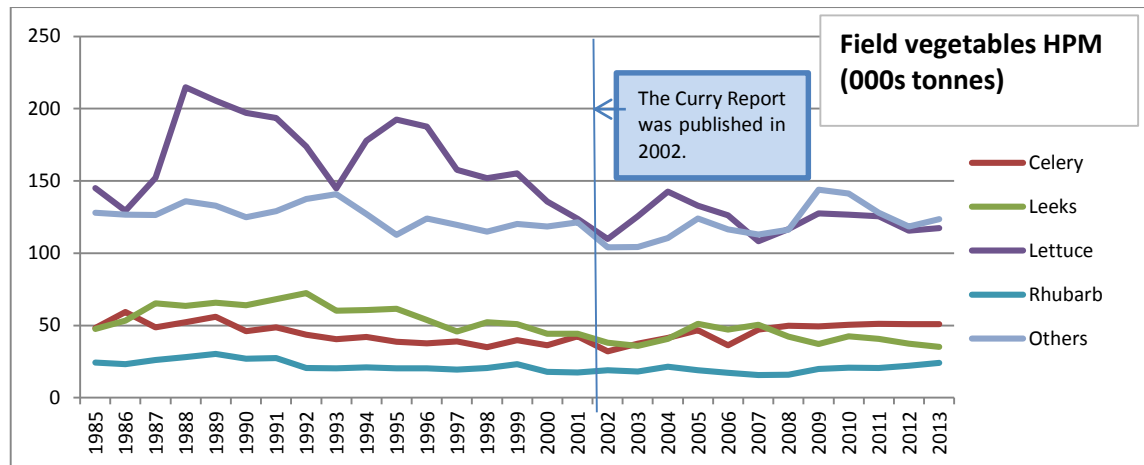
Source: Defra. (2014). Basic Horticultural Statistics 2014. London table 12 (Defra, 2014b)

Figure 2-5 Home Produce Marketed for legume vegetable crops (000 tonnes)



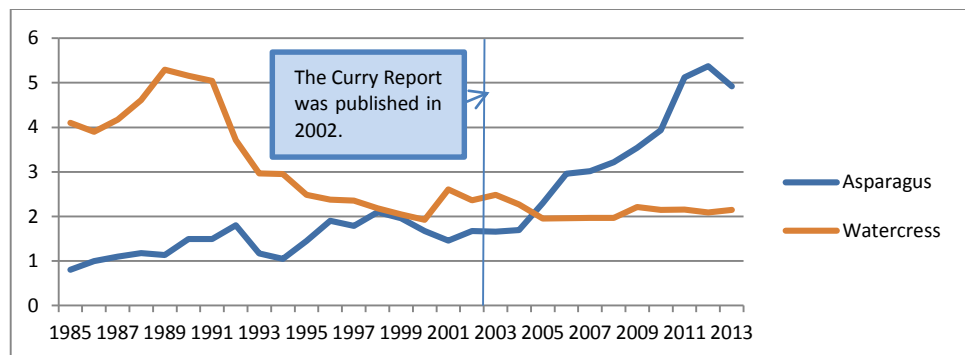
Source: Defra. (2014). Basic Horticultural Statistics 2014. London table 12 (Defra, 2014b)

Figure 2-6 Home Produce Marketed for other vegetable crops (000 tonnes)



Source: Defra. (2014). Basic Horticultural Statistics 2014. London table 12 (Defra, 2014b)

Figure 2-7 Home Produce Marketed for niche vegetable crops (000 tonnes)



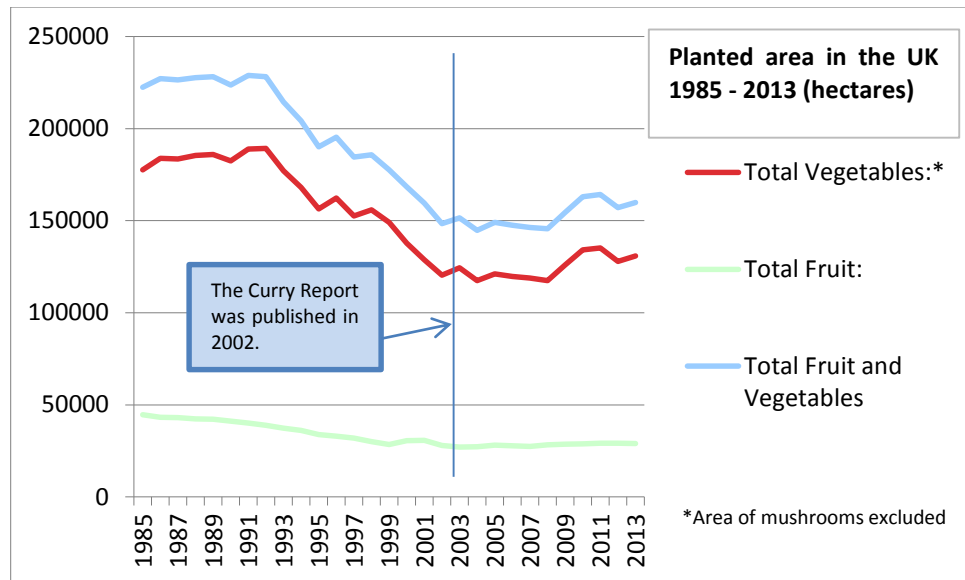
Source: Defra. (2014). Basic Horticultural Statistics 2014. London table 12 (Defra, 2014b)

Niche crops such as asparagus were small in terms of output marketed. The most striking decline was in brassicas where home production declined in all crops apart from broccoli (see figures 2-4 – 2-7) note differences in scale on y axis on these charts).

Area planted

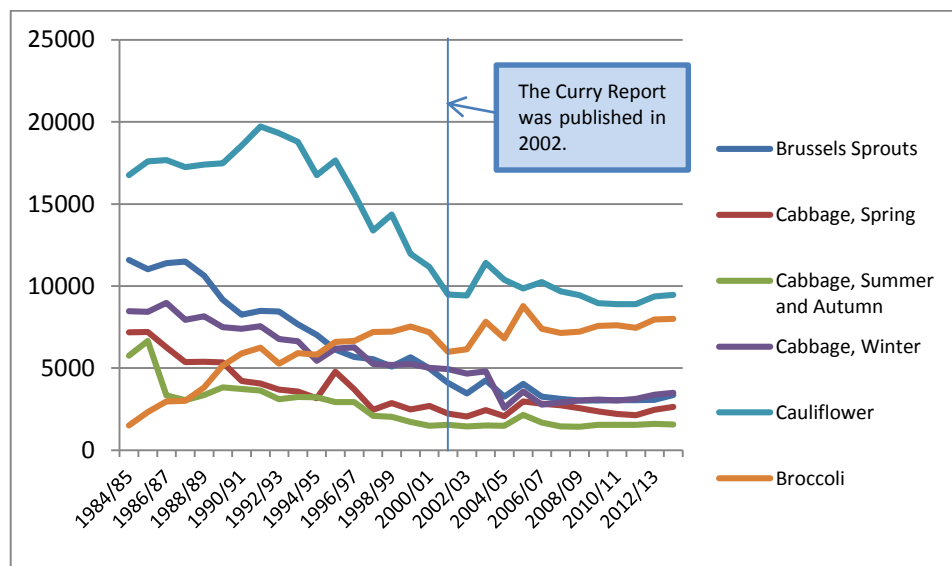
Decline was also manifest in the amount of land devoted to vegetable production. Prior to 2002 area planted for all fruit and vegetables had declined by a third (2014b) (see figure 2-8).

Figure 2-8 Area planted for fruit and vegetables 1985-2013



Source: Defra. (2014). Basic Horticultural Statistics 2014. London table 1 (Defra, 2014b)

Figure 2-9 Area planted for brassicas 1985-2013

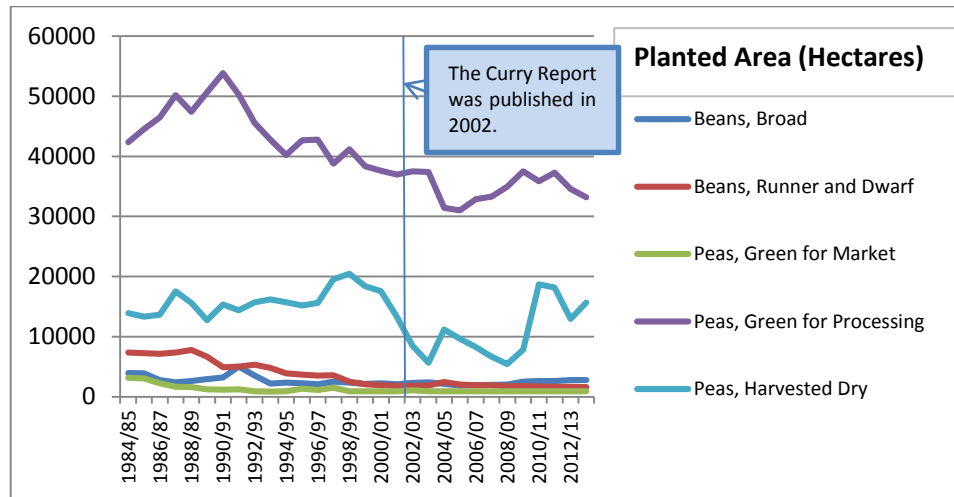


Source: Defra. (2014). Basic Horticultural Statistics 2014. London table 11 (Defra, 2014b)

One exception to the overall decline was asparagus. The area planted with asparagus grew steadily from 437 hectares in 1984/85 to 777 hectares in 2001/02. (Asparagus Growers' Association (2009b)). As a percentage of the total area devoted to growing fruit and vegetables this is, of course, very small: in the region of 1%. Whilst there are asparagus

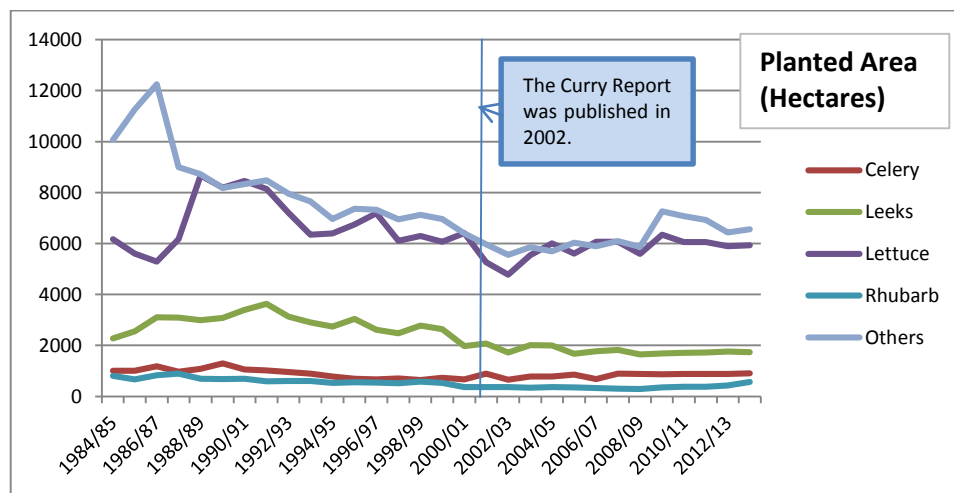
growers all over the UK from Scotland to Cornwall, the main growing areas are Lincolnshire, East Anglia, Midlands, Herefordshire, Kent and the South West (ibid).

Figure 2-10 Area planted for legumes 1985-2013



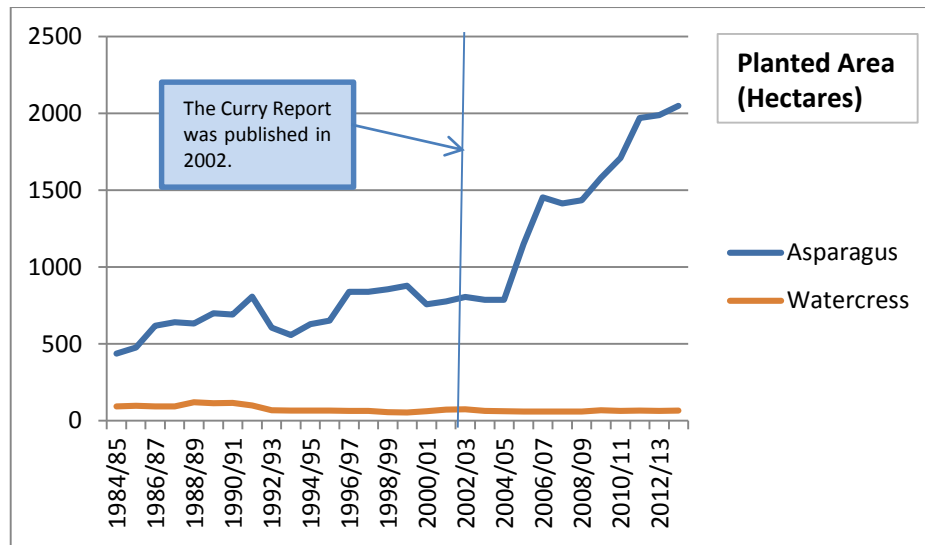
Source: Defra. (2014). Basic Horticultural Statistics 2014. London table 11 (Defra, 2014b)

Figure 2-11 Area planted for other vegetables 1985-2013



Source: Defra. (2014). Basic Horticultural Statistics 2014. London table 11 (Defra, 2014b)

Figure 2-12 Area planted for selected niche vegetables 1985-2013



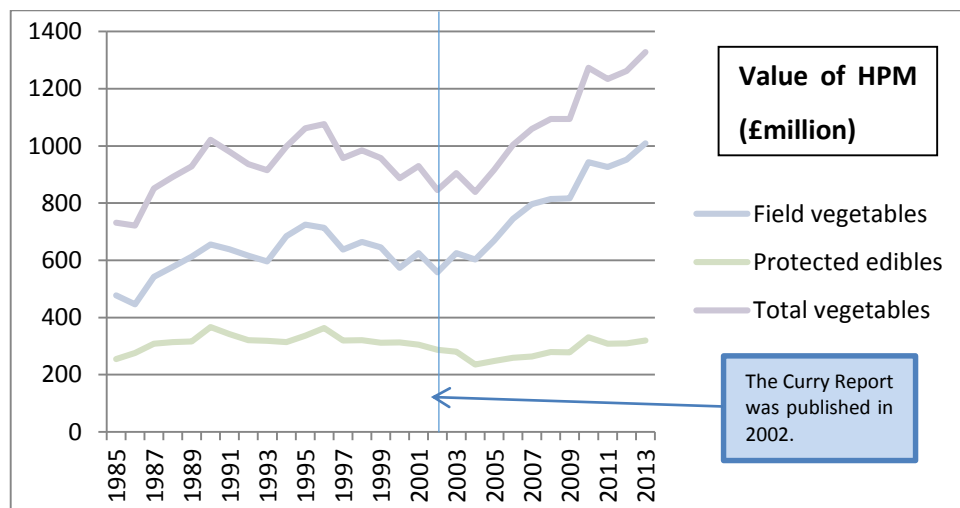
Source: Defra. (2014). Basic Horticultural Statistics 2014. London table 11 (Defra, 2014b)

Some traditional vegetable varieties have been in decline (e.g. standard and cherry tomatoes), whilst specialist varieties have fared better (e.g. cocktail and plum tomatoes). The area planted for protected vegetables declined by over 60% over the period 1985 - 2002.

Value of Supply of Home Production Marketed

The absolute value of HPM for vegetables increased by 15% between 1985 and 2002 but in real terms, taking into account the inflation over the period in question, this represented a decline of more than a third.

Figure 2-13 Value of Home Production Marketed for Vegetables



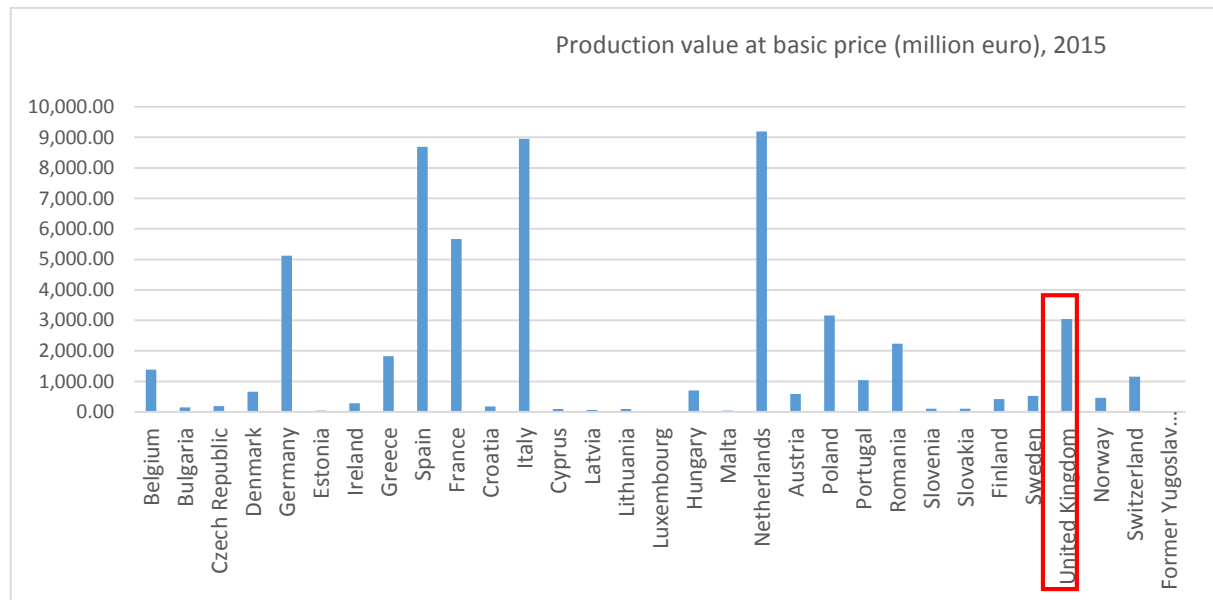
Source: Defra. (2014). Basic Horticultural Statistics 2014. London tables 13 and 15 (Defra, 2014b), 2013 data are provisional

Volume of production, area planted, and home produce marketed (HPM) are three distinct measures of production activity. Area planted was in serious decline prior to the Curry Commission across all sectors, apart from one or two niche crops where growth in area planted was from a very small base. Whilst this reflects a decline in production, it may also reflect improvements in land use efficiency. In general, the volume of production for vegetables was also in decline, as was the economic value of the sale of produce. Only carrots and onions, and a few niche crops such as asparagus, were increasing in volume and value terms.

UK Vegetable Production in a European Context

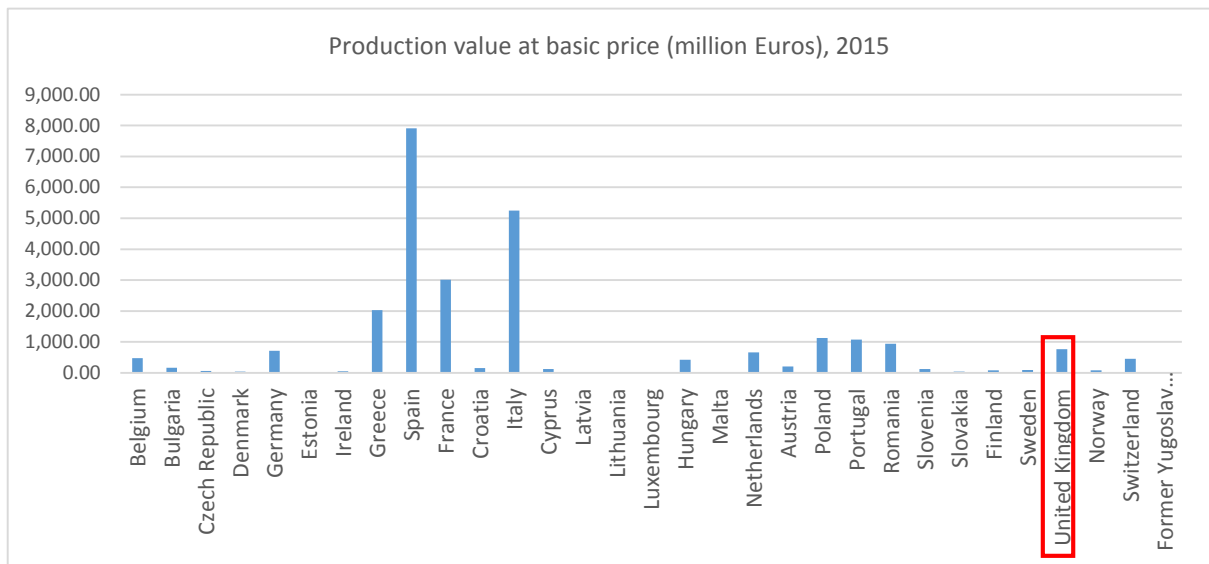
The vegetable sector is often bracketed with fruit production. The importance of the heterogeneous fruit and vegetable sector varies across the EU as can be seen from recent Eurostat figures (see figures 2-14 and 2-15 below) with Spain, France, Italy and the Netherlands dominating vegetable production. The UK, whilst dwarfed by these countries, is nevertheless a significant producer of vegetables in the EU, in contrast its fruit sector is small.

Figure 2-14 Vegetables and Horticultural Products Production Value



Source: Eurostat: Economic accounts for agriculture - values at current prices [aact_eaa01] Last update: 15.12.15 (accessed from: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/agriculture/data/database_01/02/2016) (2016)

Figure 2-15 Fruit Production Value



Source: Eurostat: Economic accounts for agriculture - values at current prices [aact_eaa01] Last update: 15.12.15 (accessed from: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/agriculture/data/database> 01/02/2016) (2016)

Governance of Vegetable Production

National Levy Boards

At the national level levy boards were important policy institutions that governed the production and trade of agricultural outputs. Levy boards, or marketing boards, were a common feature of UK agricultural policy in the post war period of the 1950s and 1960s (Davies and Hope-Mason, 2005), although some levy boards can be traced back to the 1930s. The Potato Marketing Board, formed in 1934 for example, was effective in controlling domestic supply by a penalty on excess acreage (Davies and Hope-Mason, 2005). The boards set standards and placed restrictions on supply in order to maintain prices and protect farmers and growers. The levy board for vegetables was the Horticultural Development Council (HDC). The British Potato Council regulated potato production. Other levy boards were the Home-Grown Cereals Authority; the Meat and Livestock Commission and the Milk Development Council. Since then, the function of the levy boards has evolved from protecting farmers from the vicissitudes of the market to support for competitiveness, sustainable production and promotion. In England more recently, the levy boards have been brought together into a single body, the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB). The formation of AHDB was included in a range of changes ordered in the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and came into force under the Agriculture and Horticulture

Development Board Order (2008). According to its website, the AHDB was set up to: engage in research and development (R&D) and farm-level knowledge transfer (KT); provide market information to improve supply chain transparency; stimulate demand by effective marketing; and develop export markets for agriculture businesses (AHDB, 2015). Since AHDB replaced the levy boards (the British Potato Council; the Home-Grown Cereals Authority; the Horticultural Development Council (HDC); the Meat and Livestock Commission and the Milk Development Council), funding for AHDB remained based on a levy on farmers and growers (2008). Now AHDB is organised into six sector divisions that broadly mirror the old levy boards: Horticulture, Potatoes, Cereals and Oilseeds, Beef and Lamb, Pork and Dairy (AHDB, 2015).

EU Common Market Organisation for Fruit and Vegetables

A special regime for fresh fruit and vegetables (F&V) governed production and trade across the sector until the early 1960s (Čačić et al., 2009) when a Common Organisation of the Markets in fruit and vegetables was established (2010b). Production and trade were regulated by a range of specific market interventions that included withdrawal of production, entry price schemes and export subsidies (dell'Aquila and Petriccione, 2012). A major reform took place in the mid-1990s, (Bidwells, 2007) and further reforms were introduced in the new millennium. At the time of the Curry Commission UK vegetable producers did not benefit from subsidies, support for agriculture via CAP was largely focused on the mainstream agricultural outputs of cereal crops and livestock. Market-oriented reforms aimed at simplifying regulation began in 2004 (Čačić et al., 2009), culminating in the 2007 reforms. The 2007 reforms were designed to address buyer power; competitiveness; the regularly occurring crises that arose often due to the perishable nature of fruit and vegetables; and stagnating levels of consumption of fruit and vegetables (2010a). Post 2013 the EU reviewed the CMO for fruit and vegetables (2016). Reform of CAP 2014-2020 has signalled an enhanced role for POs not just in fruit and vegetables but in other sectors too as a mechanism to boost competitiveness of EU agriculture (European Commission, 2013).

'Fruit and vegetable regime: The EU actively supports the fruit and vegetable sector though its market-management scheme (element of the "common organisation of agricultural markets"), which has 4 broad goals: 1, a more competitive and market-oriented sector; 2, fewer crisis-related fluctuations in producers' income; 3, greater consumption of fruit and vegetables in the EU; and 4, increased use of eco-friendly cultivation and production techniques.'

Source: European Commission website:
http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/fruit-and-vegetables/index_en.htm
(2016).

Fruit and vegetable producer organisations (FVPOs) were designed to be the basic actors in the fruit and vegetables regime (2016). The UK published a National Strategy for Operational Programmes 2008-2013 for fruit and vegetable POs (2008a). Table 2-2 lists the objectives for the UK fruit and vegetable PO programme. The Rural Payments Agency (RPA) is responsible for ensuring that the operational programmes complied with EU regulations, for example that the PO operated as a single marketing desk, and that a proportion of spending in the operational programmes should be devoted to environmental actions (2008a). POs could obtain 4.6% of the PO's value of production marketed (VPM) and funds must be matched by contributions from PO members (Copa-Cogeca, n.d.). The CMO includes other mechanisms for support, for example a School Fruit Scheme; provenance schemes, support for organic farming, crisis prevention and environmental actions (2016).

Table 2-2 Objectives for the Future Development of Producer Organisations

Extract from United Kingdom's National Strategy for Sustainable Operational Programmes 2008-2013, (2008) Defra pages 6-8	
i)	To encourage more growers to join existing producer organisations, so as to permit growers to reduce their costs of production and fixed costs on the farm by providing central services and group owned facilities, thus making the growers more cost effective in the marketplace.
ii)	To encourage producer organisations to reduce supply chains, by taking on more direct marketing either singly or in collaboration with other producer organisations, thus enabling growers to take a higher price for their goods by supplying produce closer to the end customer.
iii)	To encourage producer organisations to source non-member produce in order to be able to fulfil annual supply contracts. Encouragement for POs to trade fresh produce from all origins, whether grown in the UK, other EU Member States or southern hemisphere third countries, will strengthen their ability to be strong players in the market place and to become category managers.
iv)	To promote the corporate brand of the PO, and its produce. The majority of producer organisations have up till now been reluctant to market themselves either to new members or to new customers. Branding is desirable to build robust businesses.
v)	To encourage independent reassessment of the corporate governance of the organisations, and of the opportunities to increase margins for growers. Producer organisations can benefit considerably from external review of their structure, governance and financial arrangements. Independent analysis by specialist companies and implementation of appropriate measures offers the potential to improve the commercial performance and corporate capacity and sustainability of producer organisations, and the position of their members.
vi)	To develop crop grading, packaging, storage and distribution facilities to meet customer requirements. As the market develops for ready-to-eat prepared products, the POs need to reinvest in additional high-care facilities.
vii)	To further develop field to fork crop-tracking systems. The recording and monitoring of product from planting to eating is piecemeal at present, and POs should be able to track the life of a product back from point of sale to point of planting and have all inputs, handling and observations followed through the whole crop life.
viii)	To develop electronic monitoring of crop growing environments in order to maximise crop production. Monitoring by instrument the environment around the crop for temperature, wind, moisture, CO2 etc., and using the data thus

	generated to forecast pest infestation, disease risk, irrigation need, heat/cold, offers the potential to optimise production.
ix)	To encourage minimum input systems, including nutrient management and near organic pest control systems. Biological pest/disease management, nutrient input and offtake monitoring, should be given high priority.
x)	To assess and reduce energy consumption during production, harvesting, grading, storage and marketing. POs should be supported in assessments of fuel usage and measures to monitor and reduce fuel consumption per unit of production.
xi)	To optimise water usage according to crop need, by providing irrigation scheduling services, and where appropriate crop watering systems.
xii)	To extend the storage and shelf life of fresh products, by investments in stores and developments in modified atmosphere storage of both the crop and the packaged product.

Table 2-3 EU support for FVPO Operational Funds 2000-2013

	2000 (€m)	2006 (€m)	2013 (€m) provisional budget
EU support for FVPO operational funds	283	544	1043

Source: Copa-Cogeca. (n.d.). Fruit and vegetable producer organisations in the EU: overview and prospects. (Copa-Cogeca, n.d.Paragraph 4)

For the UK, implementation of the fruit and vegetables regime was not without problems. There were controversies concerning payments to producers (2009) and some UK POs lost their status because of infringement of the regulations (2012). POs fitted well with the model of fruit and vegetable production that was common in southern European states such as Italy and Spain (Copa-Cogeca, n.d.) where vegetable production is a significant agricultural activity. In southern Europe POs were more akin to trades unions and enabled small producers to form associations to agree more favourable prices with powerful of downstream actors. Such a tradition did not always sit easily in a UK context, especially one where producers saw themselves as independent farmers (Schlosser, 2002) and where farms were generally larger.

Copa-Cogeca, the organisation that represented many EU growers, argued that support for growers was less than that given to other sectors. The fruit and vegetables sector represented almost 17% of the total value of EU agricultural produce from around one million farms but funds allocated to the fruit and vegetable sector amounted to approximately just 3.5% of European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF), and approximately 2% of EAGF is specifically directed towards operational funds for fruit and vegetable POs (n.d.). EU support for fruit and vegetable production was designed to be consistent with WTO (World Trade Organisation) rules (ibid) and the arrangements for support for POs were designed to sit within the prevailing liberal trade paradigm. In the northern states the pattern seems to be a few large

corporate style POs with a high economic value; in southern states there are a large number of much smaller cooperative POs (Copa-Cogeca, n.d.). As well as POs, other types of organisations in the fruit and vegetable sector were recognised by the CMO fruit and vegetables regime: i) Producer groups – common in the new member states and Mediterranean countries, seen as transitional organisations as PGs develop to meet the standards required to be considered POs; and iii) Associations of producer organisations – larger ones are in evidence in Belgium and Italy (Copa-Cogeca, n.d.).

Copa-Cogeca also suggested that there were not sufficient FVPOs; only 35% of fruit and vegetable producers across the member states of the EU were organised into POs (ibid). Since this was an important mechanism through which growers obtained financial aid from the EU, this was viewed as a low figure. Some of the reasons suggested for the low participation rate were the administrative burdens of setting up and monitoring POs, and some EU aid was available to growers without the need to form POs. For example, fruit and vegetable growers may be entitled to claim the Single Payment Scheme (Rural Payments Rural Payments Agency, 2013).

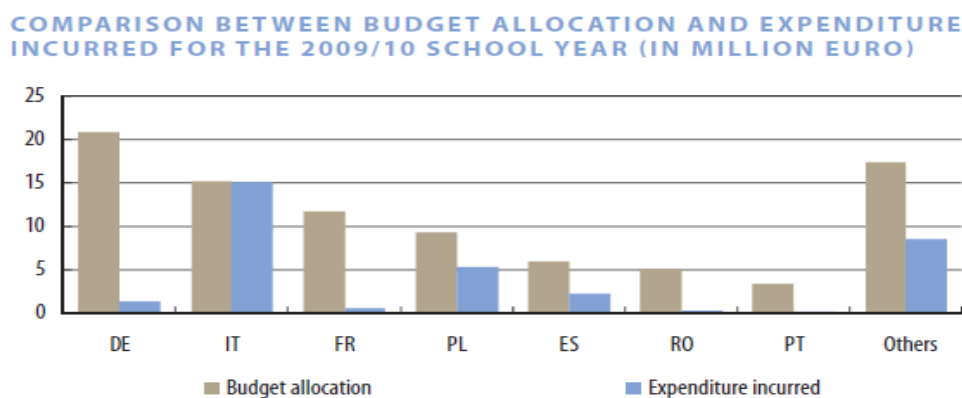
For the post-2013 CAP Copa-Cogeca argued that operational programmes needed to be funded from Pillar One (single CMO Regulation) of CAP rather than via Pillar Two (rural development). One reason for this may be that according to an impact study as reported in the minutes for Advisory Committee on Fruit and Vegetables for 13th April (2011) partial decoupling would lead to a reduction in production for fruit and vegetables. Clearly grower organisations such as Copa-Cogeca were likely to press for support for increased production, but whether other goals related to the environmental impact and consumption could be better supported by this approach may be contested. But despite grower representative concerns, the post-2013 arrangements were a continuation of the market oriented Pillar II policy. In addition to the original goals listed above, the aim was to encourage more growers to join POs by reducing the administrative burden and simplifying legislation ((Jacquin, 2010) page 5).

School Fruit (and Vegetables) Schemes

As part of the support for the fruit and vegetable sector there was also a scheme to encourage school children to consume more fresh fruit. The scheme was open to all EU countries although uptake has been limited (see figure 2.6 below). In the UK the scheme was not taken up because an alternative scheme was already in place. A recent government response to a Freedom of Information request from the European Commission suggested that the UK

government believed its existing scheme was more effective, and challenged the validity of a school fruit scheme that was funded via CAP since it was perceived as a health-related issue rather than a support mechanism for producers (2013). £44 million was spent on the UK School Fruit and Vegetables Scheme in England alone (European Court of Auditors, 2011) but its impact may not have been as effective as envisaged. School dinners, for example, were evaluated as having a larger impact on vegetable consumption (Blenkinsop et al., 2007) and the impact of the School Fruit and Vegetables Scheme on production was limited since much of the produce, especially fruit, was not produced in the UK.

Figure 2-16 School Fruit Scheme Budget and Expenditure 2009/2010



Source: European Commission.

Source: European Court of Auditors (2011) page 50)

European Commission advisory committees and forums

Within the European Commission there were advisory committees linked to Directorates General (DGs) that affected the vegetable sector.

The European Commission Advisory Committee on Fruit and Vegetables

This organisation acts as a liaison committee between the European Commission and various groups representing the industry, consumer and other interested parties. Representation includes: Copa-Cogeca – representing fruit and vegetable producers; Freshfel Europe – the European fresh produce association representing growers, especially the grower-packer marketing organisations (GPMOs), wholesalers and others involved in the fresh produce sector; Frucom – representing those involved in the dried fruit sector; PORFEL – representing the processed fruit and vegetable industry; BEUC – the European Consumers’ Association; and EEB – an NGO concerned about environmental issues. This committee was dominated by

producers and upstream actors. There was representation of consumer groups and those with an environmental agenda but there was no representation of the retail multiples (Freshfel, 2011).

The European Commission Advisory Committee on the Promotion of Agricultural Products

As well as some support for promotion of fruit and vegetables being available via operational funds for FVPOs, there was also a horizontal approach to information and promotion across all agricultural sectors regulated by Council Regulation No 3/2008 and Commission Regulation No 501/2008 (2011b). Funding for promotion and information on fruit and vegetables has been significant. The funding from the EC was up to 50%, with at least 20% from the sector and up to 30% from individual member states (ibid). A recent evaluation of the promotion campaigns undertaken suggested that multi-product multi-country campaigns could provide most impact but despite this many campaigns were single country focused, perhaps because of the difficulties of organising complex multi-faceted campaigns. There were some restrictions on promotional activity, for example, to promote generic products rather than brands. A recent example was the decision to fund the promotion of fresh fruit and vegetables following the E-coli crisis. The EC funding across a number of member states amounted to €17m, from a total budget of €55m (EC press release, (2011a)).

High Level Forum for a Better Functioning Food Supply Chain

Within the European Commission DG Enterprise and Industry a forum has been set up to address the question of how to ensure a better functioning food supply system. Established in July 2010 and with a mandate until the end of 2012, the High Level Forum for a Better Functioning Food Supply Chain brought together representatives from EU member states, the food industry, and NGOs to explore contractual arrangements in the food supply chain, price transparency and information, and competitiveness in the agro-food and agro logistics sectors (See High Level Group Forum Food website (2012)). Of particular relevance to those vegetable suppliers who engaged with the major retail multiples were the guidelines developed on supply chain relationships. The B2B Platform within the High Level Forum for A Better Functioning Supply Chain produced a document entitled: 'Vertical relationships in the food supply chain: principles of good practice' (2011k). Its concerns were focused on protecting consumer interests (through low prices), freedom for businesses to choose which organisations they wish to do business with, and fairness (ibid). Specific principles mentioned were listed as: written, predictable and enforced contracts, based on sound information where confidentiality was respected, and where parties bear their own risks, and avoided

threats (ibid). A set of 30 recommendations was produced along with a road map. Examples of Fair and Unfair Practice from High Level Forum for a Better Functioning Food Supply Chain are given in Table 2-4. The table shows how the EU attempted to provide guidelines with specific examples of how the guidelines should be adhered to by those involved in food supply chains. Its approach was to emphasise the importance of clear, transparent and fair written contracts as the basis for commercial activity along food supply chains. (Later fieldwork will use this framework to explore food supply chain practices as experienced by those involved in English vegetable production).

Table 2-4 Examples of Fair and Unfair Practice from High Level Forum for a Better Functioning Food Supply Chain

Practice	Examples of unfair practices	Examples of fair practices
Agreements written / unwritten	Refusing or avoiding to put essential terms in writing. This makes it more difficult to establish the intent of the parties and to identify their rights and obligations under the contract.	Contracting parties ensure that the agreement is in writing, unless impracticable or where oral agreements are mutually acceptable and convenient. The agreement contains precise circumstances and detailed rules under which the parties can jointly modify the terms of the agreement, in a timely and informed way, including the process for setting the necessary compensation for any costs resulting for either party. The provisions of the written contract are clear and transparent. When contracts are not written, one of the parties sends a written confirmation afterwards.
General terms and conditions	Imposing general terms and conditions that contain unfair clauses.	Using general terms and conditions that facilitate business activity and that contain fair clauses.
Termination	Unilaterally terminating a commercial relationship without notice, or subject to an unreasonably short notice period and without an objectively justified reason, for example on the grounds that unilateral sales targets are not reached.	The unilateral termination of the agreement respects the agreement and due process and is in accordance with applicable law.
Contractual Sanctions	Contractual sanctions are applied in a non-transparent manner and are disproportionate to damages suffered. Sanctions are imposed without any justification in the agreement or the applicable law.	If a party fails to meet its obligations, contractual sanctions are applied in a transparent way, in respect of the agreement and proportional to the damages. Contractual sanctions are agreed in advance, are proportionate for both sides and are applied in order to compensate damages.
Unilateral actions	Non-contractual retroactive unilateral changes in the cost or price of products or services.	A contract contains legitimate circumstances and conditions under which subsequent unilateral action may be permitted.
Information	Withholding essential information relevant to the other party in contractual negotiations and which the other party could legitimately expect to receive. A contracting party uses or shares with a third party, sensitive information provided confidentially by the other contracting party, without the latter's authorization, in a way that enables it to obtain a competitive advantage.	Providing relevant essential information to the other party in contractual negotiations

Source: High Level Forum for a Better Functioning Supply Chain B2B Platform. (2011). Vertical Relationships in the Food Supply Chain: Principles of Good Practice: European Commission DG Enterprise and Industry (page 4).

The UK Policy Context Prior to the Curry Commission

Post-war Productionism

The development of policy takes place against a backdrop of social, economic, cultural and political change. This section attempts to sketch a picture of these broad changes and how they shaped the policy terrain from which the national food and farming policy emerged.

In period after the Second World War, agriculture enjoyed a privileged position in the nation's food policy. Even before the war had ended, the British government embarked on a new strategy for agriculture in which security of supply, food for the people, was the policy goal (Lang et al., 2009). Since the early nineteenth century Britain had used its trading links across its empire to import cheap food to its population (Trentmann, 2009) but its vulnerability was exposed during wartime and rationing was introduced to address shortages of imported produce. Because of the perceived importance of securing an adequate and resilient food supply for the nation (Smith, 1990), farming was afforded a special and exceptional place in policy in order to secure for the nation '*freedom from want of food...*' (Boyd Orr, 1943 page 5).

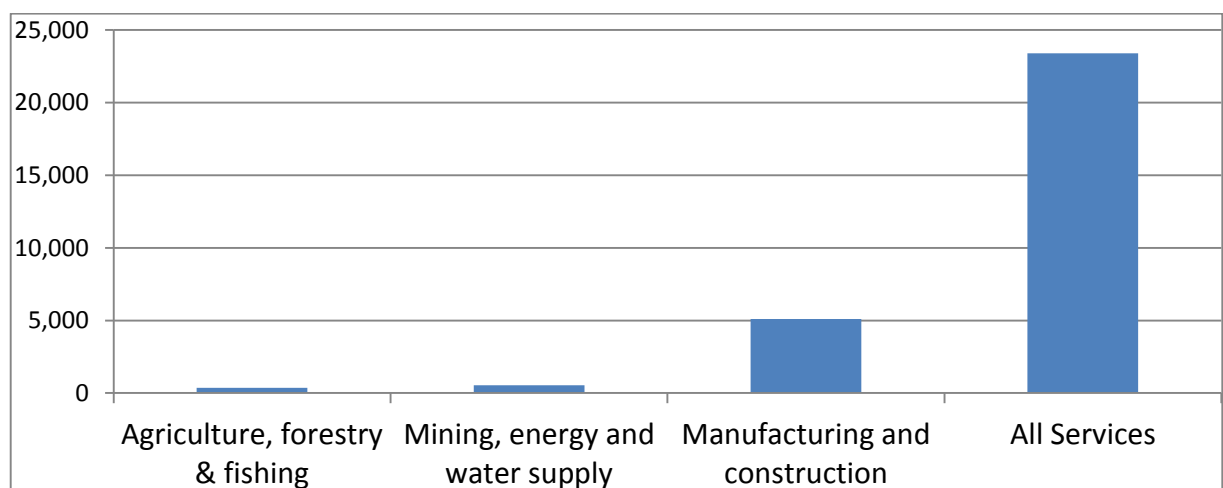
The two key institutions in the domestic food policy community were the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF), and the National Farmers' Union (NFU). MAFF was a production- and producer-focused governmental department, and the NFU represented the priorities of its key constituencies in mainstream farming: arable and livestock producers. MAFF worked closely with the NFU to protect farmers and to encourage them to produce more food (Smith, 1990). Joining the European Common Market in 1973 seemed to reinforce the productionist paradigm but by the end of the 1970s there was widespread discontent for the policy. Productionism was under attack as it became costly to both consumers and taxpayers (traditionally both these groups were a higher priority for UK governments than for other European country administrations (Greer, 2005); inefficient and wasteful, as evidenced by food mountains of over-produced commodities; and there were growing concerns about the environmental impact of over-production in agriculture (Lang et al., 2009).

The replacement of MAFF with Defra, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, in 2002 was more than just a change in nomenclature. It reflected a shift in policy priorities away from production and producers, to consumers and the whole food chain, mirroring the shift to a post-industrial consumer society. The shift opened up a policy window for downstream food supply actors (food manufacturers, food service organisations, distributors and retailers) to play a more prominent role in the development of food policy.

As Defra’s name indicated, the environmental impact of food production emerged from the penumbra of farming to a more central position in the policy agenda, for example see (Defra, 2004).

The success of a productionist policy, coupled with a shift to less regulated global markets, ultimately brought about its demise. As the transformation of British agriculture during the post war period delivered secure and efficient food supply, it heralded the declining importance of the farming lobby (Smith, 1990). A more integrated food system, with supermarkets emerging as powerful gate-keepers, squeezed farming’s political influence (Burch D and Lawrence G, 2007). Fewer individuals were involved in an increasingly mechanised agriculture and it gradually became apparent that the farming lobby’s importance diminished with its declining absolute number. The special relationship between the NFU and MAFF mapped in the classic text by Storing and Self (1971) gave way to a more market-oriented approach to food policy. Retailer power in globalised commodity supply chains led to political influence as governments increasingly relied on a system of retail-led private governance of food supply chains to enforce food quality and safety standards. The increasing influence of downstream food retailers and food service organisations, now key constituents of the service economy (see figure 2.1), was accompanied by the rise of consumerism and consumer interest groups such as the Consumers’ Association (Greer, 2005, Gabriel and Lang, 2015).

Figure 2-17 Individuals employed by industry sector UK (thousands) not seasonally adjusted



Source: ONS data EMP13 Figures for July - September 2012 (Statistics, 2012)

In tandem with shifts in the food policy community, changes in the food and farming policy agenda were precipitated by a series of crises in farming such as the bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) outbreak of the mid-1990s, and the Foot and Mouth (F&M) disease crisis in 2001. These events and others including salmonella and e-coli outbreaks, and the controversy surrounding genetically modified organisms, brought to the fore criticisms of the prevailing productionist model of agriculture. Other issues also contributed to increasing food-related anxiety (Kneafsey et al., 2008), including concern for the environmental impact of farming; concern from taxpayers and consumers about the costs and waste associated with farming; concern for consumer welfare because UK food prices at the end of the last century were higher prices than other countries such as the United States of America; and emerging concerns for health as figures for diet-related illnesses were beginning to rise. Over the decades since the 1950s priorities shifted from: production of sufficient food; to production processes (what was produced and by what method); and then to consumption concerns (the nutrition transition and diet-related illness) (Atkins and Bowler, 2001). The progressive, modernist tone of the middle years of the twentieth century gave way to a more sceptical and equivocal consumer culture. The optimistic paternalism of the post war policy was challenged by postmodernist and poststructuralist critiques. Production ceded its dominant position in the policy discourse to consumers and consumption as the problems of production of sufficient food receded (Lang et al., 2009). This was not just the case in the UK but a tendency manifest throughout the developed world's food economies, and indeed has been noted – with variations - in middle income countries experiencing the food transition, too (Reardon et al., 2003, Vorley et al., 2007).

In the 1980s arguments about the effectiveness of market liberalisation were in the ascendant. The turn to the market in agricultural policy reflected a similar disaffection with state intervention in other areas of public policy such as health and housing, employment and incomes. Keynesian economic policies were replaced by neo-liberal solutions based on the concepts of freedom of choice and less regulated markets (Cockett, 1994). Jordan (2006) identified a growing public dissatisfaction with the notion of public services in exchange for taxes. It was the development of the choice agenda in which, for example, individuals would rather pay mortgages to banks than rents to local councils (ibid). The collapse of the command economies in eastern Europe, and the ascendance of neo-liberalism underpinned by new general theories of competition (Hunt and Morgan, 1995) gave rise to the view that markets were central to successful societies in the era of late capitalism. According to Lang et al. (2009) the 1980s were the zenith of the neo-liberal influence on global food chain supply. The

Washington Consensus, as it is known, was perceived as a policy package, promoted by and based on World Bank and IMF policies favouring: fiscal discipline; economic growth as the route to public goods; less reliance on subsidies; trade liberalisation; realistic exchange rates; dismantling of barriers to foreign direct investment (FDI); free flow of capital across borders; privatisation/deregulation; and protection for property rights (Lang et al., 2009). Trade liberalisation was also in evidence in the competition laws enshrined in the original Treaty of Rome of 1957 and in subsequent agreements, the latest of which was the 2009 Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. Even prior to Britain's joining the European Economic Community in 1974, shifts towards less regulated markets were in evidence in the UK. For example, the restriction and eventual abolition of resale price maintenance (Pickering, 1974) impacted on the development of the retail sector and enabled consolidation and concentration of retailers into powerful supply chain actors. Changes in economic institutions, as well as developments in logistics, inventory and data management, transformed retail from a fixed cost storage activity to a technologically advanced service (Araujo et al., 2010) whose impact would be felt upstream in the food supply chain.

In domestic politics the Westminster model of strong cabinet government based on the two-party system, began to give way to new public management (NPM) (Rhodes, 2000). NPM was characterised by increasing privatisation and marketisation in which the citizen was re-conceptualised as a consumer of public services. Rhodes articulated these shifts as part of a governance narrative which included a shift from government to governance, in which governments found themselves with more control over fewer areas of the public domain. Rhodes suggested this was the '*hollowing out of the state*' in which the state becomes the facilitator of services rather than the provider. The core executive's position was weaker, and trust in government had diminished. Devolution and hands off management were becoming the norm (ibid, page 346).

By the early years of the new millennium the neo-liberal ideas that formed part of the broad consensus on economic policy of the 1980s were being increasingly challenged. For example in the UN, De Schutter called for tightening up of competition regulation by applying a supplier-welfare test (as well as a consumer-welfare test) for competitive markets (De Schutter, 2010). The critiques were bolstered by the impact of poorly regulated global financial markets that were in crisis in 2008. A plethora of problems ranging from: the nutrition transition and the twin problems of over- and mal- nutrition; feeding a global population of nine billion by 2050; climate change; and food price volatility undermined confidence in global agro-industrial food marketing systems. Nevertheless whether the

solution was to turn away from markets, or whether the turn to the market had not gone far enough, was contested (Paarlberg, 2010).

The development of a national UK Food Policy in the new millennium was set against a background of European Union (EU) Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reform. As the twentieth century drew to a close the EU had moved towards decoupled support for agriculture. CAP shifted from pillar I to pillar II support for farming brought in by the MacSharry reforms of 1992 and further developed in the Agenda 2000 and the Mid-Term Review (Cardwell, 2004). Farming subsidies generally would not be aligned to the volume of production and would instead be linked to environmental protection, rural development and sustainable agriculture, as illustrated in figure 2.2. A less dominant but also significant theme was subsidiarity. EU food policy was becoming less 'common', instead CAP became a 'menu' of different policy options from which individual member states could select to enact policies that better suited a nation's priorities (Greer, 2005). CAP provided common policy direction on the broad direction of agricultural and trade policies but also, through other EU policies, set the tone for wider food and farming issues ranging from GMOs and pesticide management to the marketing standards for fresh produce and the disposal of waste food. This thesis is not to be research which explores those additions and shifts but it merely notes here that for the horticultural sector, which had been markedly under-subsidised but regulated by the EU, the changes being proposed at the UK level were occurring in a changing EU context too. This juxtaposition of immediate and wider contextual change made the research proposal to focus on vegetables, an under-researched area in food policy, potentially all the more interesting for policy analysis.

The emergence of sustainability as a UK Food Policy priority

Towards the end of the twentieth century sustainable development was emerging as an EU policy issue. Whilst few would argue against sustainability, it can be interpreted in various ways. Some years before the publication of the Curry Report, the United Nations Brundtland Report (1987) articulated sustainable development as the ability to meet '*...the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.*' (Brundtland, 1987) but how this is interpreted and used was and remains contested. For example, there is much disagreement about what requirements constituted needs (for example, see (Doyal and Gough, 1991)), whether they were distinct from wants, and which needs take priority since some may conflict. Peattie defined sustainability as: '*consuming resources at a rate which allows them to be replaced, and only producing pollution at a rate that the*

environment can assimilate' (Peattie, 1995). This definition draws on Alderson's early ideas of marketing systems as part of a cultural ecology. Writing in the 1960s, he suggested that societies seek to maintain the conditions for dynamic ecological equilibrium, where technologies are used to create wealth but without destroying the long run habitability of the environment, Alderson in Cox et al. (1964). Elkington's three pillar model: profits, planet, people (1998) emerged as an important conceptualisation of sustainable development, and is often 'translated' into the business-oriented notion of the triple bottom-line. As will be shown later, it is this conceptualisation of sustainability that was adopted in the Curry Report and in the policy documents that followed. However, not everyone agreed with the implicitly optimistic stance of triple bottom-line advocates, that global capitalism (profits) can be successfully reconciled with social (people) and environmental (planet) progress. For example, (Fleming and Jones, 2013) argued that corporations continue to act in the interests of a small number of stakeholders (notably, senior managers and equity holders), and so are incapable of delivering outcomes that are beneficial to society as a whole. Nevertheless, as a result of its use in the Curry Report the three pillar model gained traction in the policy discourse from 2002.

The Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food

The Report of Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food, the Curry Report, as it became known, was published at the beginning of 2002 and put responsive, economically viable and environmentally responsible agriculture at the centre of food and farming policy Defra (2002a). Reconnecting farming to its markets and the environment, the Curry Report articulated a new direction for UK Food Policy:

'Our central theme is reconnection. We believe the real reason why the present situation is so dysfunctional is that farming has become detached from the rest of the economy and the environment. The key objective of public policy should be to reconnect our food and farming industry: to reconnect farming with its market and the rest of the food chain; to reconnect the food chain and the countryside; and to reconnect consumers with what they eat and how it is produced.' Extract from the Curry Report, Defra (2002a: 6)

As discussed above, concerns about a productionist UK Food Policy had been noted for some time prior to the Curry Commission, but it was the Curry Report that presented a vision of a

reconnected food and farming system and recommended a market-oriented policy in order to deliver a sustainable future for farming and food.

The Curry Commission, formed of ten members headed up by Sir Donald Curry, a North Yorkshire farmer and former Chair of the Meat & Livestock Commission, was appointed in August 2001. (Now Lord Curry of Kirkharle, Sir Donald Curry is referred to in this thesis by his then title.)¹ A consultation paper was published in September 2001, followed by an extensive series of regional and stakeholder consultation events designed to elicit views from across agriculture and the food industry, policy, and civic society (details are given at the end of the Curry Report) (Defra, 2002a). Given the breadth of its consultations and the serious issues it was confronting, it is understandable that the Curry Report is now viewed as a watershed in UK food and farming policy.

The Curry Commission rejected the exceptionalist position for farming that had been such a feature of post war agricultural policy. A key feature of the Curry Report is that it encouraged farmers were to view their farms as businesses. Chapter 3 is entitled Profit which *'looks at how the food and farming industry can compete and prosper in a fast-changing world'* (Defra, 2002a: 19). Farmers needed to think about what was wanted from them in terms of the goods they produced and the services they provided to end consumers, the rest of the supply chain, and to the public at large. By becoming more market oriented, and by reconnecting with the supply chain, markets and end-consumers, the waste that had been a feature of farming in the recent past, and which was having such a devastating impact on natural resources, would be addressed. Where government support was required, the provision of public funds would be made on the basis of a quasi-market exchange between the state and farmers for services associated with the protection of the countryside:

'Government has a key ongoing role in creating a market for environmental goods.' (Defra, 2002a:11)

The Curry Report attempted to rebuild agricultural policy on the idea of sustainable farming through reconnection to markets and the natural environment. It was commissioned with a remit to:

¹ Lord Curry of Kirkhale biography:
<http://www.parliament.uk/biographies/lords/lord-curry-of-kirkharle/4250>

'...create a sustainable, competitive, and diverse farming and food sector; and to contribute to a thriving and sustainable rural economy that advanced environmental, economic, health and animal welfare goals consistent with CAP reform, EU enlargement and increased trade liberalisation.' Extract from the Curry Report: Defra (2002a:5)

It set out the strategies that English farmers would need to employ in an increasingly competitive context:

'We think that there are three broad approaches. Farmers can cut costs and increase efficiency. They can add value to their products. Or they can diversify into new markets.' (Defra, 2002a:25)

It was an ambitious, not least because of the tensions between the various challenges that were to be addressed yet the Curry Report took just five months to complete. The Commission took advice from many different groups across the policy spectrum and the aim was to achieve a consensus for the way forward for farming. The crisis that was apparent in UK farming convinced the government at the time that it had to reconsider farming from 'first principles' and the Curry Report claimed to reflect a pragmatic perspective that attempted to mark a new beginning in farming policy. Configuring agricultural policy around a notion of sustainability was a pivotal break with the past. That said, the Curry Report displayed links to a number of earlier policies as the descriptions below attest. The Curry Report's 105 separate recommendations were organised under the three themes of sustainability: Profit, Environment, and People. The government response was to accept most of its recommendations (2002).

[Policy initiatives for the Vegetable Sector from or revitalised by the Curry Commission](#)

The Curry Commission made 105 recommendations to government on UK food and farming policy. It suggested the adoption of a range of interventions, regulations, policy instruments, arrangements, schemes and so on, most of which were accepted by the government of the time. This section focuses on the policy recommendations that were relevant to horticulture. So, for example, recommendations relating to animal welfare or to the management of woodlands are not covered here. Although many of its recommendations were new, a number of initiatives in existence prior to the publication of the Curry Report were also revitalised. Whilst the Curry Report may be taken as a watershed in UK food and farming policy, and its authors stated a desire to reset food and farming from first principles, inevitably the Commission reflected the policy milieu of its time. Many of the policy suggestions from the

Curry Report were then developed further in the Sustainable Farming and Food Strategy (2002b) published within the year at the end of 2002. In some instances, increased financial support for an initiative was provided, or a wider remit was defined. Key delivery mechanisms included: English Farming and Food Partnership; The Red Tractor Assured Produce scheme; and the Food Chain Centre. These are briefly outlined below:

The Food Chain Centre (FCC)

Managed by the IGD (Institute of Grocery Distribution), FCC applied lean thinking techniques to improve production and marketing for a range of agricultural products including fresh produce. Carrots, lettuce and peas in particular seem to have benefitted from the improvements suggested by FCC (see Basic Horticultural Statistics (2012)). Suppliers were encouraged to re-examine their activities in the light of market signals from downstream customers. These ideas draw on theories from marketing strategy and industrial economics, most notably Porter's Value Chain (Porter, 1987). Category management was an emerging approach in which retailers would look to efficient suppliers to implement strategies to grow sales in a particular product category ((Cox and Chicksand, 2005); (Free, 2007)).

Assured Food Standards

AFS is a not for profit organisation originally established by the NFU in 2000 to manage and promote the Red Tractor Scheme (AFS), based on various farm assurance schemes from the mid-1990s. Like the FCC, the Red Tractor Scheme pre-dated Curry but was revitalised by the Curry Report. Although AFS is owned by the farming unions, food processor and retailer trade associations, it claims to be independent in its enforcement of farming standards and there is some evidence that standards on Red Tractor farms are higher than on farms outside of the scheme (albeit in the livestock sector rather than horticulture) (Red Tractor Assurance Scheme & the Farming Regulation Task Force, 2011). The Red Tractor was intended to signal minimum quality standards for a range of British produce including fresh produce. As such it was envisaged as an accessible and affordable measure of quality, animal welfare, environmental standards and traceability, perhaps in contrast to other assurance schemes such as organic labelling, which could be viewed as a measure of quality at the upper end of the price range. Today the AFS website boasts of 78,000 farmers in its Red Tractor scheme across various agricultural sectors including fresh produce(2011). However, its critics would say that the standards it enforced were only marginally above statutory minimums, and that the general public was unclear about exactly what the Red Tractor stood for (for example, see Sustainable Development Commission (2005)). Nevertheless the latest Red Tractor Review estimates that

its logo is on produce worth £12 billion (Assured Food Standards, 2015) and provides an effective example of industry governance of farming standards.

The English Farming and Food Partnership (EFFP)

EFFP was set up to encourage increased coordination and cooperation between farmers and the rest of the food supply chain. It has been restructured into a commercial consultancy, the European Farming and Food Partnership, and a not-for-profit organisation, the Food and Farming Foundation, with a mission to champion collaboration across farming and food industries (Ashbridge, 2010).

Food From Britain

In England, regional food was supported by Food From Britain which focused on bringing regional foods to UK and export markets. This organisation was wound up in March 2009 (see Defra (2009b)).

Demonstration farms

A network of demonstration farms was also put in place to promote good practice in husbandry and environmental protection.

Farmers' markets

Support for farmers' markets was also signalled in the Curry Report. The aim was to provide growers with alternative routes to market in the light of the dominance of the grocery multiples, particularly in product categories such as fresh produce.

The Applied Research Forum for Farming and Food

ARFF was formed in 2003 as a result of a recommendation in the Curry Report. Now called The Agriculture and Horticulture Research Forum, its remit was to enable industry levy bodies such as the Horticultural Development Company to collaborate on near market R&D programmes and to contribute to the shaping of government priorities in agri-food research (Agriculture and Horticulture Research Forum (2011)). The Forum provided a mechanism for industry levy bodies to collaborate in the development and integration of appropriate strategic and applied R&D programmes and associated knowledge transfer activities, and to influence Government prioritisation and investment in agri-food research.

These various initiatives added up to a significant level of support using a wide range of policy initiatives, including policy instruments and private governance schemes, focused on developing farming into a successful wealth-creating activity. There was also significant

support for the role of farmers as protectors of the environment through the entry level and higher-level stewardship schemes.

Food Policy after the Curry Report

The Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food

The Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food was published at the end of 2002 (Defra, 2002b) covering England only, since the UK had by then devolved powers (differently) to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. England developed the approach that had been outlined in the Curry Report. Its guiding principles were articulated as:

- 'Safe, healthy products (in response to market demands)
- Support for viable and diverse rural and urban economies
- Sustainable land management (supported by payments from the public purse)
- Within biological limits of natural resources (soil, water, biodiversity)
- A commitment to reducing energy consumption and renewable energy
- Safety and hygiene at work in the food chain
- Animal welfare
- Maintenance of the agriculture resource base (within limits)'

(Defra, 2002b)

Recipe for Success: Food Matters - Towards a Strategy for the 21st Century

The Cabinet Office Food Matters report was published in 2008 and demonstrated the high priority given to food supply in policy circles at the time prior to the credit crunch (Cabinet Office, 2008). Its aims were to review trends in production and consumption with a view to analysing the implications for the three pillars of sustainable development. The stated aim was to '...build a thriving food system that produces safe, low-impact food and healthy diets' (Cabinet Office, 2008). Produced by the Cabinet Office Strategy Unit, this report was requested by the incoming Prime Minister Gordon Brown, conscious of two features reshaping the food system: firstly, the internal pressures from externalised costs from health, noted by the two Wanless Reports for Gordon Brown when Chancellor (Wanless, 2002, Wanless, 2004) and the disruption of zoonotic diseases and crises such as BSE, swine vesicular disease and Foot & Mouth disease; and secondly, the shocks to the food system from the banking and oil price rise shocks in 2007-08.

Food 2030

In the final months of Brown's New Labour government another major food policy document was produced, Food 2030. Drawing on ideas outlined in Food Matters (Defra, nd), and the growth of policy thinking that stemmed from that, as well as institutional developments such as were promoted in Defra by the new Council of Food Policy Advisors, this document attempted to refine food policy in the light of increasing concerns about climate change and food price volatility. The vision for 2030 was for a UK food system that was sustainable and secure. The priorities were set out around six core issues:

- 'Encouraging people to eat a healthy, sustainable diet
- Ensuring a resilient, profitable and competitive food system
- Increasing food production sustainably
- Reducing the food system's greenhouse gas emissions
- Reducing, reusing and reprocessing waste
- Increasing the impact of skills, knowledge, research and technology'

(Defra, 2010c)

Although this strategy was short-lived, side-lined by the Coalition Government after the May 2010 election, it was remarkable for the fact that the UK recognised the need for a policy which met the broad goals known as Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP). Consumer change was indicated, not just change by economic sectors before the consumer met the food in the shops.

Food Policy under the Coalition Government

A new coalition government came to power in May 2010. The new Coalition government's focus on austerity and its commitment to reduce the number of agencies and government bodies had an impact on food and farming policy and institutions and delivery bodies. Changes were made in the remit of the Food Standards Agency, a number of policy initiatives were curtailed, and many policy delivery agencies were disbanded, for example the Sustainable Development Commission (Lang et al., 2011) and the Council of Food Policy Advisors. In September 2010 Warwick Horticultural Research Institute was subsumed into the Department of Life Sciences at Warwick University and some applied science related to vegetable production continued at the Crop Centre. The Fruit and Vegetables Task Force viewed these changes as a 'loss of expertise'. (Fruit and Vegetables Task Force, 2010a). As an alternative to government bodies, the Coalition Government sought the help of the food industry to invest in research and development, and communicate healthy eating messages to consumers in exchange for a light touch to regulation based on risk not hazard (Defra, 2010b). The Defra

Business Plan 2011-2015 summarised the new priorities and savings the department would make (ibid).

The Taylor Review

The Taylor Review, published in early 2010 (Taylor, 2010) and the Progress Report (Defra, 2011) summarised the direction and progress of Conservative (and thus later Coalition) agriculture policy. As suggested above, in the context of austerity, the farming community as a whole could not expect financial support for the sector, farming would have to rely on its ability to compete in the context of global trade:

‘just as we must live within our environmental means, so must we live within our economic means’ (Taylor, 2010) page 1

The policy focused on competitiveness, scientific investment and skills. Its priorities were to:

- Encourage private sector investment in R&D
- Reinvigorate applied research
- Ensure research is translated into practical benefits
- Equip our farmers and growers with the skills to succeed
- Drive scientific advances and technological innovation across the world

(Taylor, 2010) page 1

Fruit and Vegetables Task Force

The Fruit and Vegetables Task Force was set up in 2009 under the previous administration by the then Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Hilary Benn, in response to a proposal from the Council of Food Policy Advisors (Fruit and Vegetables Task Force, 2010c). It attempted to develop a discourse that involved farmers, producers, supply chain actors such as retailers, civic society, and government. Earlier there had been an attempt to address the problems for domestic production of fruit and vegetables and in 2006 the National Horticultural Forum had published a case study analysis carried out by Promar (National Horticultural Forum, 2006). Its recommendations had focused on labour issues, training, cooperatives, benchmarking, customer profiling, R&D, encouraging demand for UK produce, investment to support producers’ ability to ensure continuity of supply (National Horticultural Forum, 2006). The Report of the Fruit and Vegetables Task Force was produced in August 2010, a few months into the Coalition Government (Fruit and Vegetables Task Force, 2010c). The stated aim of the task force was to increase the consumption and production of domestic

fruit and vegetables, citing health and economic benefits. The Task Force's recommendations were summarised under three headings:

- A competitive supply base
- An efficient supply chain
- Increasing consumption

Three months later the Fruit and Vegetables Action Plan was published (Fruit and Vegetables Task Force, 2010b).

The Foresight Report: The Future of Food and Farming

As part of the Foresight Project Collection, The Government Office for Science commissioned a report into the future of food and farming. According to the GOS website:

'Foresight projects examine either an important public policy issue where science might be part of the solution, or a scientific topic where potential applications and technologies are yet to be realised.' (Government Office for Science, 2013)

The project involved gathering evidence from 100 peer-reviewed papers and several hundred experts and stakeholders. The aim was to build evidence and provide strategic options for policy.

UK Strategy for Agricultural Technologies

The Taylor Report emphasised the importance of innovation to drive competitiveness across the whole of UK farming, and no exception could be expected for vegetable production, especially since it had not been used to levels of support given to other agricultural sectors. The UK Strategy for Agricultural Technologies, published in July 2013, built on the idea of sustainable intensification that was articulated in the Foresight Report a couple of years earlier. The strategy drew on concerns raised in the Foresight Report that food production would have to increase to meet the needs of a rising global population. The agri-tech strategy encouraged greater private and third sector investment in agricultural innovation but was also backed by an additional public funding of £160m. Opportunities for innovation in vegetable production were highlighted in the strategy, for example, in enhancing the nutritional benefits of broccoli (HM Government, 2013) page 28.

Table 2-5 Summary of Key Policy Documents on UK Food Policy relating to Vegetable Production in England

Date	Document	Department/ Key Author(s)	Type of Policy Document
January 2002	Farming and Food: A Sustainable Future, Report of the Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food	Defra/Sir Don Curry	Report to inform policy
2002	The Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food: Facing the Future	Defra	Key policy strategy document
2008	Recipe for Success: Food matters towards a strategy for the 21st century	Cabinet Office Strategy Unit	Report to inform policy
2008	National Framework for Environmental Actions: National Strategy for Operational Programmes of Producer Organisations in the United Kingdom	Defra and UK's devolved administrations.	Operational framework
August 2010	Report of the Fruit and Vegetables Task Force	Fruit and Vegetables Task Force	Report to inform policy
October 2010	Fruit and Vegetables Action Plan	Defra	Operational policy document
2010	Food 2030	Defra	Key policy strategy document
2011	Science for a new age of agriculture.	Lord Taylor	Conservative Party Document
2011	Taylor Review 'Science for a new age of agriculture' Progress Report Summary.	Defra	Policy Document
2011	The future of food and farming: challenges and choices for global sustainability	Government Office for Science	Report to inform policy
2013	A UK Strategy for Agricultural Technologies	HM Government/BIS	Operational policy document

A complete list of policy documents 2002-2015 covered in the review of policy documents is given in Appendix 1

Discussion

Vegetable production in England was experiencing a dramatic decline throughout the period from the mid-1980s to the turn of the new millennium that affected most categories with the exception of some root vegetables such as carrots and onions. The overall supply of vegetables fluctuated around four million tonnes over the period from 1985 to 2002, with an increase in imported produce offsetting the decline in home-grown vegetable production. Land given over to vegetable production declined.

UK food and farming policy prior to the publication of the Curry Report had been dominated by a post-war productionist approach in which the priority was sufficient production of food and an exceptionalist position for agriculture. Since the mid-1970s, Britain had been in the European Common Market (later the European Union) and UK Food Policy had to sit within the EU CAP framework and within a global trade model. UK Food Policy had focused on mainstream farming sectors, cereal and livestock, and generally vegetable production did not benefit from government subsidies.

However, by the late 1980s there was a growing discontent with such a strategy both at home and in Europe. CAP reforms were shifting towards more market oriented, environmental goals, and support for agriculture was shifting from production subsidies to de-coupled rural development and environmental protection policies. A turn to the market was beginning to happen for mainstream agriculture. Nevertheless, in Britain vegetable producers continued to receive little in the way of subsidies. The vegetable sector had always depended on its ability to compete but the shift to global trade in buyer-dominated global commodity supply chains seemed to be having an impact on domestic growers who found it increasingly challenging to compete with imported produce from growers in other countries with a much lower cost base (for example, in terms of labour costs) and more attractive product offerings to retailers and end-consumers.

By the end of the twentieth century concerns were being raised about the impact of agricultural production on the natural environment, as well as the cost of subsidies. Beginning with the Curry Report, UK Food Policy aimed to address environmental issues *and* the costs associated with subsidising production. A more competitive agricultural sector would be less reliant on subsidies, and subsidies could be re-directed to encouraging farmers to protect the natural environment. The Curry Report argued for a turn to the market and suggested a range of policy mechanisms that could assist the vegetable sector. The FCC could help growers reduce their costs of production; EFPF could help growers explore export opportunities; the

Assured Produce scheme could provide a quality assurance marque; and farmers' markets could provide smaller growers with alternative routes to market. In addition, incentives to grow bio-fuel crops could provide growers with new opportunities. Environmental protection schemes (entry level and higher level) could provide growers with subsidies for protecting environmental resources. A turn to the market had been tried in the past in the 1920s and 1930s with the establishment of various marketing boards but this market-oriented policy was distinctive by integrating a turn to the market with environmental issues and sustainability. Rather than marketing boards, POs would provide the basis for grower co-operation that could be responsive to the demands from the supply chain and yet also counter buyer power. POs linked competitiveness and environmental protection because POs could access EU matched funding for investment in return for compliance with environmental standards. How would a struggling domestic vegetable sector respond to the challenge to be both more sustainable and more competitive? Would the array of policy interventions address the problems English growers encountered?

Chapter summary

This chapter has outlined the sector context for the thesis, and explains the policy context that led to the formation of the Curry Commission. It presents trend data on the vegetable sector in terms of land use, volume and value of production. It outlines the key recommendations that were set out in the Curry Report of January 2002 and in subsequent policy documents in the period 2002-2015 relevant to the vegetable sector in England. It also explains the EU and global trading context in which the vegetable sector and UK Food Policy are situated. The final section presents an argument that, given the significant policy watershed of the publication of the Curry Report, the serious decline in domestic vegetable production at the time, the global trade context, and the potential role for vegetable production in a sustainable model for agriculture, that it is appropriate to examine the impact of a market-oriented UK Food Policy 2002-2015 on the production of vegetables in England.

Chapter 3 Conceptualising Food Policy and Marketing: A Review

Chapter Introduction

The previous chapter explained the context for the thesis and showed how marketing ideas came to prominence in UK Food Policy at the time of the Curry Commission as policy makers began to engage with the idea of sustainability. The previous chapter also documented the serious decline in vegetable production. This chapter moves on to explore relevant theoretical traditions for a thesis that straddles both the marketing and policy disciplines. The thesis is situated within the domain of food policy and therefore it is also necessary to outline key marketing ideas and debates that may be only superficially understood by those in the food policy discipline.

Bearing in mind that the first research question of the thesis is to examine the impact of marketing ideas on policy, the chapter begins by examining the academic literature on policy analysis and explores the extant literature on how ideas from the marketing literature have influenced UK Food Policy and the policy making process. The second research question focuses on the impact of policy on vegetable production in England so this chapter also explores the academic literature on marketing practices adopted by vegetable growers around the time of the Curry Commission.

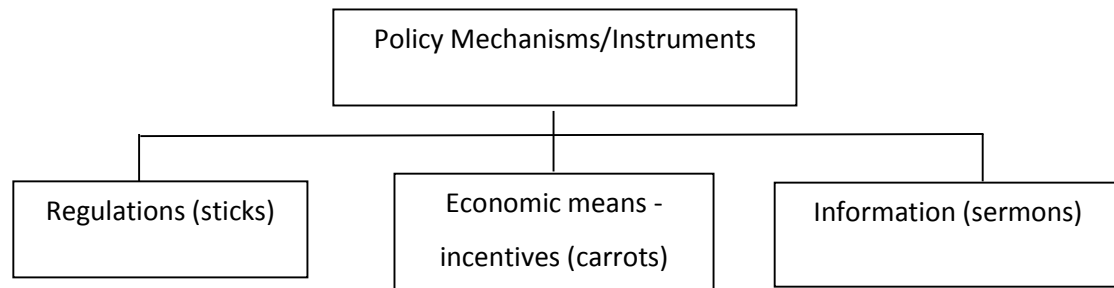
Theoretical Frameworks in Food Policy Discourse

In attempting to critically evaluate how a market-oriented UK food policy evolved, it is necessary to explore theories of policy-making and the food policy discourse. Food policy is one part of public policy. Definitions of public policy vary but there is broad agreement on some key features public policy. Public policy is concerned with the decisions that public officials do about public problems (Kraft and Furlong, 2013). These are decisions for which a government entity is a goal-oriented agent (Richards and Smith, 2007) although policy includes decisions *not* to do something as well as active decisions to make a particular policy happen (Howlett and Ramesh, 2003). Policy is complex because causes, government actors, and their decisions may operate at multiple levels – at the local level, the national and supranational level.

Policy is enacted through a range of policy mechanisms, and there exist a number of typologies that classify policy mechanisms. Pawson (2006) suggested that the model proposed by

Bemelmans-Videc et al.(2003) is a parsimonious typology of policy mechanisms (or instruments as they term them):

Figure 3-1 A Threefold Typology of Public Policy Instruments



Source: (Bemelmans-Videc et al., 2003) page 30

Focusing in on food, Timmer et al state that food policy is concerned with the various efforts of governments to *'influence the decision-making environment of food producers, food consumers, and food marketing agents in order to further social objectives'* (Timmer et al., 1983 page 9). As such, their approach emphasised the goal of redistribution in food policy.

Policy analysis is the examination of the components and processes of policy (Kraft and Furlong, 2013). Various attempts have been made by policy theorists to explain policy cycles, processes and systems of modern policy-making. Greer also suggested that analysis of policy needs to take account of the various levels at which policy development takes place (from local to global) and the networks of policy actors and institutions that affect the policy process at each stage and level. According to Richards and Smith (2007) some researchers focus on three key elements of policy: policy aims, policy interventions or actions, and policy distributional outcomes (that is, what or who benefits from a policy) whereas other researchers examine the actors, resources and structures involved in a policy. (Howlett and Ramesh, 2003) offer a structure including actors, institutions, instruments and ideas operating at each stage of the policy-making process. They suggest a framework based around three core issues: the scope of policy; the policy instruments employed; and the distributional outcomes (i.e. who benefits from policy developments) is useful for policy analysis.

Smith (1990) explored the development of agricultural policy in terms to two frameworks: pluralism and corporatism. A pluralist perspective focused on the impact of interest groups. The underlying ontology was that policy emerged from a transparent process of government responses to the power of various pressure groups and thus the appropriate method involved

gathering evidence of the power that specific pressure groups wielded over a period of time. Evidence was gathered in the form of actions and outcomes in which it is assumed power is 'intentional, observable and dispersed' (Smith, 1990, page 11) throughout the policy cycle. A criticism of the pluralist framework is that it underplays the role of the state in seeking to further particular agendas.

Smith (1990) citing Cawson (1986) conceptualises corporatism in policy formation as a quasi-exchange process in which specific interest groups are afforded an influence in policy formation in return for delegated policy implementation and enforcement. From a corporatist perspective the exclusion of groups and ideas from the political agenda is an important part of understanding the development of policy. Smith (1990) also highlighted the importance of structural power based on institutional, ideological and economic privilege. Smith (1990) cites Lukes (1977) in arguing that power may be exercised through social structures rather than conscious individual choices. The prevailing structures prevent some issues having access to the policy process not because certain individuals will it to be so, but because the existing structures have inherent biases. These biases reflect the existing norms and assumptions about policy options that are often hard to shift. But in a Khunian sense paradigm shift does occur in policy from time to time. The policy paradigm begins to be questioned when problems are not solved by the existing paradigm and the thesis attempts to explore whether and how a new market-oriented paradigm for UK Food Policy worked in addressing the problems in vegetable production.

Richards and Smith (2007) observe that policy-making has changed as a result of two fundamental shifts: the rise of multi-national organisations, and the hollowing-out of the state. They suggest that the ability of any government to bring about changes in public policy has been limited by a new world order dominated by globalisation, shifting from a process of government to governance, which was then followed by an attempt in the UK by New Labour to 'join-up' the processes of government again. Policy analysis may focus on the link between a regime and policy outcomes, or may focus on a search for policy determinants. Alternatively, researchers may focus on policy content, perhaps because policy may influence politics rather than the other way around, whereas others may attempt to evaluate the impact of policy. Lang et al (2009) summarise the study of food policy as an attempt to develop knowledge about how *'policy-making determines and responds to the food system'* (Lang et al., 2009 page 21).

Those involved in understanding UK policy in recent years have drawn on a range of perspectives that may be divided into two broad camps, those who adopt objective or

positivist methodologies, and those who adopt interpretivist methodologies (Howlett and Ramesh, 2003). Objectivist approaches seek to identify universal laws, for example, that govern the relationship between causes and outcomes in policy. Whilst objectivist approaches were in the ascendant in the early years of the twentieth century, in more recent times academic research in policy has become dominated by alternative policy approaches including critical approaches and historical institutionalism. Critical policy analysis rejects the possibility that in policy analysis one can separate values from evidence, and seek to explore policy using, for example, a Marxist or feminist lens with which to make sense of policy making processes. Historical institutionalism adopts the position that universal causal laws in policy are elusive, and assert that in order to understand the development of policy it is important to trace the unique unfolding of historical developments that led up to a particular policy. A key feature of historical institutionalism is the idea of path dependence, which suggests that future policy options are shaped and constrained by the choices from the past. Historical institutionalism typically avoids a deterministic perspective, and attempts to understand the complexities and uncertainties of policy processes. Cairney (2015) suggests that the complexities of political systems of government, may be broken down into five main elements: actors, institutions, networks, ideas and context.

An important stream of literature in food policy analysis is that concerned with the alleviation of hunger, particularly in poorer countries. Timmer et al (1983) provided an important text on food policy analysis which stressed the tensions between various issues in a domestic food policy: adequate and affordable food to consumers; sustainable prices for producers and protection from the extremes of bad harvests and commodity gluts; short run and long run impacts on efficient production and wealth creation especially in relation to home and overseas supply; and long term food security. They adopted an economic analysis that stressed the pivotal role of markets in, inter alia, providing signals to farmers and others involved in the supply of food, and largely set to one side the political issues within a nation state. They argued that whatever the ideology of a government, it would need to ensure an effective and efficient supply of food to its population.

More recent texts, such as Lang et al (2009), whilst not underplaying the policy issues associated with hunger, bring to the fore the complex challenges of food policy at the beginning of the twenty first century, involving the resolution of environmental, economic and social/health issues associated with food. Diet-related concerns of over-, under- and mal-nutrition and their relationship with a country's food policy have become prominent themes in recent years. Food policy is particularly subject to the complexities of policy making because

it involves 'wicked' problems that cut across the policy domain, affected by a range of policy structures and institutions, involving many different actors and interest groups including those with economic power such as global food manufacturers, retailers and food service organisations. Two pertinent themes that are noticeable in food policy are calls for i) a more joined-up policy, and ii) evidence-based policy. Cairney (2015) suggests that those who call for a more joined-up policy to address 'wicked' problems fail to understand the complexities of policy making, especially when it is clear that policy makers are only able to focus on a limited number of issues for which they are responsible. In another paper (Cairney et al., 2016) he points out that the processes of gathering evidence are rarely value neutral, and suggests that policy makers use evidence selectively to support some policy interventions and ignore others. Pawson argues that research on policy would benefit from adopting what he calls a realist approach, based on the early formulation of critical realism but without the emancipatory perspective of those whose aim is to transform society by revealing how those with power use it to oppress others (Pawson, 2006). Nevertheless, Pawson's realist approach is critical in the sense of its being open to disputation, with the aim of working towards consensus based on a deep understanding that comes from considering what works in policy from many vantage points. A fuller discussion of realism is presented in Chapter Four since realism is the ontological perspective adopted in this thesis.

In the past the focus on alleviating hunger meant that food commodities that delivered macro-nutrients were prioritised by policy makers. Thus in Britain the cereals and livestock sectors dominated policy. The production of vegetable produce, crops valued for the micro- rather than macro-nutrients, remained subject to the market forces of supply and demand and receive less support in UK Food Policy. As discussed in Chapter 2, which set out the policy/sector context, several themes reflecting the marketization of policy were apparent in the UK Food Policy discourse around the time of the Curry Commission. These themes included the hollowing out of government; the shift from a redistribution role for policy to the Competition State model (Cerny and Evans, 2004) and the choice agenda in the era of the citizen-consumer (Jordan, 2006). So although the Curry Commission may be seen as a watershed in UK Food Policy, the prevailing policy context was one of marketization. The discussion now turns to some of the ideas about markets that came to dominate policy at the time of the Curry Commission.

Markets in the Policy Discourse of the New Millennium

This section explores ideas and debates about markets that came to dominate UK Food Policy at the turn of the new millennium. It examines perspectives from marketing theory on markets as a governance structure; arguments concerning the benefits and limitations of markets; and whether markets are compatible with sustainability and fairness.

Markets as a Governance Structure

According to Wright in Bowles and Gintis (1998 page xi), a market may be defined as:

'uncoerced exchanges between people of goods and services' and Alderson viewed exchange as 'the act of improving the assortments held by the two parties to the exchange' (Alderson, 1957 page 197).

Coordinating activities to improve assortments may be enacted in different governance structures: markets, or hierarchies, or networks, the latter seen as hybrid arrangements (Powell, 1990). Hayek (1976 (1944)), favoured free markets rather than succumb to the dangers of a centralised state hierarchy to control production. But even in the most liberal of market economies there are institutions that govern the rules of engagement in markets, for example there might be competition laws to limit monopolies and vertically integrated supply chains. In reality markets, especially in the context of food and agriculture, are subject to regulation of various sorts, for example on nutritional labelling, country of origin, and health and safety. Sometimes nation states step in to address the adverse consequences of less regulated markets, for example, to pay for the clear up of pollution, or to provide healthcare for diet-related illnesses linked to the over-consumption of heavily promoted foods high in salt, sugar and/or saturated fats, so the full consequences of 'free' markets may not be realised.

In contrast to Hayek, Keynes argued that nation states should do more than adopt a laissez-faire attitude to markets, arguing that the state had a pivotal role in creating markets and shaping demand (Keynes, 1997:1936). Today there remains considerable debate about the extent to which human interactions across many domains could or should be conceptualised and governed as markets (Sandel, 2012). Although institutional alternatives to markets have been extensively studied and proposed (Ostrom, 2005), Wright maintained that whilst no society would rely solely on markets, few would seriously consider abandoning the market mechanism for some form of comprehensive centralised planning (Wright in Bowles and Gintis, 1998). Underpinning the debate are contested and contradictory assumptions and

values concerning the benefits and the limitations of markets, their compatibility with sustainability, and the extent to which they deliver fair distributional outcomes. These issues are explored below.

Are markets beneficial?

An important idea that was influencing policy at the turn of the new millennium was the notion that well-functioning markets delivered societal benefits, that is, benefits beyond the buyer-seller dyad. According to Jordan (2006), Adam Smith saw the exchange of goods within markets as the basis of a meritocratic society, a vision that contrasted sharply with a deterministic feudal society. From a rational choice perspective a free market was one where buyers and sellers made voluntary, rational choices to maximise utility (Howlett and Ramesh, 2003). In neo-classical economics it was conventional to assume 'want-regarding principles' (Barry in O'Neill, 1993 page 63) in which consumer wants are taken as given, and the purpose of neo-classical economic analysis was to determine a solution that maximises utility. Individual buyers' preferences disciplined the market ensuring that the best competitors thrived. However, a number of writers highlighted societal problems with a market-based adversarial system based on choice and competition, especially where externalities meant that the outcomes had impacts beyond the buyer-seller dyad (although externalities can be positive as well as negative). Instrumental rationality could lead to suboptimal outcomes at a societal level, a feature of Marcuse's iconic one-dimensional society (Marcuse, 1964) and Levitt argued that it may be possible to achieve better societal outcomes by restricting or editing some choices at the individual consumer level (Levitt et al., 2003). It has been suggested that too much choice may be psychologically draining (Iyengar and Lepper, 2000); (Mick et al., 2004). Schwartz (2004) questioned the direct relationship between increasing levels of choice and increased well-being and Levine (1998) argued that the ability to choose well was not innate; it was something individuals had to learn. Individuals had to learn to understand themselves and their relationship to their environment, something he terms self-integration. He argued that some people learnt to choose well, and some people have better opportunities to learn how to choose wisely than others do. From the firm's perspective, (Poiesz, 2004) highlighted problems of a proliferation of choice for producers who find themselves on a treadmill seeking ever declining profit margins by producing an expanding number of product varieties required to meet the fragmented preferences of consumers.

An important conceptual explanation of the benefits of markets was the Resource-Advantage Theory of Competition (Hunt and Morgan, 1995, Hunt and Morgan, 1996) and later as The General Theory of Competition (Hunt, 2000). They argued that their positivist model, in a

scientific realist tradition, provided a parsimonious explanation of why economies based on markets delivered more abundance, more innovativeness and more quality than command economies. The General Theory of Competition provided a powerful theoretical explanation of why policy makers should be sanguine about markets that did not have the typical characteristics of perfect competition. They argued that large firms that dominated a market were not necessarily a sign of market failure, and that all firms, even small firms, could develop a unique combination of resources that would yield them a competitive advantage. Agency could overcome structural limitations, so long as firms made effective strategic choices concerning the use of their heterogeneous resources and capabilities to meet heterogeneous and changing preferences.

On the other hand it could be argued that markets were the means by which those with power exerted their strength over those less powerful. This view suggested that markets entrenched inequalities (Kilbourne, 1998), and marginalised values other than purely economic concerns (Desmond, 1995). A capitalist system based on markets perpetuated a mal-distribution of wealth. The neo-classical paradigm, dependent on economic growth and capital accumulation, he argued, was incompatible with notions of a sustainable society. In a seminal macromarketing paper Firat and Dholakia (1982) suggested that it was not so much that markets were not useful in society but rather they questioned the focus of research in the marketing discipline which was dominated by research that explored market phenomena at the individual product and individual consumer level, leaving relatively unexplored broader questions of patterns of consumption at the societal level. They challenged the conventional marketing notion that production was a response to demand, and argued that production and consumption existed in a dialectical relationship – in other words, what was produced reflected what was demanded but also that what was consumed depended on what was produced too. And they called for a new research agenda for macromarketing based on the *'formation and transformation of consumption patterns'* (Firat and Dholakia, 1982 page 13). The Kneafsey et al (2008) study of alternative food networks provides an illustration of research into synergistic, collective and active production and consumption systems in the vegetable sector and their potential to address the problems associated with the existing globalised food supply chains. Carù and Cova (2003) also noted the narrow perspective of mainstream research in marketing. They pointed out that consumption experiences included activities prior to and after purchase and that these experiences also took place beyond a market context, and involved feelings as well as rational thought processes, drawing on ideas from

Holbrook and Hirschman on the role of feelings as well as deliberate rational cognition in shaping the behaviour of consumers (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982).

Despite the various critiques of neo-classical depictions of consumers and markets, there has been a shift towards marketisation in post-industrial societies. Although some have voiced concerns about the limits of the citizen-consumer analogy, for example, the Chartered Institute of Marketing C.I.M. (n.d.) and Sandel (2012), UK governments of various hues moved to extend marketisation of the public realm. Conservative administrations from the late 1970s onwards adopted neoliberal policies of deregulation, inflation and monetary control. The social democratic agenda of New Labour, underpinned by Giddens's third way (Giddens, 1998) rejected the old left's adherence to state ownership of the means of production and instead created the Competition State to appropriate the benefits of globalisation for its population (Cerny and Evans, 2004). In doing so the redistributive role of the state diminished (Timmer et al., 1983), as the state not only engaged in policies to appropriate the benefits of global markets but in effect promoted, sustained and expanded globalisation and marketisation.

The call for reconnection to the market in food and farming policy recommended in The Curry Report (Defra, 2002a) fitted into a prevailing neo-liberal discourse of the time. Jordan (2006) noted the shift in values in which the citizen became reduced to a consumer, responsible for the efficacy of his or her choices. The responsibility for a poor education, for example, lay with the parent rather than the local authority or school, what Kilbourne labelled as '*blaming the victim*' (Kilbourne, 2010 page 369). Schwartz (2004) saw it as an attempt to offload responsibility for decisions from the provider, whether doctor, or local authority, onto the citizen-consumer, drawing on the liberal market notion of *caveat emptor* (Crane and Matten, 2007). The argument that consumers, as free, rational, individuals, were responsible for their choices, and thus must bear the consequences of their actions, whilst an important cornerstone of economic explanations of consumer behaviour, has been critiqued and challenged extensively, for example, (Bagozzi, 2000, Levine, 1998).

Choice and competition were important aspects of markets but markets may also be conceptualised as an arena in which collaboration was a feature. (Gummesson, 2008, Gronroos, 1994). Collaboration, like competition, may take place across and along a supply chain. A key issue for individuals and firms in a supply chain was to decide when to compete and when to collaborate (Lamming and Cox, 1999). Porter and Kramer (2011) argued that firms needed to re-think their approach to how they can create value based on a more collaborative approach. Sidestepping Friedman's neoliberal critique of corporate social

responsibility (Friedman, 1970), they presented an enlightened self-interested argument that firms adopting a narrow view of their own interests underestimated the costs to their businesses associated with the social harms that occurred as a result of their commercial activity. They argued that customers' needs did not occur in a vacuum of atomised choices but were embedded in a societal context (customers are citizens too), and that with a global population growing there were many opportunities for firms who were able to create what they termed 'real' value to satisfy the needs of this population. Further, this was something that could only be done within environmental limits. Sustainable development was not only possible within market economies, it was unlikely to occur without markets. Their paper was a response to the view that business was the cause of many social and environmental problems. Their argument was based on the idea that free trade across international markets meant cheaper goods for ordinary people and protectionism ultimately only benefited the wealthy business owners at home (Trentmann, 2009). Nevertheless, Porter and Kramer emphasised that some regulation was required to *'enhance shared value ... and stimulate innovation'* (Porter and Kramer, 2011 page 74).

From a different perspective Bowles and Gintis (1998) also attempted to articulate the inter-relatedness of free trade and societal well-being. They stressed the interplay of three structures that affected both equality and efficiency: markets, the state, and communities (this latter term includes families, neighbourhoods, and workplaces). They argued that markets can be part of an egalitarian and economically efficient society and they acknowledged that both market failures and state failures could occur. They suggested that equality, a key component of a fair society, was not necessarily a bar to economic efficiency, and they highlighted how unequal societies can develop inefficiencies that could impact on productivity. They argued for fair markets rather than 'free' markets. Less equal societies fostered distrust so that resources had to be invested to ensure compliance. Another reason why equality may be complementary to productivity was residual claimancy, that is, the extent to which the individual benefited from his or her additional inputs in the form of extra hard work, or maintenance of assets. Aligning control and residual claimancy was seen as being both fair and effective. So there seemed to be a body of opinion that markets were not inherently inimical to societal welfare but that some regulation of markets might be necessary. De Schutter (2010) suggested regulatory systems such as Anti-Trust legislation in the US, and competition law of the Treaty of Rome in the EU focused on adverse impacts on consumers but he argued that supplier welfare was important too. Consumers' long term interests and sustainability needs could be undermined when large downstream firms were

able to exploit their market power over suppliers upstream. The recent Grocery Supply Code of Practice (Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy, 2009) was cited by De Schutter as one example where it was not necessary to identify problems with consumer welfare in order to limit retailer power (De Schutter, 2010).

Are markets compatible with sustainability?

Since the Curry Report asserted that a sustainable food and farming system should be based on a farming sector that was reconnected to its markets, responsive to customers' needs and competitive, it is appropriate here to explore ideas in the marketing literature concerning the link between markets and sustainability. Are markets a defining feature of a consumer society that is inherently unsustainable, or will well-functioning markets deliver sustainability?

Porter and Kramer argued that markets were not incompatible with sustainability. They encouraged firms to focus on creating shared value to embrace the trading opportunities that the sustainability agenda raised. Firms should seek to satisfy opportunities based on creating societal value, cautioning firms against unsustainable practices and the pursuit of short-term financial success that was not based on creating societal value (these were 'toxic' profits). On the other hand, Kilbourne (2010) questioned whether sustainable development was possible within markets in the prevailing dominant social paradigm (DSP). The DSP, which was based on political and economic liberalism and technological rationality, focused on material progress and assumed infinite growth was achievable and desirable and thus inherently unsustainable. Van Dam and Apeldoorn (1996) were also sceptical of whether sustainability was compatible within the prevailing market contexts, and argued that it would require regulatory change to ensure that markets operated within environmental limits.

Galbraith (1962) suggested that marketers were creating materialist wants that individuals did not really need, suggesting that markets would ultimately create unsustainable demand but O'Neill argued that it was possible to distinguish between essential needs and unsustainable wants. Instead of relying on revealed preferences as used in neo-classical economics, O'Neill looked to Aristotelean values to provide a framework for understanding the basic requirements for human flourishing (O'Neill, 1993). Similarly Doyal and Gough asserted that it was possible to separate less important wants, which could be satisfied in market contexts, from fundamental needs such as health and personal autonomy which should be governed outside of markets. By separating essential needs from second order wants it would be possible to create sustainable markets.

As far as the marketing activity that takes place in markets, some writers began to articulate whether and how marketing could play a part in sustainable development. Belz and Peattie (2009) proposed that sustainability marketing was based on four concepts that they claimed would deliver solutions to global needs that were: ecologically oriented; viable (from a technological and economic point of view); ethical; and relationship-based (rather than transaction-based) (Belz and Peattie, 2009, page 18). Van Dam and Apeldoorn attempted to sketch out differences between ecological marketing, green marketing, and sustainable marketing, apparently drawing on Dobson's distinction between dark green ecologism and light green environmentalism (Dobson, 1990). Dobson attempted to contrast two main strands of green political thought: ecologism or Green politics asked questions about ends, that is, it adopted a critical approach that questioned the goals of present society. Environmentalism, Dobson argued, focused on means, to identify less resource intense ways of doing things without questioning the broader goals of present society. Much earlier Alderson had suggested an ecological framework for marketing systems (Alderson in Cox et al., 1964). His conceptualisation drew on notions of biological ecology and was concerned with how a population adjusted to its environment in a positive dynamic relationship so that expanding needs would be met by technological progress without destroying the long term viability of the environment. He suggested that such an approach would open up criteria for assessing marketing performance that went beyond simple efficiency. His normative, functional approach conceptualised marketing as a function that shaped 'the dynamic process of matching goods and needs and in organising institutions and processes to serve this ultimate purpose' (Alderson in Cox et al., 1964). The ultimate purpose was the survival of the whole system. For Alderson markets had the potential to be beneficial for society and the role of the marketing theorist was to study marketing systems with the aim of understanding how they work and how they could work better. It is to this tradition that this thesis attempts to contribute.

Are markets fair?

As discussed earlier Hunt's General Theory of Competition (Hunt, 2000) explained why markets might deliver more value in quality and quantity terms than command economies but the model did not address concerns about the appropriation of value and the distribution of the wealth created. One response to concerns about the appropriation of value was the development of the Fair Trade movement. Fair Trade aimed to help disadvantaged producers, mainly from the Southern hemisphere, to prosper by meeting the needs of consumers mainly from the Northern hemisphere through a beneficial rather than exploitative system of trade

(Nicholls and Opal, 2005). The Fair Trade movement was a civil society response that evolved to attenuate the adverse impact on small producers of market failures. Nicholls and Opal (2005) highlighted the features of markets where malfunctions could occur. These were markets in which: small producers lacked access to markets and to information about prices and market requirements; smallholder farmers also lacked access to financial markets and to credit and partly because of this were risk averse and did not diversify (Nicholls and Opal, 2005). They also often experienced weak enforcement of laws and regulations, and were offered prices that did not cover their real costs of production. As a result they often sought out less sustainable production methods in an effort to reduce (in the short term) their production costs. To compound matters, the poverty of smallholder farmers limited their ability to respond to market signals (Nicholls and Opal, 2005 page 53).

Table 3-1 Market Failure Problems and Fair Trade Solutions

Market failure issue	Fair Trade Solution
Smallholder farmers lack information about prices	Organise farmers into cooperatives, pool resources to access information
Smallholder farmers lack information about market requirements	Organise farmers into cooperatives, pool resources to learn about quality requirements, direct long term relationships will enable growers to learn from information with downstream actors
Smallholder farmers lack access to financial markets	Organise farmers into cooperatives, pool production to access futures markets
Smallholder farmers lack access to credit	Downstream actors to pre-finance a large percentage of seasonal crops
Smallholder farmers are risk averse and do not diversify	No direct solution – but raising incomes may encourage farmers to take on more business risk (and thus gain some opportunities to grow their business)
Weak enforcement of laws/codes of practice	Require adherence to International Labour Organisation (ILO) standards regarding minimum wages, working/trading conditions
Prices not covering the cost of production	Price floor guarantees minimum prices
In an effort to lower costs, less sustainable production methods continue to be used, harming workers and the environment	Price floor covers the costs of sustainable production, environmental standards enforced, premium for certified organic products
Smallholder farmers and farm workers are poor	Price floor and minimum wages, social premium guaranteed, which must be spent on development projects to improve well-being

Source: adapted from Nicholls and Opal (2005 page 53)

The Fair Trade movement responded to these market failures by establishing four main principles: direct purchasing from producers; transparent and long-term trading partnerships; agreed minimum prices; and a focus on development and technical assistance via the payment to suppliers of an agreed social premium (Nicholls and Opal, 2005). Fair Trade was one approach to addressing poverty in the Global South but it was not without its critics, for example, Sidwell (2008) argued that fair trade distorted market activity by fixing prices. This would lead to a suboptimal allocation of resources, over-supply, and stifled business development, a view echoed by Porter and Kramer (2011).

UK vegetable producers were clearly not disadvantaged to the same extent as smallholder farmers in the South but there was some concern that structural problems were affecting the appropriation of value, if not the creation of value, in grocery supply chains. Hayward (2003) reported farmers' concerns that the Grocery Code of Practice introduced in March 2002 was not effective in controlling buyer (i.e. supermarket) power and Towill (2005) suggested there were problems for producers that supplied the large UK grocery retailers. He documented retailer strategies employed to appropriate a large share of the value created in supply chains. These were: directly reducing unit costs by, for example, demanding a price reduction to match a competing retailer's prices; reduced payments to suppliers by, for example, seeking retrospective discounts; increasing payments from suppliers by, for example, payment for promotions; and third party discounts such as payments to the retailer from hauliers awarded designated status. None of these actions was illegal or subject to a code of conduct at the time but they served to illustrate how power imbalances may have affected appropriation of value in the supply chain (Towill, 2005). Dobson et al (2001), suggested that buyer power would increasingly become a feature of EU grocery supply chains with downstream buyers well placed to appropriate value by enforcing up-front fees, listing fees, fees for promotional activity and the like. They noted that in sectors such as fresh produce, where supply was fragmented, major retailers were potentially able to engage in anti-competitive practices on the basis of their monopsony power so that suppliers would find difficult to challenge for fear of being delisted. And whilst buyer power may have enhanced welfare by counter-balancing manufacturer power in branded fast moving consumers goods (fmcg) markets, it could have an adverse effect on vegetable suppliers.

The impact of power on supply chain relationships has been examined (Hunt and Nevin, 1974, Dapiran and Hogarth-Scott, 2003). Using orthodox marketing strategy frameworks Cox and Chicksand (2005) suggested that retail multiples with Janus-like power over both suppliers and buyers (end consumers) were best placed to benefit from collaborative arrangements.

Duffy et al (2003) explored distributive and procedural components of fairness in grocery supply chains and Hernandez-Espellardo and Arcas-Lario (2003) demonstrated the importance of perceptions of distributive and procedural fairness in asymmetric channel relationships. They argued that unilateral control from the more powerful partner could be used to improve performance across the supply chain. But perceptions of fairness by the small farmers were crucial to leverage relationships as a resource to achieve organisational goals.

However, collaborative arrangements between retailers and their suppliers may fall foul of competition regulations. In an American context, for example, Bush and Gelb (2005) suggested that some practices associated with category management might be illegal especially where a large retailer interacted with a small supplier. In a UK context there have been several recent cases successfully brought against supermarkets. For example, the Office for Fair Trading fined Tesco, Morrison's and a large dairy group for colluding over prices (Smithers, 2007). Whilst the supermarkets argued that they were attempting to support their suppliers, the OFT concluded that such practices were not in the interest of consumers. Some collaborative arrangements may benefit the parties involved but may lead to a diminution in consumer welfare if it stifled competition or raised end-consumer prices. This issue was a problem where the role of category manager was effectively delegated to a dominant supplier. The focal supplier may then be in a position to restrict competition within the category and it was possible that some competition authorities would take a dim view of this (Bush and Gelb, 2005).

The above section covered the contradictory theoretical frameworks on markets as a governance system and outlined competing accounts concerning the benefits and limitations of *markets*, and whether they are fair and compatible with sustainability. The next section moves on to outline key *marketing* conceptual frameworks and their links to meta-theoretical concepts of structure and agency.

[An Outline of Marketing Concepts in Relation to Food Policy](#)

Since the thesis aims to contribute to the Food Policy body of knowledge, it is necessary to define key marketing terms and outline important marketing theoretical frameworks that may be relevant in the context of food policy. The Curry Commission argued that UK Food Policy should turn to the market for solutions to the problems in UK farming. The market, in other words, was to be the integrating force for what the Commission saw as a damaging disconnection between production and off-farm food sectors. How 'the market' is conceived

in this policy formula is therefore of considerable importance; the notion of the market can and does mean different things to different academic and economic traditions. This section attempts therefore to explore the theoretical frameworks that underpin this policy shift and why it matters for the modern discourse about food policy. This section explains the main marketing ideas that were prominent at the time of the Curry Commission and shows how different wings of the marketing discipline understood them. Orthodox marketing, based on marketing management and the marketing mix (commonly known as the 4Ps, product, price, place and promotion) is the dominant paradigm in marketing and therefore it is necessary to explore its key features since these ideas are likely to dominate an attempt to employ marketing theory. Critical marketing provides an alternative perspective and challenges many of the assumptions of orthodox marketing. Whilst critical theory is a common feature of some social sciences such as sociology, it is less widely understood or accepted in mainstream marketing. Orthodox marketing and its counterpart critical marketing provide two contradictory two standpoints on markets and marketing. A third perspective, commonly viewed as being on the periphery of the marketing discipline, is heterodox marketing. Heterodox marketing has links to both the orthodox and critical wings of the marketing discipline. It is critical in the sense that it challenges the effectiveness of orthodox marketing solutions based on the 4Ps marketing mix, rather than critical in a political sense. Where the critical marketing perspective challenges the place of markets and marketing in society, the heterodox perspective, on the other hand, broadly accepts the efficiency and effectiveness of markets in transforming resource inputs into usable consumer outputs. However, heterodox marketing does critique the neo-classical economics orthodox marketing accounts of how marketing systems work.

Orthodox Marketing

Defining Marketing

In everyday parlance the word marketing is synonymous with 'advertising', 'promotion' or 'selling' but generally accepted definitions of marketing rooted in the orthodox tradition conceptualise it as more than just commercial communication. Kotler's definition states that:

'[m]arketing is a social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging products and value with others,' (Kotler et al., 2004 page 6)

Market orientation

A key idea in modern orthodox marketing was the rejection of product orientation in favour of a market orientation (Levitt, 1960). Product orientation was framed as an inappropriate attachment to a product or specific technology; an approach to be avoided by the rational marketing manager. Focusing on the generic consumer needs that a particular product/production technology satisfies rather than on the product/production itself protects a firm from obsolescence since consumer needs are enduring whereas any product or production technology may be superseded by new ones. Various marketers have attempted to conceptualise and operationalize market orientation. Narver and Slater (1990) articulated the constituents of market orientation as being: customer orientation, competitor orientation; inter-functional coordination; and long term profit focus. Kohli et al. (1993) defined market orientation in terms of a firm's ability to gather and respond to signals from the external environment. Ellis (2006) concluded from a meta-analysis of more than fifty studies across almost thirty countries that market orientation was a key determinant of organisational performance, particularly in large, mature markets. Research by Beverland and Lindgreen (2007) suggested that the process of organisational change from a sales orientation to a market orientation in food commodity firms was not always straightforward and could result in suboptimal market oriented behaviour if the Lewin process of change (unfreezing/moving/refreezing) was not well managed. Harris and Ogbonna (1999) highlighted some conceptual problems related to the development of a market oriented culture in organisations. Amongst other things they were concerned that the development of techniques for measuring market orientation relied on the strong positivist tradition in marketing theory and research. Developing this idea Tregear (2003) suggested that in the context of artisan food producers, the use of structured scales to measure market orientation could be problematic because of the many layers of meaning attached to words such as marketing, selling and promotion. Her work questioned the validity of a simplistic binary model of product orientation (bad) versus market orientation (good). She found evidence of specialist food producers' concern for product quality alongside a good understanding of market orientation in practice, if not in the words they used to describe what they did. Baker et al. (1999) investigated market orientation and its impact on supplier-distributor relationships. They suggested positive links between suppliers' perceptions of a reseller's market orientation and levels of trust, commitment, cooperative norms and relationship satisfaction.

Marketing Strategy

Within the orthodox marketing tradition there have been numerous models that prescribe marketing strategy. Ansoff's strategy growth matrix (Ansoff, 1986) was an early example of the models advocated in standard marketing texts:

Table 3-2 Ansoff's Growth Strategy Matrix

	Existing product/technology	New product/technology
Existing customers/market	Market penetration	Product development
New customers/market	Market development	Diversification

Source: Ansoff (1986)

The model suggested that firms achieved their objectives by following one of four strategies: market penetration, product development, market development or diversification. Porter's generic strategies (Porter, 1985) suggested that a firm needed to decide the basis on which it would compete: a low cost base, a differentiated strategy or a focused strategy. Other models included the product life cycle, which prescribed different marketing strategies for each stage of a product's 'life', and the Boston Consulting Group Policy Matrix, a framework based on the product life cycle developed by the eponymous consultancy. These models were attractive because they provided a generic structure with which marketing managers could assess risks and opportunities associated with different marketing strategies.

Marketing Management

Armstrong et al define marketing management as:

'the art and science of choosing target markets and building profitable relationships with them' Armstrong et al (2009) page 10.

In one sense marketing management has always been part of trade. Since the earliest times, traders and merchants have attempted to satisfy their customers and encourage them to buy (Dixon, 2008). But there seems to be a qualitative difference in how marketing management is conceptualised and practised today. Alongside the institutional reforms that supported and shaped modern market societies, today's trading environments are characterised by the profusion of abundance as mass production, industrial development, and technological innovation have addressed the problem of affordable and plentiful supply, at least in

developed countries, and so marketing practices have changed in response. In the post-war consumer societies of the second half of the twentieth century, firms found themselves in the position of having to look more assiduously for customers than was required in the past and thus an activity devoted to finding customers emerged: modern marketing management (Levitt, 1960). Marketing management developed into a sophisticated, wide-ranging and sometimes controversial set of tools and techniques designed to, it has been suggested, persuade consumers to buy more (Galbraith, 1962).

The Marketing Mix

The marketing mix model based on the 4Ps of product, price, place, promotion has become an essential framework in marketing management. Its most prolific proponent is Philip Kotler, who has written many textbooks on the analysis, planning, implementation and control of marketing decisions based around the 4Ps. In one such text, the marketing mix is conceptualised as the *'factors under its [the firm's] control'* (Armstrong et al., 2009) page 53 which the adroit marketing manager manipulates in response to the uncontrollable actors and forces in the external environment. The marketing mix has been revised and extended – the 7Ps for service firms for example - but the fundamental idea remains the same. The marketing mix provides a handy checklist of the various features of the product or service offering that a marketing manager has to design and control and from which a customer derives value. It is based on the idea that marketing is a matching process in which the capabilities of a firm are 'matched' to opportunities in the external environment. The firm is conceptualised as a discrete entity, separate from an external environment and other organisations, and engaged in atomistic arms' length transactions. The marketing mix model asserts that an effective firm will take steps to monitor the external environment, responding to changes in the environment by making adjustments in the marketing mixes of its products and services. Whilst the marketing mix model has been a key framework in marketing theory and practice, it is not without its critics and some, particularly from the heterodox wing of the marketing discipline, question the validity of its underlying neo-classical economics assumptions (Ford, 1997). For example, the distinction between uncontrollable external factors and controllable factors within a firm, it could be argued, are not as clear-cut as the marketing mix framework suggests. The notion that a firm is a discrete entity is questionable as many firms appear to have blurred boundaries as they link up with contractors and outsourced services, engage in joint ventures with other economic entities, and exert significant influence if not control over external agencies such as local and national governments. The marketing mix model was developed for use in consumer markets and may be less relevant to firms whose customers

are other firms. The marketing mix model assumes an active seller and a passive buyer but many organisations, for example those in industrial markets, encounter customers who take an active role in shaping the processes and products of exchange. Nevertheless the marketing mix framework remains the dominant approach to marketing management and has helped many managers in providing a framework for the decisions they need to make.

Brand management

Brand loyalty was defined by Jacoby and Kyner (1973) as:

'(1) the biased (i.e., non-random), (2) behavioural response (i.e., purchase), (3) expressed over time, (4) by some decision-making unit, (5) with respect to one or more alternative brands out of a set of such brands, and (6) is a function of psychological (decision-making, evaluative) processes'. Jacoby and Kyner (1973 page 2)

Doyle and Stern (2006) saw branding as a way of de-commoditising products, a value-adding strategy. De Chernatony and Riley (1998) identified twelve brand themes in the marketing literature including an identity system; an image in consumer's minds; a value system; a personality; and a device for adding value. Keller (1993) suggested a brand equity model in which firms aimed to develop what he termed active loyalty by investments in brand identity and meaning to develop brand awareness, points of parity and difference from similar competitive offerings to engender positive judgements and feelings, ultimately to develop resonance based on customers' perceptions of their relationship with a brand. Corstjens and Corstjens (1994) and later Thain and Bradley (2012) suggested that brand names served three distinct roles: identification; quality assurance and identity. Originally branding ideas were developed in the FMCG markets (fast moving consumer goods) of early 20th century America (Jones and Monieson, 1990) but has since been applied in many other circumstances from services industries to even the marketing of developing countries and places (Anholt, 2003).

Aaker (1996) suggested the key values of branding for the customer were: enhancing the mental processing of information (brands enabled purchase decision short cuts); confidence in the purchase decision (risk reduction); and use satisfaction and research by Tihomir and Ranko (2003) suggested that in the context of food, brand name was a key evaluative criteria used by consumers to signify quality. Aaker also highlighted the usefulness of branding to the firm by: enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of marketing programmes; improving brand loyalty (Reichheld and Sasser Jr. (1990); maintaining prices/margins (customers, both end consumers and trade intermediaries, may be prepared to pay higher prices for successful

brands); brand extensions (as a possible route for growth); trade leverage; and competitive advantage since it may be difficult for competitors to copy a successful brand.

Manufacturers began by using eponymous brand names but over time these developed into a complex game of identity, assurance and image building using a combination of umbrella brand names (often the corporate brand name), range names and eponymous names, and endowed with personality traits (Jennifer) Aaker (1997). Own label brands used the a retailer name rather than a manufacturer name to identify a product (Davies, 1998) and retailers made use of conventional brand management techniques, for example, Tesco developed a number of range names such as 'Finest' and 'Healthy Living' as well as its Value brand that sit below the umbrella Tesco name. With the development of type two own labels (own labels that compete as good value at high quality, rather than the good value at average or low quality position of type one own labels) retailers were increasingly making use of sophisticated branding techniques to market their product offerings. The vegetable sector remained distinctive within the grocery market because much of the produce was offered for sale in a commodity/unbranded format.

Aaker (1996) suggested that brand equity, the value of a brand, was enhanced by taking steps to increase brand loyalty, brand awareness, and perceived value, and developing positive brand associations. Once brand equity was strong, it could be leveraged by product line stretching and brand stretching, brand extensions and co-branding. This kind of prescriptive advice was typical of a marketing management approach. There were some examples of research on branding concepts in a commodity fresh produce context, for example Beverland (2001). Leitch and Davenport (2007) explored the use of what they termed 'social brands' such as the term GM-free by supermarkets to enhance perceptions of their own label brands.

Relationship marketing

A key development in orthodox marketing thinking was relationship marketing (RM). Christopher et al. (2002) suggested that RM represented a shift in focus from a type of adversarial and functionally-based marketing focused on customer acquisition to a collaborative and cross-functionally-based marketing that prioritised customer retention (Reichheld and Sasser Jr, 1990). In earlier orthodox approaches to marketing, interactions between buyers and sellers were conceptualised as arms' length, discrete and adversarial, and the unit of analysis was the transaction. The RM ideas that emerged in the 1990s were based on an assessment of the value of relationships to a firm rather than the value of transactions. RM themes included: i) an emphasis on customer retention rather than acquisition ii) short

term rather than long term, for example by focusing on the value of a lifetime of transactions and iii) a broader rather than narrower view of marketing which advocated, for example, that firms engage with many other constituencies such as suppliers, governments, and employees, for example, as well as engaging with their end consumers. Hunt and Morgan summarised the ten distinct relationships based on four different types of partnerships that a firm needed to manage (Morgan and Hunt, 1994). Sin et al.(2005) proposed a scale to measure relationship marketing orientation (RMO) and in doing so attempted to link the established scales for marketing orientation from Narver and Slater (1990) and Kohli et al (1993) with the emerging ideas on relationship marketing. Their RMO scale measured bonding, communication, shared, value, empathy, reciprocity and trust in marketing relationships. The relationship marketing approach emphasised mutuality and collaboration as the basis of a new way to do business. In practice it was common for consumer goods and services firms to operationalize RM in a more prosaic fashion in the form of customer relationship management (CRM) and loyalty programmes (Peppers and Rogers, 2011). Nevertheless Gronroos (1994) asserted:

'The aim of marketing is to establish, maintain and enhance relationships with customers and other partners, at a profit, so that the objectives of the parties involved are met. This is achieved by a mutual exchange and fulfilment of promises.' (Gronroos, 1994: page 9)

Relationship marketing evolved from orthodox managerial marketing, and from a consumer perspective of marketing (Ford, 1997, McLoughlin and Horan, 2002). So it is possible to see RM as a broadening out of orthodox ideas, encouraging marketing managers to think about to think about a broader range of interactions rather than just interactions with customers, and to consider long term as well as short term gains: a lifetime of sales from a loyal customer was worth having (Egan, 2004). Gummesson (2008) saw RM as a response to the shortcomings of the positivist, analytical approach to marketing typified by Kotler's 'analysis, planning, implementation and control' model of marketing management (Kotler, 2000).

Morgan and Hunt (1994) devised a model of RM that conceptualised commitment and trust as key mediating variables in the development of long term successful relationships; Hingley and Lindgreen's case study-based research suggested that a number of dimensions including trust in credibility, trust in benevolence, commitment, social bonding, satisfaction and conflict would impact on the quality of market relationships between retailers and suppliers in agricultural contexts (Hingley and Lindgreen, 2002). Research by Ryu et al. (2007) examined long-term orientation (LTO) between manufacturers and suppliers. Trust was singled out as a

key factor in the development of LTO and their research suggested that environmental uncertainty could hinder the development of a LTO, despite high levels of trust between the supplier and the manufacturer.

There was also an ethical tone to the RM discourse based on an old enlightened self-interest idea that opportunistic or exploitative behaviour would rebound on a firm, for example, by adverse word of mouth communication circulated by disgruntled customers. It was a type of marketing based on the idea that markets and societal welfare were not incompatible. Drawing on arguments from Drucker (1969) and Kotler (2000), and later reflected in Porter and Kramer's shared values (2011), RM suggested firms to seek out mutually fulfilling opportunities. Concern for societal issues was not incompatible with business success because customers - and governments - would want to support and engage with responsible firms. Going further Sirgy and Lee (2008) developed an ethical model of RM based on duties of beneficence and non-maleficence which they termed consumer well-being (CWB) marketing. It was a model of marketing that moved beyond the teleological reasoning of enlightened self-interest to deontological notions of duty and the responsibilities firms have to the society that provides legal protection for them.

The RM approach was not without critics. Some questioned whether it was really articulating anything new since marketing theory had always stressed the mutuality and warned against exploiting customers. Tadajewski and Saren (2009) noted that relational approaches to marketing were not as new as some writers on relationship marketing implied, although they acknowledged that the RM that became popular in the 1990s was in contrast to the orthodox marketing management approaches that had become well established by then. East et al. (2006) challenged a key tenet of RM, the emphasis on customer retention. They suggested that customer retention was not always cost effective. Brown (1998) suggested that the RM 'charabanc' was getting out of hand and he criticised RM for its lack of a strong philosophical and theoretical base. He also noted that it was large organisations that had embraced most enthusiastically the RM paradigm. Cox and Chicksand (2005) questioned the extent to which all members of a supply channel would benefit from more collaborative approaches. They argued that firms that had dominance over both up- and down-stream firms in the supply chain were most likely to benefit from collaboration. For those without power leverage advantages, particularly in environments where there were problems concerning a regular supply and demand of the commodity in question, they argued that most firms would do better to adopt a conventional transaction-based approach, or seek to address the power imbalance through de-commoditisation and the development of premium brands.

Despite some reservations about RM, it seemed to be gaining in popularity from the 1990s onwards. Shaw and Gibbs (1995) looked at food supply chains and suggested retailers were moving towards more collaborative approaches and developing closer links with their suppliers; Wilson (1996) noted that the adoption of supply chain management initiatives was improving co-ordination between producers of fresh produce and the supermarkets, and Fearne et al. (2006) and highlighted how better collaboration could improve service levels and supply chain performance for both soft fruit growers and the retail multiples. Ryu et al. (2007) suggested that power asymmetry and environmental uncertainty along the food supply chain undermined the link between trust and long term relationships. Likewise, Hunt and Morgan's model of RM suggested that coercive power had a negative impact on the two key mediating variables of trust and relationship commitment (Morgan and Hunt, 1994). Batt (2003) also examined the high levels of distrust between growers and buyers in Australian fruit markets, concluding goal congruence was important in engendering trust and that opportunistic behaviour on the part of the market agent, propensity to exercise power, and the withholding of information undermined the development of grower trust. Moorman et al. (1992) explored trust and its impact in a different business to business context and concluded that trust and perceived quality of interaction had a powerful (albeit indirect) impact on relationship processes and outcomes. Hingley (2005a) on the other hand suggested that suppliers should not be overly concerned about the imbalance of power between producers and retailers. In a study of agri-food supply chains he argued that the RM literature inadequately addressed the issue of power in supply chains. Collaborations, he argued, may still be successful despite asymmetric power, a point supported by Duffy et al. (2003). In addition, Fearne (1998) argued that channel power brings about its own problems as, paradoxically, retailer dependence will increase with retailer power as the retailer multiples work more closely with fewer but larger suppliers. The supermarkets will become more reliant on those suppliers to deliver all year round supply, to drive product innovations, and to enforce quality standards.

So it would seem that whilst RM generally endorsed the benefits of collaborative approaches based on trust and commitment between suppliers and their supply chain customers, there was a stream of research that questioned what it saw as a rather benign depiction of inter-firm relationships that did not account for what was often referred to as the 'dark side' of relationships (Ford, 1997). Collaboration could open up opportunities to enhance value and reduce costs in a supply chain but some warned that suppliers needed to understand that collaboration might not result in a fair sharing out of the value created. On the other hand Hingley encouraged suppliers to be pragmatic and accept power asymmetry as a starting point

for learning how to survive in retailer- and super-middlemen-dominated supply chains. Finally, whilst there may be benefits of collaboration for suppliers and retailers, research by Rindfleisch and Moorman (2003) suggested that cooperation between competitors could reduce firms' customer orientation over time, undermining the link between suppliers and their ultimate customers.

Critiques of Orthodox Marketing

Marketing has always been a slippery concept. Marketing has an '*ambiguous relationship with truth*' (Woodall, 2007 page 1284). On the one hand farmers, multiple retailers, food manufacturers and food service organisations claimed congruence between their interests and those of the public. On the other hand, there were many examples of where consumers' interests were undermined or disregarded by an increasingly powerful food industry. Recent controversies such as the addition of beef and pork-based ingredients to chicken products, trans-fatty acids, additives, genetically modified produce, chocolate produced by exploited female workers (Pollan, 2008, Cox, 1993) to name a few egregious examples, demonstrated the complexity and ambiguity of marketing practices. Food security, the resilience of food supply chains (Soil Association, 2008) and the societal costs associated with diet-related diseases (Foresight et al., 2007) are more recent manifestations of public concerns about marketing practices associated with food. Kneafsey et al. (2008) argued that food-related anxiety was a problem linked to the disconnection between producers and consumers caused by long and opaque supply chains. Technological developments such as refrigeration have tapped into consumers' concerns for freshness and in the process have propelled the retailer multiples into a pivotal position in the supply chain (Freidberg, 2009, Freidberg, 2010). There was some concern as to whether the marketing activity of firms in the food supply chain encouraged sub-optimal consumption patterns such as insufficient consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables, excessive consumption of foods high in salt, sugar and saturated fats, excessive consumption of alcohol and unnecessary consumption of food supplements (Hawkes, 2008, Pollan, 2008). Winson (2004) argued that the marketing practices of retailers, food manufacturers and food services organisations shaped the institutional food purchase and consumption context. The modern foodscape as a result had become dominated by what he termed pseudo foods, that is, highly processed foods high in saturated fat, salt and sugar (Winson, 2004). Olshavsky and Granbois (1979) asserted that food preferences learned in infancy may be more resistant to conscious deliberation than other purchases and it has been suggested that environmental factors, that is, the marketing activity that shape the context in

which choices are made, may play an important role in shaping individuals' food purchases (DiClemente and Hantula, 2003, Drewnowski and Specter, 2004).

Conceptualisations of consumers are similarly diverse as Gabriel and Lang (2015) outlined, ranging from the consumer as sovereign, or victim, or activist or hedonist or even the prosumer, involved in the production and creation of their own use-value. More radical interpretations look to community supported agriculture as a more fundamental reassessment of the relationship between consumers and production (Kneafsey et al., 2008). A broader view of consumption experiences was also advocated by Carù and Cova (2003). Drawing on Edgell et al.'s sociology of consumption (Edgell et al., 1997), they suggested a typography of consumption experiences in which the market was just one context for consumption experiences, the others being the household, the community and the state, revealing complex interactions between the producer and the consumer to create valuable consumption experiences.

The contradictory nature of marketing (Woodall, 2007) and the ambiguity in what is meant by marketing was reflected in the changing definitions of marketing over the last one hundred years or so (Tadajewski and Brownlie, 2008). Moller and Halinen (2000) suggested that there were two research traditions in marketing: one characterised by low relational complexity, end-customer oriented and transaction focused, and the other characterised by high relational complexity, focused on a small number of interdependent buyer-supplier dyads or focal groups. Woodall (2007) suggested that whilst some approaches to marketing adopted a partnered, shared value approach, others were more adversarial.

The influence of critical theory and postmodernism on marketing

As orthodox marketing embraced the RM perspective, there were those who adopted a more critical perspective. Tadajewski and Brownlie (2008) called for a less prescriptive and more critical examination of the development of marketing as an academic discipline. Criticality, they suggested, was based on: ontological denaturalisation (an acceptance that the present state of society was not inevitable or 'natural'); epistemological reflexivity (an approach that avoided simply accepting existing marketing orthodoxy and being aware of how one's own conceptual frameworks affected perceptions of the real world); and a non-performance stance (to reflect that the study of marketing should be more than simply a quest for knowledge directly useful to marketing managers). From a supply chain perspective New (1997) argued that the scope of academic research on supply chains should not just be driven by concerns for efficiency; justice in a supply chain context required a similar level of scrutiny.

Marketing management usually focused on efficiency rather than justice and adopted a managerial perspective with little consideration of the impact of marketing activity on society or the environment.

The early marketing academics adopted a much broader approach to the study of marketing and explored issues such as distributive justice. For example, Taylor and Taylor Dewees (1952) examined in detail the marketing activities provided by the American Department of Agriculture and co-operative marketing studies carried out to help American farmers in the 1920s and 1930s. The aim was to explain and attenuate the wide disparity between farm gate and consumer prices. The *Journal of Macromarketing*, established in the 1980s, was an attempt to bring back a broader, less prescriptive approach to marketing. A critical approach to the study of marketing aimed to explore the role of marketing in enabling social transformation (Tadajewski and Brownlie, 2008). Kilbourne (2008) argued that macromarketing should adopt a thesmological approach, by this he meant that macromarketing should explore the three institutional frameworks that represented the necessary conditions for the development of viable markets, these were: the institutions of political liberalism, economic liberalism, and technology. Issues such as materialism, unlimited economic growth, globalisation, and environmental problems should become the focus of macromarketing analysis.

In contrast to the overtly emancipatory tone of critical marketing, postmodern marketing represented a literary turn in marketing thinking, one in which postmodern ideas of knowledge, knowing and being were used to explore marketing discourses and practices. Brown challenged orthodox approaches to marketing such as marketing management and RM (Brown, 1998). However postmodernists placed less emphasis on critical marketing's quest for social transformation, and presented a critique of the modernist agenda. Postmodern marketing represented a turn towards conceptualising marketing as an art rather than a science; it delighted in the individual, and eschewed broad generalisations. It provides a conceptual framework for researching marketing in which interpretive, phenomenological and ethnographic methodologies were employed to develop new directions in marketing thought.

A postmodern marketing perspective levelled a powerful critique on the reductionist approach of orthodox marketing in part because orthodox marketing's focus on individual consumers meant that it failed to scrutinise properly the embedded social and semiotic roots of consumption. But postmodern marketing was also sceptical about social transformation

projects of the type advocated by those drawing on critical and poststructuralist perspectives, instead the marketing postmodernists embraced the sensory and emotional pleasures associated with production and consumption.

The Heterodox Marketing Alternative: Markets-as-Networks

One further theoretical perspective needs to be outlined and here it is referred to as the heterodox marketing perspective. Although a well-established approach favoured by a group of European marketing scholars, its frameworks have been overshadowed by the dominance of orthodox marketing theories. The heterodox alternative to orthodox explanations of market phenomena in the marketing discipline draws on industrial or business to business (B2B) marketing based on a markets-as-networks (MAN) conceptualisation of marketing interactions between firms (Brennan, 2006). Its research typically attempts to describe and explain interactions between suppliers and customers as they really are, noting that orthodox marketing often fails to conceptualise essential features of marketing interactions in the real world. Industrial Marketing and Purchasing Group (IMP) scholars such as Håkansson and Ford (Håkansson, 1982, Ford, 1997) have generally assumed a more active role for buyers in industrial markets in which buyers co-create value with a network of organisations involved in a process of transvection of assortments (Alderson and Martin, 1965). A summary of the distinctive features of the MAN approach is provided by Brennan (2006) who suggested its theoretical antecedents were based on an *'opposition to assumptions of conventional marketing'* (Brennan, 2006 page 834). These assumptions include the notions that markets are atomistic, based on discrete transactions, where buying and selling are separate activities, and where it was assumed that an active seller engaged with a passive buyer based on pure exchange (ibid) see Table 3-3. The IMP Group in particular challenged conventional consumer marketing frameworks and instead looked to ideas from Alderson's General Theory of Marketing in which supply chains are conceptualised as organised behaviour systems, and marketing is conceptualised as a 'sorting' activity (Priem, 1992).

Table 3-3 A Summary of Heterodox Marketing's Markets-as-Networks Key Features, Theoretical Assumptions and Frameworks

Unit of analysis	Inter-firm relationship; interaction; network of relationships
Methodological practice, evidence	Qualitative empirical studies; single and multiple case studies
Core frameworks, models, concepts	Interaction model—interaction process (episodes, relationships), interacting parties, interaction environment, atmosphere ARA model—actor network (actor bonds), resource network (resource ties), activity network (activity links)
Key assumptions	Heterogeneous, learning firms; open systems; path dependence; technology development key rationale for inter-firm cooperation; buyer–seller relationships are common, enduring, and relatively stable; buyer–seller interaction involves active parties; buying and selling are simultaneous processes
Theoretical antecedents, origins	Opposition to assumptions of conventional marketing (discrete transactions, atomistic markets, buying and selling separate, active seller–passive buyer); inter-organizational theory; new institutional economics; institutional approaches in social science; economic sociology; neo-Austrian economics; technical change literature; institutional marketing; business strategy

Source: Adapted from Brennan (2006) page 834

For Alderson supply chains were not just about transactions but were concerned with transvections, the transformation of heterogeneous raw materials into heterogeneous goods and services desired by consumers. His systems approach emphasises the importance of marketing in the *'dynamic process of matching goods and needs and in organising institutions and processes to serve this ultimate purpose'* (Alderson in Cox et al. (1964) page 94). Writing in the 1950s and 60s, his cultural ecology perspective, which conceptualises production and consumption activities in terms of the adjustment of a population to its environment, favours the development of society based on increasing satisfaction of consumer needs using advances in technology but without destroying the long term habitability of the environment. It's a perspective that resonates today with notions of sustainable development that seek to balance the triple bottom line goals for people, planet and profit. Alderson critiqued orthodox marketing models based on neo-classical economics because they failed to take account of

the importance of business relationships, and the interplay of competitive and co-operative behaviour between organisations.

There are a number of examples of a MAN framework being used to analyse food systems. Wycherley (2000) analysed the fresh produce sector in terms of the development of relationship bonds, activity links and resource ties using a MAN perspective. Like other studies, for example Abrahamsen & Håkansson's study of Japanese fresh fish supply systems (2012), he suggested that parallel networks were a feature of the fresh produce sector. In the Wycherley study (2000), the conventional fresh fruit and vegetables network served the retail multiples with non-organic produce. From this developed the 'hybrid conventional' network of actors that provided organic produce in response to growing demand from retail multiples. An alternative network, which he termed the pioneer network, provided organic produce to independent retailers and markets. He noted significant differences in how the pioneer and conventional networks had evolved. The pioneer network was built on ethical values and an idealistic vision of organic production supported by strong personal relationships between actors, whereas the hybrid conventional network viewed organic production as simply another niche business opportunity to be exploited.

Those adopting a MAN approach reject the conventional approach that assumed 'thin' interactions in an atomised, stimulus-response, transaction-focused market model. They conceptualised marketing and purchasing activity in supply chains as 'thick' interactions that took place within stable and long term relationships which took place over time. Relationships could not simply be switched on and off as assumed in the relationship marketing approach. They also explored when and why organisations developed interdependencies with other supply chain organisations (Håkansson, 1982). The context was small numbers interactions, that is, interactions between a relatively small number of actors. The unit of analysis was the relationship rather than the transaction and the buyer was equally active in determining what was produced and how value was created. Over several decades the IMP Group in particular developed tools and models including the Interaction Model (Håkansson, 1982), and the AAR (activities, actors, and resources) model (Håkansson and Snehota, 1995). Mattsson (1997) compared the MAN approach to both a narrow orthodox version of marketing management based on the marketing mix, with a broader orthodox relationship marketing approach, suggesting that RM could be viewed as a development of the orthodox marketing mix perspective, which, in its extended view, displays some features of the MAN view. He suggested that, whilst RM and MAN had theoretically distinct roots, there was potentially an overlap between RM and MAN, and that researchers from both views could benefit from a

greater understanding of each other's perspectives, opening up the possibility of explanations that bridge both traditions and in so doing provide practical insights for policy makers. Both traditions conceptualised relationships as a form of governance distinct from either hierarchies or markets at the micro (buyer-seller dyad) and the meso (network for a focal firm) level, but the MAN also explores relationships as a form of governance at the macro level (whole economy) too. Håkansson and Waluszewski (2013) argue that the body of MAN empirical research that has been amassed suggests that effective business interaction, embedded in on-going business relationships, is an important driver of efficiency and innovation, but that it has been overlooked by both organisations and policy makers, who have often privileged technological change as the key driver of efficiency and innovation.

This stream of research, proposing that we need alternatives to neo-classical conceptions of markets in the fresh food sector based on industrial networks continues. Brindley and Oxborrow (2014) proposed that the themes of relationships, networks, channels and partnerships were essential to the development of sustainable food supply chains. Looking at Norwegian fresh fish supply Abrahamsen & Håkansson (2012) contrasted the "jungle metaphor" of antagonistic actors involved in zero-sum games with an IMP conception of economic interaction. Hingley contributed to this debate, focusing in particular on the '*overall inefficiencies and ineffectiveness*' resulting from asymmetric power relationships in food supply chains (Hingley, Lindgreen, & Grant, 2015, p.2). However, relatively little attention in this debate has been paid to the public policy implications of an alternative re-conceptualization of economic activity from an IMP perspective. An exception is Håkansson's (2006), who attempts to frame economic policy matters using a business network conceptualization of economic activity. He argued that '*from a policy point of view networks should never be left alone to develop according to their internal driving forces as these always will favour the most powerful within the network*' leading to economic inefficiency Håkansson (2006, p.163). Finally, the work of Nicholson et al (2014) suggests a critical pluralist perspective may be of use in gaining insights into the interplay of structure and agency in industrial network contexts. They aim to encourage researchers to use multiple theoretical perspectives without attempting to reconcile them into a single overarching meta-theory. Table 3-4 provides a summary of the key conceptual theme derived from the review of the MAN literature and used in the analysis of the empirical data in the thesis.

Table 3-4 Principle MAN Conceptual Themes

MAN Conceptual Theme	Key link to MAN literature
Retailer dominance (retailer managed networks)	(Hingley, 2005b) (Hingley et al., 2015)
An alternative explanation of how the real-market-economy actually works 'below the surface' in contrast to the orthodox competitive markets narrative	(Araujo, et al., 2010)
AFNs and conventional networks - two or more distribution networks operating largely in parallel with limited inter-network interaction	(Abrahamsen & Hakansson, 2012) (Wycherley, 2000)
Managing Relationships relationship management processes	(Hingley, 2005a; Munksgaard, 2008)
Sustainability networks, channels and partnerships are essential to the development of sustainable food supply chains	(Brindley and Oxborrow, 2014)
Bridging orthodox and heterodox perspectives learning across paradigms Critical pluralism, potentially an overlap between RM and MAN , despite the fact that RM and MAN have theoretically distinct roots	(Nicholson et al., 2014) (Mattsson, 1997)

Source: Author

Initially the thesis was designed around orthodox marketing ideas and its radical counterpart critical marketing. The competing paradigms of orthodox and critical marketing were explored in the context of UK Food Policy for the vegetable sector. But it was only after gaining an insight into how the orthodox marketing paradigm shaped policy and responses from the vegetable sector, and the limitations of a critical perspective, that the author returned to the third theoretical tradition, that of MAN and explored it in more depth. It was assumed initially that an orthodox marketing approach would be an appropriate theoretical framework for what seemed to be a clearly defined market supply chain for vegetables. But as will be demonstrated later, the empirical evidence highlighted the shortcomings of the orthodox and critical marketing perspectives.

For UK Food Policy, orthodox marketing theoretical frameworks had some significant advantages. Firstly, at the time of the Curry Commission they were at the forefront of new thinking on policy. Secondly they were prescriptive in that they offered policy makers easily understood frameworks that could be applied that delivered unequivocal advice on marketing strategy and management. MAN research has been described as descriptive rather than prescriptive in that it seeks to establish the existence of marketing phenomena and often

there is less emphasis on offering generalizable prescriptions (Easton and Håkansson, 1996). Its underlying ontology emphasises the historical and path dependent nature of cause and effect so MAN prescriptions, when they are offered, are typically context specific.

Håkansson (2006) suggested that there was the possibility that networks had the potential to be more efficient and more innovative than normal market structures, but that policy interventions to protect weaker actors in networks would be required since it could not be assumed that networks would develop in a neutral way. B2B marketing and the IMP Group in particular seems to have shaped a Nordic perspective on marketing whereas orthodox consumer-focused marketing, based on the stimulus-response 4Ps framework has dominated the Anglo-American world. MAN theoretical frameworks have been used to understand complex networks, where indirect relationships between interdependent actors operating in triadic or focal net arrangements are studied. These networks often involve what Easton and Håkansson (1996) term 'technological interweavement' in which firms are reliant on other actors for their technological innovation and success.

Summarising Differences in Orthodox, Critical and Heterodox Marketing Standpoints

To summarise, marketing terms are frequently ambiguous and theoretical frameworks in marketing are contested, sometimes even lacking in internal homogeneity. The marketing discipline is dominated by orthodox views about how markets - and the marketing that takes place within them - work. Orthodox marketing management focuses on the individual buyer-seller dyad and offers ideas about how individual consumers behave and how individual firms should respond in a variety of (static) market conditions, usually involving an active seller and a passive buyer. Its ahistorical stimulus-response model is based on the 4Ps (product, price, place, promotion) framework, market orientation, and rational decision makers. More recently different perspectives have (re)emerged that question some of the assumptions of the orthodox marketing management perspective. Meanwhile critical perspectives challenge the orthodox assumptions of the benefits of markets and the alignment of individual and societal goals and there are examples of individuals who seek to resolve or move beyond seemingly incommensurable theoretical standpoints in marketing such as O'Driscoll (2008) and Nicholson et al. (Nicholson et al., 2014).

The less well-known heterodox perspectives challenge the conceptualisations of markets that are assumed in both orthodox and critical marketing theoretical frameworks and suggests that in industrial marketing contexts MAN explanations more effectively capture marketing activity

embedded in on-going interdependent relationships. Table 3-5 below summarises the key assumptions of orthodox, critical and heterodox marketing perspectives and how the different assumptions might shape a policy discourse. Table 3-5 attempts to summarise orthodox, critical and heterodox marketing perspectives as three exemplars of distinct traditions in marketing theory. (Given the lack of a coherent RM stance, a separate RM perspective is not presented here).

An orthodox perspective would seek to achieve conventional economic goals and would design policies to encourage economic growth and wealth creation driven by innovation and improvements in (labour) productivity. A critical perspective seeks transformation of society, and aims to address the dual food policy problems of access to healthy lives and environmental protection. A heterodox perspective conceptualises economic activity in such a way as to avoid simple binary values (powerful/powerless, buyer/seller, worker/capitalist) that dominate orthodox and critical accounts. Instead it adopts a theoretical framework that sees marketing systems in a dynamic ecological equilibrium based around embedded interaction in managed networks between incomplete organisations that are capable of learning, engaged in thick, relatively enduring interactions over time. Using knowledge of orthodox marketing frameworks, but being cognisant of the critical and heterodox stances too, the thesis aims to develop an abstracted explanation of the impact of a market-oriented UK Food Policy on vegetable production and use the theoretical insights from the various marketing standpoints to provide insights for the future development of UK Food Policy for the vegetable sector.

Table 3-5 A Framework for Understanding Food Policy and Vegetable Production from Orthodox, Critical and Heterodox Marketing Perspectives

	An Extreme Orthodox Perspective: Marketing Management based on 4Ps	A Critical Perspective: Critical Marketing	A Heterodox Perspective: Markets-as-Networks (MAN)
Theoretical base and key models	Meta-theory: agency; Neo-classical market economics, orthodox conceptualisations of markets and marketing, 4Ps, the dynamic disequilibrium of markets drives innovation and better ways of satisfying consumers (Hunt, 2000)	Meta-theory: structure; Critical theory (e.g. Marxist), embedded markets, markets entrench inequality and mal-distribution of wealth (Polanyi, 2002:1944), poststructuralist	Meta-theory: critical pluralism; IMP tradition, cultural ecology, heterodox ideas of networks, industrial marketing, the maintenance of the dynamic conditions for dynamic ecological equilibrium, (Alderson in Cox et al., 1964) Key models include: AAR, Interaction model
Societal problems to be addressed	Economic demise - an inability to compete in global markets	Inequalities in access to healthy food, food-related anxiety	Ecological disequilibrium, resources depleted by destructive technologies
Policy goals	Hunt's policy goals: productivity, economic growth, wealth creation	Sustainability and redistribution, environment and health aspects of sustainability, transformation of society	Goals for sustainability: efficient resource use, prosperity and stability, well-being (Jackson, 2009),
UK Food Policy solutions based on:	Competitive, free markets; sustainable intensification of global commodity supply chains, optimal societal outcomes emerge from competitive markets	Alternative to the existing Competition State paradigm	Managed networks; institutional and structural change to support network interaction, regulation of networks to ensure optimal societal outcomes
Policy priority for Vegetables Sector	Competitiveness, efficiency and consolidation within the vegetable sector, sustainable vegetable production in England based on low energy and low carbon inputs	Local trade, self-sufficiency, small scale community-led solutions	Resilience and diversity, sustainable agriculture – based on a larger vegetable production sector to reduce dependence on less sustainable food production
Consuming unit and type of choice	Individual, engaged in rational (choice among) packs/brands/products (Firat & Dholakia, 1982), capable of making sound nutritional choices in their own interests if provided with adequate information	Co-producers -actively involved in production, food and conviviality	Groups and society, (choice among) product classes (e.g. choice between vegetables and other foods), bounded rationality in which consumers satisfy complex needs relating to food choices (beyond nutritional value)
Producers and nature of their relationship with their customers	Mainly conventional production, some organic production as value-added produce, engaged in thin, discrete, adversarial transactions with customers	Co-producers -actively involved in production Short supply chains	Diverse range of producers engaged in thick, embedded, relationships, interdependent based on mutual benefits
R&D and desired output	Focused on mechanisation and bio-tech developments, high tech to improve competitiveness and produce affordable, plentiful produce, using low carbon, efficient production	Focused on the adaptation of natural ecological systems, organic production	Focused on the adaptation of natural ecological systems, low and high tech, learning over time, to produce healthy food, sufficient production, balanced appropriation of value across supply networks

Source: Author

Marketing Practices in the Vegetable Sector: Category Management

The Curry Report stressed that vegetables growers needed to improve their marketing efforts so to complement the earlier sections which focused on marketing theory, this chapter also explores the academic literature on the marketing practices of vegetable growers in England. One important theme is how growers marketed their produce to their key buyers, the retail multiples and category management has become a distinctive feature of marketing activity between supermarkets and their suppliers.

Since the abolition of resale price maintenance in the mid-1960s, and as retailers invested in technological innovations (for example, related to self-service, customer information and logistics) retailers became increasingly powerful in food supply chains (Araujo et al., 2010). The emergence of buyer-dominated global commodity supply chains was well underway by the 1990s (Gereffi and Korzeniewicz, 1994) and retailers were beginning to adopt an approach known as category management in their dealings with their suppliers. Typically the academic marketing literature examines category management from the retailer's perspective. It explores the advantages of category management for retailers, and whether category management encourages opportunistic behaviour on the part of the category captain (Arkader and Ferreira, 2004, Gooner et al., 2011). Free (2007) defined category management as:

'an array of collaborative buyer-supplier relationships ranging from computer-aided space planning to full blown partnerships' (Free, 2007 page 899)

It involved the retailer and supplier managing a product category as a separate business unit within the supermarket (Food Marketing Institute, 1993). By the end of the last century it was being asserted that category management had replaced brand management as the defining trade practice in retailing (Dussart, 1998). Category management reflected retailer priorities. A retailer may be less concerned about which product items and brands sell within a product category so long as its overall costs, margins and sales targets for the product category in question are achieved. A study in Finland by Lindblom and Olkkonen (2006) suggested that whilst most suppliers perceived the retailers as the main drivers of category management tactics, there were instances where some suppliers, for example large manufacturers, could exert control in decision-making. Morgan et al., (2007) suggested that the role of the focal supplier, the category captain, was crucial in the development of successful category management relationships. The focal supplier ensured continuity of supply by liaising with

other suppliers. Nevertheless retailers were often sceptical, and concerned about focal supplier opportunism. The Morgan et al., (2007) research also suggested that focal supplier opportunism would also adversely affect the behaviour of other suppliers. However, they found that effective monitoring of focal suppliers seemed to reduce opportunistic behaviour.

Category management's success was claimed to be based on the strategic advantages that accrue to a retailer that is able to develop a more effective supply chain through the use of fewer (but better) suppliers that reduce transaction costs and risk to the retailer whilst encouraging innovation in supply (Aastrup et al., 2007) The retailer's category manager worked closely with a focal supplier/ category captain to develop plans on how to grow the category (O'Keefe and Fearne, 2002) and the category captain liaised with other suppliers to ensure continuity and quality of supply, and to develop the category. The role of the category captain was one of both competitor and collaborator with other suppliers and with the retailer. Category management relied on shared information systems and whilst much of the early literature on category management emphasised its collaborative nature, Free suggested that category management could be used collaboratively or coercively (Free, 2007). Lamming and Cox (1999) were less equivocal: whilst category management might in some instances develop more collaborative approaches, they suggested that adversarial, competitive relationships form the underlying rationale of most inter-firm interactions along the supply chain.

Azimont and Araujo (2007) presented the review processes within category management as contrapuntal opportunities for market shaping by various actors in the supply chain to reinforce or subvert exchange routines. Their research, based on observations of interactions between beverage manufacturers and retailers, suggested that even niche suppliers can redefine and shape a market category. Even though the competitive space for smaller suppliers may be limited, there were opportunities to collaborate and compete. Free suggested that the collaborative discourse often associated with category management actually undermined trust and led to higher levels of cynicism as suppliers faced more strident demands from retailers whilst bombarded with talk of collaboration and mutual benefit (Free, 2008). Kottila and Ronni (2008) explored collaboration and trust in organic food chains. Collaboration was only present across a few dyadic relationships and not at the supply chain level so, for example, a number of the farmers had almost no contact with the retailers, and it seemed the lack of meaningful communication impacted on the development of trust, a key mediating variable (Morgan and Hunt, 1994). Nevertheless, Kottila and Ronni found that where farmers were able to develop trust with others in the supply chain, power imbalances

and different value systems were not insurmountable problems in the development of collaborative arrangements.

It seemed that supply chains were becoming both *'fragmented and integrated'* (Amin and Robins, as cited by Doel (1999 page 69)). Doel suggested that where the basis for the competition was price, contracts were rare and retailer power would ensure supplier compliance without formal contracts. Retailers preferred to deal with a few well-run suppliers to minimise transaction costs and risk whilst ensuring competition between suppliers. It would appear that the recent EU policy of developing grower POs would fit in with arrangements such as these for supply chain governance dominated by retailers. Some large retailers understood that it was not in their interests to have a supply base that did not generate sufficient profit to be able to invest in future developments. In contrast where the basis for competition was product-centred (value-added) the governance patterns involved closer interdependencies with suppliers. A type two own label strategy of good value at high quality (Corstjens and Corstjens, 1994) was adopted in which retailers would demand confidentiality and exclusivity, in return appointing the supplier as the sole or dominant supplier for a particular product. Dependency between the supplier and the retailer was more palpable and the inter-relatedness of the interactions between the retailer and the supplier was more embedded in contrast to the more arm's length approach associated with price-based contracts. In each case a community in which informal *'constraints, conventions and embeddedness'* of *'ongoing social interactions'* (both quotes from Doel, 1999: 81) resulted in relatively stable inter-firm interactions. This study suggests performativity in markets in which institutions and norms associated with markets shaped individual actors' behaviours.

Ellis (2007) explored managers' accounts of category management relationships along the supply chain and highlighted the complex nature of relationships in supply chains, sometimes adversarial, sometimes cooperative. Managers used language to frame their 'next possible actions' (Ellis (2007: 157) and this research seemed to suggest that whilst managers may have used the language of networks and relationships, they framed their future interactions more strongly in terms of channels and marketplaces, reflecting an underlying adversarial approach. Poppo et al. (2008) explored how past relationships and expectations of future continuity affected trust: prior history may actually have a negative impact on trust where there were weak expectations of continuity.

It would seem that the term category management covered many different types of relationships between suppliers and their retail customers, depending on the patterns of

some key constructs: power/dependency; trust; control and commitment (Hogarth-Scott, 1999). Since the mid-1990s there has been much discussion on how to manage category management usually from the retailers' perspective. (Dupre and Gruen, 2004, Dhar et al., 2001, Du et al., 2005).

Although one benefit of category management is better co-ordination between the supplier and the retailer, there have been concerns about the impact on consumer welfare, often because the focal supplier/category captain plays a pivotal role in the management of the supply base. The category captain/focal supplier can limit competition from other suppliers and this may have adverse consumer welfare effects. According to Desrochers et al (2003) and Bush and Gelb (2005) concerns may be sufficiently serious in some jurisdictions at least for regulators to intervene in category management arrangements. A study from 2001 (Basuroy et al., 2001) suggested the impact of category management depended on the context in which it was applied, but also highlighted concerns that category management led to higher end-consumer prices, and hence supported concerns about its impact on consumer welfare.

Category management demonstrates that the reality of marketing activity for most growers is centred on their interactions with their key customers, the supermarkets. Given that supermarkets are actively involved in the on-going exchange processes with their suppliers, and the dependence of suppliers on their supermarket customers, it would seem that the MAN framework provides a better model for understanding the marketing practices of mainstream vegetable growers than orthodox marketing management and the marketing mix.

[A Summary of Academic Research on Food Policy and Marketing](#)

To complete the review of conceptualisations of marketing and policy, this section explores the academic research on marketing and food policy, focusing on studies of the vegetable sector and social marketing. Social marketing is an appropriate starting point since its ideas have been adopted in numerous contexts by those involved in food policy to effect behaviour change. Social marketing is defined by Andreasen (1994) as:

'the adaptation of commercial marketing technologies to programs designed to influence the voluntary behaviour of target audiences to improve their personal welfare and that of the society in which they are a part' (Andreasen, 1994, page 110)

Government and non-governmental organisations turned to ideas from orthodox consumer marketing and applied them to a variety of situations, for example, recycling behaviour, binge drinking, sexual health, and smoking (Hastings and Saren, 2003). Sometimes governments use the techniques of social marketing in an effort control the costs of services that address the consequences of 'free' markets. For example, to reduce the costs of public healthcare associated with the consumption of less healthy, heavily marketed foods, governments engage in social marketing to encourage citizens to eat more vegetables. The National Social Marketing Centre (2012) provides resources and advice for those involved in designing and delivering social marketing campaigns in the UK. Although social marketing has begun to broaden beyond its individual psychology and economics roots (Wood, 2016) the summary of studies on food policy and marketing presented here shows the focus in social marketing remains on individual consumers with few studies that focus on upstream producer marketing issues.

The review of the studies related to food policy and marketing found more than 300 papers. The summary is presented in Table 3-6 below. 120 of the studies were concerned with issues that are not relevant to the thesis including regulation of tobacco, and food marketing in the context of less developed nations. Papers not written in English were also excluded, although there were only four of these. Of the 209 remaining studies, a large number were focused on consumers and consumer behaviour (72) and, although less numerous, studies of retail and supply chains in the context of food policy and marketing were also prominent (18). There were some studies that focused on regulations, food labelling, and biotech issues (47 in total). Food policy and the marketing of fresh produce was a relatively under-studied topic with six studies, including one on the marketing of tart cherries in the United States, and another on efforts to promote sustainable economic growth in the Philippines by diversifying agriculture into fruit and vegetables production. Other studies of food policy and the marketing of fresh produce included Garming et al (2013); Stanton and Herbst (2005) . The study by Garming et al (2013) explored collective marketing amongst small-scale growers in Central America, and concluded that social capital prior to the formation of collaborative marketing arrangements was not a key success factor for collaborative marketing, and they suggested that other indicators of collaborative marketing success, such as access to assets or start-up skills might improve our understanding of the external support that groups of growers might need to build up effective collective marketing solutions. Hawkes et al (2012) suggest that downstream interventions aimed at changing consumers' behaviour are unlikely to be effective without a

better understanding of the incentives for producers and those involved in the transformation and marketing of food produce to deliver more healthy options.

Some studies could have been placed in a different category, for example the Briones study of fruit and vegetables production (Briones, 2008) could have been placed in the 'Economic development, LDCs' category, clearly the categories are not always mutually exclusive. The decision to place a study in a particular category was informed by a consideration of the relevance of the study to the thesis. The categories coloured grey (including the 'Economic development, LDCs') were not deemed to be relevant to a study of food and farming policy and its impact on English vegetable production. So whilst a study of agriculture in the Philippines could have been classified as 'Economic development, LDCs' it was included in the 'Fresh produce, food commodity production and marketing, firm performance' because its findings might be relevant to the topic of the thesis.

The summary shows that research on marketing and food policy tended to focus on downstream activities: consumers themselves, the retail environment in which their choices take place, the activities of processed food manufacturers including labelling and nutritional information, and the regulation of labelling and promotions.

Table 3-6 Summary of Research on Food Policy and Marketing

Database (Roehampton University library facilities) review of studies on policy, marketing and vegetables dated 21/10/2016	EBSCOHost Academic Source Premier	Indicative studies	EBSCOHost (additional studies)	Indicative studies	Total
Search terms (in abstract unless otherwise stated)	SEARCH 1: Food Policy; Marketing		SEARCH 2: Vegetables (all text); social marketing		
Peer reviewed research papers	403		85		
Peer reviewed research papers since 1990	260		74 (5 duplicates)		329
Consumers and consumer behaviour (including consumer behaviour issues related to obesity)	49	Briers and Laporte (2013); Haws and Winterich (2013) Liaukonyte et al (2012)	23	Clason and Meijer (2016);	72
Schools and children, parents and children	17	Dority et al (2010)	3	Judd et al (2014);	20
Alternative food networks, organic, sustainable consumption, fair trade, local, food activism	18	Vega-Zamora et al (2014); Atallah et al (2014)	7	Vukasovic (2016); Litt et al (2011)	25
Food marketing and cities, tourism, and festivals	12	Meretse et al (2016)	0		12
Retail, Supply chain issues, availability concerns, food deserts, food miles	16	Cerovečki and Grünhagen (2016); Kissinger (2012)	2	Kyureghian & Nayga (2013); Furey et al (2002)	18
Food processors and their marketing activity	9	Cairns and Macdonald (2016)	0		9
Fresh produce, food commodity production and marketing, firm performance	2	Thornsbury and Martinez (2012); Briones (2008); Hawkes et al (2012)	4	Garming et al (2013); Stanton and Herbst (2005)	6

Food labelling including FOP (front of pack) studies	16	Scrinis, and Parker (2016)	0		16
GM, biotech issues	9	Nelson et al (2003)	1	Pelaez and Da Silva (2008)	10
Regulatory Issues, food standards, food safety, and (state) promotion of sustainable consumption, regulation of sustainable food systems, food waste	21	Gruber et al (2016); Wood (2016); Dou etc al (2015)	0		21
Tobacco, drugs and alcohol	19	Andrews et al (2015)	0		19
Economic development, LDCs	42	Al-Haboby (2016)	15	Fotu et al (Fotu et al., 2011)	57
Non-research papers on food policy and marketing (e.g. conceptual/discussion papers)	2	Hastings (2016); Donovan et al (2015)	3	Pilchman (2015);	5
Other including papers not in English, food scandals, editorials and lists of abstracts	28	N/A	11	N/A	39
Duplicates			5		
Total	260		74		329

Alternative Food Networks

Before closing this chapter it is worth highlighting the research on alternative food networks. One field where there are good studies of food policy and marketing is in the context of alternatives: alternative food networks, organic, fair trade and local produce. Although these areas are a relatively small part of the overall food system, they present researchers with an interesting context in which to explore the complexities of food policy, consumer behaviour and marketing. One pertinent example is the work of Kneafsey et al. (2008). They adopted a critical approach to a study of alternative production and consumption networks, mainly focused on organic fruit and vegetables. Their case studies explored the theme of producer-consumer reconnection based on socially embedded patterns of exchange. Their exploration of reconnection begins from a radical position that depicts the serious problems inherent in modern agro-industrial food systems. Consumers have become disconnected from the producers of their food and as a result a number of problems have emerged for both those who grow the food and those who consume it. For growers they suggest that disconnection has meant a loss in power relative to the large retail multiples and a loss of traditional knowledge connected to land and place, whereas for consumers it has led to food-related anxiety and inequalities in access to healthy food. Their research might be seen as an example of a critical approach. Other studies in alternative food networks also draw on critical themes, for example the McEachern et al. (2010) study of farmers' markets explores how ethically conscious consumers navigate practical limitations and concerns for authenticity and local food. A Canadian study by Feagan and Morris (2009) uses the idea of embeddedness, socially, spatially and with nature, to understand how non-economic factors influence consumers' choices in alternative food networks and a French study by Costa et al (2014) explored the social value of organic food, suggesting that the purchase of organic produce had political and symbolic value for customers beyond instrumental economic factors. These studies provide a radical perspective on the value of food and problems of our mainstream food systems.

Research Questions

The review of the literature on food policy and marketing suggests that, as might be expected, most research on food policy and marketing is in the context of developing or less developed nations, for example, to explore how policy can support economic development. These contexts highlight important food supply issues for vulnerable populations and reflect the traditional priority of food policy studies. There are also studies of consumers and consumption behaviours in developed country contexts where the food policy issues may be

focused less on hunger and malnutrition and more on diet-related illness and well-being. Research on social marketing dominates the literature on food policy and marketing with its emphasis on individual behaviour change. The retail environment has been studied extensively, for example, on the accessibility and availability of fresh produce.

Whilst the focus has been on consumers, consumption, and downstream/retail contexts, there is less research on producers and production. Where there are studies that focus on marketing and producers of vegetables, they have tended to focus on alternative food networks. Although the study of alternative markets may inform theorising about more mainstream contexts, it does seem that mainstream vegetable markets and those that produce for them rather than, say, for organic or local markets, are under-researched.

The argument presented here is that, as far as marketing and policy studies are concerned, the perspective of producers that serve mainstream consumers in developed countries is under-researched. Given that the vegetable sector has been the focus of various market-oriented policy mechanisms since the Curry Report, as shown in Chapter Two, and given UK Food Policy goals to increase domestic production of vegetables, it seems timely to inquire as to the impact on the vegetable sector of a UK Food Policy based on the idea of market reconnection. For the vegetable sector in England, reconnection translated into an important priority: better marketing, and therefore a study of how policy tried to improve and support marketing for the sector is appropriate. It is argued that there is a strong societal value in research that provides an evidence base for understanding the impact on the vegetable sector of a UK Food Policy based on marketing ideas. Thus the thesis explores the question of whether, given the stated priority for sustainable agriculture in UK Food Policy, a policy to support better marketing in the vegetable sector in England worked. In doing so, there is an attempt to engage with a fundamental dilemma for UK Food Policy: what is the ideal nature and structure of vegetable production in England, and what should policy do to support its development? A further complexity was that there was also the new dilemma for UK Food Policy – sustainability. This included the emerging problems related to the protection of natural resources (planet) and health (people). Given the pivotal role increased production and consumption of vegetables can play in addressing health and environmental goals, the marketing of vegetables, and the role of policy to support it, is a problem worth investigating.

The aim of this study is to explore how a market oriented UK Food Policy evolved, and its impact on the production of vegetables in England. Impact may be assessed in terms of actions, decisions and strategies adopted but the study is distinctive because it assesses the

impact of taken for granted marketing theoretical frameworks on policy. So it considers to what extent did growers change how they perceived their competitive environment and their place in it in response to UK Food Policy?

Research question 1

How have ideas about markets and marketing shaped UK Food Policy since the publication of *“Farming and Food: A Sustainable Future, Report of the Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food”* (the Curry Report)?

Research question 2

What impact did an evolving market oriented UK Food Policy, based on particular notions of market reconnection, have on the production of vegetables in England, in particular on how those involved in growing vegetable crops perceived and understood their marketing challenges?

The section above articulates the societal value of the thesis and provides a rationale for the focus on UK Food Policy 2002-2015 and the vegetable sector but a thesis also needs to demonstrate a contribution to scientific knowledge and this section attempts to address this. The aspiration of the thesis is to contribute to knowledge about marketing and policy - to fill a gap in the food policy literature with relevance to marketing. Realism, the ontology adopted in the thesis, focuses on the development of mid-range, appreciative theories to develop abstracted explanations that work in particular contexts. The aim is to contribute to the development of a more nuanced understanding of what better markets and better marketing might mean in the context of the vegetable sector in England, and how policy actors and growers can adapt their marketing conceptualisations, plans and actions to achieve the triple bottom line policy goals (profit, people and planet) for sustainable agriculture. In doing so, the thesis illuminates the multi-faceted and contested nature of marketing and ultimately suggests that the much overlooked MAN perspective provides a theoretical basis for reconciling orthodox and critical perspectives that will be useful for addressing problems in the vegetable sector and for other food policy contexts.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has examined relevant theoretical traditions in food policy and in marketing. It has defined policy and food policy, and outlined the range of approaches to policy analysis that are reflected in the academic policy literature. It has defined marketing and outlined key

marketing ideas and debates that were current around the time of the Curry Commission and explored the extant literature on how ideas from the marketing have influenced UK food policy and the policy making process, this is summarised in Table 3-4. It also explored the academic literature on marketing practices adopted by vegetable growers around the time of the Curry Commission. The review of the literature suggests there have been various studies of food policy and efforts to increase the consumption of vegetables. However the review suggests that there are few food policy and marketing studies that focus on the production base, although alternative food networks are reasonably well covered in the literature and there are studies of relationships along the supermarket supply chain, typically from the point of view of the retailer. Chapter Two showed how the Curry Commission was pivotal in bringing about a more market-oriented UK food and farming policy but its impact the marketing effectiveness of vegetable growers has not been subjected to an academic study. This study addresses an important a gap in our knowledge of how a market-oriented UK Food Policy has impacted on the marketing efforts of those involved in vegetable production in England. Since vegetable production in England is likely to be pivotal to a sustainable model of UK agriculture, such a study can make a useful contribution to food policy.

PART TWO: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Chapter 4 Research Design and Methodology

Chapter Introduction

This chapter outlines the research design and methods adopted. It begins by articulating the assumptions made about the nature of the phenomena under scrutiny, and theories of knowledge in terms of what counts as evidence and why. In addition the chapter demonstrates that suitable and appropriate evidence was gathered in order to answer the research questions. It outlines the design of the research and makes transparent the processes involved in the production of knowledge on which the thesis is based.

The chapter is organised into five sections. It begins with a section that explains the process of how the research questions were identified followed by a restatement of the **research questions**, and explains how the research questions emerged from the review of policy and marketing conceptualisations, the review of the official literature, and the published data on the vegetable sector. This first section also sets out the challenges that need to be confronted in addressing research questions that straddle the policy and marketing academic domains and explains how the **research questions emerged** from the review of policy, marketing and industry context. The second section articulates and justifies the philosophical underpinnings in terms of the **conceptual frameworks** adopted in the thesis. The third section outlines the **research design**. It includes a discussion of the methods adopted, and why these methods were chosen and others rejected. It also explains the approach taken for the analysis of the data generated. It equips the reader with a rationale for the choice of methods and details of the research instruments, analytical frameworks and interview guides used. The fourth section presents the **methodology** which justifies the methods used in the collection and analysis of data from the document analysis and the key informant interviews. It explains how the key informants were chosen, and how, where and when the interviews were conducted. It also describes how the evidence from the data gathering is presented. The final section records the process of obtaining **ethical approval** for the research.

Identification of the Research Questions

The end of the previous chapter identifies the broad terrain of the research problem and provides a justification of the social and scientific value of a study focused on the policy and marketing of vegetables in England. In the early stages of the thesis it was assumed that the focus would be on the marketing activity endorsed by the state to encourage consumers to

make better food decisions. Such an approach would be familiar in orthodox marketing where a market context is assumed and it is generally taken for granted that the actions of those involved in production are driven by voluntary choices made by rational buyers. But in the food policy literature there were other perspectives on the transformative production processes and the role of the state and markets in making these transformative processes happen. These explanations differed in how, for example, history and politics were incorporated into explanations of food production and consumption systems.

As a result of the exploration of the conceptualisations in policy and in marketing, the role of ideas and conceptualisations concerning what food could and should be produced and consumed became more important. So whilst it was important to try to understand the impact of a market-oriented policy on the competitiveness of the vegetable sector in England in terms of empirical evidence of volume and value of production, prices and so on, the role of different conceptualisations of markets and theories of how marketing could and should be practised became more prominent themes in the thesis.

It was apparent that there was good quality published information on aggregate vegetable production provided by various governmental organisations at national and regional (EU) level. This information is used since it provides useful evidence for the second research question, which explores the impact of policy on vegetable production. With good quality data on the level of output in volume and value terms and in terms of the land used for production, the fieldwork could focus on attempting to understand how a market-oriented perspective came to prominence in UK Food Policy, how ideas from marketing were employed, how these ideas changed policy, and how they impacted on perceptions and marketing practices adopted by those involved in growing vegetables in England.

Chapter Two showed how the Curry Commission ushered in an era of market-oriented food policy in Britain in response to serious problems in UK agriculture. Vegetable production in England had experienced serious decline in output in the final two decades of the twentieth century that a policy aimed at supporting better marketing might address. Chapter 3 outlined various theoretical approaches to the analysis of policy including pluralist, corporatist, rational choice and institutionalist perspectives. In the policy literature there was a broad consensus of the importance of institutions and conceptualisations in shaping the policy discourse and processes, the behaviour and practices of actors, the policy interventions favoured and implemented, and the associated outcomes. It is argued, therefore that when attempting to understand the impact of a new approach to policy, researchers need to make sense of

conceptualisations of causes and events (their own as well as others'), and the interplay between conceptualisation and empirical evidence. Chapter 3 also introduced the idea of critical pluralism as a conceptual framework advocated by Nicholson et al. (2014) which encourages marketing academics to be open to multiple ontological perspectives and cautions against creating new atomised theories with strongly defended boundaries. Such an approach seemed appropriate for an interdisciplinary study of policy and marketing. The research questions that emerged from the review of the academic marketing and policy literature, and a review of grey literature of government and official sources and documentation are re-stated here:

Research question 1: How have ideas about markets and marketing shaped UK Food Policy since the publication of *"Farming and Food: A Sustainable Future, Report of the Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food"* (the Curry Report)?

Research question 2: What impact did an evolving market oriented UK Food Policy, based on particular notions of market reconnection, have on the production of vegetables in England, in particular on how those involved in growing vegetable crops perceived and understood their marketing challenges?

The review of conceptualisations of policy and marketing covered in Chapter 3 revealed contested accounts of the benefits and limitations of markets, and of the role of the state in regulating, enabling and restricting marketing activity. The thesis scrutinises three theoretical standpoints: the orthodox, the critical and later the MAN perspectives in marketing theory. The mainstream orthodox marketing account emphasises the ability of markets, even when conditions are not perfectly competitive, to deliver more innovation, increased abundance and better quality of productive output. It also assumes congruence between societal goals and the goals of individual market actors, and suggests that the role for policy is to ensure the conditions for free or lightly regulated markets. Its theoretical frameworks are typically positive models based on quantitative empirical research, which attempt to explain the world as it is. Prescriptive models provide guidance to firms in their attempts to become more competitive. These models also suggest how state actors could effectively apply marketing ideas, for example, to change public behaviour. Chapter 3 also included perspectives that challenged some aspects of orthodox marketing.

The heterodox wing of the marketing discipline, whilst broadly assuming the benefits of markets in line with the orthodox marketers, challenged the validity of orthodox neoclassical assumptions about how markets worked, particularly in business-to-business contexts. In

particular the MAN (markets-as-networks) perspective, the third broad marketing paradigm that is used in the thesis, attempts to understand voluntary exchanges in business-to-business or industrial contexts. Its explanatory frameworks are appropriate for industrial marketing contexts, where a small number of active buyers and sellers are engaged in the complex processes of sorting and matching to achieve the transvection of heterogeneous resources into heterogeneous consumer products and services for consumer markets. Its assumptions assume, *inter alia*, that firms are incomplete and interdependent, and exchanges are not arms' length, discrete transactions but are embedded in on-going business relationships. From a MAN standpoint collaboration occurs where each party perceives that the opportunities that will accrue to their organisation by coordinating some commercial activities outweigh the opportunities that might accrue from all out competition. It also assumes that relationships take time to develop, and firms are wary of other actors' motives. The MAN perspective, in contrast to an orthodox viewpoint, assumes that there is a dark side to relationships, but explores how market actors' shared values evolve and shape future exchanges and learning. As far as food policy is concerned, the MAN perspective does not assume (as is the case with the orthodox perspective) that societal benefits will flow from exchanges in business networks since the development of networks is path dependent, and its evolution is shaped by the agenda of dominant actors in the network. Thus the MAN perspective assumes that policy makers may need to take action to ensure that the coordinated actions in networks achieve broader policy goals. On the other hand, in contrast to the critical perspective, the MAN perspective largely accepts that the markets are not inimical to societal welfare, and tends to adopt a positive rather than normative perspective in so far as its models attempt to describe the world as it is rather than how it ought to be. The MAN standpoint is generally focused on mid-range theorising and eschews broad generalisations, focusing instead on how markets work in specific contexts.

A model of sustainable agriculture, one that balances concerns for the planet (environment), people (social, health), with the need for profit (economic) has been a dominant theme in UK Food Policy since 2002 but many challenges lie ahead in part because there may need to be trade-offs between the triumvirate goals. But the vegetable sector is one where the resolution of competing priorities for sustainability may be easier than in other food production sectors. Marketing has traditionally been about increasing economic activity (indeed this has been a criticism of marketing) so perhaps there are opportunities to harness the capabilities of marketing to achieve health and environmental goals by increasing economic activity in the vegetable sector. But which marketing perspective should be adopted? Given the dominance

of orthodox marketing in the academic marketing literature, and given that vegetables may be assumed to be simple commodities, an orthodox lens might be appropriate. But the literature on the changing practices in the vegetable supply system indicates that changes have taken place in how supermarkets interact with their suppliers. Category management has replaced spot markets and become a common feature of vegetable supply. Growers are expected to take on a wider range of supporting and coordinating activities, for example, to ensure all year round supply, to support innovation in processing and/or packaging, or in the development of new varieties of produce.

The policy literature illuminated a range of normative and positive perspectives on understanding policy processes and outcomes. Against this backdrop of contested policy and marketing ideas, the published data provided evidence of worrying trends in vegetable production in England (outlined in Chapter Two), which demonstrate the need for ideas and actions that work in the real world. Thus it is imperative that the thesis explores both the way in which ideas from marketing are used to shape UK Food Policy as well as assessing the impact of policy initiatives in the particular case of vegetable production in England. The thesis must explore the coherence of conceptualisations and their links to effective policy mechanisms in relation to whether and how growers were able to increase production through better marketing, and whether the markets in which they operated provided opportunities for them to create and appropriate value. The thesis uses an understanding of multiple perspectives to enable new insights into how policy can harness marketing ideas to support the vegetable sector and in so doing shift to a more sustainable model for agriculture.

Developing a Conceptual Framework for the Research

Research that crosses disciplinary boundaries may be rich in terms of its ability to produce novel insights and new perspectives on existing knowledge but it may be troublesome in a variety of ways. It may be challenging to straddle two theoretical traditions, in this case marketing and food policy; and it also creates problems in terms of research design and methods. Each discipline has developed its own traditions in terms of how it confronts and resolves ontological and epistemological issues. It may also be the case that each discipline has its own conventions in terms of the methods favoured and endorsed by its academic community. This section attempts to explain how the various ontological, epistemology and methodological issues were addressed in the choice of a conceptual framework for the research.

This is a food policy thesis that explores the impact of marketing ideas on UK Food Policy, and the impact of a market-oriented UK food policy on vegetable production in England. As such it draws on ideas and concepts from both academic marketing and food policy. As alluded to above, in attempting to conduct an interdisciplinary study the researcher needs to be cognisant of the ontological and epistemological debates across both disciplines (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998). The first research question involves an attempt to understand the world as various actors in the policy world see it, their values and goals, which may be diverse and contradictory, in order to make sense of how problems are understood, which solutions are deemed appropriate, and which policy instruments are selected to address the problems identified.

Research Question 1 attempts to provide an account of how marketing ideas influenced UK Food Policy at the beginning of the new millennium. Given the ambiguous nature of some marketing ideas, and the contested and multi-faceted theoretical frameworks in the academic marketing literature, it explores the how the adoption of a particular set of marketing ideas impacted on UK Food Policy 2002-2015. Its attempts to understand how the problems for vegetable production in England were understood, and examines the adoption of specific policy mechanisms to provide solutions to the marketing problems in the vegetable sector.

The second research question requires evidence of the impact on the sector. Impact may be measured in a variety of ways. It may be measured by the examination of changes in what is produced, where, and by which economic entities, in the vegetable sector. But it also encompasses changes in how different actors, policy makers and the growers themselves, thought about food production and growers' relationships with their customers and markets.

Research Question 2 provides an account of the impact of a particular market-oriented UK Food Policy in terms of the impact on vegetable production in England, how it changed what was produced, and how the marketing of produce changed. But it also explores whether and how a new market-oriented UK Food Policy transformed how growers understood the marketing challenges they faced. Did a market-oriented UK food policy bring about a transformation in how growers approached the marketing of their produce? Did growers become more competitive and more collaborative? Were they able to implement marketing ideas on efficiency and competitiveness within a sustainable farming framework? And what impact did these changes have on vegetable production in England?

As policy begins to grapple with the multi-faceted problems of sustainable food production, the thesis provides a novel way to resolve contested ideas of the place of markets and marketing in UK Food Policy that go beyond conventional structure versus agency arguments that dominate marketing and policy debates.

A Realist Theoretical Framework

The author's background is as a marketing academic. Intellectually, this meant part of the conceptual clarification in this thesis process was the exploration of how modern food policy academic discourse (as pioneered by the Centre for Food Policy in which this research was conducted) could be informed by marketing ideas, and vice versa; hence the decision to focus on the Curry Commission's impact. Academic research in orthodox marketing has tended to adopt a positivist epistemology based on a functionalist paradigm (Nicholson et al., 2014). Within a functionalist paradigm the approach to knowledge generation involves the production of general models that predict and/or explain consumer behaviour or other marketing phenomena (Ellis et al., 2011). As can be seen from the orthodox marketing literature the unit of analysis is typically the transaction and the actors involved are firms and individual consumers. Quantitative methods such as large-scale survey research are preferred.

Academic marketing has its roots in economics and so it is to be expected that it would share its positivist philosophy. Research published in the highest ranking academic marketing journals, for example, the *Journal of Marketing*, are predominantly positivist. This tradition is associated with the American School of Marketing and is generally accepted as the orthodox stream of marketing thought. Even though the thesis is rooted in the food policy discipline, its literature base is dominated by the marketing ideas examined in Chapter 3, and therefore there is a responsibility to explain a divergence from what would be considered by marketing academics an orthodox approach to knowledge generation. An explanation is provided below:

In contrast to positivism, interpretivism is a philosophical approach to research that seeks to understand the world as experienced by individuals in terms of their lived experience. Where positivism typically uses a quantitative approach based on large scale data, logic and statistical inference, interpretivism uses qualitative data to provide a rich account of meaning (*verstehen*), where an understanding of a particular historical and social context is central to an explanation of human behaviour. The world of food policy, in which this thesis is situated, manifests both natural and socially constructed features. It is well placed to benefit from

knowledge derived from those who adopt a positivist ontology and those that assume interpretivist philosophical traditions.

A third approach seems to bridge a gap between what might be seen as a positivist/interpretivist dichotomy, this third approach is known as realism or critical realism. A critical realist approach is advocated by Ritchie et al. (2014) and the National Centre for Social Research, which specialises in policy research. Its basic tenets are outlined below, along with a short explanation of an accompanying perspective, critical pluralism (Nicholson et al., 2014). Mindful of the benefits of a critical pluralist approach, the thesis adopts a realist conceptual framework. From a realist perspective, evidence in terms of statistical data is not appropriate and the aim is not to infer the results from a sample on to a population. The evidence needs to distinguish between necessary and contingent relations between phenomena. Hence in this thesis a qualitative approach to data gathering is adopted to explore the impact of marketing on policy for the vegetable sector. A realist approach attempts to provide a mid-range abstracted explanation of how the real world works, in this case how a UK Food Policy shaped by marketing theories impacted on the vegetable sector in England.

Realism is based on a philosophy in which it is asserted that i) the real world exists outside of the imagination of the observer and ii) our knowledge of the real world is distinct from the real world itself (Bhaskar, 1975). In adopting a realist approach to investigating social phenomena the researcher attempts to avoid adopting either a naïve objectivist (positivist) or a radical relativistic (interpretivist) stance (Sayer, 1984). Naïve objectivism assumes that it is possible to gather objective knowledge about social phenomena through observation and experience. Radical relativism assumes that the external world does not exist outside of the subject's perception of it. The former assumes that observation is theory neutral, the latter that observation is theory determined. This study rejects both and assumes a realist perspective that observation is theory laden, which assumes an external world but that observations of social phenomena are affected by the conceptualisations we use to analyse our perceptions of why things are the way they are. An integral part of a realist stance means that it is necessary to evaluate social phenomena, their structures and practices, as well as providing an explanation of them but a key test for a researcher adopting a realist stance is *practical adequacy*, the research must provide an explanation that in some sense works in the real world (Sayer, 1984).

Realism is appropriate for the exploration of how actors make sense of the social world of food policy and the 'causes' of issues in the social world. Realism emphasises the importance of conceptualisations in policy, whilst acknowledging that conceptualisations have to work in the real world. In other words, our attempts at sense making have to be practically adequate. This is particularly important in the context of food, where real impacts are manifest regardless of our beliefs about food. The methods chosen must not only gather evidence of what happened but must also capture how ideas were used by both those involved in policy, and in this case, those involved in vegetable production, and how ideas of markets and marketing, shaped policy interventions and responses. Although the ontological perspective adopted in this thesis draws on Bhaskar's early critical realism ideas, Pawson warns that the 'critical' prefix is loaded with two distinct meanings, one that refers to a politicised emancipatory perspective in which critical accounts attempt to reveal how power is exercised by elites. Pawson rejects this perspective and uses the term critical to mean 'open to criticism' that is a feature of a scientific discourse (or alternatively he opts to discard the word 'critical'). Throughout this document I have used the term realism rather than critical realism to align the approach adopted with Pawson's (rather than Bhaskar's) stance.

According to Tadajewski and Brownlie (2008), critical approaches in marketing have been developed on the basis of three fundamental tenets: ontological denaturalisation (in which it is assumed that the present circumstances are the result of a complex of social and political forces and events rather than assumed to be inevitable or desirable); epistemological reflexivity (in which the researcher is aware of his/her impact on the social phenomena under scrutiny and the impossibility of adopting the position of a disinterested observer); and a non-performance stance (where the purpose of the research may be beyond marketing research's conventional goal of furthering a managerial agenda). So although positivism has dominated orthodox academic marketing research endeavours there are also alternative research philosophies and perspectives of knowledge generation based on ideographic approaches. Alternative ontological perspectives are particularly apparent in what might be termed as the heterodox marketing traditions such as the Nordic school, IMP (Industrial Marketing and Purchasing) group, or those that adopt a macromarketing approach.

A critical marketing perspective is consistent with the multi-disciplinary, normative and problem-solving approach common in policy studies (Lerner and Lasswell, 1951). Nicholson et al. (2014) suggested a critical *pluralist* approach is useful to explore the interplay between structure and agency in supply chains and to achieve meaningful empirical outcomes. This

approach suggests the researcher examines the three fundamental components that shape the development of knowledge: the theoretical/ ontological, the methodological/ epistemological, and the procedural/ method, as three non-hierarchical dimensions of the research. This enables the researcher to adopt an approach to research that reflexively draws on a range of perspectives to reveal new insights into structure and agency in a particular context whilst avoiding a descent from pluralism into an *'anything goes, [...] anti-theory'* pragmatism (Nicholson et al., 2014).

So although it is important to document what happened to UK Food Policy and how it impacted on the vegetable sector in England, the researcher must also confront issues related to the value-based priorities reflected in a market-oriented UK Food Policy. The research methods chosen for the study must be capable of generating the evidence required to answer such questions (Mitcham, 2007). Here qualitative data are gathered since a realist explanation does not rely on statistical inference as the basis of its explanations and knowledge generation. In developing knowledge in policy it is not enough to simply describe policy initiatives that impact on a specific context, in this case the vegetable sector in England. The aim of the research is to apprehend the taken for granted assumptions adopted by various actors about how the world works, to see the context as they see it, and to move towards a coherent explanation of why some policy options emerged and others were foreclosed. In policy research there is a tension between a positivist rigour, the desire for sound empirical evidence and transparency on the one hand, and the recognition that it is difficult to separate goals and means, values and techniques in the study of government actions (Torgeson (1983) cited in Howlett and Ramesh (2003)). In the context of research on supply chains, New (1997) advocates that research should not confine itself to matters of efficiency alone, but should consider social and political aspects of a just supply chain. Finally Nicholson et al (2014) suggest those exploring industrial marketing systems might find it helpful to adopt a critical pluralist approach by integrating different theoretical perspectives. It would seem that they suggest researchers should worry less about incommensurability and instead consciously make use of different theoretical traditions to illuminate insights into the interplay of structure and agency in supply networks. It is this approach that the author is attempting to replicate in this study.

Research Design and Methodology

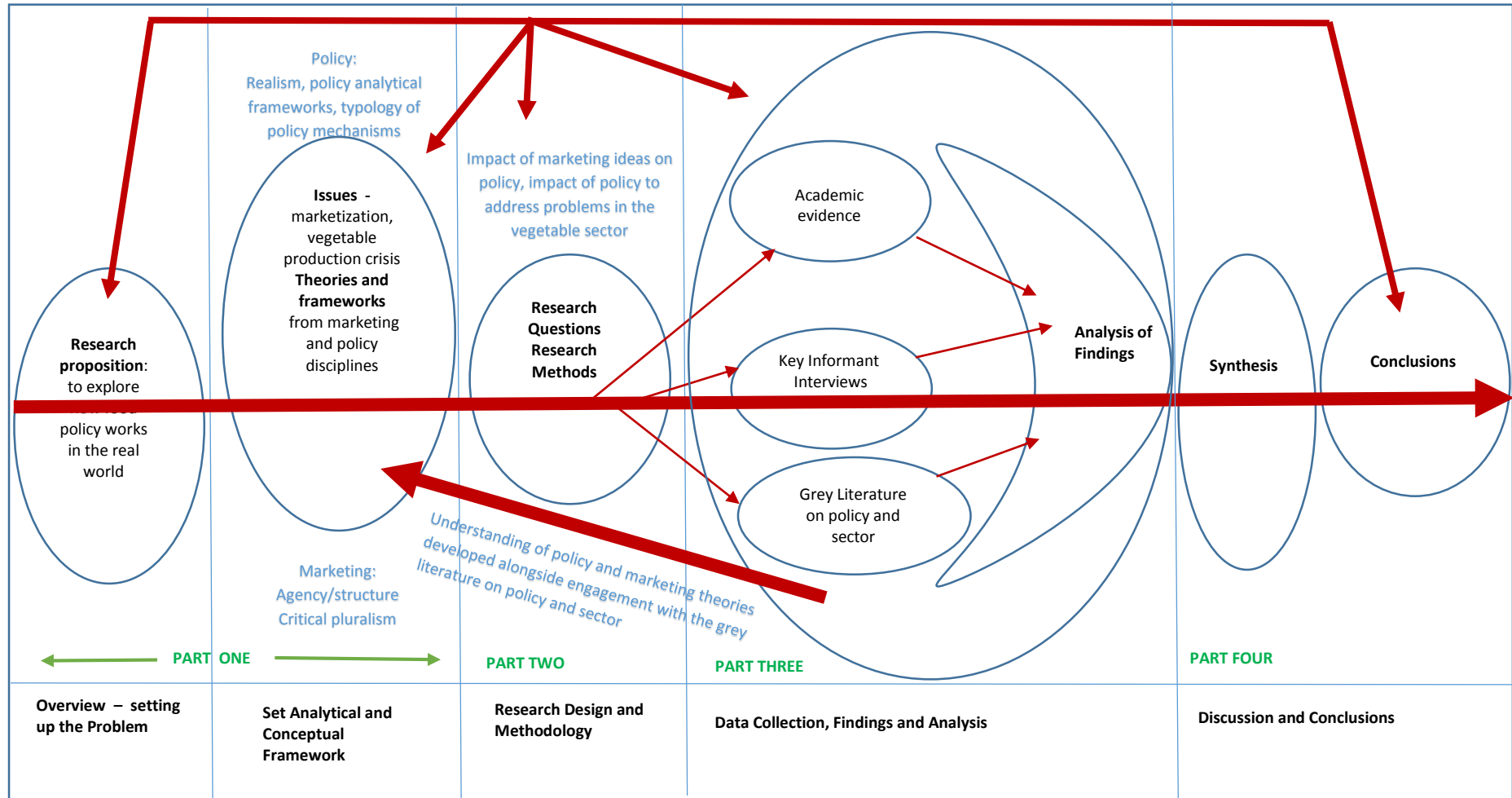
A research design is the overall configuration of a piece of research (Easterby-Smith et al., 1991). An outline of the research design is provided in Figure 4-1 and Figure 4-2 shows how the parts and chapters of the thesis are linked to the research processes. A methodology provides a justification of the methods used as well as a description of the methods and how data are created.

The thesis requires evidence of how the food policy world *is perceived* by those who inhabit it, and their values, as well as documenting actors' behaviour and the impact of particular actions as they relate to the material world of the production and marketing of vegetables in England. For this study the focus is on the organisations that produce vegetables in England. Vegetable producers are part of a food supply system involving what Alderson would have termed the transvection of biological inputs (seeds, plants, fertilizers) into usable consumer produce (for example, bags of salad leaves). So one approach would have been to explore the perceptions and behaviours of those in organisations across the system, including agribusiness involved in seed/plant production, pesticides, herbicides and so on; growers and farmers; packers and wholesalers; food manufacturers and processors; independent and multiple retailers, and food services organisations, as shown in Figure 2-1 in chapter 2. Orthodox marketing studies often focus on discrete actors, consumers for example, without adopting a whole systems perspective, some recent examples in the context of food include Haws et al. (2015); Costa et al. (2014); Litt et al (2011); and Liaukonyte et al. (2012). Studies in the heterodox literature on the other hand tend to adopt a systems perspective, but there are also some systems studies that focus on a particular group of actors within a network (Maglaras et al., 2015, Porac et al., 1995) and in any case the boundaries of any system are inevitably somewhat arbitrary. The boundaries set for this study are the production and supply chain up to the customer (retailer) and this is reflected in the conceptual approach to the research questions. As discussed in Chapter 2, a thriving vegetable sector in England has the potential to contribute to sustainable goals - economically, environmentally and in terms of health - so it is important to understand the sector's problems as perceived by those most closely associated with the fundamental task of growing produce.

Ritchie et al. (2014) suggest that an abductive logic in which a technical account of participants' activities and beliefs is produced using a priori categories is appropriate for research in a policy context. Qualitative research is appropriate for gathering knowledge about ideas and perceptions. Denzin and Lincoln (1998) suggest that there are three interconnected fundamental activities involved in qualitative research i) articulation of the

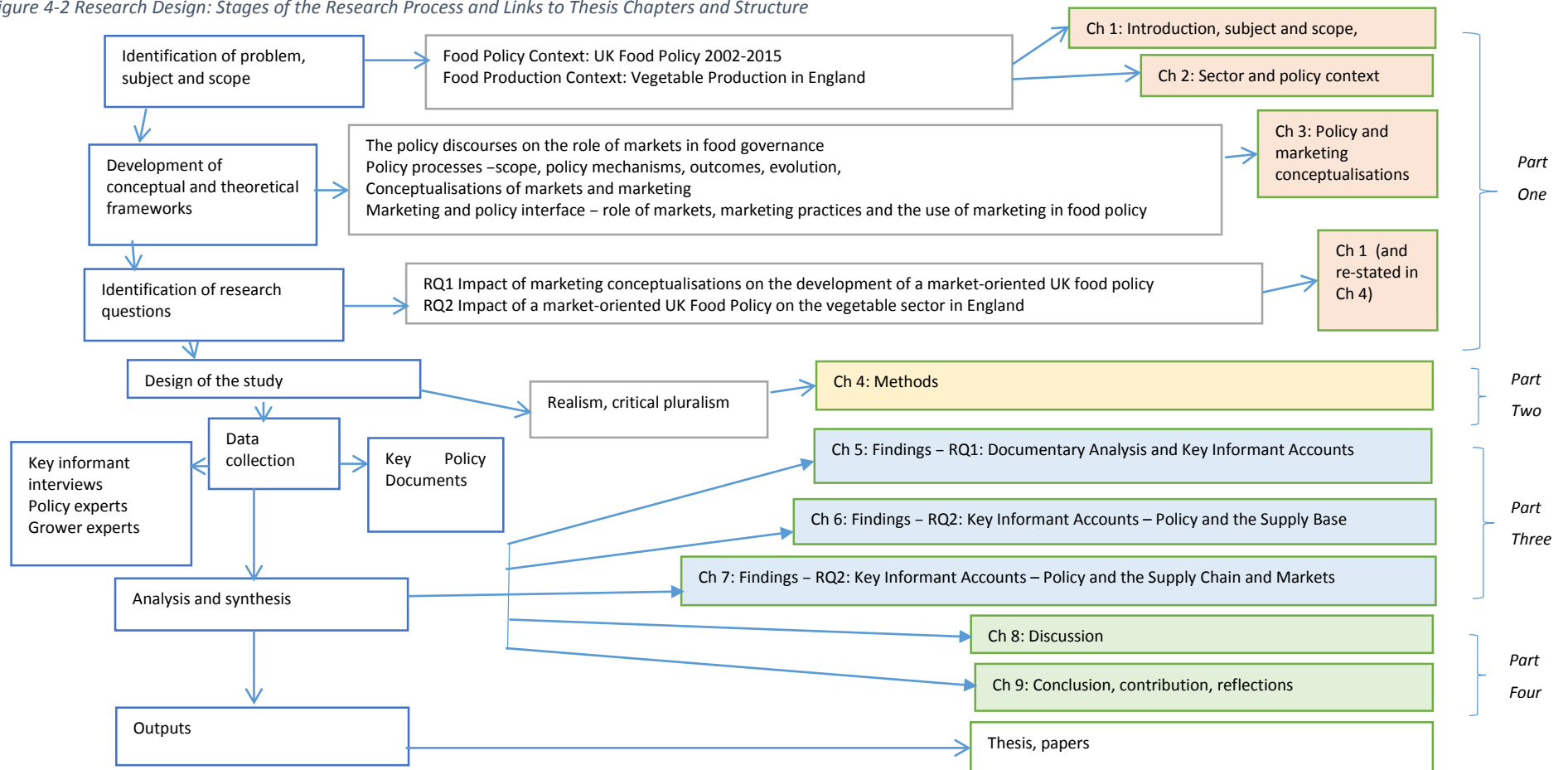
ontological framework shaped by the researcher's unique background and worldview, ii) development of a set of questions which are iii) explored using transparently articulated techniques designed to gather and analyse empirical materials relevant to the study. This is summarised in Table 4-1. There are various methods of qualitative research including observation (e.g. of meetings), analysis of documents, focus groups and individual interviews. Since the analysis of the context for the thesis covered in Chapter 2 suggested an abundance of official policy documentation, it was appropriate to conduct an analysis of it. Chapter 2 also highlighted the availability of headline secondary data on production but evidence was lacking on how perceptions of markets and marketing influenced policy makers and those involved in vegetable production. Interviews or group discussions could have been used, in this case interviews were used since they enabled individuals to reflect on their own experiences and it was not thought that the advantages of interaction that group discussions provided outweighed the logistical drawbacks of organising group discussion events for busy growers. Face to face interviews with experts on policy and from across the spectrum of production would capture a range of values. By triangulating secondary research with documentary analysis and expert interviews a nuanced picture of policy impact could be created. The approach adopted is to conduct an analysis of the policy that was depicted in the selected policy documents. The insights gained are then augmented with the information from the interviews to explore what how the policies were enacted in practice and how those involved in vegetable production understood and responded to the market oriented UK Food Policy 2002-2015. The analysis based on the policy documents is presented in Chapter 5, and the findings from the expert interviews are presented in Chapters 6 and 7. The findings from both the document analysis and the interviews are discussed in Chapter 8.

Figure 4-1 Pictorial Representation of Research Process



Source: Author

Figure 4-2 Research Design: Stages of the Research Process and Links to Thesis Chapters and Structure



Source: Author

Table 4-1 Linking the Conceptual Framework, Research Questions, Methods and Analysis

Framework	Ontology:	<p>Whether/how did UK Food Policy engage with horticulture (vegetable production) in the Post-Curry era? This involves an exploration of UK Food Policy 2002-2015 based on Better Marketing – to how and to what extent did a market oriented policy work?</p> <p>Realism emphasises the need to explore taken for granted assumptions so that a practically adequate account of the real world can emerge. Appreciative theory: Mid-range theorising to provide an analytical bridge between grand theory (e.g. on the interplay between structure and agency) and empirical research</p> <p>Critical pluralism – multiple perspectives are respected so that a new synthesis may emerge</p>
Epistemology	Research Questions	<p>RQ 1: Impact of marketing ideas on UK food policy</p> <p>RQ2: Impact of a distinctive market-oriented UK Food Policy on vegetables sector in England 2002-2015</p> <p>Better Marketing: How did policy use orthodox marketing ideas, how did the sector respond? Or Fairer Markets: Was there evidence of structural problems for the vegetable sector? What did policy do to address market failure/malfunction issues? Aim to gather the full range of ways of thinking about marketing and to use empirical evidence to create an abstracted explanation</p>
Methodology techniques designed to gather and analyse empirical materials relevant to the study.	<p>Academic and official/government sources</p> <p>Secondary data</p> <p>Documentary analysis</p> <p>Key informant interviews</p>	<p>Review marketing and policy literature to develop insights relating to the influence of ideas and approaches to understanding policy and marketing phenomena.</p> <p>Scrutiny of secondary information on the productive activities of the vegetable sector – to provide supporting evidence of output and activity.</p> <p>Documentary analysis of key UK food policy publications – to illuminate the impact of marketing ideas on the policy scope, interventions and outcomes</p> <p>Key informant interviews – to illuminate the impact of marketing ideas on the policy scope, mechanisms and outcomes and to explore how UK Food Policy impacted on marketing ideas and practices adopted by growers within the English vegetable sector. To understand how collective cognitive models shape actors' understanding of competitive environments.</p> <p>Interview question guide for policy experts: questions based on policy mechanisms adopted (carrots, sticks and sermons) from F&V report and plan.</p> <p>Interview question guide for growers: questions explore features of market orientation and market structures in the vegetable sector as understood by those with expert knowledge of the vegetable sector using frameworks derived from both marketing theory and policy documents.</p>
Analysis	Empirical data analysed and synthesised into an abstracted explanation	<p>Multiple perspectives - aim to document the full range of opinions voiced by the experts in the study.</p> <p>Marketing theoretical frameworks – orthodox marketing ideas, critical/radical perspectives and heterodox approaches (in particular the markets-as-networks MAN framework), used to develop an abstracted explanation of the impact of marketing ideas on UK Food Policy, and the impact of UK Food Policy on those involved in vegetable production in England.</p>

Source: Author, based on a framework from Denzin and Lincoln (1998)

Review of the Academic and Official Literature

The gathering of empirical data is preceded with a careful examination of extant sources of academic and official literature in order to develop an understanding of the terrain within which the thesis is situated. Chapter 3 includes a summary of academic studies on marketing and policy and provides details of how the review was carried out. A review of the government and official literature relating to UK food policy (specifically vegetable production in England) was also conducted. The aim of the review was to illuminate the complex policy and regulatory context in which UK policy for vegetable production is situated. It covers documents from national state sources including Defra, RPA, AHDB (and HDC), the Competition and Markets Authority (formerly the Competition Commission), and the Government Office for Science. Official documents published by Defra were the starting point since this is the government department with responsibility for food. A search on the Defra website and archived sources provided information on policies that affected vegetable production in England. Other websites were also used to access official documentation relevant to the study. The Rural Payments Agency is Defra's executive agency responsible for the payment of subsidies to farmers, and the enforcement of horticulture marketing standards. Its website included links to documents on the regulations on the Producer Organisation scheme, and the marketing standards for vegetable produce.

The Competition Commission (now the Competition and Markets Authority), and the Food Standards Agency are two non-ministerial government departments whose publications may be relevant to a study of English vegetable production. The Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board, an independent statutory levy board, which imposes a levy on growers to fund innovation in the sector, is also a useful source of official information about vegetable production in England. The Sustainable Development Commission (disbanded in 2011), was a non-departmental public body that attempted to shape the agenda for sustainable agriculture, so the review also included a scan of its documents.

The review also examined relevant (to vegetable production) EU policy documents, and publications from international bodies such as the UN. The European Department responsible for food is D-G Agriculture and Rural Development, so a review of documentation on its website was carried out. In particular, the documentation on the Common Market Organisation for Fruit and Vegetables is relevant to this study. In addition, documentation from D-G Enterprise was gathered since this department was responsible for the development of policy on competitiveness, and supply chain regulation and good practice. The websites for various UK and EU departments were scanned regularly since new publications could be

added as policy evolved and in this way the government and official literature could be kept up to date. Although not government documents, official documents from fruit and vegetables trade associations and organisations such as Copa-Cogeca and the NFU for policy-related issues were included in this review where trade organisations commented on government policy for the sector. The depiction of the UK food policy terrain presented in Chapter 2 is based on the government and official literature and a list of the government and official sources is provided in Appendix One.

Published Data on Vegetable Production Used in the Thesis

The publically available data on domestic vegetable production are presented in Chapter 2. Data are gathered in different ways and for different purposes so the task here is to integrate different types of information into a coherent picture of the vegetable sector. Many sources of information on vegetable production group fruit and vegetables together but produce may be sub-classified in different ways. The Horticulture Development Company covers horticulture crops that includes fruit and vegetables as well as ornamental and nursery plants (2015). Its classification divides vegetable production into field vegetables (large scale, outdoors) and protected edibles. Rural Business Research (RBR) includes figures for large-scale field vegetables in its general cropping figures in the Farm Business Survey (FBS). Its data are derived from a sample of farms across all sectors but since horticulture is a heterogeneous part of agriculture the FBS data needs to be treated with a little more caution than for other sectors. RBR's specialist reports on horticulture production focus on protected vegetables but also include some small-scale outdoor vegetable production (classed as 'other horticulture' (Crane et al., 2015)). Generally horticulture figures for vegetables refer to crops for human consumption although some legumes such as peas harvested dry are used as animal feed. Potato production is usually considered separately from other vegetables, as is mushroom production, and peas are sometimes classified separately from fresh vegetables, for example, in the June Census data (2010d). Tomatoes are classified as vegetables and rhubarb figures are sometimes included in the vegetable data to reflect its true non-fruit status.

Defra produces statistics on horticulture, the most recent report is the Basic Horticultural Statistics (Defra, 2013). It also produced the following reports: AUK, Agricultural Statistics (2014a); data from the June Census of Agriculture and Horticulture, (2010d) published December 2010; sector specific reports published by Defra including the Glasshouse Survey (2008b), England; and Survey of Vegetables and Flowers England (2009a). Rural Business Research, a research consortium made up of a number of leading agricultural institutions and universities and funded by Defra, also produced reports on horticulture, the latest is the Farm

Business Survey 2013/14: Horticulture Production in England (Crane et al., 2015). This report uses the data from FBS. Some information was provided by various crop associations, such as the Asparagus Growers Association, a full list of crop organisations is produced in Appendix 4. This list was sourced from The Horticultural Development Company, HDC, a division of the statutory levy body the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB) which administers the collection of an industry levy to fund essential near-market research and development for the benefit of UK Horticulture (HDC website (2015)). Information on funding from government/EU schemes such as the EU Fruit and Vegetables Scheme was provided by the Rural Payments Agency (RPA). Commercial sources also provide information on fruit and vegetable production and consumption in Britain, these include Mintel, Key Notes, European Food and Farming Partnership (EFFP), and Bidwells.

Empirical Data Collection

This section provides the details concerning the methods adopted for gathering new data and how they were implemented. Ritchie and Spencer stress that qualitative policy analysis requires a transparent methodology so that the processes involved can be independently scrutinised. A summary of the key features of a transparent methodology and how this research attempts to demonstrate them is given in Table 4-2:

Table 4-2 Features of Qualitative Research

	Features of Qualitative Research...	...demonstrated in the study
Grounded or generative	It is heavily based in, and driven by, the original accounts and observation of the people it is about	Key informant interviews capture growers and policy makers accounts
Dynamic	It is open to change, addition and amendment throughout the analytic process	A priori coding categories Evolution of focus from marketing strategies, to examination of market malfunction, to network perspectives
Systematic	It allows methodical treatment of all similar units of analysis	Coding frameworks for orthodox and heterodox marketing applied to all policy documents specified
Comprehensive	It allows a full, and not partial, selective, review of the material collected	All interviews were used in the study
Enables easy retrieval	It allows access to, and retrieval of, the original textual material	All transcripts from the study are stored on Nvivo
Allows between- and within-case analysis	It enables comparisons between, and associations within, cases to be made	Nvivo coding enables comparisons between and with interviews
Accessible to others	The analytic process, and the interpretations derived from it, can be viewed and judged by people other than the primary analyst	The methods chapter describes the analytic process, and raw data are retained

Source: (Ritchie and Spencer, 1994) page 176

As mentioned above, the research methods chosen for the study must be capable of generating the evidence required. The first research question is seeking evidence of the impact of conceptualisations of marketing that underpin a particular policy. So the analysis of a UK food policy needs to i) gather evidence of the new policy and ii) employ a method that will reveal the underlying ideas that shaped the market-oriented UK food policy from 2002. Policy may manifest itself in a variety of ways but key policy strategy documents are an appropriate focus. The text of these documents is examined using conceptual frameworks derived from the exploration of the marketing literature, which revealed contested ideas about the principles and practices of effective marketing. Policy conceptual frameworks are used to classify different types of policy mechanisms.

The second question focuses on the impact of a market-oriented UK food policy on vegetable production in England. Impact may be measured in terms of production inputs and outcomes. The review of the published data on vegetable production provides an important source of evidence of what was produced in value and volume terms, outcomes, and what resources were used (land, energy, plants, labour). But food policy change involves changing how growers think about their marketing activity as well as changing what they do. Thus impact is also to be found in how the growers themselves (and those with expert knowledge of vegetable growing, such as agronomists) reframed their thinking on their productive activities in the light of the new market-oriented food policy regime in the UK. The academic marketing research suggested that under conditions of imperfect competition actors' perceptions of their competitive environment will shape their responses to the competitive challenges they face (Porac et al., 1995, Maglaras et al., 2015). Therefore understanding how growers use taken for granted conceptualisations as they attempt to compete in food supply systems shaped by a market oriented UK food policy will augment the data on what is produced in England and show how ideas of marketing shape business behaviour and policy responses.

To summarise, the approach adopted is to first carry out a policy analysis using key policy documents to extract the implications for the vegetables sector and then to use interviews to explore experts' perceptions of the effectiveness of the policies, and the sector's response to them.

Data Collection: Document Analysis

Qualitative data analysis in this context is focused on revealing the underlying conceptual frameworks and processes involved in developing and implementing a fundamental shift in agricultural policy, from an essentially production-oriented policy that had been in place since

the end of the Second World War to a new market-oriented UK food policy in the new millennium, the like of which had not been seen in Britain since the 1930s.

The first research question explores the impact of marketing ideas on policy. It examines which ideas shaped UK food policy at the turn of the new millennium. Once a scan of the policy terrain had been completed, it was decided to focus in on policy documents that articulated the UK Government's Food Policy relating to vegetable production. The thesis focuses on the period 2002-2015 and examines the documents that articulate UK government's Food Policy during that time. It begins with an analysis of the Report of the Commission on the Future of Farming and Food (The Curry Report) January 2002, since this seminal document marks a significant change in thinking about UK Food Policy. It explores which ideas of markets are employed to construct a new market-oriented UK Food Policy and how these ideas evolved throughout the New Labour and Coalition administrations of the first decade or so of the new millennium. Whilst the analysis focuses on those documents that articulate policy it will also make links to relevant reports such as the Foresight series of reports that directly informed policy strategy pronouncements. Foresight reports are published by the Government Office for Science to provide scientific evidence of the issues that policy attempts to address and may provide insights into government thinking at the time that the various food policy documents were published. Operational policy documents that were focused on the vegetable sector were also included.

So it was reasonable to begin the empirical work of the thesis with a detailed documentary analysis of the key policy documents that articulated UK food policy that emerged from the scan of the government and official literature. The analysis was focused on documents outlined in Figure 2-20 which is reproduced below. The rationale for focusing on these documents is that they are i) key policy strategy documents, or ii) key reports that directly informed key policy strategy or iii) documents detailing the implementation of policy for the fruit and vegetables sector. From the review of the official sources it was clear that for the vegetable sector POs and the Fruit and Vegetables Task Force are two important institutions, so the document articulating the UK PO Scheme, and the report and action plan of the Fruit and Vegetables Task Force are included in the analysis. Finally, given the importance of innovation to the sector and in the absence of Coalition policy for the vegetable sector beyond the Taylor review of 2011, the UK government's stance on agricultural technologies is also included in the analysis as an indication of the Coalition's approach to UK food policy.

Table 4-3 Summary of Key Policy Documents on UK Food Policy relating to Vegetable Production in England

Date	Document	Department/ Key Author(s)	Type of Policy Document
January 2002	Farming and Food: A Sustainable Future, Report of the Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food	Defra/Sir Don Curry	Report to inform policy
2002	The Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food: Facing the Future	Defra	Key policy strategy document
2008	Recipe for Success: Food matters towards a strategy for the 21st century	Cabinet Office Strategy Unit	Report to inform policy
2008	EU Fruit and Vegetables Regime: United Kingdom's National Strategy for Sustainable Operational Programmes 2008-2013	Defra and UK's devolved administrations.	Operational framework
August 2010	Report of the Fruit and Vegetables Task Force	Fruit and Vegetables Task Force	Report to inform policy for F&V
October 2010	Fruit and Vegetables Action Plan	Defra	Operational policy document
2010	Food 2030	Defra	Key policy strategy document
2011	Science for a new age of agriculture.	Lord Taylor	Conservative Party Document
2011	Taylor Review 'Science for a new age of agriculture' Progress Report Summary.	Defra	Policy Document
2011	The future of food and farming: challenges and choices for global sustainability	Government Office for Science	Report to inform policy
2013	A UK Strategy for Agricultural Technologies	HM Government/BIS	Operational policy document

Source: Author

The documents were analysed using the Orthodox/Critical/Heterodox Marketing framework presented in the review of conceptualisations of food policy and marketing in Chapter 3, Table 3-4 (reproduced below as Table 4-6).

Table 4-4 A framework for Understanding Food Policy and Vegetable Production from Orthodox, Critical and Heterodox Marketing Perspectives

	An Orthodox Perspective: Marketing Management	A Critical Perspective: Critical Marketing	A Heterodox Perspective: Markets-as-Networks
Theoretical base and key models	Meta-theory: agency; Neo-classical market economics, orthodox conceptualisations of markets and marketing, 4Ps, the dynamic disequilibrium of markets drives innovation and better ways of satisfying consumers (Hunt, 2000)	Meta-theory: structure; Critical theory (e.g. Marxist), embedded markets, markets entrench inequality and mal-distribution of wealth (Polanyi, 2002:1944), poststructuralist	Meta-theory: critical pluralism; IMP tradition, cultural ecology, heterodox ideas of networks, industrial marketing, the maintenance of the dynamic conditions for dynamic ecological equilibrium, (Alderson in Cox et al., 1964) Key models include : AAR, Interaction model
Societal problems to be addressed	Economic demise - an inability to compete in global markets	Inequalities in access to healthy food, food-related anxiety	Ecological disequilibrium, resources depleted by destructive technologies
Policy goals	Hunt's policy goals: productivity, economic growth, wealth creation	Sustainability and redistribution, environment and health aspects of sustainability, transformation of society	Goals for sustainability: efficient resource use, prosperity and stability, well-being (Jackson, 2009),
UK Food Policy solutions based on:	Competitive, free markets; sustainable intensification of global commodity supply chains, optimal societal outcomes emerge from competitive markets	Alternative to the existing Competition State paradigm	Managed networks; institutional and structural change to support network interaction, regulation of networks to ensure optimal societal outcomes
Policy priority for Vegetables Sector	Competitiveness, efficiency and consolidation within the vegetable sector, sustainable vegetable production in England based on low energy and low carbon inputs	Local trade, self-sufficiency, small scale community-led solutions	Resilience and diversity, sustainable agriculture – based on a larger vegetable production sector to reduce dependence on less sustainable food production
Consuming unit and type of choice	Individual, engaged in rational (choice among) packs/brands/products (Firat & Dholakia, 1982), capable of making sound nutritional choices in their own interests if provided with adequate information	Co-producers -actively involved in production, food and conviviality	Groups and society, (choice among) product classes (e.g. choice between vegetables and other foods), bounded rationality in which consumers satisfy complex needs relating to food choices (beyond nutritional value)
Producers and nature of their relationship with their customers	Mainly conventional production, some organic production as value-added produce, engaged in thin, discrete, adversarial transactions with customers	Co-producers -actively involved in production Short supply chains	Diverse range of producers engaged in thick, embedded, relationships, interdependent based on mutual benefits
R&D and desired output	Focused on mechanisation and bio-tech developments, high tech to improve competitiveness and produce affordable, plentiful produce, using low carbon, efficient production	Focused on the adaptation of natural ecological systems, organic production	Focused on the adaptation of natural ecological systems, low and high tech, learning over time, to produce healthy food, sufficient production, balanced appropriation of value across supply networks

Source: Author

Data Collection: Key Informant Interviews

The study also included interviews with 23 key informants with knowledge of i) UK food policy as it related to vegetable production in England and ii) the vegetable sector in England both conventional and organic production. The study accesses these two groups because the focus of the study is on i) the impact of marketing ideas on UK food policy and ii) the impact of market-oriented UK food policy interventions on vegetable production in England. The study covers both conventional and pioneer/organic production since it is likely that exponents of different production methods may have differing world views concerning policy and marketing that may be explored in the study. The interviews were anonymised and a simple system of identification was adopted. Growers, managers in grower-packer marketing organisations, grower consultants, and policy experts. Growers, that is owner-farmers or farm managers with direct experience of growing, were classified by the prefix Gr. A two digit number was added in the order in which the interviews took place. So, for example, the first grower to be interviewed was given the code Gr01. Managers from larger grower-packer marketing organisations, typically not having direct experience of growing operations, were given the code GP and a two digit number added as above. Grower consultants, for example, agronomists, were given the prefix Con, and those with policy expertise were allocated the prefix Pol. Some individuals had links to more than one of these roles, so the dominant role was chosen to classify them. One interviewee was mistakenly classified as a grower consultant, this was later changed to a policy expert.

The initial focus for the thesis was the fruit and vegetables sector since government statistics and policy documents group these producers into a single sector. However, it was decided to focus on domestic production of vegetables and there were several reasons for this: The fruit and vegetable sector is heterogeneous compared to other agriculture sectors. Figure 4.7 summarises its heterogeneity. Davidson's classic text, the Oxford Companion to Food (Davidson, 2006) lists the most commonly cultivated fruits, a list of over forty (which does not include the most recent varieties such as Pink Lady) and the Re:fresh Directory (FPJ, 2011) lists 185 vegetables including potatoes and mushrooms, although not all are produced in England. Extending the study to cover all fruit and vegetables would have meant designing a much larger study, since Mason (Mason, 2010) suggests sample size for qualitative studies should reflect the heterogeneity of the population. So it became apparent that it was necessary to frame the scope of the thesis to a narrower group of product categories.

One alternative would have been to focus on a single product category, such as brassicas (cauliflowers, broccoli) but this was considered to be too narrow, especially since broader

concerns about the impact of UK on the vegetable sector were to be explored. In the end it was decided to focus on domestic vegetable production in England because: i) despite its heterogeneity in terms of produce, it was a cohesive collection of producers as perceived by policy makers; ii) the domestic sector was sufficiently large to be of concern to policy makers: most of the fruit consumed in England comes from overseas, whereas most of the vegetables consumed are home grown and vegetables are a group of products that could be grown domestically (unlike many varieties of fruit such as oranges and bananas); iii) vegetables are likely to play an important role in the shift towards sustainable agriculture (Foresight, 2011), and iv) English producers were the focus because policy in this area had been devolved to the regional administrations. Because one individual may represent more than one sub-group (for example, a person might be a grower of both field and protected crops), there were opportunities to keep the number of participants to a manageable number across the heterogeneous vegetable sector.

Table 4-5 Heterogeneity in the Vegetable Sector

Criterion	Links to specific key informants (red)	Represented in the sample of participants
Network/ sector/ subsector	Conventional network Gr01, Gr05, Gr06, Gr08, GP01, GP02, Rep01, Rep02, Rep03, Rep 04, Rep05, Rep06, Pol01, Con02 Pioneer (organic) network Gr02, Gr03, Gr04, Rep01, Con04, Gr07, Pol04 Vegetables – protected Gr02, Con01, Gr04, Rep01, Con04, Gr07, GP01, GP02, Rep05, Rep04, Rep06 Vegetables – field Gr01, Con01, Gr03, Pol01, Gr04, Rep01, Gr05, Con04, Gr06, GP01, GP02, Rep05, Gr08, Rep04, Rep06	Sample includes both conventional and pioneer growers, and those with knowledge of both protected and field production
Grower role/ involvement in production	Practising farmer owner Gr02, Gr03, Pol01, Gr04, Gr05, Gr06, Gr07, Gr08, Rep06, Farm manager Gr01, GP01, GP02, Rep04, Consultant (advisor, e.g. agronomist) Con01, Rep01, Con04, Con02, Pol04	Sample includes owners, managers and consultants
Farmer segment (Wilson et al., 2010)	Custodian Gr01, Pol01, Gr04 Lifestyle choice Gr03, Gr07 Pragmatist GP01, GP02 Modern family business, Gr02, Gr05, Gr06, Rep06 Challenged enterprise Gr08 (Gr03?)	Sample covers the spectrum of types of farm
Size of farm/scale of production	Small Gr03, Gr07, Gr08 Medium Gr02, Pol01, Gr04, Gr05, Gr06, Rep04, Rep06 Large Gr01, GP01, GP02	Sample covers the spectrum of size of farm
Nature of the farm	Mixed farm with wide range of produce Gr01, Gr02, Gr03, Pol01, Gr04, GP01, GP02, Rep04, Single or narrow production focus Con01, Gr05, Gr06, Gr07, Gr08, Rep06	Sample covers mixed farms and specialists
Links to other supply chain economic activities	Production focused Gr01, Con01, Pol01, Gr05, Gr08, Rep06 Production and processing/activities along supply chain including wholesaling and retailing Gr02, Gr03, Gr04, Gr06, Gr07, GP01, GP02,	Sample includes farms that engage in some supply chain activities, mainly first stage processing but some small farms also engaged in wholesaling/retailing
Links to overseas suppliers and/or producers	None/few Gr01, Gr02, Gr03, Pol01, Gr05, Gr06, Gr07, Gr08, Rep06 Some/many Gr04, GP01, GP02, Rep04	Sample includes those with some links to overseas suppliers and those with no links
Nature of the grower's	More Embedded Gr01, Gr02, Gr03, Pol01, Gr04, Gr05, Gr06, Gr07, Rep06 Less embedded/Distant Con01, GP01, GP02, Gr08, Rep04	Mainly embedded, some more distant (e.g. GPMO participants)

relationship to the land/farm		
Produce	Mainly simple relatively unprocessed produce Gr01, Gr02, Gr03, Pol01, Gr05, Gr06, GP01, GP02, Gr08, Rep04, Rep06 Simple and composite products Gr04, Gr07,	Most producing less processed produce, a few examples of composite products in both conventional and pioneer farms
Values and priorities	Strong economic concern Gr01, Con01, Pol01, Gr06, GP01, GP02, Gr08, Rep04, Rep06, Pol02, Pol03, Rep02, Rep03, Rep05, Strong environmental concern Gr02, Gr03, Gr04, Gr05, Gr07, Pol04, Rep01, Con04, Con02	A range of economic and environmental values across the sample
View of supply chain relationships	Tending towards cynical and opportunistic Pol01, Gr06, GP01, GP02, Gr08, Rep04, Rep05, Rep06, Pol02, Pol03, Rep02, Rep03 Tending towards idealistic and cooperative Gr01, Gr02, Gr03, Gr04, Gr05, Gr07, Pol04, Con02, Rep01, Con04	A range of views across the sample
Nature of resources	Human/physical/relational/financial/organisational/legal/informational Farms characterised by heterogeneous resource mix	A variety of resources available to the farms across the sample

Source: Author

The Selection of Key Informant Participants

There is a range of different qualitative techniques each of which draw on different theoretical assumptions. Using participants with expert knowledge is an established method in policy research but a key methodological issue is to ensure that access is gained to individuals with sufficient insight and knowledge of the context of the study and that a full range of different perspectives is covered. The study had two main objectives: to assess the impact of marketing ideas on policy, and to assess the impact of a market-oriented UK food policy on the sector. The former question required input from those with an in-depth understanding of UK policy, and the latter required input from those with first-hand knowledge of the impact of policy on the vegetable sector both conventional and pioneer. A thematic analysis of their accounts may be substantive (what they say) or structural (how they construct a coherent account of the world) (Ritchie et al., 2014).

Obtaining Access and Snowballing

Gaining access to the population of vegetable producers experts was challenging but the study was successful in obtaining access to some individuals that had a unique understanding of UK policy after the Curry Commission alongside individuals with expert knowledge of vegetable production. The section below describes how key informants were used in the study and their particular contribution to knowledge of UK food policy and vegetable production.

The demands of running a horticulture/farming business means that growers have limited spare time, and a typical day's work includes little time in the office. Farmers may be reluctant to engage with a research process so a snowball approach was adopted. Grower organisations were used as the starting point, since they had knowledge of the City University's Centre for Food Policy and its role contributing to UK food policy. Connections with some of the crop associations were established at the annual 'Agriculture in the United Kingdom' Seminar that took place in York in February 2011, and at the Centre for Food Policy Food Symposium in December 2011. Follow-up emails secured two interviews, one with the head of a crop association, and one with a senior manager at the Fresh Produce Consortium (FPC). Having obtained some interviews with experts from the crop/sector associations, more contacts were sought and the participants were asked to recommend growers who might be able to contribute to the study. The Defra seminar also provided the contact details of Defra experts involved in policy for the vegetable sector. These individuals were contacted with the result that two senior representatives from Defra's Horticulture Hub contributed to the study, one of whom had many years' experience of UK food policy at a senior level. In addition, initially using personal and professional contacts built up at the Centre for Food Policy, the co-

operation of a former member of the Agriculture and Food Research Council, with experience as a writer on food issues and as a long-standing journalist for a farming publication was secured. The Defra participants were able to represent a conventional view of domestic vegetable production and the third expert provided a critical view of policy and was more closely aligned to the pioneer networks. From the crop association participant another interview was secured with an innovative conventional Lincolnshire grower, who in turn provided a link to a member of the Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food, who was able to provide a unique insight into the policy making process. A number of MPs with links to agriculture were contacted, sometimes using the Centre for Food Policy links, but although possible dates were discussed for interviews, no interviews with MPs were secured; there was some political turmoil at the time of the interviewing research which might explain this.

Separate interview guides were constructed for the two main groups of participants, these are presented in Figures 4-11 and 4-12. Some participants represented more than one group within the study. For example, one individual was a policy expert having been a member of the Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food, but was also a grower and had been active as a representative at various levels in the NFU. The interview guide for policy makers was used with anyone with direct experience of UK food policy making regardless of their knowledge of vegetable production since their insights were rare and more difficult to obtain. Other participants were interviewed using the grower interview guides.

Two grower representatives were from the British Growers' Association plus one from the Tomato Growers' Association and two from the Country Land Association, which represented a wide range of rural businesses as well as vegetable producers. In addition a director of the Fresh Produce Consortium, which represented a range of organisations involved in the vegetable supply chain, was also interviewed. Sadly, despite a number of attempts, it was not possible to secure an interview with a current senior representative from the NFU (in part because a key individual was on maternity leave at the time), however as was mentioned above, one of the policy experts had been an active and senior member of the NFU a few years earlier. For the growers, most of the interviews took place face to face at the grower's farm and this also provided an opportunity to observe at first hand the workings of a vegetable farm. The key informants from the larger GPMOs opted for telephone interviews. In the past efforts to obtain permission to visit GMPOs had been refused, so perhaps these larger organisations were wary of allowing outsiders on to their sites, possibly for commercial reasons.

The phone conversations tended to be more structured and formal and kept more closely to the interview structure but the interviews on the farm site digressed as farmers were keen to show how the farm worked. It was decided that this information was rich and important and so the interviews followed where the farmers wanted to go. As a result, there were occasional problems transcribing the off-site interviews since sometimes they took place in noisy working environments. A couple of interviews took place in London at or near City University.

Fifteen interviews took place across England and six interviews were conducted by phone. Although time consuming, farm visits were extremely useful to gain insights into farm processes and facilities. In total ninety-four individuals and organisations were contacted and twenty-one interviews with twenty-three individuals took place over a period of twenty-one months. Contact details and tracking progress of contacts were recorded in an Excel file retained on a password protected University of Hertfordshire laptop (and later a Roehampton University machine). A backup copy of the file was also stored using the Research and Progress system at City University.

Most of the participants were male but there were a few female participants, the latter, apart from one niche grower, were in managerial positions in industry representative or quality standards organisations, or policy experts. As far as possible, the full range of views voiced by the different key informant participants have been recorded authentically and sympathetically, using their own words as far as possible.

Much of the vegetable production in England takes place in Eastern and South Eastern England, and this is reflected in the purposeful selection of farms from these regions. All vegetables except potatoes are included, again reflecting how Defra, HDC and other governmental and non-governmental organisations classify vegetable production. Vegetable production excluding potatoes falls into two main categories: field vegetables and protected crops according to HDC (2015a). Most vegetable production is sold via the conventional network, the mainstream supply chains involving the multiple retailers, but it was necessary to obtain the views of those producers who make use of pioneer networks, alternative supply chains, such as independent wholesalers and retailers, farmers' markets and box schemes, and food service supply chains in order to understand policy impacts in developing alternative supply chains. Most vegetable production in England is conventional, but there is some organic production and some pioneer producers based in the South West where organic production is more popular were included in the study.

The growers' first-hand experience and practical knowledge are important in the study. Grower consultants (agronomists and those with specialist knowledge of crop growing) are able to provide rich contextual evidence that draws on a scientific and technical understanding of the problems of vegetable production. The views of grower representatives and policy experts such as the horticulture specialists at Defra, were able to provide cross-sector insights.

Figure 4-3 Pictorial Summary of Key Informant Participants

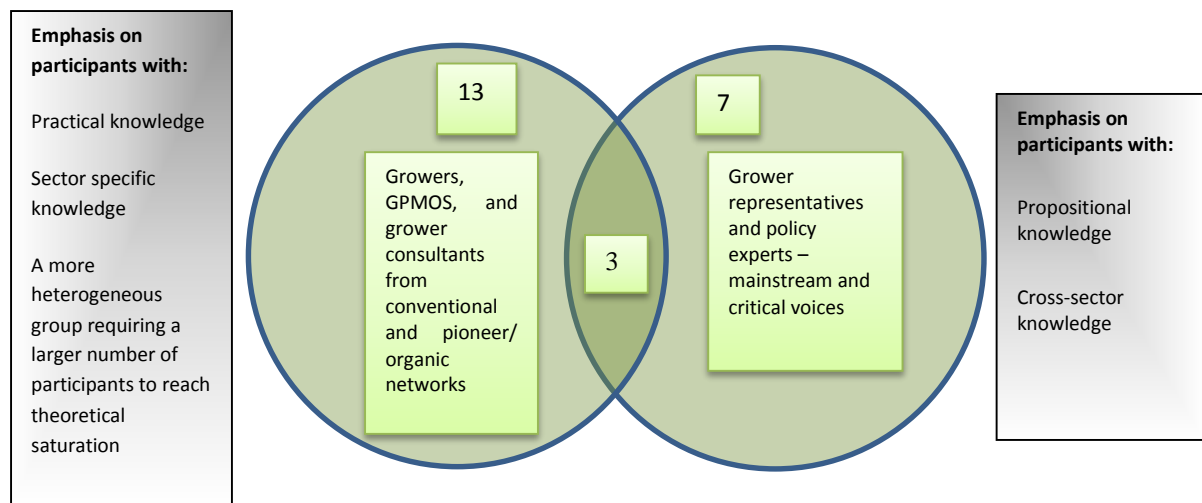


Figure 4-4 Location of participants



Table 4-6 Summary of Key Informants

ID Code	Description	Source of contact and date of contact email	Date and location of interview	Other details
Gr01	Conventional network, modern family business, male Senior farm manager, field and protected crops, East Anglia Medium/large mixed traditional farm Model farm, professional manager but conservation also an important concern Main supply network avoids retailers	Recommended as an example of a model conventional farm by a fresh produce director of a large supermarket multiple First contacted 3/9/12	21/9/12 Interview at farm offices, Thetford, Norfolk 15.30 – 16.31	A brief tour of the estate plus information (maps etc.) was provided.
Gr02	Pioneer network, lifestyle choice, male Organic grower mainly protected crops, East Anglia Entrepreneurial young owner family farm but branched out into downstream supply Alternative supply network through traditional markets and farmers' markets	Personal contact via Farmers' Market in Bury St Edmunds First contacted 3/9/12	18/9/12 Interview at farm near Cambridge 11.30 – 14.30	The participant wanted to make comments off the record. Only the recorded comments are used in the study. A tour of the farm and facilities was also provided.
Con01	Conventional network, pragmatist, male Consultant/agronomist, experience of UK and overseas production Knowledge of large scale production and mainstream supply networks, now retired (challenged enterprise?)	Centre for Food Policy contact First contacted 10/08/2012	21/8/12 Interview at City University, room A305 11.00 – 12.12	
Gr03	Pioneer network, lifestyle choice, male Organic producer/lifestyle farmer field and protected crops, West Country Small farm, experience of food cooperatives Runs market stall as outlet for produce and to supplement farm income	Farmers' market network contact First contacted 15/8/12	7/9/12 Interview by phone Exact time not recorded Duration 53 minutes	
Pol01	Conventional network, custodian, male Owner farmer, traditional family farm, Eastern England Medium/large traditional mixed farm field scale vegetables and other crops Member of the Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food	Recommended contact by Gr06 First contacted 9/10/12	19/10/12 Farm house, Spalding, Lincolnshire 11.30 – 12.49	
Gr04	Pioneer network, custodian, male Medium/large organic grower/supplier field and protected crops,	Centre for Food Policy contact First contacted 9/10/12	30/11/12 Interview in Islington, London	

	Successful box scheme, main location is West Country but also overseas			
Rep01	Mainly conventional network links but some links with pioneer network, male Representative from Tomato Growers Association - mainly protected crops Knowledge of both conventional and organic production	Crop association listing First contacted 14/8/12	31/8/12 Interview by phone Exact time not recorded Duration: 64 minutes	
Gr05	Conventional network, modern family business, male Young owner farmer third generation family farm, South East Sustainability champion Field scale vegetables, serving mainly ethnic wholesale foodservice markets, extending into top fruit production	Centre for Food Policy contact First contacted 25/3/13	24/4/13 Interview at farm, Harwich, Essex 10.00 – 11.12	
Con04	Pioneer network, male South East Grower consultant and writer, sustainability champion	Centre for Food Policy contact First contacted 10/8/12	30/8/12 Interview at home near Manningtree, Essex 11.30 – 12.54	
Gr06	Conventional network, pragmatist, male Owner farmer (semi-retired), traditional family medium sized farm, Field scale vegetables, Eastern England	Recommended contact by Rep04 First contacted 03/09/12	21/9/12 Farm offices and farm house, South Holland, Lincolnshire 11.30 – 12.10 and then a further 48 minutes over lunch	The first part of the interview took place in the farm offices but was interrupted. The rest of the interview took place during a tour of the farm and at the farm house over lunch.
Gr07	Pioneer network, lifestyle choice, female Organic grower (not certified), West Country Very small niche producer (chillies) supplements income from farm, part time, lifestyle choice Serves farmers' markets and some food producers	Recommended contact by Gr03 First contacted 15/8/12	22/8/12 Frome, Somerset 12.00 – 12.45	
GP01	Conventional network, pragmatist, male Expertise covers both field and protected crops, based in South East Technical Manager for large GPMO Focal supplier for retail multiples	Centre for Food Policy contact First contacted 15/8/12	Phone interview 31/8/12 Exact time not recorded, duration 63 minutes	
GP02	Conventional network, pragmatist, male	Centre for Food Policy contact First contacted 15/8/12	Phone interview 7/9/12	

	Expertise covers both field and protected crops based in South East Business Development Director for large GPMO Focal supplier for retail multiples		Exact time not recorded, duration 45minutes	
Pol02	Conventional network but some knowledge of pioneer network, female Representative from Defra, senior role Extensive knowledge of horticulture across both field and protected crops	Defra was selected as a key government department, contact details on website then email forwarded to participants Pol02 and Pol03	19/11/13 Interviewed in Defra offices, London, 11.10 – 12.48	Pol02 and Pol 03 interviewed together at Defra offices in London
Pol03	Conventional network but some knowledge of pioneer network, female Representative from Defra, middle manager role Extensive knowledge of horticulture across both field and protected crops	First contacted 25/10/13		
Rep02	Conventional network, male Representative from CLA (Country Land Association) Rural business focus, conventional affiliation	Farming/crop association listing First contacted 25/11/13	6/12/13 Interviewed in CLA offices, London	Rep02 and Rep 03 interviewed together at offices in London
Rep03	Conventional network, male Representative from CLA Rural business focus, conventional affiliation			
Rep05	Conventional network, female Representative from FPC (Fresh Produce Consortium) Broad knowledge of the supply network	Farming/crop association listing First contacted 14/8/13	5/11/13 Interviewed near City University 13.00 – 14.45 (including a break for lunch, recorded interview time 70 minutes)	
Gr08	Conventional network, challenged enterprise, male Grower owner (retired) with some consultancy experience Small/medium sized farm, South East Formerly a mixed farm, most recently focused on specialist vegetable production for catering trade	Centre for Food Policy contact First contacted 15/08/12	22/08/2012 Interviewed at farm, Denham, Berkshire 16.00 – 16.52	
Con02	Conventional and pioneer affiliation, female Senior representative from LEAF, grower environmental standards body	Farming/crop association listing First contacted 25/11/13	13/12/13 Phone interview via Bluetooth	Interview was conducted as interviewee was driving so

	Broad knowledge of vegetable sector across England		Exact time not recorded Duration: 65 minutes	quality of the recording was occasionally affected
Rep04	Conventional network affiliation, male Representative of British Growers Association (Senior manager) Broad knowledge across field scale and protected crops	Farming/crop association listing First contacted BGA 10/8/12	29/8/12 Interview at BGA offices, Louth, Lincolnshire 14.00 – 15.10	
Rep06	Conventional network affiliation, modern family business, male Representative of British Growers Association (Chair) Broad knowledge of field scale and protected crops Also successful niche grower (asparagus, sprouts), based in North, farming background	LinkedIn contact First contacted 7/7/14	26/9/14 Phone interview Exact time not recorded Duration 60 minutes	Rep06 is a well-known figure both as a grower representative and as an award-winning farmer. Contact made via a mutual LinkedIn contact.
Pol04	Pioneer network affiliation, male Writer on food and agriculture (semi-retired), former member of Agriculture and Food Research Council Organic affiliation, a critical voice in the policy discourse	Key informant – contact details on webpage First contacted 22/5/14	29/7/14 11.15 – 12.31 Interview at home, Oxford	Pol04 is a well-known writer critical of mainstream food and farming policy

Separate interview guides were constructed for the two main groups of participants, these are presented in Tables 4-7 and 4-8 below:

Table 4-7 Indicative questions for grower organisations

Question topic	Form of questions	Interviewer prompts	Links to academic and government/official literature
Market Orientation questions (MO) – related to customer/ collaborator partner(s) information acquisition, dissemination and responsiveness.	<p>Does your producer organisation make good use of information on customers and collaborative partners (e.g. from trade publications, informal sources)? Is the information timely?</p> <p>How is the information disseminated across the organisation?</p> <p>What approach to planning for future opportunities is adopted?</p> <p>What happens when customers and collaborators experience problems with the quality of your produce</p>	<p>Discussions on customer trends and collaborative opportunities - look for evidence of formal and informal activity, look for specific examples</p> <p>Look for evidence of impact of new information on formation of plans</p> <p>Look for evidence of responsiveness</p>	<p>Conceptualisations of market orientation</p> <p>MO as the ability to gather, disseminate and respond to external information (MARKOR scale)(Kohli et al., 1993)</p> <p>MO as customer orientation, competitor orientation, inter-functional coordination, long term horizon, concern for profit (Narver and Slater, 1990)</p>
Relationship Marketing Orientation questions (RMO) – evidence of bonding, communication, shared values, empathy, reciprocity and trust between grower and other members of the supply chain	<p>Considering the main business relationships with major customers (e.g. buying groups, retailers)</p> <p>Describe the nature of the cooperation and contact. How important is it for your business to establish long term relationships?</p> <p>How would you describe the communication process between your organisation and its major customers?</p> <p>Would you say that you share the same worldview as your major customers in terms of opinions, feelings and values? If not how are they different?</p> <p>Do you think there is empathy, reciprocity and trust between you and your major customers? Can you provide some examples to demonstrate this?</p>	<p>Look for frequent, honest, able to show discontent</p> <p>Or examples that show a lack of these qualities?</p>	<p>Link to conceptualisations of relationship marketing orientation: (Morgan and Hunt, 1994, Gummesson, 2008)</p> <p>Relationships across internal, buyer, lateral and supplier partners KMV model - trust and commitment (Morgan and Hunt, 1994)</p>

<p>Marketing Strategy questions - business strategies employed</p>	<p>Over the last decade describe the business strategies your organisation has engaged in – e.g. adding value, cost reduction, diversification into up- or down-stream activities, diversification outside of the F&V supply chain (e.g. tourism, biofuels).</p> <p>Were these strategies successful?</p> <p>How did government initiatives help you engage in any of these strategies?</p>	<p>Look for evidence of strategies based on added value, reduced costs, diversification and business performance (in broad terms: worse than, better than other competitors in main market): sales growth, customer retention, return on investment, and market share</p>	<p>Link to orthodox marketing strategies (Ansoff, 1986, Porter, 1985):</p> <p>Market penetration, market development, product development, diversification</p> <p>Generic strategies – low cost, differentiate, focus</p>
<p>Environmental concern – protection of natural resources, low carbon</p>	<p>Would you say that environmental concerns are important for your organisation?</p> <p>What kinds of strategies are employed to address environmental concerns?</p> <p>What reasons underpin your organisation’s attitudes to environmental issues?</p>	<p>Look for evidence of concern in terms of priority/not a priority for this organisation)</p> <p>- reducing GHG emissions; reducing fertilizer and pesticide usage, increasing diversity, enhancement of landscape</p>	<p>Link to policy documents: The Curry Report (Defra, 2002a)</p> <p>Entry and higher level scheme compliance</p> <p>PO membership and link to environmental compliance</p> <p>Changing production to lower input/energy/carbon models</p>
<p>Governance of supply chain issues</p>	<p>What kinds of problems does your organisation experience in its dealings with supply chain customers?</p>	<p>Look for evidence of access to information on prices, market requirements, access to financial markets and credit, attitude to risk, ability to diversify, existence and nature of contracts and written agreements.</p> <p>Allow unprompted issues to be exhausted before prompting on the above supply chain issues</p>	<p>Link to features of market failure from literature on fair trade (Nicholls and Opal, 2005), (see figure x.a below) and EU principles of good practice in vertical relationships in food supply chain (High Level Forum for a Better Functioning Supply Chain B2B Platform, 2011)</p> <p>Lack of information on prices and market requirements; lack of access to financial markets and credit; risk averse behaviour; unsustainable methods of production; poor growers; lack of transparent contracts; absence of good practice in contracts</p>

Table 4-8 Indicative questions for grower representatives/policy experts:

Question topic	Form of questions	Interviewer prompts	Links to academic and government /official literature
UK Food Policy priorities for the vegetable sector	<p>The fruit and vegetable action plan was published in October 2010.</p> <p>What progress is being made towards the goals of the plan i.e. in terms of i) a competitive supply base; ii) an effective supply chain iii) increased consumption and iv) environmentally benign production of vegetables?</p> <p>To what extent do the goals remain relevant – or has the agenda changed?</p>		<p>Link to Fruit and Vegetable Task Force documents (Fruit and Vegetables Task Force, 2010b, Fruit and Vegetables Task Force, 2010c)</p>
Impact of a decade of policy	<p>There have been a number of initiatives that have affected the fruit and vegetable sector since the publication of The Curry report.</p> <p>What was the impact of the various initiatives?</p> <p>FV POs are now the main vehicle for delivering public support to the sector but many growers remain outside of the scheme. What do you think are the issues to be overcome in supporting English vegetable producers?</p> <p>What improvements can be made in the process of implementing support for the vegetable sector?</p>	<p>Allow unprompted responses first before mentioning specific initiatives (Assured Produce; FCC; Farmers' Markets; Entry and Higher Level Schemes; POs; GCA; School Fruit/Veg Scheme)</p> <p>Look for evidence of policy continuation and policy shift across the sustainability debate (economic, health, environment)</p> <p>Prompt for evidence of shifts in the policy community, changes in agenda, and impact of events once initial response given, probe on tension between competitive producers, and buyer dominated global supply chains.</p>	<p>Link to key policy documents and their policy initiatives:</p> <p>The Curry Report (Defra, 2002a); SFFS (Defra, 2002b); (Cabinet Office, 2008); (Defra, 2010c); (Lord Taylor, 2011)</p>
Future developments – general themes	<p>How do you see the role of government (national and regional) in shaping the future development of fruit and vegetables production in England?</p> <p>Which actors are shaping the development of the debate; does market reconnection remain a theme for food policy?</p>	<p>Probe for evidence of policy continuation and policy shift in terms of reconnection (with market, supply chain and the environment), and shifts in the policy development process</p>	<p>Link to key policy documents, The Curry Report (Defra, 2002a); SFFS (Defra, 2002b); (Cabinet Office, 2008); (Defra, 2010c); (Lord Taylor, 2011)</p>

Data Analysis of Key Informant Interviews

The substantive analysis (what participants said) began by exploring key informants' views on i) reconnection with the market and ii) with the environment, the two major themes from the Curry Report. The research made use of conventional conceptualisations of market orientation (MO) and relationship marketing orientation (RMO) and used orthodox conceptualisations of MO and RMO in the design of the interview guide for growers (Narver and Slater, 1990, Kohli et al., 1993). Evidence of use of particular marketing strategies advocated in policy documents based on ideas from Porter and Ansoff (Porter, 1985; Ansoff, 1986) was gathered. Environmental issues were explored using The Curry report's view of environmental good practice as i) protection of the landscape; ii) GHG emissions and iii) concern for diversity (Glazer, 2010). Policy had framed reconnection as a failure to market but features of market failure (or at least structural problems in markets) from critical marketing theory were also used as a priori classifications. Market malfunction was conceptualised using criteria for market failure from the fair trade movement (Nicholls and Opal, 2005), and European Commission's B2B Platform Principles of Good Practice on Vertical Relationships in the Food Chain (High Level Forum for a Better Functioning Supply Chain B2B Platform, 2011). Whilst much of the analysis focused on substantive issues it became clear that a structural analysis was also necessary since different participants provided very different accounts (how they framed the issues) of the problems and solutions of marketing in the vegetable sector.

Some time was spent reading and transcribing the interviews, which provided an opportunity to become more familiar with the text of the conversations. Audio files and transcripts were stored on a password-protected laptop so that conversations could be listened to as well as read.

Initially Excel was used to keep track of the analysis but later NVivo was used to code the transcripts of the interviews. Broad *a priori* categories based on the research questions above were used. Concepts from the policy literature and the marketing literature guided the choice of themes within the broad categories but it was also important to allow some themes to emerge from the accounts. For example, although the literature on commodity chains suggested that labour issues would be an important theme (for example, Friedland et al., 1981, Wells, 1997), the particular issue of workers' health emerged from a key informant interview. NVivo enables systematic and comprehensive coverage of the data set. The same categories could be applied across all the units (interviews) and gathered into various thematic reports but the original transcripts were stored separately from the thematic reports. This affords transparency and ensures that the process of analysis is accessible to other researchers. NVivo enables multiple coding. At first the analysis focused on issues of market

failure and failure to market to address RQ2 but later the codes relating to heterodox marketing concepts could be applied to the original data units to address RQ3.

Presentation of Findings from the Empirical Data

Chapter 5 addresses Research Question 1: How did ideas about markets and marketing shape a market-oriented UK food policy since 2002? The analysis of the policy documents is presented in this chapter supported by evidence from key informants. A framework for policy analysis from Howlett and Ramesh (2003) which focused on policy scope, policy instruments and distributional outcomes was used to provide a structure for the analysis. A typology of policy mechanisms – incentives, regulation and information, or more informally carrots, sticks and sermons - is also used in the analysis (Bemelmans-Videc et al., 2003).

Chapters 6 and 7 address Research Question 2: What impact did a market-oriented UK food policy have on domestic production of vegetables in England? Using a framework from the Fruit and Vegetables Action plan the findings show how growers responded to the various policy mechanisms designed to support better marketing and whether they had a positive impact on vegetable production. Chapter Six focuses on policy mechanisms designed to support a more competitive supply base. Chapter 7 presents the findings on policy mechanisms to improve the supply chain, and to increase consumption of vegetables. The final section of Chapter 7 moves beyond what policy did to explore whether UK Food Policy had failed to address structural problems. Rather than focusing on better marketing, should policy have attempted to address issues of fairness related to structural problems growers encountered in the supply chain? A framework for exploring market malfunction derived from critical marketing and from EU policy guidelines on well-functioning supply chains was applied to assess whether there were problems that a policy to encourage better marketing did not address.

Chapter 8 provides a discussion of the links between the evidence provided by the documentary analysis and key informant accounts, the marketing and policy literature, the published data and the government and official documentation. It attempts to offer a compelling explanation that bridges the competing marketing theories and the empirical research on the vegetable sector and policy context. Chapter 9 presents conclusions that can be made about UK Food Policy and the place of vegetable production in England as part of a sustainable food system. It aims to demonstrate the contribution that the thesis makes to the food policy discourse and literature.

Ethics

The study was registered with the School of Health Sciences Research Ethics Committee at City University and was submitted and an application for approval of research involving human

participants was submitted on 24th June 2012. The study was begun when the Centre for Food Policy was located in Health Sciences, before its move to the School of Social Sciences; thus the ethics approval system was detailed in line with the conventions for that academic location. Approval for the study was granted on 27th July 2012 and the ethical approval reference is PhD/12-13/06. All data files (individuals contacted, participant details, audio recordings and transcripts of interviews, Nvivo thematic reports etc.) are stored on a password-protected computer. The application for ethical approval and related documentation are presented in Appendix 3

Chapter Summary

The end of Chapter 3 showed how the research questions addressed a gap in the literature relating to an under-researched policy issue and policy context: UK Food Policy 2002-2015 for the vegetable sector. Chapter 4 explained and justified a realist conceptual framework, often adopted in policy studies, to explore the two research questions which aimed to understand how ideas from marketing were used in UK Food Policy, how they evolved, and how they impacted on those involved in vegetable production and to what effect. Given these research questions, the chapter then explained how the methods adopted gathered the evidence required to answer them. Since the purpose of this research is explanation building rather than the verification of a theoretical model using inferential statistics, the methods chosen are qualitative rather than quantitative. Document analysis and key informant interviews, augmented with the secondary data on the vegetable sector provided in Chapter 2, were used to build up a picture of how ideas from marketing were used in UK Food Policy 2002-2015, and how the new market oriented policy impacted on the vegetable sector. Details of which documents were selected, which experts were interviewed (and why), and the indicative questions used in the interviews, along with their links to the academic and government/official literature, are provided to make transparent the processes of evidence gathering and sense making, and to demonstrate that the evidence was gathered in accordance with university ethical guidelines. This concludes Part Two, Research Design and Methodology. The next section, Part Three, presents the findings in Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

PART THREE: FINDINGS

Chapter 5 The Impact of Marketing Ideas on UK Food Policy

Chapter Introduction


This chapter presents the findings related to the first research question: **How have ideas about markets and marketing shaped UK Food Policy since the publication of “*Farming and Food: A Sustainable Future, Report of the Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food*” (the Curry Report)?**

It focuses on exploring the impact of marketing ideas on UK Food Policy 2002-2015. Chapter 2 outlined the chronology of food and farming policy documents beginning with the publication of the Curry Report in 2002 up to the publication of the UK Strategy for Agricultural Technologies in 2013. The UK Food Policy documents that are analysed here were purposely selected as outlined in Chapter 4 to include three types of policy documentation: i) key policy pronouncements, ii) policy documents that provided the evidence for the policy pronouncements, and iii) key operational documents relevant to the vegetable sector. Three phases of UK Food Policy are analysed: early New Labour Policy 2002-2007; Late New Labour Food Policy 2008-2010; and Coalition Food Policy 2010-2015. Tables 5.1, 5-4 and 5-6 provide a structured summary of the impact of marketing themes on policy *outcomes* relating to i) the three pillars of profit, planet and people, and ii) the impact of marketing themes on the *policy mechanisms* adopted. A simple policy typology from Bemelmans-Videc et al (2003) is used, from most to least powerful policy mechanism: regulation-based interventions (sticks), economic incentives (carrots), and information/advice (sermons). Also scrutinised are the policy actors involved in the development of policy; the distributional outcomes reflected in the representation of various constituencies and interest groups; and the nature of the evidence used to support particular policies.

The Impact of Marketing Ideas on Early New Labour UK Food Policy

Table 5-1 summarises the key policy documents in Early New Labour Policy in terms of evidence, policy pronouncements and operational documents.

Table 5-1 Early New Labour UK Food Policy 2002-2007

A Turn to the Market in UK Food Policy – Orthodox Marketing Themes Influence Policy			
	Evidence base:	Key Policy Pronouncements:	Key operational documents for the vegetable sector:
	<p>Curry Report (CR) 152 page document</p> <p>Pluralistic, consultative model adopted for evidence gathering</p>	<p>Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food (SFFS) 52 page document</p> <p>Largely accepts the narrative from the Curry Report</p>	<p>National Strategy for Operational Programmes of Producer Organisations in the UK 34 page document</p> <p>Linked to SFFS and EU policy for POs</p>
<p>Impact of Marketing Ideas on Policy Outcomes: Profit, planet, people</p>	<p>Profit theme based on consumer sovereignty narrative and orthodox marketing theory of competition derived from Porter and Ansoff</p> <p>Planet: brings environmental issues to the fore in UK Food Policy – and into growers’ business models; citizen consumer of countryside as an aesthetic good</p> <p>Few recommendations on people pillar (3 of 105)</p>	<p>Profit theme dominates but the use of the three pillar model opens up a policy space for health</p> <p>Planet: continues Curry theme of environmental protection as a public good that farmers provide</p> <p>People: health conceptualised within an orthodox marketing framework based on individual rational choice</p>	<p>Significant financial support for profit pillar. Horizontal collaboration model based on orthodox conceptualisation of supply chains</p> <p>Planet: competitiveness linked to environmental compliance (e.g. capital funding for low carbon energy/biofuel systems). Detailed environmental priorities</p> <p>People – N/A</p>
<p>Impact of Marketing Ideas on Policy Mechanisms: Carrots (economic incentives), sticks (regulation) and sermons (information provision and advice)</p>	<p>105 policy mechanisms, economic incentives dominate but also many informational components - e.g. information packs for retiring farmers, a few ‘carrots’ with ‘sticks’ attached - e.g. funding in exchange for compliance. Orthodox marketing suggests that lightly regulated markets deliver societal benefits.</p>	<p>Adoption of Curry recommendations – only 3 of 105 were rejected (rejections included ‘sticks’ for retailers) Significant funding for ‘carrots’, Some ‘sticks’, and plenty of ‘sermons’ (e.g. advice /information) on competitiveness, and consumption</p>	<p>Significant economic incentives linked to environmental regulation.</p> <p>Regulation controlled by RPA and a complex EU regulatory system to check opportunistic behaviour</p>

Source: Author

Report of the Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food (Curry Report)

The Curry Report included a number of incentive-based and informational policy mechanisms. Table 5-1 classifies the policy mechanisms advocated in the Curry Report.

Table 5-2 Classification of the Curry Report Recommendations

Classification of Curry recommendations related to the UK Vegetable Sector (Recommendations as numbered in the Response to the Report of the Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food by HM Government (2002).)	(Total = 105)	Recommendations
INFORMATION, REGULATION AND THE STATE	11	
CAP reform	4	1, 2, 12, 64,
Towards an evidence-based policy (research; information to and from farmers etc.)	7	4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 29, 31
FARMING AS A BUSINESS	39	
Supply chain issues – relationships along the supply chain, collaboration and cooperation, alternative supply chains, supply chains in the public sector, farmer representation body	8	9, 10, 11, 58, 84, 100, 103, 104
Helping farmers manage risk and reduce costs	6	3, 13, 16, 42, 43, 44,
Helping farmers add value	9	17, 18, 20, 22, 24, 25, 27, 28, 86,
Helping farmers diversify	5	21, 38, 39, 40, 45,
People in farming – recruitment, training and education of new and existing farmers, retirement of older farmers	11	46, 47, 48, 49, 50-57
FARMING AND THE ENVIRONMENT	21	
Support for environmental protection role of farmers	17	59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 69, 70-79, 105
Pesticide use	4	80-83,
FARMING AND THE PUBLIC	6	
Farmers and the public	3	87, 88, 89,
Public health	3	98, 101, 102
OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS	28	
Rejected recommendations:	3	23, 30, 37,
Not relevant to horticulture (e.g. related to animal husbandry, forestry etc.)	25	14, 15, 19, 26, 32-36, 41, 55, 65-68, 85, 90-97, 99

Source: Author, data from Farming and Food: A Sustainable Future, Report of the Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food, (2002); and Response to the Report of the Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food by HM Government, (2002).

The Curry Report advocated a number of policy mechanisms based on the need for English farmers to compete more effectively and engage in better marketing. Subsidies in the form of direct payments for production were seen as part of the problem of disconnection

[Subsidies] divide producers from their market, distort price signals, and mask inefficiency. As a result, some farmers have been slow to meet their customers' requirements, slow to change, and slow to innovate. (Defra, 2002a: 20)

The Curry Report advocated a number of policy mechanisms based on mainstream orthodox marketing ideas. Porter's generic strategies (1985) to compete on the basis of a low cost base; or to compete on the basis of added value (differentiation) were used in the Curry Report. Ansoff's growth strategies were reflected in the advice for market development and diversification (Ansoff, 1986). Chapter 2, entitled Profit:

'...sets out the strategies that we think English farmers and processors will need to employ to get on in an ever more competitive marketplace:

- *efficiency — and how food producers can take best advantage of new technical developments; how collaboration, more mature trading relationships, better management of risk and a more flexible labour market can help cut costs;*

- *adding value — how higher standards and care for the countryside can be turned into a selling point*

through assurance schemes and marketing; how we can address this country's poor animal health record; how we can unlock already growing demand for local food;

- *diversification — and the opportunities for farming in areas like non-food crops, tourism and water management. P19*

The business-like tone reflects the technocratic approach to commercial problems advocated in popular strategic marketing texts such as the Johnson and Scholes text (1989) that encouraged firms to examine their marketing environment to seek out opportunities for competitive advantage. The existing supply chain perceived as a *'remarkable feat of logistics.'* (Defra, 2002a:31). Consolidation in the external supply chain environment was assumed to be inevitable with positive societal outcomes:

'The trend to consolidation gives supermarkets, food service chains and major processors significant influence both over consumers and farmers. They will use this power to require higher, more consistent standards from producers —at lower prices.' (Defra, 2002a:16).

It was up to farmers to respond:

'They [farmers] will need to be better at marketing, better at working together, and better at understanding their business as a business.' (Defra, 2002a:16).

And if they did there were good opportunities for them:

'Farmers and farmers' groups that work closely with supermarkets and processors, and that are in touch with the consumer, can do good business.' (Defra, 2002a:17)

Table 5-3 Policy initiatives from or revitalised by the Curry Commission Relevant to the vegetable sector

Curry Commission Policy initiatives	Description and links to orthodox marketing concepts
The Food Chain Centre (FCC)	<p>Provided research on improving efficiency in production</p> <p>Porter's generic strategies - competitive advantage through low costs – lean management approach</p>
Assured Food Standards/Red Tractor	<p>Quasi brand for fresh produce</p> <p>Porter's generic strategies - competitive advantage through adding value</p>
The English Farming and Food Partnership (EFFP)	<p>Provided advice on collaboration</p> <p>Value chain - better coordination between growers and with vertical supply chains</p>
Food From Britain	<p>Support for export</p> <p>Ansoff Growth Strategies: growth through market development</p>
Demonstration farms	<p>Innovation - diffusion of best practice - transferred from within one organisation into another</p>
Farmers' markets	<p>Opening up access to new markets - new opportunities driven by understanding and satisfying consumer demand.</p> <p>Reaching new customers – added value strategy derived from Porter's generic strategy model</p>
The Applied Research Forum for Farming and Food (now part of AHDB)	<p>Hunt's General Theory of Competition - dynamic markets and heterogeneous supply and demand – firms need to continuously innovate to find a competitive advantage</p>

Source: Author

Given the difficult financial circumstances in which British farming found itself at the turn of the new millennium, it was hardly surprising that the Curry Report focused so much on transforming farming as a business activity and used prescriptions from orthodox marketing. With hindsight it is commendable that the Curry Report was able to engage with sustainability as well. The experience of

recent environmental and food safety crises in farming may have made it easier to persuade policy makers of the importance of sustainability to long term economic success for British agriculture.

'The driving force was that there had been environmental degradation and that it was necessary to turn the corner on that.[...] Margaret Becket was very keen on that side and the current civil servants are still very keen on environmental elements. [...] I mean people criticise it now [...] but to get any degree of commitment to payment in lieu on an environmental scheme was quite something actually.[...] So it was a fascinating time and to get the ELS [entry level stewardship] scheme, you know, on the environmental side up and running...'

Quote from policy expert (Pol01)

The use of the term reconnection was a way of linking the two strands of the new UK Food Policy of better marketing and better environmental husbandry. Reconnection – to the market, supply chain, and to the environment captured the idea of a solution the problems in farming that were linked to a productionist policy that encouraged over production. By encouraging farmers to become more sensitive to the markets for their produce policy was signalling a way forward that was less wasteful in terms of taxpayers' spending, and in terms of the impact on the environment. As such the policy was able to address a broad range of concerns and thus was broadly accepted as the basis for a new market-oriented UK Food Policy.

'And having looked at the Curry Report yesterday, I was thinking, and I remember at the time there was a lot of push back from people saying there was too much emphasis on the environment then. And you see this pendulum swing. And lots of that is to do with what's happened with the economy, I think, in terms of the focus shifting somewhat. A lot of environmental aspects have become core business now, to do with waste management, and energy. And there's all the benefits of managing your costs down. Reducing the waste.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep05)

The Curry Report argued that farmers should cooperate with other farmers and collaborate with other organisations along the supply chain. However cooperation and collaboration were not as unproblematic for farmers as the Curry Report seemed to suggest. Cox and Chicksand (2005) suggested that it was the retail multiples rather than suppliers that were best placed to appropriate the benefits from increased collaboration. In addition some forms of business to business cooperation, such as reciprocal arrangements, were seen to be incompatible with societal welfare (Tadajewski, 2009); (Bush and Gelb, 2005) especially when collaborations adversely affected competition (Desrochers et al., 2003).

If you look at the best grower in this country, and you look at Mr Tesco's results, the difference is that Tesco make huge profits, the grower is not, simple as that, right.

Quote from grower representative (Rep01)

The Role of the Retailers in Vegetable Supply Chains

'...frankly, the supermarket buyers have too much power. There is a clear fear factor within the vegetable sector [...] supermarkets have got too much power, the government can't really do anything about it...'

Quote from grower representative (Rep 02)

As suggested above, the Curry Report largely sidestepped the issue of retailer power and its impact on producers. Despite concerns about the impact of increasing concentration in grocery retailing (Dobson et al., 2001) and as evidenced by the Competition Commission's investigation into supermarkets at the turn of the new millennium (2000), the Curry Report framed the problems in farming as a failure to market rather than a structural malfunction in the supply chain. Such a view was consistent with Hunt's General Theory of Competition which asserted that i) dynamic markets provided plenty of opportunities for firms with heterogeneous resources that were constantly seeking opportunities to innovate ii) policy makers should not be over concerned if market conditions do not conform to a perfectly competitive ideal and iii) policy makers should be wary about intervening in markets because it is through market interactions that wealth and economic growth are achieved and improvements in productivity are realised. The narrative presented in the Curry Report acknowledges that grocery chains were effective in satisfying customers and thus were a positive force in terms of societal well-being, an argument that the retailers asserted (for example, see Walmart's update on its progress towards sustainability linked efficient retailer dominated supply chains, low environmental impact and societal benefit (2010)). One of the three recommendations to be rejected by the government was the suggestion for rate relief for a retailer that provided space for local produce in its stores (recommendation 23) (2002). The reason for its rejection was concern for practical problems associated with administering a system of business rate relief as well as problems in defining the term local. It would appear that in making this decision the government was careful to avoid overcomplicating retailers' relationships with local authorities and overburdening them with increased regulatory constraints.

'I don't think our government wants to take on the retailer industry. I think they'd recoil from that.'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr06)

Concerns in policy circles about retailer concentration were nothing new. There were concerns about buyer power in the second half of the nineteenth century as department stores and multiples expanded rapidly to sell the newly packaged, branded and advertised goods (Yamey, 1966). Then the response was regulation in the form of resale price maintenance (r.p.m.). It was enforced by a powerful trade associations representing brand manufacturers and independent retailers (Pickering, 1966). This action kept buyer power in check and was generally supported by the state and society (Pickering, 1966). By the 1930s r.p.m. was a common practice across a number of consumer markets including groceries (Yamey, 1966) and Yamey also reported that prior to the second world war the British public was generally tolerant of 'organised constraints on competition' (Yamey, 1966 page 257). But as scarcity gave way to abundance in grocery markets in the 1950s, and with the introduction of innovations in self-service in retailing (Cochoy in Araujo et al., 2010), the legitimacy of restrictions on lower prices began to be questioned. Retailers wanted to exploit the emerging opportunities for growth based on lower unit costs and thus lower prices for consumers. Proscribing resale price maintenance opened up these growth opportunities for grocery retailers. And although *recommended* prices remained popular well into the 1970s, the 1956 Restricted Trade Practices Act and the 1964 Resale Price Maintenance Act outlawed resale price maintenance in all but a handful of sectors such as pharmacy and books (Pickering, 1974). The large grocery retail multiples that emerged as a result of the technological and legislative changes were able to use their position to appropriate value from other supply chain actors including suppliers (Cox and Chicksand, 2005) to such an extent that the Competition Commission investigated supermarkets in 2000 and later in 2008 (2000, 2008). The Competition Commission, perhaps mindful of the fact that retail multiples did deliver lower unit prices to consumers (Hawkes, 2008), ruled that voluntary codes of practice were an effective solution to problems of buyer power in the grocery sector. Not everyone agreed:

...it's taken the government, oh God knows, 15 years to have an adjudicator. [...] we have no legal [...] Framework to protect growers. Now, in a sense that might be a good thing if you're a consumer, because it means the prices are kept down. It's a bad thing if you're a grower, because you've got no margin, you've got no profit [...] you're relying on very thin margins to exist on [...] Effectively, you're relying on the good grace of a supermarket buyer...

Quote from grower representative (Rep03)

Meanwhile growers and other suppliers who supplied the supermarket chains experienced severe financial pressures on their margins (Towill, 2005). Nevertheless the farming community seemed to have accepted the analysis of its problems as presented in the Curry Report; a later case study report

on horticulture reflected a similar viewpoint (2006), despite widespread concern about retailer concentration. Challenging the growing popularity of liberal market structures and institutions based on a global trade framework would have been confronted by resistance from powerful downstream interest groups that could draw on a consumer welfare argument and would have run counter to the mood of trade reform within the European Union.

The Curry Report and Environmental Protection

An orthodox marketing perspective influenced how environmental issues were depicted. The protection of the environment was presented as a public good provided by farmers in exchange for payment from the public purse.

'If society wants environmental benefits ... which cannot be delivered by the market on its own then farmers should be rewarded from the public purse for providing them.' (Defra, 2002a) page 73.

It was an attempt to value natural resources in market terms, and to link economic and environmental benefits in agricultural production. It is interesting to note which environmental issues were highlighted. High on the agenda in The Curry Report was the preservation of the landscape of the countryside, its aesthetic preserved for citizens to enjoy, and pay for, as a leisure facility. In addition farmers were also encouraged be more environmentally friendly by growing biofuels, reducing waste, and using renewable sources of energy. The Curry Report successfully challenged the idea that environmental despoliation was an unimportant externality for UK Food Policy. Since the MacSharry Report of 1992 the EU was moving towards a system of decoupled payments for farmers in which farm subsidies were linked to environmental protection and rural development rather than to production (Cardwell, 2004). The dual criticisms of the old productionist approach as economically inefficient and bad for the environment were addressed by calling on farmers to respond to market signals *and* protect natural resources in response to quasi-market signals from grateful taxpayers. By demonstrating a link between good husbandry and commercial viability the Curry Report was successful in encouraging growers to exploit opportunities to reduce costs and GHGs. Although the market incentive was powerful in encouraging farmers to engage in activities that would protect the natural environment, the market metaphor had its limits as various writers have highlighted. (Van Dam and Apeldoorn, 1996) suggested that the supply of natural resources could not easily respond to price signals, and (Kilbourne, 1998) was sceptical whether a reconciliation of human needs and nature was possible within the dominant social paradigm (DSP).

The Curry Report and Health

'But in environmental terms, the Curry Commission did an enormous amount and I still think we're missing tricks in a major way in terms of the social side, in terms of diet and health...'

Quote from policy expert Pol 01, member of the Curry Commission

The people pillar of the sustainable development model received much less attention than the profit or planet pillars. Health was a lower priority for agriculture policy at the time of the Curry Report and interventions to address health issues related to food production were generally avoided. Just three of the 105 Curry recommendations were concerned with public health, recommendations 98, 101 and 102 (see table 2.1. in Chapter 2). Health was framed as a consumer choice issue, largely disconnected from agricultural production. The Curry Report lacked the macro-level public health perspective that some much earlier food policy documents displayed such as *Food and the People* (Boyd Orr, 1943), and Beveridge's *British Food Control* (1928). These earlier documents envisaged a pivotal role for the state in the production and distribution of food. However by the time of the Curry Report state interventions were out of favour because they were linked to subsidies that encouraged overproduction that was economically wasteful and environmentally harmful. Concerns for continuity of supply and under nutrition were perceived to be largely problems of the past. The prevailing view seemed to be that health problems associated with too little food had been addressed; and the new problems associated with the consumption of too much or the wrong food had yet to come to the fore. In keeping with an orthodox marketing perspective, the Curry Report framed health issues related to food consumption as a matter of individual choice rather than related to structural issues of availability or accessibility of a particular range of foods. However, the marketing literature covered in Chapter 3 suggests there were at the time critiques of a simple connection between consumer choice, effective markets, and social welfare. Levine (1998), for example, questioned the validity of some of the assumptions about an individual's ability to choose well. Others had explored the link between satisfaction and individual choice (Iyengar and Lepper, 1999) suggesting the role of choice in feelings of satisfaction is culturally constructed; and a little later Schwartz (2004) suggested that the link between more choice and increased welfare declined as choice proliferated. Although the orthodox marketing perspective articulated a simple explanation of individual choice and societal welfare, others suggested a more complex relationship (Mick et al., 2004, Levett et al., 2003, Olshavsky and Granbois, 1979, Poiesz, 2004, Iyengar and Lepper, 2000, Firat and Dholakia, 1982), particularly in the context of food. The scope of the Curry Report was centred on food production and perhaps a more nuanced treatment of consumers and consumption was overlooked. The depiction of food

choice as a rational consumer decision was consistent with orthodox marketing. Diet was conceptualised as an individual choice and a cross-departmental steering group to develop a food and health action plan was confined largely to the promotion of health messages, that is, information provision, the weakest type of policy mechanism. The Curry Report seemed to assume that consumers made poor health choices because of lack of information or education. Its vision for the future included well-informed consumers who would ensure that those who produce healthy food from good farms would prosper. In the future:

'Consumers are health-conscious and take a keen interest in what they eat. They know where it has come from. They know how it was produced.' (Defra, 2002a:10)

Marketing Ideas in the Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food

Despite its shortcomings in terms of health, the evidence from the Curry Commission initiated a substantial reassessment of UK Food Policy using a market framework. The Curry Report's innovative use of a three pillar model opened up a policy space for 'people' related themes in UK food policy, in particular those related to health. In the SFFS document economic concerns remained prominent but options to leverage state support where markets were judged to be inadequate in delivering societal welfare improvements began to gain traction. Nevertheless the SFFS was a market-based policy. Benchmarking, support for innovation, the development of skills, and environmental responsibility came to the fore in a typically New Labour fashion: optimistic and pragmatic, based on free but regulated markets with some public support, a third way (Giddens, 1998). Criticisms of the role of powerful actors downstream in the supply chain were again carefully avoided, perhaps because the supply chain in orthodox marketing represented customers' interests, and perhaps reflecting a close relationship to the government, and in particular the Cabinet Office and the Prime Minister, in the way the NFU had been close to MAFF in the past. The prevailing model of the Competition State (Cerny and Evans, 2004), meant that priority was given to policies that enabled the British economy to benefit from globalisation, and criticism of organisations seen to be engaging successfully on the global stage was muted. Underpinning the globalisation debate was the assumption of continuous future growth, despite scepticism that economic growth and environmental impact could be de-coupled (Jackson, 2009).

The Curry Report had introduced a new market-oriented approach to UK Food Policy and this was developed in SFFS. In other sectors of the economy, for example manufacturing, a competitive, high-skilled, high value, innovation-led approach had been advocated since Wilson's white heat of technology days through to the transformation of the British economy from one based on manufacturing to one based on services in the 1980s and 1990s. The same market-oriented approach

was now being recommended for UK Food Policy. It was suggested that commodity type foods would come from producers elsewhere, and English agriculture would focus on the high value end of the market in much the same way that car buyers had shifted to overseas brands leaving only a few specialist home grown marques. Page 15 of the SFFS report listed the initiatives that SFFS advocated (SFFS, 2002). It was an approach that used carrots and sermons to encourage farmers to shift to an added value business model based on assurance schemes, organic farming, and export were the first four initiatives in the section headed 'Reconnecting with the market' on page 15. These four suggestions adhere to orthodox marketing advice such as Porter's generic strategies but they appear to be tiptoeing around the mainstream food system, especially for vegetable producers. Export, for example, was and remained insignificant for vegetable growers (AUK Statistics 2010a) and organic food, added value products and assurance schemes produce were small niche markets, despite some periods of rapid growth between 1995-2005 (Mintel 2009). The supermarket supply chain dominates:

'The open market is very small. If retailers are taking 85% of fresh produce, then there's only 15% on the free market or on the wholesale market or corner shops'

Quote from GPMO manager (GP02)

One conventional grower believed farmers' markets were a good route to market for smaller growers but not for larger organisations:

'Oh definitely yes, they're not really suited to the larger people though. [...] in fruit and veg there's only one large fruit and vegetable supplier who goes to farmers' markets [...] On any scale anyway.'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr08)

For a reconnected strategy it seemed determined not to reconnect with the mainstream of the domestic food system. Basic food commodities for the mass of the population were simply not the job of many English farmers anymore; global trade involving low cost overseas producers would ensure supply all year round. The remaining strategy initiatives summarised in table 5-3: advice, diversification, and public procurement in effect separated the mainstream supermarket supply chain from English farmers, encouraging English farmers to seek out alternative opportunities if they could not compete for mainstream consumers. The exception to this were the few, large agriculture businesses, based on a plantation agriculture model, that could adopt modern techniques and provide capital investment to ensure that their output was consistent, low cost, and compatible with the requirements of the dominant retail multiples. These larger grower organisations made use of trade links and joint investment with overseas providers to ensure all year round supply to retail multiples

to supplement domestic production. In this way some grower organisations took on a trading role, which fitted well with the category management model adopted by the grocery retailers (Hingley et al., 2008). But they were wary of the demands it placed on them:

Contracts, any contract worth its salt says 'you've got to provide A at price all of the time and if you can't do that all of the time then you've got to go and get it, and nine times out of ten when you've got to go and get it, it's going to be a lot more than the price that was agreed.

Quote from grower representative (Rep04)

So it would appear that many English fruit and vegetable growers and mainstream English customers were not particularly well reconnected. Market reconnection was advocated in SFFS but it was a reconnection to an almost mythical ethical customer base (Devinney et al., 2010). After years of decline in farming, this strategy was a strategy aimed at the periphery of the food supply chain, reflecting the increasingly marginal status of domestic farming in the provision of vegetables for home consumption. Farmers who wished to maintain an active role in production were to survive by becoming a facsimile, a theme-park, 'Good Life' version for hyperreal consumption. Much of English vegetable farming could no longer produce basic commodities for the supermarket mass markets in the context of global supplies of lower cost alternatives. Nevertheless there was a commitment to revitalising farming in the SFFS document, albeit an eviscerated version, taking farming into an *after modern* era with some economic incentives and support for farming as a business and assuming an orthodox explanation of progression in markets from simple commodities to added value products and services. There was a view that the small niche segments would grow into major parts of the market, this reflected orthodox explanations of how markets evolved.

The context of buyer dominated globalised commodity chains (Gereffi and Korzeniewicz, 1994) was largely accepted as the solution to lower food prices and better quality. However, there does seem to be a genuine attempt to move beyond the binary opposites of either/or dilemmas apparent in orthodox marketing discourses (O'Driscoll, 2008). The SFFS document attempted to address competition AND cooperation, health AND the environment. Policy seemed to be moving towards a more interconnected model. One exception was the 'carrot' of support for biofuel production, which at the time was being encouraged without much thought as to the global impact on natural resources available for growing food.

'...it's robbing Peter to pay Paul a little bit. Growers have only got so much money to invest so if they're putting it into [...] solar and PV instead of actually the next growing system or reducing the fertiliser it puts or buying, you know, buying a new system that's going to save them money on the growing methods or increased

yields, it's, it has its benefits but, it's also, I think it's negative. We [should be] putting all our capital into growing this business and producing more rather than actually into those sort of additional income generation projects

Quote from GPMO manager (GP01)

The SFFS document may be read as a rejection of exceptionalism for food production that had characterised the post war UK Food Policy. There was an implicit acceptance of the lowly position of agriculture in terms of its economic impact and in terms of job creation. One solution for the farms struggling to compete in a global market was to turn to diversification, since it was unlikely that farming could survive without additional income streams from tourism, energy production and the like. For example, woodland creation was one option that was advocated. A further indication of the changing role of farmers and farming was the commitment to extending public access to the countryside. Developing the aesthetic role of the countryside, farming was more than just production of food, farming had gone postmodern. Farmers could prosper by displaying their farming activities for public consumption, blurring the lines between what was real and the representation of the real (Poster, 2001). Like government, farming was being hollowed-out, mirroring a consumer-oriented discourse that was central to orthodox marketing thinking. The SFFS Policy critiqued a production-oriented view of farming. Farmers were encouraged to produce what they can sell rather than sell what they can produce (Kotler, 2000). Thus firms, including farmer controlled businesses, were exhorted to engage in producing whatever was profitable, and other issues need not be considered.

Although the link between the Curry Report and SFFS is clear, there were some examples of policy evolution. For example, nutrition did take greater prominence in the SFFS report compared to the Curry Report and specific initiatives were advocated, usually involving economic incentives or schemes, and better systems of information provision (sermons). Healthy Start and Welfare Foods Scheme were focused on improving nutrition for children from poorer families. Food labelling, and animal health and welfare featured, and there was a commitment to increase fruit and vegetable consumption. To implement the strategy regional stakeholders were to be co-opted. The Regional Development Agencies would draw up Delivery Plans. These initiatives were aimed at ensuring consumers had the capacity, information and motivation to engage in market exchanges (Crane and Matten, 2007). Nevertheless one policy expert acknowledged how challenging this might be for some families:

'...it's very hard for a low income family [...] it requires more thinking for a low income family to achieve five a day, that's 35 units a week and if it's a family of three that means moving 105 units of fruit and veg into their household...

Quote from policy expert (Pol02)

The SFFS committed significant resources to the problems for farming that were identified in the Curry Report. SFFS committed substantial funding to agriculture (about £500 million) mainly in the form of economic incentives /carrots (Defra, 2002b). Farming in England was encouraged to reconnect with the market but only to those segments where growers could establish a competitive advantage. The Food Chain Centre (FCC) attempted to address supply chain inefficiencies, and local produce could provide a possibility of providing something that was perceived to be better without being more expensive (especially as transportation costs increased).

'...we've actually seen from members is that a lot of them who would have sold organic produce, [...] they found that their sales were quite bad until they took off the name organic, because people were assuming they were paying more than they should be [...] even though they may not have changed the price of the product, they found just removing the organic name actually increased sales, which is a bit perverse, obviously because you're trying to add value to the product, but clearly the perception of the consumer was that hang on, I'm paying more than I could be...'

Quote from Grower Representative (Rep02)

It seemed as though the strategy was not aimed at reversing the decline in English vegetable production in volume terms, it was about salvaging an income for the few fresh produce farmers that had managed to survive so far. If prosperity for producers depended on bringing in supplies from overseas to augment domestic production this was seen as a win-win situation: lower prices, all year round supply for supermarkets and their customers, and a new hollowed-out role for grower organisations as facilitators or service providers to the retail sector rather than just producers of fresh produce.

National Strategy for Sustainable Operational Programmes (POs)

Support for Producer Organisations was first signalled in the Curry Report (Defra, 2002a), however few details were outlined, except to say that a guidance note would be produced. By 2007 the EU producer organisation was being used to link economic incentives and support with environmental compliance. Producer Organisations could gain access to funding for the following:

- Measures aimed at reducing fuel and energy usage
- Measures aimed at reducing the environmental impact of water usage
- Measures aimed at preventing emissions into air, water or soil
- Measures aimed at the re-use of crop remains and other organic residues, or at contributing to recovery of agricultural waste
- The environmental management of packaging.
- Measures aimed at protecting the landscape, natural habitats and biodiversity
- Measures aimed at preventing soil erosion and promoting conservation of soils (Defra, 2007)

More detail on key informants' views on the success of the PO scheme will be covered in the next chapter, but despite some problems, there was a feeling that POs had helped some growers, particularly smaller ones.

'...it's quite a substantial amount of money [from the PO Scheme], it's something like, it may even be 4% of your turnover, the government will [...] pay you as a grant to go towards capital projects, [...] the strawberry industry [...] They go on together, they form producer organisations, they got that money and they invested that in the tunnels so almost all tomato, strawberries are grown under tunnels now...'


Quote from grower representative (Gr04)

Environmental compliance was focused on improving the environmental impact of the vegetable sector rather than reviewing the relative impact of the production of different types of food commodities.

The Impact of Marketing Ideas on Late New Labour UK Food Policy

Table 5-4 summarises the key policy documents in Late New Labour Policy in terms of evidence, pronouncement and operational documents.

Table 5-4 Late New Labour UK Food Policy 2008-2010

Policy Expansion: Harnessing the Benefits of Markets for a Three-Pillar Model of UK Food Policy			
	Evidence base:	Key Policy Pronouncements:	Key operational documents for the Vegetable Sector:
	Food Matters (FM) 144 pages Market research model for evidence gathering; expert and pluralist consultation	Food 2030 84 page document – commitment to implement FM recommendations	F&V task Force Report 37 page document
Impact of Marketing Ideas on Policy Outcomes: Profit, planet, people	Profit: link between markets and fairness signals intention to correct market malfunctions Global trade model - innovation drives economic growth and productivity	Health and environment dominate, plus support for (and some regulation of) competitive markets Decarbonise to tackle environmental impact	Sub-group of the Food Strategy Task Force Outcomes reflect a more networked perspective across food supply

	<p>Planet: broadens to global issues, and resource intense production</p> <p>People: more prominent than in CR, concern for food safety and health</p>	<p>Orthodox theme of choice: 5 a day, provenance, immutable consumer preferences,</p> <p>Emergence of some critical ideas – e.g. third sector more prominent</p>	
<p>Impact of Marketing Ideas on Policy Mechanisms: economic incentives, regulation and information provision and advice</p>	<p>'Carrots' to support global trade, fair competition, and to reduce waste</p> <p>Marketising environmental compliance: emissions trading, adjustment of bio-fuel incentives</p> <p>Little 'Sticks' - voluntary codes to correct market failure – GSCOP; 'sticks' for FSA on safety and nutrition</p> <p>'Sermons' for consumers albeit joined-up ones – enable, encourage, engage – on health, and waste</p> <p>Role model - public procurement as model consumer</p> <p>Fewer 'carrots' than Curry Commission, increased use of sermons to consumers</p>	<p>Profusion of policy mechanisms</p> <p>Food Strategy Task Force - commitment to implement recommendations from Food Matters</p> <p>'Carrots' for innovations for sustainable agriculture</p> <p>Significant funding for increasing F&V production and consumption</p> <p>'Sermons' dominate, some 'sermonising brandishing sticks', 'sermons with sweeteners' - less regulation for responsible commerce; encouragement of added value strategies</p> <p>Pressure on supply chain re availability/access to healthy food options.</p>	<p>'Carrots', 'sticks' and 'sermons' to support efficient supply base, competitive supply chain, and increasing consumption</p> <p>Orthodox marketing themes: adding value but also a critical tone in interventions to correct unfairness from market malfunctions and failures</p>

Source: Author

Food Matters

The 2008 Cabinet Office Food Matters report demonstrated the high priority given to food supply in policy circles at the time prior to the credit crunch (2008). This policy document considered the whole food supply context, in contrast to earlier documents which focused on primarily on agriculture. Unlike most food policy documents, this was produced from the Cabinet Office, rather than from Defra, reflecting the importance of food policy towards the end of New Labour's third government. Up front the government pledged its support for the recommendations in the Food Matters document (Cabinet Office, 2008, page 6).

In the Food Matters document societal concerns became more prominent. Diet-related ill health was now identified as a negative market externality, separate from food safety which had been the main health concern related to food policy a few years earlier. It is also worth noting the juxtaposition of

economics and equity. In Food Matters the societal concern for fairness and equity was bound up with the market mechanism (for example see the Executive Summary of Food Matters in Figure 5-1 below on the future challenges). There was a conscious attempt to articulate the view that markets were the way to deliver lower prices and thus equity through access to affordable food, drawing on the orthodox view that economic development was the route to a better society. By linking equity and economics at the beginning of the document in this way, the Cabinet Office was shaping the analysis towards solutions based on the benefits of global trade, the invisible hand of the Competition State at work.

Figure 5-1 Extract from Executive Summary, Food Matters

The food system faces a series of future challenges in relation to:

- economics and equity – recent increases in global commodity prices have brought to an end the long-term decline in the price of food, and few expect food prices to return to past lows;
- health – an estimated 70,000 premature deaths in the UK could be avoided each year if UK diets matched nutritional guidelines;
- safety – the food that we eat in the UK is safer than it has ever been but continuing vigilance is needed to minimise food contamination; and
- environment – the food chain has huge environmental impacts (around 18% of UK greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are related to food production and consumption).

Source: (Food Matters, 2008: iii)

Shifts in the policy discourse were also apparent in how the conclusions and solutions were presented. Consumer concerns were given priority and the first two actions presented in Food Matters focused on information to consumers. The starting point of the 2030 strategy is to ‘*encourage people to eat a healthy, sustainable diet*’ (Defra, 2010c) page 9. It seems that UK Food Policy here makes an assumption, consistent with an orthodox perspective, that demand shapes supply. Thus the starting point of change is to shift the behaviour of consumers. Both Food 2030 and Food Matters focused on healthy eating and by framing the discussion in this way, defined the individual consumer as the central driver of supply response. This underplayed the role of availability in shaping food choices, and assumed that present-day lifestyles were fixed and desirable rather than something that could be challenged or changed by different state policies and priorities, as some writers have suggested (for example, O’Neill (1993). This approach was consistent with Firat and Dholakia’s dominant orthodox pattern of consumption (Firat and Dholakia, 1982).

Integration also became more prominent, and there was an attempt to acknowledge the role of civic society and industry in the design and delivery of a joined-up UK Food Policy. Environmental issues were refined to focus on a few key issues. The first of these were waste reduction and efficiency (win-win economic and environmental objectives). The second was greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The focus on GHGs privileged carbon reduction in agriculture over other environmental issues such as biodiversity and preservation of the landscape. Large plantation farming organisations were able to align economic and environmental concerns in the focus on GHGs. Biodiversity on the other hand was unlikely to fit well with existing commercial priorities (Glazer, 2010, Smaje, 2011).

'...the main thing would be the effect on the environment, and I think it's been interesting seeing the effect of what we do here on the local biodiversity. We've got, from what was just a field, and obviously a field does have, a pasture does have some wild life in there but the amount of stuff that's come in since we started growing. We've got snakes, sitting in the compost heaps, the birdlife has come up massively. We've got a pond to encourage frogs and toads to eat slugs so we'd like to do the whole list of benefits in terms of the local wildlife population thanks to the way we're doing it here.

Quote from organic grower (Gr03)

GMOs were also mentioned but within a distinctively economic rather than environmental context, as though testing the waters for reaction to amending EU regulation on GMOs. The document stressed the European and global context in which UK Food Policy operates.

'I don't think GM is the golden bullet but it does have a role to play and the lack of, you know, the lack of ability for companies or people to engage in it is, you know, considering I think 70% of the world does use it.'

Quote from grower-packer MO manager (GP01)

The document suggested that the state would play a central role in moving UK Food Policy towards a sustainable future, and that government was prepared to intervene to ensure that health, social, environmental as well as economic goals were achieved. However, the dominant social paradigm of the Competition State remained intact: global competitive markets remained important, but there was an acknowledgment that regulation of markets and other state interventions had a role to play to safeguard fairness and to address distortions in agricultural markets. The more powerful policy mechanisms of regulatory 'sticks' were more a feature of the Food Matters document than in the Curry Report and SFFS. Incentive schemes and information provision were also used, for example, government funding would be provided for the Change for Life campaign. The public sector would act as a model consumer by procuring healthier foods. Although *'initially voluntary'* there was a clear

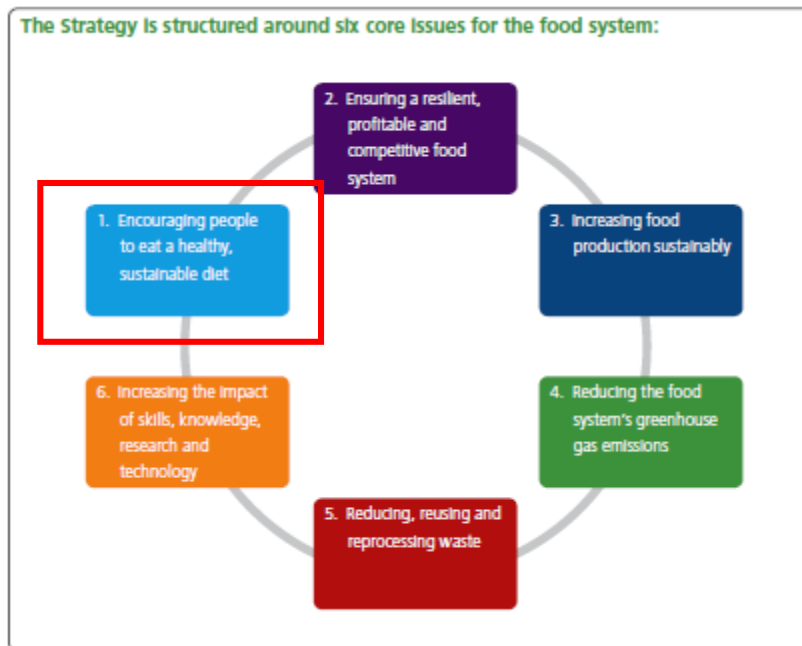
indication that compliance could be made compulsory (Cabinet Office Strategy Unit, 2008 page iv and xiv) if industry did not take steps to address the problems associated with availability and accessibility of healthier food options. It was a food and farming policy based on orthodox marketing principles of global trade but it highlighted some areas where government interventions and regulations were appropriate, it seemed that free markets needed government intervention, as suggested by Polanyi (Polanyi, 2002: 1944). Environmental concerns were reduced to one key issue: greenhouse gases (GHGs) which was consistent with the prevailing European approach to marketising environmental impact, as exemplified by the recently introduced EU Emissions Trading Scheme (Egenhofer, 2007).

The Food Matters report was a carefully researched, persuasive and well-presented document designed with a serious intention to back up words with action. Cabinet Office support was palpable as reflected in the increased inclination (or sometimes threats) to use sticks as well as carrots and sermons in the mix of policy mechanisms. In addition, Food Matters identified policy drivers in the form of task forces and codes of practice which demonstrated the seriousness with which food issues were treated at the time. It remained a market oriented policy and orthodox themes remained but there was evidence of a more critical perspective as UK Food Policy attempted to confront the limitations of market exchanges for health and environmental issues by greater involvement of the state and civic society.

Food 2030

A key theme in the Food 2030 strategy was consumer choice. An orthodox understanding of the sovereignty of the citizen-consumer underpinned this strategy and, like earlier strategies and consistent with an orthodox perspective, it seemed to underplay the role of the persuasive industries in shaping consumer preferences. For example, the role of marketing food high in salt, sugar and saturated fat to children was not mentioned at all in this document, and neither was the domination of the foodscape by such foods (Winson, 2004). The consumer was again modelled as a rational being drawing on behaviourist models of consumer behaviour.

Figure 5-2 Strategic priorities for 2030



Source: (Defra, 2010b: 9)

But whilst an orthodox marketing perspective was still apparent in the Food 2030 policy, there was a shift towards incorporating social and environmental factors into a UK Food Policy that attempted to address a range of sustainability issues. Markets were important, but other concerns were given more prominent place in policy. Of the six priorities for food policy, only the second issue '*ensuring a resilient, profitable and competitive food system*' is clearly focused on the food marketing system (Defra, 2010c). The late New Labour government seemed to have increased concerns that there was evidence of problems *in practice* in food markets and seemed prepared to intervene where markets were not working as they should:

'Government's core role in the UK food system is to correct market failures where they arise (for example distortions to the food economy caused by poor information, imperfect competition, the failure to price externalities and the under-provision of public goods), and to ensure that social equity is safeguarded.' (Defra, 2010c) page 8.

A key shift in policy in Food 2030 was the focus on increasing food production to feed an expanding global population. In Food Matters, published just a couple of years earlier, little mention was made of this issue but the food price spikes of 2007-8 brought home the impact of economic developments abroad on demand for food commodities and the raw materials used to produce food. The earlier policy concern about food supply efficiency was to some extent replaced by concerns about security

of supply. There was growing concern about the resilience of the food system to cope with unexpected events linked to climate change and other environmental problems. In earlier documents farmers were encouraged to shift to biofuel production to augment their income from farming. By 2010 Food 2030 acknowledged the wider impact on the supply of food that such a strategy would have, for example, on land available for food production. Perhaps food and farming policy was becoming more joined up.

Food 2030 represented a continuation of an evolving and coherent joined-up food policy backed up with resources and evidence. Nevertheless, there did seem to be an attempt to contain debate about sustainability by focusing on less controversial issues that worked within the existing Competition State paradigm. For example, waste was prioritised and there were specific indicators for waste (Food 2030 (2010) page 78). More controversial environmental issues that critiqued orthodox marketing theories, such as biodiversity, the inherent unsustainable nature of a consumer society based on continuous economic growth, or health problems associated with a Western diet (Woodward and Simms, 2006, Tudge, 2007) were afforded a lower profile in the Food 2030 document.

Paradoxically by the time of Food 2030, UK Food Policy had become both more devolved and more integrated. The Common Agricultural Policy which had become less common and less about agriculture (Greer 2005). Devolution enabled the devolved government bodies in Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland to develop their own approaches to food policy (Lang, Dibb et al. 2011). UK Food Policy ranged over many more policy areas than agriculture and became more interrelated to other food issue concerns such as public health, rural development and environmental despoliation. In attempting to manage the complexity involved in shifting the debate away from simple binary dilemmas, policy makers sought to build policy on an evidence-based approach reminiscent of a pluralist approach, in which the state acted as a disinterested observer and arbiter of the divergent perspectives, bringing forth a new multi-faceted food policy. Gathering and disseminating information and advice was a key characteristic of UK Food Policy development during the late New Labour era. The Council of Food Policy Advisors, formed in 2008, was one manifestation of this approach (Lang, Dibb et al. 2011) as the evidence of the impact of agriculture on climate change and health was mounting (for example, see Garnett (2008)).

Between the Curry Commission and the end of the New Labour administration in 2010, UK Food Policy had expanded and evolved. What began as a turn to the market facilitated a number of policy initiatives that aligned the economic and environmental impact of farming within a market framework based on orthodox marketing ideas. In the Food Matters and Food 2030 reports health had become a key issue shaping UK Food Policy. In keeping with an orthodox marketing perspective, an atomised

model of consumer choice confined policy interventions largely to ‘sermons’ in the form of communication of health messages. But the customer sovereign metaphor was also employed as the state framed itself as the consumer in public procurement policies that favoured suppliers that conformed to particular health standards. UK Food Policy continued to make use of orthodox marketing ideas but some critical macromarketing ideas began to influence policy outcomes and mechanisms too as the government sought a more active role to ensure an alignment between profit (competitive markets) and desirable societal outcomes for people (health) and the planet (environment). The critique was of markets *in practice* rather than markets as a theoretical system for organising the efficient allocation of resources. The late New Labour government signalled that it would intervene to ensure that market malfunctions would be challenged. The orthodox marketing framework remained.

[The Fruit and Vegetables Task Force Report](#)

The Fruit and Vegetables Task Force was set up in 2009 under the previous administration by the then Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Hilary Benn, in response to a proposal from the Council of Food Policy Advisors (Fruit and Vegetables Task Force, 2010cpage 5). It attempted to develop a discourse that involved farmers, producers, supply chain actors such as retailers, civic society, and government. Earlier there had been an attempt to address the problems for domestic production of fruit and vegetables and in 2006 the National Horticultural Forum had published a case study analysis carried out by Promar (2006). Its recommendations had focused on labour issues, training, cooperatives, benchmarking, customer profiling, R&D, encouraging demand for UK produce, investment to support producers’ ability to ensure continuity of supply. (National Horticultural Forum, 2006page 10). These recommendations were aimed at building a supply base that could serve the retail multiples; environmental and social issues were given a lower priority. The Fruit and Vegetables Task Force aimed to examine the issues for the sector beyond the marketing concerns voiced in the earlier analysis by Promar. Table 5.5 below illustrates the interest groups involved in Fruit and Vegetables Task Force from producers, retailers, government, and civic society. Whilst the structure of the report draws on marketing themes – competitiveness, reconnection and customer orientation, the membership base of the Task force suggests a more networked approach in which business, the state and civic society engage to address problems related to sustainable agriculture.

Table 5-5 Members of the Fruit and Vegetables Task Force

Producer representatives	10	Including Sean Rickard, former NFU Chief Economist; and also an organic grower
Supply chain representatives	6	Including two from Tesco
Government body representatives	4	Including NDPBs
Environment	2	Including Prof Gareth Edwards-Jones; producers such as Peter Hall probably also have a strong interest in environmental issues
Health/consumer and civic society	4	including food writers and school foods representatives

Source: (2010cpage 3)

The stated aim of the task force was to increase the consumption and production of domestic fruit and vegetables, citing health and economic benefits. The potential for positive environmental impacts from increased production and consumption of fresh produce was not an argument that was brought to bear (ibid, pages 4-5). The Task Force’s recommendations were summarised under three headings:


- A competitive supply base
- An efficient supply chain
- Increasing consumption

Under each heading specific proposals were put forward with details of how they could be achieved and which organisations or individuals were responsible for their implementation. The left hand column in Table 5-7 reproduces the summary of the key proposals in the report. Table 5-7 is used to compare the Fruit and Vegetables Task Force Report and the Action Plan and is discussed in the section below on Coalition Policy.

The Impact of Marketing Ideas on Coalition Government UK Food Policy

Table 5-6 summarises the key policy documents in Coalition Policy in terms of evidence, pronouncement and operational documents.

Table 5-6 Coalition UK Food Policy:

Policy Contraction: Still Market Oriented – but less policy support			
	Evidence base:	Key Policy Pronouncements:	Key operational documents for the Vegetable Sector:
	<p>Foresight Report (FR) 211 pages comprehensive, expert evidence gathering, commissioned by New Labour</p> <p>Taylor Review (TR) 11 pages, light touch evidence gathering, Conservative Party document</p>	<p>UK Strategy for Agricultural Technologies 52 pages</p>	<p>F&V Action Plan 17 pages</p>
<p>Impact of Marketing Ideas on Policy Outcomes: Profit, planet, people</p>	<p>FR provides a global perspective on sustainable agriculture, backed by substantial scientific evidence</p> <p>TR - profit theme dominates - economic viability dominates, few references to planet and none to people</p>	<p>Selective use of FR evidence for sustainable intensification, evidence overlooked on resource intensive foods</p> <p>Consumer sovereignty, immutable consumer preferences.</p> <p>Orthodox narrative consistent with goal to increase global food production</p> <p>Sparse policy based on technical innovation</p>	<p>Focus on orthodox themes of producer competitiveness and efficiency</p> <p>Themes related to the planet and people pillars are side-lined</p>
<p>Impact of Marketing Ideas on Policy Mechanisms: Carrots (economic incentives), sticks (regulation) and sermons (information provision)</p>	<p>Orthodox themes dominate, self-regulating markets for outcomes of wealth creation, productivity, and economic growth</p> <p>Fewer 'carrots' and 'sticks' some 'sermons' – advice for farmers, industry, scientific community</p>	<p>Industry-led, innovation-based policy</p> <p>'Carrots' - £160m for agri-tech innovations</p> <p>Few 'sticks'</p> <p>Commercial voices dominate Council</p> <p>Assumption of congruence of goals between industry and state (Donovan et al., 2015)</p>	<p>Fewer 'carrots' and 'sticks' - a lighter touch to regulation, some 'sermons' where cost implications can be borne by industry</p> <p>Policy mechanisms mainly for production efficiency in the F&V sector</p>

Taylor Review: Science for a New Age of Agriculture

The Taylor Review and its progress report (Taylor, 2010, Defra, 2011) were published almost a decade after the Curry Commission. They return to an orthodox marketing discourse in which technological innovation is driven by competitive markets, facilitated by a light touch policy of few carrots and sticks, and perhaps some sermonising. Where the Curry Report had 105 recommendations, the Taylor Review has 18. Where the Curry Report makes extensive use of economic incentive schemes and some environmental regulation sticks as well as information provision in a plethora of policy mechanisms, the Taylor Review avoids the use of carrots and sticks, preferring mechanisms that facilitate the actions of other agents, particularly industry ones, and sermon-like advice on private sector investment, applied research, and efficient production in farming. Where the Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food was backed by a budget of £500 million, the Coalition UK food policy aimed to make better use of existing sources of funding, for example, from Europe, or funding for scientific research, and education and training. International trade features prominently, particularly with developing nations, as a way of addressing global food policy issues of sufficient production and lower environmental impact.

'...we're looking at [research on] water retention from rain so that you need less irrigation. We're looking at soil, the use of compost to maintain the quality of the soil within what is basically a monoculture.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep06)

The Foresight Report and the UK Strategy for Agricultural Technologies

Given its liberal and conservative make up, it was to be expected that a revitalised belief in the predominant place of markets would be a feature food and farming policy under the Coalition Government. Policy makers used the evidence from the Foresight Report to support an argument that food and farming policy required a market oriented strategy focused on the most pressing problem: world hunger. Other policy issues were unimportant compared to the problem of scarcity and markets were the mechanism by which supply and demand could be efficiently and effectively aligned. It helped too that the timeframe of the Foresight Report extended the policy horizon from 2030 to 2050: less urgent problems could be dealt with later. Although the Foresight project was focused on future plans for the global food system, it acknowledged that the present global food system of protected and free markets was less than ideal and that a diverse range of policy actors from government, industry and civic society operating in at local, national and regional levels would need to be involved in policy making and implementation. The UK Strategy for Agricultural Technologies (2013) aimed to

focus on large scale, high tech solutions based on what was termed sustainable intensification to increase domestic production to feed a growing global population. The preface to the report, jointly written by the Secretaries of State Defra and DfID, signalled a pivotal role for business. They suggested that the UK farming and food industry could capitalise on commercial opportunities in providing innovative solutions to the serious problems in the global food system.

'There is a growing market for frozen fish, frozen prawns. The same principle should apply to frozen vegetables, like peas, for example, to [export to] other countries...'

Quote from grower representative (Rep02)

'I think we're quite insular in the UK [...] I just don't think we give it enough effort to export. The Dutch are so good at trading that if we do export to anywhere in Europe, it'll go through a Dutchman.'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr06)

World hunger was framed as a problem of insufficient production so that opened up solutions that used technology to increase production. Impact on the environment would be minimised by focusing on waste and low-carbon production methods.

'...with the demand profile that's going to be hitting us, it's a good place to be...'

Quote from GPMO manager (GP01)

The major players in the food industry would drive technological innovations supported by government funds for agricultural innovations. A leadership council was set up to oversee policy implementation, made up of representatives from major food producers, manufacturers and retailers, scientists and research academics, as well as BIS and Defra representatives. Chaired by a representative from the retail multiples, dissenting voices from civic society were noticeable by their absence in the leadership council and alternative perspectives on food security, sustainable food production and food sovereignty for example from (Fairlie, 2007), (Smaje, 2011) and (Tudge, 2007) were not brought into the policy discourse. Health was almost entirely absent from the report, and was largely assumed to be the responsibility of individual consumers. The *'western lifestyle aspirations'* (2013), the trend *'towards more meat and dairy products'* (2013) revealed a naturalised ontology that assumed consumer preferences were innate and inevitable. Almost a decade earlier the Curry Commission had called for a diverse farming sector but now diversity in production and production methods was largely abandoned since scale was required to push through productivity improvements. The strategy described an industry-led solution in which the effectiveness and

efficiencies of markets could be harnessed to create growth and solve the problem of sufficient food production. Export was a priority and an opportunity for efficient producers but the Foresight report's recommendation that *'demand for the most resource-intensive types of food must be contained'* (Foresight, 2011) was inexplicably ignored in Coalition UK Food Policy.

Fruit and Vegetable Task Force Action Plan

The Fruit and Vegetable Task Force's documents published in 2010 typified the retrenchment in UK Food Policy. The August Report's aims, proposed by the Council of Food Policy Advisors, were for a:

'strategy for increasing the domestic consumption of fruit and vegetables and to identify realistic and sustainable opportunities for increasing domestic production of fruit and vegetables' (Fruit and Vegetables Task Force Report 2011 page 5).

In contrast, the Action Plan focused on a much narrower set of goals that focused on the conventional marketing goals of efficiency and competitiveness of the fruit and vegetable supply base:

'make domestic produce more competitive on grounds of cost, availability and quality' (Fruit and Vegetables Task Force Action Plan 2011 page 2).

Table 5-7 shows which of the proposals from the Fruit and Vegetables Report were incorporated into the Action Plan. The goal of increasing consumption was not included in the plan, and references to sustainability were discarded. The August Report referred to *'realistic and sustainable opportunities'* in the quote given above but it appeared that the Action Plan was focused almost exclusively on the former. Whilst the objectives of the Fruit and Vegetables Task force were always pragmatic, focusing on incremental changes within the existing supply chain context that did not require significant input from the public purse, and eschewing opportunities to consider new proposals for sustainable production (Fruit and Vegetables Task Force Report 2011), the October Action Plan narrowed further its field of vision to almost exclusively economic concerns. The Action Plan seemed to be a withdrawal from the broader perspective of a joined-up food policy to focus on immediate economic concerns. Health and environmental issues were only explored if they displayed *a priori* an alignment with economic concerns, in particular the economic priorities of the major players in the food supply chain. However, the Action Plan was a continuation of the commitment to support fruit and vegetable production as an economic activity and by doing so it was possible that some environmental and health goals might also be achieved.

Table 5-7 Report of the Fruit and Vegetables Task Force Key Proposals and the Proposals accepted in the Fruit and Vegetables Action Plan

Competitive supply base	
Proposal from the Report of the Fruit and Vegetable Task Force August 2010	Proposals accepted in the F&V Action Plan October 2010
Make reference to food production in national planning policy and streamline planning requirements	supported in the action plan
Address issues of permanent immigration and seasonal labour availability for agriculture and horticulture	supported in the action plan
Government recognition and support for the need for available water for horticulture	supported in the action plan
Review of approval process for non-chemical means of control	supported in the action plan
Industry strategy to protect a unified well-invested R&D facility	supported in the action plan
Abolish Agricultural Wages Board	supported in the action plan
Work with services like Business Link to provide appropriate advice to growers	supported in the action plan
Panel to champion financial needs of sector	supported in the action plan
Efficient supply chain	
Report of the Fruit and Vegetable Task Force Proposals August 2010	Proposals accepted in the F&V Action Plan October 2010
Clearer practical rules on operation of EU Fruit and Vegetables Aid Scheme	supported in the action plan
Levy boards to play a role in providing independent advice on the market and growing conditions	supported in the action plan
Best practice in ordering timetables to be drawn up	supported in the action plan
Supply chain efficiency incentives	Not supported in the action plan
Produce a Guide to the Wholesale Sector	supported in the action plan
Extend Business Development Manager programme for wholesale markets	supported in the action plan – but dependant on funding
Increasing consumption	
Report of the Fruit and Vegetable Task Force Proposals August 2010	Proposals accepted in the F&V Action Plan October 2010
Explore how to better use Change 4 Life to promote 5 A Day and potatoes	supported in the action plan – focus on potatoes
Evaluate Food Dudes Programme	supported in the action plan

Promote best practice in whole category marketing campaigns	Not supported in the action plan
Include frozen fruit and vegetables in Healthy Start and promotions of healthy frozen/canned fruit and vegetables	Not supported in the action plan
Include 'healthy' composite foods in 5 A Day licensing scheme	Not supported in the action plan
Align VAT with fruit and vegetable consumption objective	Not supported in the action plan
Support Grow Your Own including proposals to make land available and gardening within schools	Supported in the action plan
Public procurement standards would also be developed so long as they met cost and competition constraints – not mentioned in the August report but included in the action plan	

Source: Author based on (F&V Task Force, 2010a, pages 6-9); (2010b)

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the findings on the impact of marketing ideas on UK Food Policy 2002-2015. Three phases of UK Food Policy are analysed: early New Labour Policy 2002-2007; Late New Labour Food Policy 2008-2010; and Coalition Food Policy 2010-2015 and key UK Food Policy documents from each period were analysed supported by insights from key informants from across the vegetable sector and those involved in policy. The Curry Report encouraged growers to see their farms as businesses and offered support and advice based around three themes: efficiency, adding value, and diversification, reflecting Porter's generic marketing strategy model for achieving sustainable competitive advantage: reduce costs or add value (Porter 1985), and Ansoff's growth matrix advice to develop new products and markets and diversify (Ansoff, 1986). Environmental protection was conceptualised as a product provided by farmers for the nation and this provided an orthodox framework for paying farmers for environmental compliance. As the policy evolved it remained market oriented, but the state took a more prominent role in linking economic concerns with health as well as with the environment and became more inclined to intervene where markets failures arose. What began as a turn to the market facilitated a number of policy initiatives that aligned the economic and environmental impact of farming within a market framework based on orthodox marketing ideas. After 2010 the UK Food Policy became a more market dominated policy as the Coalition Government looked to industry to lead on policy, for example in the UK Strategy for Agricultural Technologies (2013) and accepted the orthodox assumption that competitive markets are efficient in delivering more abundance and more quality (Hunt, 2000) in the face of rising global demand for food. Support for the vegetable sector remained and the Fruit and Vegetable Report was translated into an Action Plan. However, the plan was a watered down version with fewer policy 'sticks' and 'carrots' and with

more emphasis on competitiveness in the supply base. The following chapter will move on to explore the views of those with expert knowledge of the vegetable sector of the impact of a market oriented UK Food Policy on the Vegetable Sector.

Chapter 6 Impact of Policy on the Vegetable Sector

Chapter Introduction

The previous chapter focused on the first research question and presented the findings on the impact of marketing ideas on the UK Food Policy 2002-2015 relevant to the vegetable sector. The next two chapters address the second research question: **What impact did an evolving UK Food Policy, based on particular notions of market-oriented reconnection, have on the vegetables sector in England 2002-2015?** Adopting a structure that mirrored policy as set out the Fruit and Vegetables Task Force Report (2010) and Action Plan (2010), Chapter 6 focuses on the impact of policy on the supply base, and Chapter 7 focuses on the impact of policy on the supply chain and markets, perceptions of marketing challenges, and whether UK Food Policy should have done more to address structural problems in the market for vegetables.

For this chapter, Chapter 6, the aim is to explore whether and how UK Food Policy helped growers engage in more effective marketing. Chapter 5 showed how UK Food Policy attempted to support the vegetable sector improve its marketing but the vegetable sector, as shown in Chapter 2, is a heterogeneous sector, so the purpose here is to document the views of the impact of UK Food Policy from the different constituencies within the vegetable sector as voiced in the key informant interviews. Some issues are specific to a particular constituency, for example organic growers, whereas other issues impact across the sector, for example, management of labour issues or access to finance. Key informants from grower representative organisations and policy experts provide a cross-sector perspective whilst other participants may have detailed knowledge of one type of production or type of grower organisation. Producer Organisations Scheme, a key policy mechanism designed to support investment in vegetable production is explored here, although POs also had an impact on how the supply base engaged with the supply chain and markets too.

Chapter 6 is organised using the structure of the Fruit and Vegetables Task Force Report and Action Plan (Fruit and Vegetables Task Force, 2010c, Fruit and Vegetables Task Force, 2010b) which grouped policy mechanisms around three key market-oriented policy goals for vegetable production: a competitive supply base, and efficient supply chain, and increasing consumption. As said above, Chapter 6 focuses on the first of these, a competitive supply base, and Chapter 7 explores policy relating to efficient supply chain, and increasing consumption. Table 6-1 below summarises the main policy mechanisms for a competitive supply base. Some of these policy mechanisms have since been terminated, for example, the Food Chain Centre, and some were not implemented as originally planned but the finding chapters attempt to record experts' views of their success.

Whilst Chapter 5 focused on the documentary evidence of UK Food Policy, Chapters 6 and 7 use the varied perspectives of those with expert knowledge of vegetable production to build up a picture of how policy impacted in the real world. Policy aimed to change both what farmers did and also how they understood their productive activities so the findings attempt to document both the detail of what happened but also the ways of thinking about marketing displayed by those involved in the sector. Chapter 8 will analyse the findings presented in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 to provide a detailed and abstracted explanation of the impact of a market oriented UK Food and Farming Policy 2002-2015 on vegetable production in England.

Policy Mechanisms to Support a Competitive Supply Base

This section reports the findings from the key informant interviews on policy mechanisms to support the vegetable sector. Table 6-1 provides a summary of the policy mechanisms to support the vegetable sector and provides the structure for the chapter.

Table 6-1 Summary of Vegetable Sector Policy Mechanisms for a Competitive Supply Base

Priority	Policy mechanism/focus (derived from the Fruit and Vegetables Action Plan)
Planning permission for production facilities	Streamline planning requirements
Access to labour	Seasonal labour availability for agriculture and horticulture Abolish Agricultural Wages Board Attracting new people into farming
Environmentally friendly production	Waste reduction -including the lean management as advocated in by FCC Resources for production water management Renewable energy/biofuels Plant protection products
Support for innovation	Industry strategy to protect a unified well-invested R&D facility Applied Research Forum for Farming and Food (now part of AHDB)
Access to credit	Panel to champion financial needs of sector
Advice	Work with services like Business Link to provide appropriate advice to growers
Quality standards	Assured Food Standards/Red Tractor Scheme
Support for marketing and export	The English Farming and Food Partnership (EFFP) Food From Britain
Support for best practice	Demonstration farms
Producer Organisations	Operation of PO scheme Including clearer rules on PO scheme subsidies

Planning Permission for Production Facilities

Despite the commitment to streamlining planning requirements for new vegetable production facilities in 2010, growers, big and small, and their representative organisations, complained about

difficulties in obtaining planning permission in the study. It was a particular problem for those engaged in protected cropping, as this tomato grower representative explained:

'...the planning laws are incredibly restrictive [...]

Quote from grower representative (Rep01)

'...the cost of getting things through planning just puts people off taking a risk...'

Quote from GPMO manager (GP01)

Policy commitments to the protection of the English countryside may be in conflict with the use of the countryside, even when farming is sustainable. The role and purpose of the natural countryside is at the heart of the planning issue. Protecting the natural landscape of the countryside is sometimes at odds with the production of home-grown vegetables:

' The one place that is producing tomatoes, and this may happen in the future, is Downham Market, Wissington, [inaudible] factory where they have excess heat and excess CO2, well these are the two things that you pump into a glasshouse. [...] Great, so you have a power station, a village and a glass house, well you try and get that one past the planners [...] So, we've got a problem with planners.'

Quote from grower consultant (Con04)

'...people don't want to look out on polytunnels. I mean only a tiny proportion now of the people who live in the countryside have any economic link to it [...] People don't want them near their multi-million pound country cottages.'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr08)

'...we need something in planning policy that actually helps the planners understand the importance of food security'

Quote from GPMO manager (GP01)

A Defra policy expert conceded that progress on planning had been slow:

'[reading from the Fruit and Vegetable Task Force Action Plan] OK, "simplify burden of planning and reduce burdens on growers". That is happening a bit, not as much as we'd like [...] LEPs [Local Enterprise Partnerships]. That's the LEPs and there is also the Rural and Farming Network and there's usually at least one representative from the RFN on the LEP to try and influence the strategic plan for the area [...] so there's been some improvement but that's one that I wouldn't say [...] Farmers are zooming along with.

Quote from Policy Expert (Pol02)

And planning issues are usually resolved at the local level, so that the influence of Defra, for example, is muted:

'...any planning permissions are done at local level which is local authority's responsibility.'

Quote from policy expert (Pol03)

One manager from a large grower organisation felt that the present arrangements amounted to an absence of policy on planning:

'...if more MPs realised it is important within their constituency, they might go and side with the farmer who's got a planning issue.'

Quote from GPMO manager (GP01)

Access to Labour

Labour Costs

Compared to other sectors within agriculture, vegetable growing is a labour intensive activity. Labour is a significant cost of production, but some believed that UK Food Policy could do more to ensure an appropriate and affordable supply of labour for the sector. Employment taxes, for example, affected labour intensive sectors like horticulture.

'We've got a two million and something turnover and our labour bill was 700,000. [...] we've slightly mechanised the greens harvesting, i.e. we do it on rigs, so we cut into the box, put it in there, but it's still, the actual product is picked and cut by hand, physically, the spring onions is entirely manual [...] ...this government put up employers' national insurance. [...] So 1% but it was a 10% increase in employers' national insurance. [...] Which is a tax on employment. [...] So, forget subsidies, encourage people to employ more...'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr05)

Whilst most conventional growers sought to minimise labour input, one small organic grower adopted a different strategy, specialising in labour-intensive production to produce value-added products such as hand-picked bagged salad.

'...we're focusing most on the higher value crops such as salads and things like that. They're the things that are quite perishable and have quite a lot of labour involved. We can compete with the bigger producers on those sorts of things.'

Quote from organic grower (Gr03)

Seasonal and casual labour

The use of seasonal workers and casual labour reflected the inherent variability in vegetable demand and production. Growers, big and small, organic and conventional relied on seasonal and casual labour to address cyclical and short-term peaks and troughs.

'... agency labour is still very important, [...] the sun comes out today and the orders will be up by 600% tomorrow.[...] You can only ever meet that by temporary labour.'

Quote from manager in a GPMO (GP01)

A number of mainstream growers reported problems obtaining enough workers with the right skills and prepared to work in the fields, particularly since the withdrawal of SAWS. One policy expert explained the problem from the growers' perspective:

'...the SAWS workers, who made up one third of the workforce, were very dependable and stayed the whole time and once they were trained, they were very productive and they knew why they were here, you know, they were very focused. The people who come in otherwise drift in and it's a stepping stone to the next thing [...] And every time you have churn it costs you money...'

Quote from policy expert (Pol02)

It was her belief that the use of workers from Romania and Bulgaria under the SAWS scheme yielded benefits for both growers and the workforce:

'And it was a good deal for everyone who was involved with it because they were paid a fair wage and they worked very hard [...] And they either came back or relatives came back the following year [...] So, while some in the press might have called it a slave system, they voluntarily came the next year. [...] they'd had, you know, four or six Romanian medical students and picking, you know, stones out of the potato harvester was paying for med school [...] These were people who were very fixed on what they were doing and why they were doing it. [The wage differential] was huge for them [...].'

Quote from policy expert (Pol02)

One grower claimed that the benefit system in England did not sit easily with the demand for casual labour. He explained that in previous generations local female workers would have been employed in harvesting, with one person assigned the role of child minder:

'...so you get into the whole issue of how to allow people to do seasonal jobs without impacting on benefits. [...] 30 [workers] join us in the summer who are from overseas. [...] Whereas, that 30 used to be local [...] And they used to be mums. We used to have a [...] crèche in the field. We used to have one mum or grand-mum [...] come and all the rest of them would bring their kids, and she'd occupy the kids

in the field. I mean, we couldn't do for health and safety now [...] But that shows the demographic that used to come here. That demographic will never come here now. [...] Because it won't suit them financially.'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr05)

Other growers were more scathing about the local workforce. Referring to the problems a fellow grower had finding local workers, a grower consultant said:

'...he has tried desperately hard to employ local people without success. And what is lacking is the work ethic...'

Quote from grower consultant (Con01)

Another grower consultant thought the problems were not just limited to local workers. Urban lifestyles, the decline of rural culture in Eastern Europe, and the workers' own preferences for less physically demanding jobs affected overseas workers:

'Labour, now the labour issues are huge, [inaudible] Eastern European [inaudible], they come over here and they don't have to work on farms [...] They start off on a farm because [inaudible] farms provide them with accommodation [...] OK, so they get a foot in [...] Phone up their mates and go and work at a petrol station [...] work in a hotel because that's what they prefer to do, but there's another thing, insidious thing that's happening now, the kids that are coming over from Eastern Europe are no longer brought up in a rural tradition. Now, I've got a mate, [friend's name] who's already had to send home about a third of the people that have come and worked for him this year because they're getting back ache two hours later [...] Because they're basically softies (Laughs). [...] Now I believe, this is supposition on my behalf, I believe that that rural culture just simply isn't there anymore.'

Quote from grower consultant (Con04)

The same grower consultant, with views often at variance with the conventional growers' perspective, continued to highlight nuanced problems relating to the grower workforce:

'If you, we've got another problem here, if you did nine to five hoeing [...] Your body has to be a different shape [...] The food you eat has to be different and you have to also have the mental capacity of being bored for a day. [...] I've done it and it's awesomely awful.'

Quote from grower consultant (Con04)

A grower consultant expressed concerns about the future availability of labour from Eastern Europe:

'...we are going to find, in five years' time, we're going to find a real, real shortage of labour in this country and horticulture, no question about that and that will be, that will really affect businesses.'

Quote from grower consultant (Con01)

Changing requirements for labour in the vegetable sector

The changing pattern of production was having an impact on the labour force that was required in vegetable production. All year round supply required some full time roles:

'A lot of it [the use of local labour] is because we are pretty much a year round business. We have seasonal peaks but we do have a [...] A good core of year round as well.'

Quote from manager in a GPMO (GP01)

There was a view that the increased consolidation and mechanisation of vegetable production would require workers with a different set of skills. A conversation with two policy experts highlighted the changing nature of work in vegetable production. Large grower organisations required workers with technical and managerial skills:

'...they've got to do all the paperwork, due diligence, pay the wages [...] that all has to be worked out and planned and then there's contracts [...] Because people are using each other's land. [...] There's quite a bit of management in farming. [...] And people think it's a guy with a straw driving an old tractor around, you know, [inaudible] and they have no idea.'

Quote from policy expert (Pol02)

Whilst the GPMOs need a more professional workforce with technical and managerial skills in addition to seasonal labour, the smaller farmers have survived by moving into some downstream activities, such as market stalls, and farmers' markets to capture a greater percentage of the value created in the vegetable supply chain. This has created new challenges for them in ensuring workers perform tasks to the required standards. One organic farmer who delivers boxed vegetables and serves farmers' markets explained the difficulties of training staff, often casual, overseas employees, to understand how to pack and present specialist vegetable produce:

'I literally say to them if the quality is bad you know that means we won't sell stuff and then there won't be a job.'

Quote from organic grower (Gr02)

Attracting new people into the vegetable sector

One successful smaller grower voiced concerns about the availability of qualified farm managers and there was a belief that growing vegetables was not perceived as an attractive job or career option.

'So it's, well, we're recruiting at the moment because we have an aging management, we have three people calling it a day in the next two years and there's only five of us [...] In the actual management team...'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr05)

'...horticulture I think historically has been seen as a bit of a, if you can't do anything else then you do horticulture...'

Quote from grower representative (Rep01) (PM)

'We need good, very good people to come into it but it's not even on, I don't think any careers adviser [has it] on their agenda [...] it needs to be embedded in there somewhere.'

Quote from manager in a GPMO (GP01)

One policy expert reported the attempts by the government to address a skills gap in horticulture in general. The approach included working across departments to develop skills in the indigenous population as well as looking to innovation to develop solutions that reduced dependency on labour:

'...one of the reasons for the agri-tech strategy and the hit is to invest money [in R&D into mechanisation] [...] It's not just drought tolerant strawberries, it's ways the strawberries can be picked more efficiently. [...] RHS produced a report earlier this spring saying that skills all the way across the piece need to be looked at for horticulture. [Apprentices] That's coming in, [...] 2012 was the first year universities could charge £9,000 tuition [...] Do you think Harper Adams agricultural college got more or less applications? [...] I was so surprised, they said they'd never had so many applications, ever,'

Quote from policy expert (Pol02)

Productivity of labour and productivity of land

For conventional growers reducing the labour cost was a key productivity target and the focus of collaborative efforts by large grower organisations. One grower and key industry representative explained how the vegetable sector was looking to mechanisation in other industries for ideas on improving productivity and mechanising production:

'We're planning to visit a car plant in Coventry, a group of us are going down there, to see whether robotic technology could help reduce labour input. [...] That's because an awful lot of brassicas have to be cut by hand, [...] If we can find ways of reducing that labour cost that's good for us.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep06)

Some organic producers sought to reframe the issue of productivity, focusing on the productivity of the land and the biological processes involved in growing vegetables, rather than on labour productivity:

'In terms of labour I'd say we are less efficient because we're not mechanised. It depends on what your, what your priorities are. In terms of there being 9 billion people by 2050 we're going to have to get as much food out of the land as we can.'

And that's the thing, we can't make more land. We can have more workers. It might make it more expensive but in terms of productivity of land area we're doing it much more productive.'

Quote from organic grower (Gr03)

'...everybody says that if you want to get food cheap, you've got to cut down the labour and if you look at an individual farm, you'll find that possibly 50% or a huge proportion of the outgoings is the labour. So it looks as though, yes, that's what you've got to do. However if you look at the whole food chain, you find that only about 20% of what we pay for food in a supermarket goes to the farmer and there's no reason for that. [...] If it's the case that only 20% goes to the farmer, [...] It's very interesting to ask "how much of what we spend goes to bankers?" I suspect that's 50% because of all the loans. But anyway, if you seriously want to reduce the cost you don't attack the 20% the farmers are getting, you attack the 80%...'

Quote from grower consultant/writer (Pol04)

Protecting workers' health

Only one grower, an organic grower, expressed concern about workers' health and the use of pesticides in the growing process. He suggested that part of the reason for opting for organic production was, in addition to environmental benefits, to avoid worker exposure to pesticides.

'It may not be any more healthy to eat an apple whether it's organic or not organic but the point is organically produced things aren't going to have the waste, the chemical waste, that goes into the environment and the exposure to the people that are producing it.'

Quote from organic grower (Gr02)

It may be that workers' health is a topic that conventional growers are wary of bringing up, but also its importance has probably diminished as more restrictions apply on the use of pesticides than in the past, and conventional growers increasingly make use of integrated farming practices that minimise the application of pesticides throughout the growing cycle.

'...we're using products that are watched so closely, that, you know, if used correctly, there shouldn't be any issues.'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr01)

Policy and Environmentally Friendly Production

The findings from the key informant interviews suggest that vegetable growers in England responded well to policy mechanisms to reduce the environmental impact of production. Key informants reported that soil and water management have improved; growers have complied with more controls on pesticide use and benefited from the cost impact of using lower quantities of chemicals; and there has been investment in renewable energy for heat and light for protected crops. However, support

for environmental compliance was often linked to land so intensive vegetable production lost out to extensive farming, particularly livestock and cereal. One informant involved in Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food reflected on how the Curry Report had helped to bring environmental issues to the fore in food and farming policy:

'The driving force was that there had been environmental degradation and that it was necessary to turn the corner on that.[...] Margaret Becket was very keen on that side and the current civil servants are still very keen on environmental elements. [...] I mean people criticise it now [...] but to get any degree of commitment to payment in lieu on an environmental scheme was quite something actually. [...] So it was a fascinating time and to get the ELS [entry level stewardship] scheme, you know, on the environmental side up and running [...] in environmental terms, the Curry Commission did an enormous amount.'

Quote from policy expert (Pol01)

A grower representative, looking back at the Curry Report, largely agreed that it had played an important part in aligning commercial interests and environmental issues:

'And having looked at the Curry Report yesterday, I was thinking, and I remember at the time there was a lot of push back from people saying there was too much emphasis on the environment then. And you see this pendulum swing. [...] A lot of environmental aspects have become core business now, to do with waste management, and energy.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep05)

The Curry Report brought environmental issues into UK Food Policy, but its legitimacy was bolstered by public concerns about environmental despoliation that were prevalent at the time. One organic grower felt that it was important that the public understood more about how our ability to produce crops depended on natural resources:

'[...] they understand it better because it's been on the BBC and they're a bit more educated from Countryfile and then choose to buy Jordan's cereal that has a LEAF type thing.'

Quote from organic grower (Gr02)

Since the Curry Report there have been a number of policy initiatives that have influenced the vegetable sector in England by bringing together economic and environmental concerns. Participants commented on the impact of a range of initiatives that they felt had raised the profile of the environmental issues for domestic vegetable production. EU and state support for agriculture was increasingly linked with environmental policies, as the basis of subsidy shifted from production to compliance with a range of environmental standards. For example, for vegetable growers the EU Fruit and Vegetable PO scheme linked funding and the environment:

'In terms of the PO scheme, because there's an environmental aspect of that, they've been able to do a lot of work using that money on all sorts of environmental issues, whether it's measurement of soils, agronomy, precision farming.'

Quote from policy expert (Pol03)

But in addition to policy incentives, the supermarkets also began to develop and adopt standards that have become a feature of domestic production. Supermarket standards were seen as more important than policy interventions in the governance of environmental standards in the supply chain.

'Most growers will probably have a LEAF audit, a Tesco's Nurture audit, an M&S Field and Fork audit as well as the Assured Produce audit so we're probably making sure that – and they're all very similar in many respects [...] But really the way they will get things changed or move the agenda forward is by the retail suppliers, picking up on those signals and transferring that down through the supply chain to their supply base. And that will only happen by PGOs [packer-grower organisations, i.e. GPMOs] showing in practice and then showing their suppliers where they can actually take action which will reduce obviously carbon usage but as a result also reduce their costs.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep06)

A GPMO manager made a similar point, demonstrating his view that competitive markets were an important driver of societal and environmental welfare:

'So it's in the blood to be doing the, putting the LEAF's fertiliser on [...] So policy doesn't drive it, it might support it, it might encourage some of the poorer performers to do that but I don't think it's, for me, it doesn't drive it.'

Quote from GPMO manager (GP01)

Governance of environmental standards was seen as so important to some supermarkets that they were changing their relationships with their supply chain, moving into direct relationships with growers to ensure compliance with their standards:

'[one of the big four supermarkets] have moved to direct sourcing. So they have to a relationship with the grower. They will often do that, with more emphasis on how a product is being grown, the environmental standards.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep05)

Despite being broadly in favour of raising standards, one conventional grower was concerned about the bureaucratic burden the various environmental standards regimes placed on growers:

'[I'm] absolutely supportive of the idea of having a method of demonstrating that we are responsible food producers. [...] But the problem is it becomes an industry in itself [...] when policies are introduced on our customers [i.e. retailers], all they do is pass a load of it on. [...] And I think the trouble is it takes everybody's mind off

of what they should be doing, you know, at the end of the day we should be producing food sustainably and safely. [...] But you know, here we are being book accountants and, you know [...] I mean, "Have you done a nut assessment for your farm?" [...] "Guys, you know, we've got trees growing around the fields." "What is your nut risk?" "Well, there's a tree round..." you know.'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr01)

And there was concern that consumers did not understand what the different environmental labels meant:

'...do people know what LEAF means when they see it on a fresh product?'

Quote from grower representative (Rep01)

Most participants reported that growers were far more careful about how much they used plant protection products (PPPs) in their growing processes. There was a general acceptance to minimise their use, in part owing to a concern for their impact on the environment, and also in terms of lower costs. Increased regulation and restrictions on a range of plant protection products were now the norm. Nevertheless, some conventional growers were concerned about removing too many pesticides from the lists of permitted chemicals.

'I think as the UK, we all take regulation and we gold plate it [...] you've got this risk based criteria and, as an industry, we don't have access to the same chemistry that the rest of Europe gets [...] we can't use the same chemicals that Europe, that our competitors in Holland use, for example.'

Quote from GPMO manager (GP01)

Whilst he felt that some EU legislation was inappropriate, it was how policy was implemented in the UK that was of particular concern. The consequence of a draconian pesticide regime he believed would be imports of cucumbers and lower yields:

'...pesticide[use] is now managed by the HSE, Health and Safety Executive [...] On a risk based basis and are a lot tougher than our European parties and therefore, as an industry, we really struggle to compete, it adds cost.[...] so pesticides are a big issue [inaudible] minority crop industry like ourselves to a certain extent where you think cucumbers, if it carries on going then maybe we won't grow cucumbers in the UK [...] [then] we bring product in [that] will have chemicals on that we can't use.[...] it's also counter intuitive for a country trying to produce more food. When we can actually use less [pesticide], it means less yield.'

Quote from GPMO manager (GP01)

He explained that pesticides have to be licensed for use in the UK but agri-chemical organisations may decide not to apply for licences if the levels of production of a particular crop are not sufficiently large to justify the costs of obtaining the licence.

'...there's quite a lot of research going on but for a, if it's too costly to do, they won't get licensing in the UK [...] the biggest issue is they won't get licensing for a small crop like we grow because it's not worth spending the money on.'

Quote from GPMO manager (GP01)

A grower representative also warned that over-burdening conventional producers with too many controls on production techniques could affect the ability of vegetable producers to contribute to health and environment goals. She was keen to see government:

'Not over burdening with regulation, encouraging greater production here in the UK, helping the industry promote healthy eating. Fruit and veg is a key part of a healthy diet. That's generating then the future growth of the industry. We've got to meet the challenges to with potentially more intensive production. The impact of climate change, we've got to manage water more carefully. Maybe we need support to do that. Having the right tools [i.e. pesticides] [...] would be very much welcomed.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep05)

One conventional farmer was more sanguine about banning some pesticides:

'As long as it happens to everyone then I think it's really good news. [...] Which would be disagreed with by other people here [i.e. other growers in eastern England] [...] But, yeah, if someone says, if someone said tomorrow, "No one's allowed to spray insecticides," it would be potentially disastrous from a business perspective but then again everyone's still got to eat and everyone will still want products and all us growers would be in the same boat, so [...] As long as overseas doesn't step in [...] As long as it's fair.'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr05)

He felt that conventional and organic production were closer than they had been in the past:

'You know, the ethical argument is a different one to have, [...] But, I mean, with our kitchen garden cropping, a lot of that is so short term, that it is effectively, it's not organic, because it's not grown on organic soils, etc., but a lot of it will only have one chemical input, and that's it, and the rest is hand-weeded...'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr01)

A grower representative described some of the problems of implementing policy relating to pesticide use. And whilst accepting the general direction of policy on pesticides, she warned about possible problems if too many pesticides were removed from permitted lists too quickly:

'...it's potentially reducing the tools available to the grower. And that's going to bite really in the next two, three years. We'll start to see, so people growing carrots, there will be fewer products available to them. And then there are issues to do with resistance, if we use one particular chemical a lot that could potentially build in resistance. Whilst the whole of the industry is going towards integrated pest management, we're just not there yet to be able to totally get rid of using chemicals. [...] If we get a very wet period certain diseases are more prevalent in this country and then you've got problems [...] getting the volumes out.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep05)

Water use

A policy expert provided an example of improvements in water management:

'And we've changed the way you abstract water from a particular date in the year to high flow periods so if the water's flowing, take it, if the water's low, I don't care what day of the year it is, you're not taking it. [...] And some of that's linked to changes in approach at a policy level and some of it is the fact that the technology's there to do it. You can text or receive a text saying today's an abstraction day, not an abstraction day...'

Quote from policy expert (Pol02)

'...fresh produce can use a lot of water in its production. And there's been lots of work to look at varieties that need less water or production methods such as not growing in soil, hydroponics or different techniques like that.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep05)

Renewables

Government policy had encouraged farmers to explore renewable fuel options. These included incentives to produce crops for bio-fuels as well as subsidies for investment in alternatives to fossil fuels. Some grower-farmers and their representatives looked favourably upon the opportunity to produce renewable crops, perhaps as part of a crop rotation system:

'...it takes careful management and understanding of what it will do for your soil structure, what it will do for potential weeds and pests. Generally where you're changing from one family, if you can call it that, of crop to another, it's beneficial generally, but there are difficulties because certain crops like sugar beet, for example, have a lot more demands on the soil, and regenerating soil after growing them can be quite difficult. But generally, [...] if the price is good enough then farmers will find a way to facilitate that.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep02)

Some large grower organisations were less enthusiastic:

'[Renewable energy] that's a bit of a distraction from the current business because we should really be investing in more food production.'

Quote from grower-packer MO manager (GP01)

A small grower was also underwhelmed:

'I did put solar power in but I regretted it. [...] I paid more in interest on a Barclaycard bill than I've had back in grant money.'

Quote from organic grower (Gr02)

The market for renewables was also having an impact on farmers' choices of what crops to grow so vegetable growers may decide to switch to producing crops such as rapeseed whose price has risen because of demand for biofuels:

'Very interesting case of rapeseed [...] German policy on biofuels has meant that most of our rapeseed goes there to be converted into biofuels, which we often import back again as other types of fuel. But because they have a government, they have a very heavily subsidised energy market from biofuels, it's going for that, it distorts the market, certainly, but rapeseed is pretty, has been very solid in terms of price for the last four, five years.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep02)

There were concerns about organic production from conventional growers. One manager from a GPMO explained his reservations about organic methods:

'... [organic production] it's probably less regulated therefore some of the things that are applied are probably as harmful, if not more harmful, than pesticides.[...]The damage to the soil, you know, we [conventional producers] don't grow in the soil so actually, we've got, we're not polluting the water table at all whereas organically, with some of the heavy metals, you know, it can be a challenge.'

Quote from GPMO manager (GP01)

On the other hand, an organic grower felt that policy makers had been set against organic production:

'I would say the Food Standards Agency have been aggressively against organic. [...] The whole thing with organic farming is it isn't whether it's slightly more healthy a tomato [...] it's to do with the production method, the way the farms work, that way you can have smaller farms selling directly, a whole ethos that should have been embraced in a way that it wasn't. It kind of scared people for some reason. It didn't fit their model. Their model was for bigger farms, more efficiency and that was the chosen way forward.'

Quote from organic grower (Gr02)

Large organisations in the food supply network were keen to tap into win-win opportunities that enabled them to reduce costs and improve their CSR profile by reducing their impact on the environment:

'...the big growers are concerned about their CSR policy – corporate social responsibility. Basically, looking at carbon is proving very effective because what it's doing is reducing our footprint but at the same time reducing carbon is saving money.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep06)

One grower representative provided an example of how a grower used carbon dioxide, which was a waste output from a nearby factory as an input to encourage plant growth:

'There was another interesting example, I think it's somewhere in Lincolnshire, Leicestershire, somewhere like that, there was a giant tomato set of poly-tunnels and greenhouses that used carbon dioxide, I think, from a local, I think it was a processing plant for something else, but they channelled the carbon dioxide through tunnels [...] Into, yep, so carbon dioxide wasn't lost into the atmosphere.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep02)

One grower representative, who also ran an agronomy consultancy, provided an example of packaging reduction:

'... we did a lot of work in terms of taking packaging out so in some cases we've reduced packaging by 80% for one retailer so that's a significant reduction in packaging but also satisfies the green issue that we want less packaging.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep06)

By successfully aligning cost and environmental impact, a renewed interest in environmentally benign production techniques was stimulated, although he believed that markets provided a better stimulus to change growers' behaviour than government interventions or directives:

'... we encourage bees for pollination, and we plant grass strips to encourage pest predators. That's not as easy as it sounds though – we planted grass edges and then we found you need the right grass to attract the right pest predator. We're looking at water and water usage, there's research that's being undertaken at East Malling Research to understand how much water we need to use. So we're looking at water retention from rain so that you need less irrigation. We're looking at soil, the use of compost to maintain the quality of the soil within what is basically a monoculture. And in fact you're not allowed to add animal manure over fresh eating products, there are restrictions on that, so it's all sorts of things. It also means that the soil actually holds more carbon. It's pretty complex growing vegetables. But we need to look for alternatives to chemicals [...] the reality of it is that [government directives to improve environmental impact] will work but it won't work in the long run. [...] The more organic matter in the soil the better the quality of the soil. That's going to give better growth. The less you have to use irrigation, that's going to be much cheaper. The better your pest management through predators, the better the quality of your crop. And therefore...the research work shows what is beneficial to the grower and then showing him there is a financial benefit in actually taking that action. Because, to be honest, yes you will

get a few people who will say, 'Well I'm going to do it because the government tells me to,' but if there is a better economic argument in terms of you're going to actually grow better crops then that's going to be much more sustainable. And that will have a much better impact on the business...'

Quote from grower representative (Rep06)

Conflicting policy priorities on environmental issues

A range of production issues might be classified as environmental matters. For example, in the Curry Report a major environmental concern was the protection of the landscape of the countryside. As fossil fuel costs rose, carbon became an important aspect of environmental impact. Biological diversity is another aspect of environmental protection. Sometimes these environmental issues are in conflict and the section above on planning also demonstrates contradictory tensions for policy. The Curry Report stressed farmers' role in the conservation of the countryside landscape as a resource for the public to experience and enjoy. On the other hand natural resources such as soil and water had to be deployed to produce food and although vegetables are an environmentally efficient food source, environmental resources are still required to produce them. Sometimes the protected environments in which some vegetable crops are grown did not enhance the natural landscape. As mentioned above, local people would sometimes object to buildings that were at odds with conventional views of what the British countryside should look like. The multiplicity of environmental issues meant that sometimes it was difficult to coordinate individual policy actions. One conventional grower commented on co-ordination problems that affected government departments:

'...with policy makers [...] everything's fragmented [...] there isn't any cross collaboration and you end up with three different problems and then it's presented to you as an environmental manager and you think, 'Well, this doesn't work, because one is counter-productive to the other.'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr01)

As food security in the face of climate volatility and global population growth has risen up the policy agenda some participants reported that concern for the environment had become more muted. Referring to recent discussions she had been involved in at Defra, a grower representative felt that environmental issues were not as prominent as they had been in 2002:

'But it's fascinating because within the group discussions, you've got people who are seeing the environmental aspects are lower on the agenda now.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep05)

One grower representative was concerned that the general public were not fully aware of the trade-offs involving vegetable production, trade, and environmental impact. He gave an example:

'... there was a scheme in Kent [...] the lost heat, was transferred via combined heat and power to power, or to heat 55,000 houses in Thanet. [...] The reason why the Thanet example actually didn't work very well, primarily because there was local pressure from the general public against schemes like this [...] And you think, "Hold on, you talk about high energy prices. Doing something like this will reduce your heating bills. Why are you moaning? Why are you whinging?"'

Quote from grower representative (Rep03)

It was not always easy to resolve competing concerns for environmental resources and it was sometimes difficult to ensure that policy actions were consistent. One grower, whose farm was involved in a number of conservation projects, provided an example of the problems he encountered:

'... all our rare heathland which is managed [...] some species out there exist out there nowhere else in the world apart from on these breckland heaths so you have to keep the grass very, very short so you can't allow invasion of taller grasses. So OK, so there's a management planning to graze them, fair enough, but then someone introduced a regulation that, well actually you can't feed the animals out there because you're bringing in, you know, additional nutrients onto what is a scarce heathland, OK. But it is such short grass, it is such poor nutrient, animals can't survive on it, so how're you supposed to graze it?'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr01)

It's not always easy to weigh up conflicting costs and benefits to protect the environment, and our understanding of the issues develops over time. One participant gives the example of food miles, which was an issue that caught the public imagination some years ago:

'...with some crops [...] anything you can dry. It doesn't matter if it takes 3 months to get here, you can send it by camel and it'll still be okay. So food miles per se is not the big deal that people thought it was.'

Quote from grower writer/consultant (Pol04)

Measures to protect the environment often focused on mainstream sectors of agriculture, that is, livestock and cereal, since these sectors were responsible for a large proportion of food production's impact on natural resources. Arable and livestock make up a large proportion of the total land used in agriculture in England. Land was a key environmental resource so policy to improve the environment was focused on agriculture activity related to land use. An unintended consequence was that the vegetable sector, which used far less land than arable production and livestock, was not supported to the same extent in its efforts to engage in more environmentally benign production.

The link between diets containing a high proportion of vegetables and environmental and health benefits has been broadly accepted so it seemed perverse to some participants that more was not

done to help increase the volume of home produced vegetables, and to help domestic growers shift to more environmentally benign production methods. One participant summed up his concerns:

'I don't feel that the reconnection that was being encouraged by the commission has actually functioned as well as it might have done. One of the outcomes from the Curry Commission, or I suppose two outcomes, one was the English Food & Farming Partnerships and the other one was the Food Chain Centre, and English Food & Farming Partnerships has, I think, achieved a certain amount in terms of actually helping business to become more business-focussed and, but I don't think that it's actually managed to connect, in a commercial sense, the retailer, added value grower scenario and the Food Chain Centre did a lot of work in terms of measuring waste in the food chain and looking at efficient process. [...] Defra chose to discriminate against fresh produce and horticulture [...] They are much happier to try and be as supportive as resources allow on the broader acre areas, and why? Because, of course, they're farming the land which is important as far as the environment's concerned. So that's why I make the point about the environment still dominating. And we saw this sort of discrimination going on in the Food Chain Centre that they would give support and help to cereals and livestock [...] And they would not give, even though it was requested, equivalent help as far as horticulture was concerned.

Quote from policy expert (Pol01)

One grower representative explained that the stewardship schemes did not work well for vegetable producers, particularly in protected cropping.

'... the grant aids that some of the arable farmers get for, you know, planting a hedge or something [...] has never been applied to protected cropping, even, I mean even in that context, the transition payments which are due to growers and farmers for organic conversion which I think were about, it was £500 a hectare, really in protected cropping don't apply because, you know, it's not an extensive operation [...] extensive and outdoor cropping I think has benefited more from those kind of [environmental] schemes [...] Whereas, and I think protected hasn't particularly...'

Quote from grower representative (Rep01)

Most participants took a pragmatic view of policies on environmental protection, confining their comments to initiatives that might work within the prevailing institutional structures, using their experience as practitioners. One participant, whose career included writing and campaigning on food issues, was keen to question some of the assumptions of the prevailing discourse. One fundamental institution he questioned was the commercial organisation. He challenged the orthodox view of the role of commercial organisations, particularly in the context of agriculture:

'The second thing you need is for businesses to be conceived as social enterprises. In other words, their job is not just to make lots of money for their shareholders, their job is partly to make money, of course, but; they also have another purpose which is environmental or community or both'

Quote from grower writer/consultant (Pol04)

He challenged the assumption that global competitiveness was a driver of societal welfare and progress:

'So what happens is we compete with Africa because we've got better technology than they have, and they compete with us because they've got more sunshine and they don't pay their people so much. The Brazilians have got labour and sunshine, but less technology and so on and so on. [...] what it amounts to in the end is you must produce more and more and more and get a bigger market share. And the first thing to observe is the world doesn't need more and more, it just needs whatever we do, we've got to do it safely – in terms of the environment, not wreck the rest of the world. [...] And we don't need to produce the maximum amount, the maximum amount is very, very damaging to the soil, to the environment and it doesn't do people any good. What we're getting at the moment is loads and loads of the stuff which is cheapest: palm oil, corn syrup, soya, wheat, out of which a limitation diet is created by corporates.'

Quote from grower writer/consultant (Pol04)

Support for Innovation

Some voiced concern about the closure of some research institutions and the lack of funding for research:

'... so many places are being mothballed, closed, you know, we've got [research institute] locally which is effectively mothballed which was a, you know, an ADAS organisation. [...] [Research organisations] they are having to close and mothball, you know, whole lab complexes because there's no funding. Well, that's absolutely criminal when the industry is crying out for that kind of research and data.'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr01)

A grower representative agreed, emphasising the need for research into improving yield:

'The other key area of policy I think the government has got to get back to is [...] better investment in R&D in this country. [...] I think that we have lost an awful lot of horticultural research and development in the last decade. [...] Places have been closed for research, research contractors have disappeared. There are some good ones left which is great. And those that are left are doing a really good job with what they've got as resources. We as an industry will pay a levy into research and there is additional funding that goes into the BBSRC and into the Technology Strategy Board as well. But Link Projects which didn't exist, which were a great link between industry and science were fantastic and they've gone. And I think that there is a need for a real focus of research on, very simply, doubling, at least doubling, yield from field vegetable and fruit and salad crops over the next ten to fifteen years.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep04)

Investment in R&D impacted on growers' confidence:

'... there are things to help the industry to be more efficient, whether it's around energy or protected cropping to extend seasons but actually I think it would really encourage growers and it would help growers to see research money going into increasing yields...'

Quote from grower representative (Rep04)

Another policy expert pointed out that horticulture does not always receive the level of funding for R&D that other parts of agriculture get:

'... if you look at the value of horticulture to the UK economy versus, you know, other things, let's say livestock or grains, if you were to divvy up the money [for R&D] according to that, then horticulture should get an awful lot more than it is.'

Quote from policy expert (Pol03)

But whilst a policy expert acknowledged the funding problems facing research institutions, she felt that the situation was improving and a conventional grower felt that there were some excellent examples of R&D:

'So, R&D, there is an integrated strategy has been developed, we've got the horticultural innovation platform, we've got the agri-tech strategy and there is a lot more coordinated work working across government [...] And across some of the research bodies, they've had a hard time the research bodies [...] And they've had to make some very, very difficult decisions but the end result is most of them are still alive and most of them are moving in a forward direction.'

Quote from policy expert (Pol02)

'... the Sainsbury's Centre and the John Inness Centre in Norwich. [...] I think they're brilliant. [...] we looked at all their gene modelling and everything and it was, you know, it's the future of agriculture, it has to be [...] Because you can shorten the cycles [with] [...] genetic understanding [...] and that's where, you know, our customers and the general public need to understand where it [genetic understanding] differs [from GM]. [...] there's genetic modification but actually understanding the genomes and just being able to shorten breeding cycles, you know, you'd be able to produce a corn of grain that you haven't got to wait till it produces its own ear, you can just, you know, interrogate the genome and know whether you've got the traits or not. [...] there's got to be a lot more funding, you know, those places, you know, the Rothamsted's, [...] where they take it out into the field and trial these things, you know, they've got to be supported really.'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr01)

A grower representative provided examples of a more proactive and co-ordinated approach that he thought should be encouraged:

'...we're very keen on innovation. At the moment we've got quite a number of schemes up for TSB funding which obviously is government money – the Technology Strategy Board - that's about, that's taking research and taking it to application, commercial application. Those are good projects. We're doing, as I say, work on pest predators, what they need to flourish in the wild. [...] We're doing work on reduction in irrigation, the water boards must have an interest in that and it's up to us to talk to them and say, 'Look, you know we're doing this work, it should help reduce demand for water which will free it up for housing and for public use.' You would have thought that they would want to do that type of research.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep06)

The heterogeneous nature of the vegetable sector makes investment in R&D challenging. One grower representative believed that it was not just a question of funding but how that funding was deployed. He provided some detail on industry funding for R&D, explaining the more active role grower representative organisations could take in shaping how the funding for R&D was spent:

'...all the growers have to give 5% of turnover as a levy to the HDC, and then the HDC uses that money [...] to develop, say, research that's useful across the whole sector. And what we realised is that the BGA could influence HDC to a much greater extent in directing the money from that levy into projects that we wanted to happen, rather than just leaving to chance or whatever. That pot has always been there but we just didn't use it properly. [...] It comes down to better communication and better coordination. So it's not that there's more money available but we got better at driving the HDC towards research we wanted to see undertaken.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep06)

Another grower representative provided a similar story of cooperation between growers, HDC and researchers:

'Our relationship with the HDC is obviously very close because now we, the principle is that we come up with, as an association, we come up with ideas of the kind of research that we think the industry needs. For instance, recently there was a new pest in the UK called tuta absoluta, [...] Which was a little micro moth which came in from South America, came through Europe and ended up in the UK and so we applied, before it had become a problem in the UK, for funds from HDC who funded a research project looking at that particular pest. So we do, we're very proactive in terms of research, we're thinking ahead all the time...'

Quote from grower representative (Rep01)

Interest in increasing British produce has encouraged the supply network to invest in domestic production but a number of informants suggested that more is required to support R&D:

'...there's huge potential to grow more in this country of what is indigenous and suits our climate. And I don't think we've seen enough in terms of helping with R&D or pushing people to do more in that context.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep05)

Translating research into usable innovations can be a challenge:

I think that's one where the government's been very supportive in terms of [...] R&D levels, certainly in bioscience, has stayed the same so they've not cut that. The challenge is getting it relevant to industry.

Quote from GPMO manager (GP01)

'And it's an endemic thing with R&D or research universities is the fact they have to, like anything, be commercial and justify their own existence. So the same idea might go round in different forms for years and years and years generating funding but will never pop out the other side as something relevant to industry which I think government is trying to address. But I would say, yes, in terms of the UK, we're also one of the world leaders in bioscience, so there's a lot of positives there.'

Quote from GPMO manager (GP01)

'I don't think GM is the golden bullet but it does have a role to play and the lack of, you know, the lack of ability for companies or people to engage in it is, you know, considering I think 70% of the world does use it [...] there's a lot of research going into understanding the biological, how plants work basically at a biological level. But sometimes it might need a bit of GM simulate or, to speed up the process by several years.'

Quote from GPMO manager (GP01)

Nevertheless growers appreciated that the sector had to invest in funding for innovation rather than relying on publically funded initiatives:

I don't think there's anyone that wouldn't say it would be lovely if the government would invest in R&D for their particular sector [...] [but] we really have to row our own boat and get on and do it ourselves rather than expecting government to be there and to do it for us.

Quote from grower representative (Rep06)

One grower representative suggested that a lot of investment in innovation was market driven:

'[Innovations] I think they are market driven. [...] There are big projects, like the Sceptre Project which is looking at alternatives to pesticides'

Quote from grower representative (Rep05)

She also commented on the combination of state and commercially funded research:

'So the concern has been I know that you have to try to tie that [research effort] together, have some sort of strategy for the industry so that you're not duplicating effort, and going in a certain direction. And there's been some work to try and pull people together and to try and share where they're going, what they're doing, to tie it together loosely. But that's where normally a government would drive a lot of that if it was that way inclined.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep05)

One grower consultant was concerned about how the benefits of research were shared:

'Now most research is done by near market, so Tesco research into post-harvest storage [...] so the IP belongs to Tesco and you ain't going to get your hands on it, so it's not done for the benefit of mankind, it's done for the benefit of Tesco...'

Quote from grower consultant (Con04)

'Although it would be done within the universities and some of our farmers work very closely with Cranfield on soil issues or whatever. But they will pay for that - it's part of their investment in their core business rather than being lessons on which the whole sector can draw.'

Quote from grower standards advisor/consultant (Con02)

There is a lack of research in areas where there are fewer opportunities for commercial development:

'... if you get the biology right, if you get the techniques right, if you understand what you've got already, that, to me, would be better but the problem is there's very little intellectual property in that, there's very little money to be made [...] Out of developing the best compost you can, you know, and putting it on your land and having fantastic yields, there's not a lot of money in it, whereas with GM there's huge amounts of money to be made and that's where the thrust of research for a lot of big business is. I think if we can get those same businesses excited about the possibilities and the potential to have some kind of IP from developing a more natural approach [...] to crop production, then those would be the really big gains but at the moment the money is, researchers go where the money is...'

Quote from grower representative (Rep01)

He continued this point in discussing research into GM technologies:

'Universities, colleges are looking at GM because that's where the money is and that's, the money comes from, not just from government but from big business as well, so the agendas get driven and I, although I find GM very interesting and I think we're, it kind of takes our eye off the ball of where research should be focused and the glittering future of GM is, I don't think it has a massive future because there's other things which should be priorities before [...] GM is. [...] it shouldn't be a priority, I mean it's kind of interesting in that theoretical kind of way, you know, of the things that you can do but all those things that can be done using GM technology can be done better if we think about it in a more... The natural things and diseases are natural things, as we begin to understand the biological processes that exist already, rather than trying to change something that's not already broken if we only saw that it wasn't broken.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep01)

A grower consultant was also concerned that important areas for research were being neglected:

'So there's this whole dynamic of being able to develop new crops, new months of production in this country which nobody is picking up, or very few people are picking up.'

Quote from grower consultant (Con04)

One grower was concerned that there were not enough independent researchers, since scientists are being employed by commercial firms in the agri-business industry:

'There isn't another generation because that next generation has all been picked up by commercial companies because there hasn't been the government funding so all the brains are now behind a brand. [...] I think it's absolutely criminal that there aren't a new generation of scientists coming up [...] you have to live it, you can't build up that level of knowledge quickly.'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr01)

'There is a concern then that you're losing the expertise, you're losing the knowledge and we will have to rely on other countries to share that expertise with us.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep05)

In a similar vein a grower representative felt it was important to be investing now to develop the technology for the future:

'I think we'll see that this is an evolving picture. I mean to gear ourselves up now. If we don't in ten years' time we'll get there and we'll be oh dear we haven't got what we thought we had.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep04)

This point was echoed by grower consultant/writer (Pol04), who took a more jaundiced view of the situation. He felt that scientific debate was being stifled or at least steered in a particular direction towards some technological solutions to the problems of food production:

'... the only scientists, the only biologists these days that can get a job are the people who work in molecular biology. You won't get a job working in zoology or botany or one of those nice things that I used to do and the only molecular biologists that actually have jobs are the ones working for Monsanto or the ones working for Oxford University are still working for Monsanto or for Syngenta, because that's where the money comes from. So the consensus is among the people who have jobs and have positions who are all basically being paid by the industry. If you took the time and trouble to ask the scientists who are not, you wouldn't find a consensus at all.'

Quote from grower writer/consultant (Pol04)

The importance of engaged researchers was mentioned by one grower representative:

If we get that technology transferred from what is theoretical, what has been found in a non-real world setting, into the real world then, you know, I think we're at the beginning of some extraordinary progress in terms of crop production and, but that needs again for not just producers to get excited about that but for researchers to get excited about that and to see the possibilities...

Quote from grower representative (Rep01)

He was also concerned that the bidding process for research funding does not fit well with genuine research, he felt it required a longer term perspective:

'... it's very difficult to research, you can't get, often can't start a project and finish it within three years which is the usual timescale for most research projects because that's the timescale that researchers and funders tend to work from [...] It needs a longer view [...] Do we still want to be pouring pesticides and chemicals on our soils in 20 years' time or do we want a situation where, you know, we're getting more production from less input which sounds counter intuitive but it's absolutely possible'

Quote from grower representative (Rep01)

Nevertheless the new agricultural technologies strategy did have support from some:

'...we've had the launch of the agricultural technology strategy in July, it's the first ever national agricultural technology strategy in the world, that you're looking at agriculture and saying, "Right, how can we increase our exports, increase, you know, increase things like employment and generally, how can we use it to stimulate the UK economy?" I think also there's an international development side of it as well, they want to do an export(?) some of the technologies for abroad so you can grow hybrid maize or something like that. So, that's very important, not just because it's providing a lot of money through sort of catalyst funds to get things to market quicker, to get things used amongst wider growing population and not just the specialist guys. It also helps fund the sort of, the actual researchers in, you know, say the John Innes centre of potato blight, which is one of their big, big areas of work-stream, really important. But it also says, it also has a statement from the government saying, "We're willing to invest serious amounts of money, hundreds of millions of pounds, into agricultural technology, because we realise there's money to be made from it, both sustainable food production in the UK, but also something we can export as a market,"

Quote from grower representative (Rep02)

The grower representative went on to explain that the Department for BIS was the driving force behind the strategy, to develop export opportunities, as well as having support from other departments:

'It's the treasury, 'cause they're happy to find the money, it's business innovation and skills, David Willis, I think, really pushed it, it's DEFRA and it's DFID as well.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep02)

A grower representative indicated that there was a more positive push from retailers, for example, to encourage domestic production:

'...I'm really excited about some of the plans that some growers have in the UK to expand and to, and some of the retailers too have, are really committed to UK or British production. So it comes from people want to buy a British product and it comes from retailers wanting to supply that demand to their, and customers, I think if they continue to support us, has happened this year because it's been obviously Jubilee year and this year they've been very pro-British, if that could continue and if they can support our industry, if the retailers can support our industry and if there's a push also from government to support the R&D [...] That needs to be there to support the industry to do better with less, going forward.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep01)

'... AHDB is now promoting skills more and they're doing a few other things that are more than just R&D so I think that's doing good.'

Quote from policy expert (Pol02)

One grower representative felt that the competitive context for research meant that research was not always well coordinated:

'One problem we find is that the research institutions don't work together, that's partly why HIP was set up [...] An awful lot of research has been undertaken and not all of it has been put out into the commercial environment. I notice that quite a few of the research institutions, you know, the likes of Stockbridge Technology Centre, and East Malling, they're great and everything but I see that they could do a lot more if they were able to share their work more. I get the impression that funding for research is in short supply and they're all competing with one another and that can get in the way of developing collaborative work. So making the best of research is part of it.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep06)

There was a minority view that questioned the benefit of a focus on industry supported agri-tech solutions:

'... of course high technology, science can be wonderful, doesn't mean to say that all of it is. [...] The idea that GMOs, triple packaging, you know all these things are good, is not necessarily true. It's good for the people that run it, it's good for a few people, is it good for humanity, is it good for the whole as a whole?'

Quote from grower writer/consultant (Pol04)

He was concerned that the present push on agricultural technologies was ideologically driven by neo-liberal ideas that underpinned policy since 2002:

'...the Blair/Brown government, that was in a sense more Thatcherite than Thatcher [...] And the present opposition is basically neoliberal, and all the rhetoric that came from Patterson and what's coming from the new woman, though I can't

bear to read what she's saying is just all neoliberal stuff. "We've got to compete, we've got to produce more, we've got to sell more high-tech because we're good at high tech" that's what Patterson said and she's saying it, irrespective of whether it's necessary, irrespective of whether it's doing anybody any good.'

Quote from grower writer/consultant (Pol04)

He was also concerned about how policy was expressed in terms that had alternative meanings:

I could use the words "sustainable intensification" to mean what I'm talking about. Small, skills intensive, low input, but it's very intensive in terms of husbandry and etc. quite concentrated, very diverse, that's intensification of a kind and it really is sustainable. What they would talk about is GM and using slightly less oil [...] it simply means more of the same. Slightly smarter technologies doing the same job, slightly less oil, or less labour so anything can mean sustainable intensification.

Quote from grower writer/consultant (Pol04)

He was keen to demonstrate that he was not against high technology solutions per se. But he wanted a further test: whether the technology was good for society. He explained:

'But the important distinction was not between high-tech and low-tech, the important distinction was between what is the impact it has on society. And polythene used in polythene bags, clogs up rivers and all that is horrible. But polythene use for polytunnels is a very convivial use of a good technology...'

Quote from grower writer/consultant (Pol04)

A grower representative was also keen to use research to build a new approach to growing vegetables:

'...I'm not an organic evangelical type of person but I think that production needs to change and it needs to become more sustainable. The use of energy to produce fertilizers and the death of a lot of soils in the UK is due to just short term thinking [...] Quality, you know, so if we don't want to be short term, we want to use good materials, we want to do it as best as we can do and build something for the long term...'

Quote from grower representative (Rep01)

In his view glasshouse production was a sustainable, low impact option for producing vegetables in England but it required a co-ordinated industry and policy response. He provided a detailed example:

'It [government] can incentivise through connecting various government departments together to make various things to happen. So for example on protected glass house cropping, it costs a million pounds a hectare to put glass up and there is at the moment no incentive to build glass, there's no government incentive, there's no, what's the word, contractual incentive from the retailers. Because you wouldn't have contracts. So if you go to your bank to say you want to build a glass house at the moment you have got to be working really hard to be able to prove to your bank that you have got a contract and that you can get a

return on the capital invested to demonstrate it. I think that with all the work that is being done on renewables or more responsibly produced energy we could be quite clever here and say the Department of Environment and Climate Change plus Defra plus probably local government, could get together and say look if we are to incentivise these guys (and Treasury for that matter as well) to produce energy. And if they produce a certain amount of energy let's say they've got an AD plant and they get their renewable heat incentive and that allows them to go to their capital suppliers and get the funding to put up an AD plant of some kind. That electricity then goes back up into the Grid and they'll get a decent preferential rate from the electricity board or whatever and get somebody to power their own glass house. What about enhancing the tariffs that they get, the renewable heat incentive tariff, if they produce in glass as well? They may build a glass production facility for tomatoes, cucumber or whatever, and they rent it out to a grower. Then we'd have more glass in this country, then we'd have more sustainable more responsible production.

Quote from grower representative (Rep04)

However, one GPMO manager was critical of vegetable growers for their lack of investment in R&D:

'...our industry in the UK, no one has really invested in it in 20 years so they're asking consumers to pay more because growers haven't bothered investing in their business, they've spent the money themselves.'

Quote from GPMO manager (GP01)

Access to Credit and Advice

There were few comments on problems related to access to credit or on advice to growers, and a policy expert thought it was no longer a problem. One grower representative mentioned that an agricultural bank would be useful, but an organic grower was less certain of the usefulness of a dedicated institution for agricultural finance.

'... it [Fruit and Vegetables Task Force Action Plan] says, 'Establishment of a panel to champion the financial needs of the sector', I don't think they've really done that [...] we're not hearing complaints about that now...'

Quotes from policy expert (PoI02)

'... my view is that there should be a business bank, a proper business bank. They're talking about targeting sectors ... and all that rubbish. You need to target success basically or potential success. And you need people that come out and look at a business model and make a decision on that.'

Quote from organic grower (GR01)

Policy on Quality Standards

Assured Produce/Red Tractor

There were a range of views on the Assured Produce Scheme with its Red Tractor logo. The conventional growing community could see the value of conforming to quality standards for their produce and having a label that communicated that but it was onerous for them to comply and the cost of compliance was borne by the grower and the retailer determined whether it was adopted. Organic growers, who adhere to a more exacting production regime, generally felt it was irrelevant or meaningless for their produce. One grower was in favour but found the bureaucracy challenging:

'when it was first introduced, the Assured Produce was introduced [...] Fantastic, brilliant. But now the audit changes every year for the sake of changing, you know, they ask you absolutely stupid questions, just for the sake of having a different question. [...] it's a great idea but it's just been exploited, you know, right to the maximum, created jobs for everyone and costs us a huge amount of money in inefficiency.'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr01)

A grower representative was also concerned about the cost burden:

'[Red tractor] is an added burden onto the producer. Now it could be the case that that's a good thing, because it actually reinforces the quality aspect, which may not be the case for imported produce, but what it also does is, it increases the costs for the producer....'

Quote from grower representative (Rep02)

There was a concern that compliance was ultimately a distraction for growers:

'And I think the trouble is it takes everybody's mind of of what they should be doing, you know, at the end of the day we should be producing food sustainably and safely.'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr01)

A GPMO manager said that the decision to use the Red Tractor mark was the retailer's decision and was concerned about lack of public understanding:

'We do [adopt the Red Tractor standard] but really at the retailer's request.[...] If they want to put Red Tractor on their labels, they'll put them on their labels. If they don't, they won't, and there's nothing we can do about that. [...] But they won't necessarily put red tractor on there because people don't really understand what red tractor's all about.'

Quote from GPMO manager GP02

One grower representative was surprised that some retailers were not using the Red Tractor logo:

'I think it is [useful], definitely. What was interesting was that Sainsbury's decided not to use it, was it last year, they said we're not involved in, we don't think consumers recognise and know what it is ... and I think people were quite amazed at that. [...] it would be interesting to revisit it following the horsemeat scandal and whether now that's seen as having another value to it to bring that level of confidence and assurance.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep05)

The conventional grower community were generally sympathetic to the aims of the Assured Produce Scheme, albeit with various caveats:

'I actually think Red Tractor's a good concept, again badly executed. I don't see why we can't just have a Union Jack on. That could be your brand [...] a stylised Union Jack...'

Quote from grower representative (Rep04)

The organic growers remained unimpressed:

'I personally don't have much faith in the Red Tractor so no I don't really think it means very much.'

Quote from organic grower (Gr03)

Support for Marketing, Export and Support for Best Practice

As show in Chapter 2, export has been a very small part of the market for English vegetable growers but some participants felt that there were options for policy to help growers reach both emerging and established export markets:

'...we are, the UK market, we are relatively small on a global scale but we could potentially be quite large on a European scale. And we currently don't trade with the European point of view. All the trade missions that have gone out are promoting UK products you know to try to develop partnerships with China. [...] And I think we haven't got those market connections correct really.'

Quote from grower standards advisor/consultant (Con02)

There were some positive noises in the development of export markets:

'One thing that has been very positive from ministers is that they're actually going to non-EU countries to try and basically drum up some demand [...] For British produce.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep02)

He believed that an important part of the development of the export market would be support for investment in grower technology:

'And, well, we've got, we've had the launch of the agricultural technology strategy in July, it's the first ever national agricultural technology strategy in the world, that you're looking at agriculture and saying, "Right, how can we increase our exports, increase, you know, increase things like employment and generally, how can we use it to stimulate the UK economy?" I think also there's an international development side of it as well, they want to do an export some of the technologies for abroad so you can grow hybrid maize or something like that. [...] It also helps fund the sort of, the actual researchers in, you know, say the John Innes centre of potato blight, which is one of their big, big areas of work-stream, really important. But it also says, it also has a statement from the government saying, "We're willing to invest serious amounts of money, hundreds of millions of pounds, into agricultural technology, because we realise there's money to be made from it, both sustainable food production in the UK, but also something we can export as a market"...'

Quote from grower representative (Rep02)

Another grower representative felt that export would be more important as a market for vegetable growers in the future:

'I think you'll have a growth in exports, primarily because you'll have the technology to be able to [...] Get it out to the export market quickly.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep03)

Policy initiatives to support export markets had the potential to provide medium-sized and larger growers with commercial market opportunities in the future. Of course, export markets do not impact on domestic consumption, but they may offer growers opportunities to scale up production and this may have a positive impact on growers' competitiveness in domestic markets. There were no comments on the usefulness or otherwise of demonstration farms.

Producer Organisations

The Fruit and Vegetables Producer Organisation regime was a major policy mechanism for supporting vegetable growers. It took the form of a policy incentive with strings (carrot and stick) that linked funding with environmental compliance. It enabled growers to coordinate their activities, reduce costs, and serve customers (i.e. retailers) better. There were a number of participants who felt that the vegetable growing sector had benefited from the PO regime:

' [Producer Organisations] that's where a hell of a lot of the money came from [...] there would have been no bloody strawberries on the markets without them. [...] I think that's been a really positive thing [POs], actually, the producer, everything I hear about it [the PO scheme] is positive actually, I mean it's a lot of money but it's something that is pretty simple and straightforward...'

Quote from organic grower (Gr04)

'...[PO scheme] has been the lifeblood of a lot of growers [...] I think producer organisations are very, very important and without them a lot of companies would not survive.'

Quote from grower consultant (Con01)

PO funding was successful in supporting more environmentally benign and more efficient production methods:

So [...] [POs are] all about ... partly environmental issues and making that better. But also in terms it can be [set] against investing in new varieties and it can be about re-structuring so that the individual business is more profitable

Quote from grower representative (Rep06)

POs seem to have worked better for English fruit growers than English vegetable growers:

'...it's pretty much all POs [in fruit production].'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr05)

But there were examples of successful vegetable POs as well:

'...for something like vining peas the POs do work well. POs have been successful in the pea vining, and in the fruit sector. The POs have enabled all of the growers within the PO to invest 80% per annum into what you would term capital investment. [...] that's pound for pound funding so the fact that the EU through POs is putting in 4% from the grower. I don't think with the economic situation that many growers would have been investing 80% year on year over this last period if it hadn't been for the Producer Associations'

Quote from grower representative (Rep06)

On the other hand another grower representative (tomatoes) expressed some disappointment at how POs had developed for growers of protected crops:

'...now we have very few Producer Organisations in the protected salads industry except for, there are one or two notable exceptions where UK growers are members of Dutch producer organisations which is rather perverse...'

Quote from grower representative (Rep01)

Improving access to markets was a key benefit for growers that were part of a PO:

'Yes, I'd say a key thing POs have helped with for those sectors where they've been used is access to markets. And that's as a result of scale. POs have enabled some growers to go to retailers with a coherent offer that works for retailers.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep06)

In a conversation in which progress on the Fruit and Vegetables Task Force Action Plan was examined, a policy expert commented on the role of POs in helping growers develop alternative routes to market:

'...the PO scheme and that, there are clearer rules, there's been a lot of work to get there, but it's still a very difficult scheme [...] There's a number of alternatives [routes to market] and it's not just the wholesale market, it's the retail food, it's the restaurant food trade [...] 3669 [...] But again that, I think, works better if you're either a large group and have the time to devote it, or if let's say you're a PO or something, because you will have the ability to make consistent pushing on the wholesale markets or 3669...'

Quote from policy expert (Pol02)

One grower representative believed that POs could help vegetable growers cooperate better to appropriate a bigger share of the value in the supply chain:

'...we've got 300 products, crops being grown whereas a dairy farmer just produces a single good. It's very different, simplicity versus complexity. [...] And probably our biggest challenge as an industry is to herd all those cats together and actually get all those crops and growers together and start them thinking about how we might approach the channel, the route to market in a different way. That's why I keep coming back to, I do think Producer Organisations, cooperation of some form, could be incredibly powerful in helping to get our way through that, that scenario. And actually forming stronger joint ventures with the retailers...'

Quote from grower representative (Rep04)

But he was concerned that not enough growers were forming POs:

'If you look at the amount of money Producer Organisations put in it's actually very small beer. Last year in the last twelve months £25 million of grant revenue funding has been provided to Producer Organisations in this country. Thanet Earth, as you mentioned earlier, cost £100 million to build. So to put that into perspective: the amount of money that Producer Organisations are actually in reality getting is really quite small. That's not to say it couldn't or shouldn't be an awful lot bigger – I personally think it could be and should be – but actually the take up has been very small.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep04)

Another grower representative was concerned that English growers were not taking advantage of the scheme to the same extent as their European counterparts:

'... other European countries have taken great advantages of Producer Organisations, for some reason the UK government isn't supporting them anymore and so we're not getting the benefit that Producer Organisations bring and all the [inaudible] benefits of, you know, capital expenditure, 50% rebate from the producer organisation, etc. So, I can only think of one or two producer organisations in the UK at the moment which are benefitting [...] that makes it even more perverse doesn't it, that we're not getting our fair share of funds from the

money we do pay into the EU [...] when Producer Organisations got closed down that nothing really seems to have changed since then, there's no reinvigoration of Producer Organisations in the UK or a re-push to get these [...] Back up and running again...'

Quote from grower representative (Rep01)

Some growers were affected by the RPA's stricter application of the regime rules, perhaps in response to a problem that some growers had attempted to exploit the scheme without properly conforming to its regulations.

'...quite frankly a number of POs – not within our management or control – have been set up out-with the spirit and the letter of the law to try to just extract the money out of Europe. And clearly I'm speaking very candidly now – part of the problem has been there have been some shall we say pseudo collaborative arrangements...'

Quote from grower representative (Rep04)

Perhaps to address some of the administrative problems some grower groups encountered, and to ensure that POs operated within the regulations, The British Growers' Association became involved in helping growers manage the administration associated with setting up and running POs:

'...we have now got five Producer Organisations here which we actually run so we do everything for them except grow and harvest the crop [...] we set them up so we, the legal entity we create it for them. We run all their continuing corporate governance, we run their financial accounts, we run their payroll, all their banking, we do all their sales and purchase ledger, we look after health and safety, regulations for them, we look after any marketing and promotions for them that they might need to do, manage their operating plan, with the RPA, so that they get the capital grant funding they have applied for, and we carry out all the checks and balances that need to be in place that we negotiate with the department and the auditors.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep04)

The process is initiated by a group of growers who then appoint BGA to manage the administration associated with the PO.

'Generally speaking when we've formed Producer Organisations on behalf of growers and set them up to run, a group has tended to come to us and they may recognise or believe there is an opportunity for them to improve their businesses through being involved in that kind of corporate structure or mutual structure. And we have then gone through the legal process, financial process, to help them cooperate, collaborate, and build up an operating plan. With a Producer Organisation you have to be in existence generally for something around six months before you make an application to the RPA with your operation plan to be recognised as a PO.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep04)

A number of participants also commented on the distinctive way British policy actors implemented the PO scheme:

'As you know, the PO regime is administered by the individual governments and obviously within the EU there are differences in how these things are administered. The experience of the UK POs is that the British government is more pedantic about the requirements of the PO than possibly some of the other EU countries. [...] the problem with the scheme is that in any one year you have to put a plan forward to the RPA by 15th September for the following 12 months starting from the first of January. And with all good horticulture crops yes that can be what you want to do but with the weather and things, things change and things like that and sometimes the flexibility isn't within the scheme as it used to be.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep06)

'...there have been difficulties caused by the application of the rules by auditors and the RPA. A lack of clarity from the European auditors to the RPA. The RPA are finding it very difficult to second guess what is expected of them. The English psyche, the British psyche, which tends to be well that's the rules so we'll play by the rules whereas if you go into Europe the rules are subject to a slightly different interpretation.'

Quote from grower representative (Con04), he continued:

A number of participants cited the bureaucratic burdens associated with setting up and administering POs:

'Producer Organisations in this country have not really developed in the way that the European Commission will have wanted them to [...] One problem that I know from experience is that the way in which they've been administered in England, the administration is horribly complex, and it requires a lot of time and resources to register as one.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep02)

One grower standards advisor had mixed views on the impact of POs, she was pleased that they encouraged more collaboration but concerned about how collaboration affected the autonomy of the traditional grower-farmer:

'Over the last ten years we have seen the distinct rationalisation of the players in the fruit and veg sector. So basically you have Produce World, Langley, G's, Riviera Produce. [...] And I think with that comes opportunities, efficiencies, market strength, but also with it goes [away] the voice of the individual farmer so I don't know if it's the right thing...'

Quote from grower standards advisor (Con02)

Two young growers in the study, one an organic grower and the other a conventional grower did not opt for POs because they felt constrained by the PO structure. They both displayed a strong desire to exercise their autonomy and their entrepreneurial flair. Both were sons of growers.

'...I can remember sitting in a meeting with all the big growers ... and they were saying 'This will go back to the growers' group and we're going to do this, we're going to do that, and there'll be money to pay back the growers' group and you're going to make this much money [...] They wanted people to invest 25 grand and I knew people who did [...] and they lost the money.'

Quote from organic grower (Gr02)

Another grower considered joining a PO for his new business venture in fruit growing, which was on a very small scale, but had dismissed POs for his main business of vegetable production.

'It was a PO for a PO's sake [...] and it was just so tenuous, and I'm glad we didn't [...] 'Cause that would have never stood up. [...] it's not a particularly strong veg area, so there's us, there's Anglia Salads down the road that are quite a big company [...] Grow a lot of lettuce and speciality leaves. That's about it. [...] we have a company pack our fruit, which is a recent diversification. There's a big PO there and they've asked us to join. [...] But with a, to be a PO, to me it just seems your hands are so tied. And the advantage of being a small company is you can move quickly, you can react, you can make decisions like that [...] POs, undoubtedly there's the benefits, but they, you do drag a company into so much bureaucracy.'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr05)

He felt that a PO might impede his ability to develop supply chain relationships:

'...our biggest customer, biggest Chinese customer [...], they invited us to meet, we went up, we had, it's brilliant, the Chinese do everything over lunch [...] and the next morning we, I think, stopped, cancelled all our orders for lettuce plants and switched it into some stuff for the Chinese and, you know, six months later we're doing a hell of a lot more business with them. So, you wouldn't have had that with a PO. [...] It would have had to go through the board and this, and that and the other [...] if you want to be a bit more entrepreneurial, I don't think it helps it. [...] And, it's not a tradition in English farming [...] I mean, in English farming, we're all suspicious, cynical old gits, [inaudible] (laughs) [...] Cynical, suspicious young gits, as well, but I think that's in the psyche...'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr05)

Many participants commented on the way that cooperatives were not as embedded in the farming culture in England as they were in other parts of Europe, and despite incentives, English farmers did not seem to want to collaborate:

'...the problem is that it [PO scheme] is a European model and it doesn't seem to sit well in the UK. [...] Yes it is a strong model in central Europe but they've got much smaller growers. So therefore it's a very good model for them to operate with.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep05)

'I think one of the problems that we've always had in this country is that farmers don't co-operate. [...] And they don't like co-operating, and Curry [...] tried to encourage far greater co-operation. And that was 10 years ago, or 11 years ago, and it hasn't worked. [...] They still won't do it.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep03)

Another grower representative agreed that the lack of co-operation caused problems, despite incentives from the national government and the EU:

'...even though there's a clear benefit there [to co-operation], the willingness for that to happen is very small.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep02)

One grower representative also suggested that the lower take up of POs in England may reflect the way English farms are passed from one generation to the next on the basis of primogeniture. This meant a different pattern of farm ownership on larger farms and a distinctive sense of personal autonomy.

'... the psyche of collaboration and cooperation is much more widespread in Europe than it is here. [...] I personally think that is a reason why we are very sceptical because our land ownership traditionally, the model has been very different, very different to the rest of Europe...'

Quote from grower representative (Rep03)

A desire for autonomy might be one reason that some growers did not join POs, bureaucratic complexity might be another. But one conventional grower suggested that the supply chain structure in England might also have influenced how growers engaged with the PO regime. Smaller growers had little to lose by joining a PO and much to gain but medium sized English growers had some contracts with large retailers at stake and they were concerned that the new PO arrangements might upset them:

'...there are some [POs] that don't work. [...] Why not? I'd say it's because of the way the market works, the oligopoly purchasers, there are so few purchasers [...] In that PO we didn't sell produce to supermarkets, to the big customers through the PO. We had to, we called ourselves marketing agents to do that so that we could still sell on the same account to, be it Tesco's or Sainsbury's or whoever. Because we were fearful that once you, if you change anything the relationship with the customer, the ultimate customer, Tesco or whoever, is changed and they might [say]: 'No we don't want that anymore'. They can be capricious and you

would not, you'd be foolish to jeopardise that because the feeling is that they can go and get their celeriac, their onions from anywhere. They can pick up the phone and say ..., and they have that power to do it. And so you do not do anything to offend them. That's one reason why POs didn't succeed.'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr06), he continued:

'A few years ago we went into another producer organisation called Global Salads. There were six or seven members and really to be honest it was a set up to exploit the grants available, to the EU cash available. It was a conduit for funds. It wasn't sufficiently a conduit for vegetables or the produce and we were, all we were doing really was funnelling our invoices through a central place, through the office of the PO and they would deduct a small levy and we would use that levy to produce an operational programme and it was a scam really.[...] it wasn't a single marketing desk, we were all doing our own marketing. [...] the Rural Payments Agency, derecognised us. [...] we would put in our operational programme which would then be subsumed into the PO's operational programme, so to the RPA it appeared as the PO's operational programme but in fact it was then split back out again into individual growers.'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr06)

POs could not overcome the distrust between the larger growers, but growers were under pressure to access funding since grower margins were being squeezed, so perhaps unsurprisingly there were some that opted for an instrumental solution:

'POs didn't really work in the field scale sector well for a number of reasons. One, the sector has rationalised and there's mistrust between the large grower organisations who are competing in a difficult market. Around 2004 some growers got together to form POs that were a bit of a con, they were supposed to have a single marketing desk as part of the PO requirements but they carried on marketing their produce separately because they didn't really trust one another. Now the RPA got wise to this, and they told them, 'We know what you're up to,' [...] so a number of these POs were forced to disband. In any case money for machinery is all very well but - and I'm not complaining or anything - but infrastructure and so on only helps so much - you have to have a market.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep06)

'I think PO as a regime [...] hit the UK industry at the wrong time. Had it hit in the 1960s and 1970s it would have been different because at that time there was a, farmers were getting together and forming co-ops, which, had they been helped by the fruit and veg regime at that time would have prospered in the same way that continental co-ops have prospered. Why didn't they prosper later on? I don't know - a lot of co-ops have bitten the dust now as you're aware I'm sure. They've been de-mutualised, they've been taken over or they have failed.'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr06)

At the other end of the production scale the larger grower-packer organisations also had mixed feelings about POs:

'Thanet Earth has three Dutch producers and, who are all part of a PO so they get European funding. [...] On the other hand our other, one of our other businesses, at [Company Name] we find the Producer Organisations a really very difficult monopoly which make it very difficult for us to develop new business. So let me explain. I want to grow a strawberry business, I'm not a member of a PO, you know, I'm a marketing desk, I want to sell strawberries I can't get growers to grow strawberries for me because they're tied in into their PO. [...] And although they might quite like to grow strawberries for me, they can't leave their PO because the penalties, the fines, the money they have to pay back is so great that it's not worth them leaving the PO. So it's a real monopoly, it's a barrier to free trade for that grower to say. [...] it's stifling innovation, movement, trade, free market.'

Quote from GPMO manager (GP02)

Another GPMO manager saw POs as simply a mechanism for accessing EU funding. Since his competitors used POs to access funding, he believed his organisation had to do the same to remain competitive:

'Producer Organisations [...] it's all about leverage and money out of Europe, as our competitors do it across Europe. [...] Unfortunately they're a damn sight better at it than we are in the UK.'

Quote from GPMO manager (GP01)

There was a note of optimism that some progress was being made to address the concerns of English growers. One grower representative was optimistic that the regulatory context would improve in the next round of CAP reforms:

'I do think the government can help by pump priming the set-up of POs by making sure that the operational plans can be as big as possible; making sure the rules are easy to negotiate your way through [...] And in truth I think they [policy makers] have [made some improvements]. I think the new round of CAP reform is looking like it is going to encourage more and more cooperation in the form of Producer Organisations, even outside of horticulture and salad vegetables which is great.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep04)

A policy expert agreed:

'...we've done a lot of work across the whole of the EU, working with other member states to try and get greater clarity in the [PO] scheme, we're not there yet unfortunately...'

Quote from policy expert (Pol02)

There were many positive comments about the PO regime from across the grower spectrum and the additional funding does seem to have helped growers engage in more environmentally benign production systems, to invest in equipment to scale up production and meet the requirements of their large retailer customers, and access other markets. The PO regime did not always sit easily within the

English industry structure of larger grower farms. Growers were reluctant to cede control to other growers and this has hindered the participation of some growers in the scheme, more so in the vegetable sector than in the fruit sector where individual farms are often smaller. Some growers were worried that the new PO arrangements would upset existing contracts without delivering new business. There have been problems with the bureaucracy, and some POs did not meet the regulatory requirements and were disbanded. There seems to have been attempts by policy makers to work with their European counterparts to obtain changes in the regime to encourage more English growers to join POs.

The table below summarises the findings from the key informant interviews on the impact of UK Food Policy for a competitive supply base on the vegetable sector.

Table 6-2 Summary of Findings on the Impact of Policy to Support a Competitive Supply Base

Competitive supply base		
Priority	Key Findings	Indicative Quotes
Planning permission for production facilities	<p>Slow progress on planning, difficulties obtaining planning permission</p> <p>Potential conflict with policy goals for environmental protection</p> <p>Local planners play a pivotal role but may not appreciate the importance of food production</p>	<p><i>'That [a better planning process] is happening a bit, not as much as we'd like... (PoI02)</i></p> <p><i>'...we need something in planning policy that actually helps the planners understand the importance of food security...' (GP01)</i></p>
Access to labour	<p>A significant cost of production</p> <p>Labour supply problems both in quality and quantity, indigenous versus migrant workers</p> <p>Growth of full time roles but seasonal workers remain crucial</p> <p>Attempts to improve labour productivity – but is that the real problem?</p>	<p><i>'...a group of us are going down there, to see whether robotic technology could help reduce labour input...' Grower representative (Rep06)</i></p> <p><i>'In terms of there being 9 billion people by 2050 we're going to have to get as much food out of the land as we can. [...] we can't make more land. We can have more workers.'</i> Organic grower (Gr03)</p>
Environmentally friendly production	<p>Growers responded to policy mechanisms to reduce environmental impact of production</p> <p>Over-rigorous interpretation of environmental rules (e.g. on PPPs)</p> <p>Tension between environmental protection and growing more vegetables</p> <p>Renewables may divert land from vegetable production</p>	<p><i>'A lot of environmental aspects have become core business now, to do with waste management, and energy. And there's all the benefits of managing your costs down.'</i> Grower representative (Rep05)</p> <p><i>'[I'm] absolutely supportive of the idea of having a method of demonstrating that we are responsible food producers. [...] But the problem is it becomes an industry in itself...'</i> Conventional grower (Gr01)</p> <p><i>'...the UK, we all take regulation and we gold plate it...'</i> (GP01)</p>
Support for innovation	<p>Concern about the lack of funding</p> <p>Some examples of good practice in co-ordinated approaches to R&D</p> <p>But sector needs to provide own funding as well as relying on the public purse</p>	<p><i>'...there's no funding. Well, that's absolutely criminal when the industry is crying out for that kind of research...'</i> conventional grower (Gr01)</p> <p><i>'...there's huge potential to grow more in this country of what is indigenous and suits our climate.'</i> Grower representative (Rep05)</p>

	GM – potentially a focus for R&D but other priorities too.	<i>'... we really have to row our own boat and get on and do it ourselves rather than expecting government to be there and to do it for us.'</i> (Rep06)
Access to credit and Advice	Very little mention of the usefulness of advice to growers Access to finance does not seem to be an issue any more	<i>'...we're not hearing complaints about that now...'</i> (Pol02)
Quality standards	Generally a positive response from the conventional sector Bureaucratic problems – cost borne by the grower Retailer determines whether it is used	<i>'I think it is [useful], definitely.'</i> (Rep05) <i>'[Red tractor] is an added burden onto the producer.'</i> (Rep02) <i>'If they [supermarkets] want to put Red Tractor on their labels, they'll put them on their labels.'</i> (GP02)
Support for marketing and export and for best practice	Comments mainly focused on export opportunities, positive policy support Demand-led opportunities No comments on demonstration farms	<i>'One thing that has been very positive from ministers is that they're actually going to non-EU countries to try and basically drum up some demand [...] For British produce.'</i> (Rep02) <i>'I think you'll have a growth in exports, primarily because you'll have the technology to be able to [...] Get it out to the export market quickly.'</i> (Rep03)
Producer Organisations	Generally a positive response to impact of POs but funding is modest PO model works for collaboration between small growers but less so for larger growers Some regulatory problems Examples of carpet bagging Disruption of existing relationships with retailers	<i>I think producer organisations are very, very important and without them a lot of companies would not survive.'</i> (Con01) <i>'POs have been successful in the pea vining, and in the fruit sector.'</i> (Rep06) <i>'...very few Producer Organisations in the protected salads industry'</i> (Rep01) <i>'...the amount of money that Producer Organisations are actually in reality getting is really quite small.'</i> (Rep04) <i>'...some growers got together to form POs that were a bit of a con...'</i> (Rep06) <i>'...we were fearful that [...] if you change anything the relationship with [...]Tesco or whoever [...] they might [say]: ' No we don't want that anymore'.</i> (Gr06)

Chapter Summary

In the previous chapter, Chapter 5, an analysis of key policy documents illuminated how UK Food Policy used a range of mechanisms based on orthodox marketing to support a more competitive vegetable supply base and better marketing in the sector. In this chapter, Chapter 6, the interviews were then analysed to explore how the sector responded to these policy efforts to improve the marketing of vegetables and to reveal insights from those involved in vegetable production on their experience of the policy mechanisms in practice.

The findings show that some policy mechanisms were seen as effective by the experts. As highlighted in Chapter 5, the policy mechanisms adopted to support a competitive supply base were relatively powerful. A key policy, the PO scheme, a regulatory framework with incentives, provided significant funding - and environmental cross-compliance - for vegetable production. It was broadly welcomed but some growers found that the scheme was not always compatible with their existing arrangements with their major customers, some found the scheme overly bureaucratic, and there were some examples of malpractice and abuse of the scheme. Nevertheless growers did respond to efforts to address the environmental impact of production. Other initiatives, such as support for export, were welcomed by the sector, although export remained a limited opportunity for vegetable growers. Some in the sector were concerned about insufficient government support for planning for new production facilities and for research. There was some support for the Red Tractor Scheme but a number of experts mentioned problems too: some believed it was not well understood by consumers, and although the costs accrued to growers, its use was dictated by the supermarkets. Chapter 5 showed that the policy mechanisms employed reflected orthodox marketing theory, and Chapter 6 showed the policies did support the supply base somewhat, and that growers engaged and responded, but growers and other experts continued to report problems for growers in terms of profitability. The next chapter, Chapter 7, using the structure from the Fruit and Vegetables Action Plan, will continue to present the findings from the interviews, focusing on UK Food Policy attempts to improve the efficiency of the supply chain, and to increase consumption of vegetables.

Chapter 7 Impact of Policy on Supply Chain, Markets and Marketing

Chapter Introduction

The second research question concerns the impact of a market-oriented UK Food Policy on the vegetable sector in England and Chapter 6 presented the findings from the expert interviews on the impact of policy mechanisms for a more competitive supply base. This chapter presents the findings on the impact of policy mechanisms designed to address supply chain and consumption challenges that growers faced. This too uses data from interviewees. As in Chapter 6, the Fruit and Vegetables Action Plan goals are used to structure the findings on the impact of policy mechanisms as shown in Tables 7-1 and 7-2 below. The chapter also presents the findings related to growers' perceptions of their marketing challenges in engaging with their supply chain customers and end-consumers. In addition, the review of the broader policy context covered in Chapter 2, and the review of the marketing theoretical frameworks covered in Chapter 3, suggest that poor marketing was not the only problem for the vegetable sector and so the final section of Chapter 7 completes the presentation of the findings by examining experts' views on structural problems in supply chain markets. It scrutinises the assertion, expressed by critical voices, that a policy based on improving marketing in the vegetable sector was inappropriate because the main challenges for growers in reality stemmed from unfair/malfunctioning markets dominated by retail multiples. It uses a framework based on the features of well-functioning markets, reproduced in Table 7-6, to explore whether the source of problems for growers related to markets (rather than growers' marketing efforts) and presents key informants' views on whether, and if so how, UK Food Policy 2002-2015 addressed problems for the vegetable sector that stemmed from malfunctions in the markets within the vegetable supply chain.

Policy Mechanisms for an Efficient Supply Chain

Table 7-1 Summary of Vegetable Sector Policy Mechanisms for an Efficient Supply Chain

Efficient supply chain (from the Fruit and Vegetables Action Plan)	
Priority	Policy mechanism/focus
Market advice	Levy boards to play a role in providing independent advice on the market and growing conditions
Retailer ordering schedules	Best practice in ordering timetables to be drawn up Supply chain efficiency incentives
Access to markets (other than supermarkets)	Produce a Guide to the Wholesale Sector Extend Business Development Manager programme for wholesale markets Farmers' markets
Management of supply chain relationships	GSCOP/GCA

Source: Fruit and Vegetables Action Plan (2010)

As noted in Chapter 2, compared to the policy mechanisms for a more competitive supply base, the policy to support a more efficient supply chain and to encourage increased consumption of vegetables (and fruit) are fewer and focused on information provision (sermons) rather than the more powerful policy mechanisms of regulation or incentives (sticks and carrots). Some of these policy mechanisms do not seem to have gained much traction.

Market Advice and Retailer Ordering Schedules

A policy expert commented on the lack of progress on business advice:

'Business link successor, I don't think that's actually happened for anyone...'

Quote from policy expert (Pol02)

Guide to the Wholesale Sector and the Business Development Manager Programme for Wholesale Markets

The same policy expert, reviewing the Fruit and Vegetables Action Plan, acknowledged patchy progress on implementing some access to markets policy mechanisms:

"'Extend business development programme for the wholesale markets", in fact that's had to go, it was just too expensive and they couldn't do it, so that has gone but the NFU has been promoting using wholesale markets as an additional [route to market] [...] Now "Production of a guide to wholesale sector", that's been done, the fresh produce consortium did it.'

Quote from policy expert (Pol02)

Access to Markets

A few policy mechanisms were employed to encourage growers to find alternatives to the supermarket supply chains for their produce.

Farmers' markets

Farmers' markets were generally perceived to be successful, particularly for small and organic growers but there was a consensus that they were not suitable for larger scale producers. In response to a question that asked whether farmers' markets were helping farmers significantly one conventional grower said:

'Oh definitely yes, they're not really suited to the larger people though. [...] there's only one large fruit and vegetable supplier who goes to farmers' markets [...] On any scale anyway.'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr08)

'There was a farmer the other day who was growing veg and selling it at farmers' markets and in fact I think he did some veg boxes. And he had a very small market garden and he had tried to expand that and he hadn't got a market and he said OK I've now got 20 tonnes of cabbage, I've now got 20 tonnes of carrots, how is he going to survive, where is he going to sell it?'

Quote from grower standards advisor/consultant (Con02).

A West Country organic grower explained that the standards required for participation in farmers' markets were useful in conveying a message of authenticity for her produce. The farmers' market in her local market town also had an impact on the local population's knowledge of food:

'They know about food. Frome, in the last five years changed and become [more knowledgeable about food], mainly because the farmers' market here is so strong [...] I'm not certified organic but I do grow completely organically but to go through the whole certification process [...] as long as you're associated with the farmers' market and you comply with the kind of requirements they have you're getting quite close to organic.'

Quote from organic grower (Gr07)

There were some issues associated with farmers' markets on their regulation and their role. A few participants mentioned that farmers' markets needed to be more regular if they were going to impact on consumers' purchasing habits:

'... farmers' markets are an idiosyncratic part of marketing, right. They're not regular enough, they're, you know [...] I mean we've got a, who wants a farmers' market like we have in Wokingham once a month? Housewives shop once or twice a week, right. In France, you know, they have open air markets, you know, two or three times a week.'

Quote from grower consultant (Gr01)

Some growers with experience of farmers' markets highlighted some regulatory issues, including the use of market stall employees:

'Farmers' markets are great and I think they're a fantastic starting point for a business. I think to some people they are the starting point and the end point. They're quite a lot of hard work. Some people do well out of them. The ones who are doing well, the ones who have got quite sorted out about it, the ones I know go around the London markets, they've got, they're doing ten of them or so, and they're using a bunch of East European marketers, they go round they drop off and sell the stuff and they go around and pick up at the end of the day. Actually I don't really know how they get away with it really because it's supposed to be the producer [who mans the stall]'

Quote from organic grower (Gr04)

Another grower mentioned the problem of managing cash transactions:

'But I mean the big problem is, if you're a big company and you send people off to farmers' markets and they take lots of cash and the cash disappears.'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr08)

And what sort of produce may be sold at a farmers' market is also contentious:

'And you know, while it, you know, I did ask the local olive supplier where the olive tree is grown because you're supposed to actually produce in a 30 mile radius.'

Quote from grower consultant (Con01)

One farmer in eastern England, the major area for vegetable production, explained a further problem with farmers' markets: demand. It would seem that farmers' markets did not always appeal to low income groups:

'... we don't have [farmers' markets], frankly we don't have the demographic here [...] That supports farmers markets, it's a relatively poor area [...] In the Tendring peninsula you've got Clacton, Walton, Harwich, they've got really bad deprivation...'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr05)

One critical voice felt that they placed too many additional burdens on farmers to take on retailer activities. He wanted to see more development of traditional markets and he felt that the role of farmers' markets was as a stepping-stone to a better functioning supply chain:

'...I think you should see farmers markets in the normal conception of them as an interim measure.'

Quote from writer/consultant (Pol04)

For one organic farmer it was the regular traditional town market, local shops and cafes that provided the access to markets and access to margin:

'It's because of the fact that we're selling direct to a town [at a traditional market] and the local people that we've got a good local food network all in the area that we can do that.'

Quote from organic grower (Gr03)

One participant felt that growers needed access to traditional markets, albeit with modern technology:

'If you just took that model [of a traditional market] but instead of necessarily having a person standing behind every stall you just had help yourself, like you do with a supermarket. And if you had everything barcoded so you just pay once at the end, you've got yourself a supermarket, but you've still got loads and loads of independent suppliers, each of whom is getting their own profit and you've got, because the barcode would say who's getting which particular thing you're selling, and you've got all the technical advantages, without the disadvantages of it being owned by some corporate and all the profits going back to Mr. Big [...] So it's not the actual fact of having the supermarket that's bad, it's the way it's done, or the business model behind it. And the progress in the barcode technology, that's progress I would say, and the better refrigeration and all that, that's progress. But all the corporate superstructure is not progress at all...'

Quote from writer/consultant (Po104)

The key informants reported that farmers' markets have been successful in providing access to markets for the smallest farmers and organic growers and they have played a role in encouraging a greater interest in food. There were some regulatory issues, and concerns about the infrequency of farmers' markets. But there was a view that farmers' markets served only a small segment of the consumer market: those who were better off and those more engaged with food issues. These issues, taken together, mean that farmers' markets have a limited impact on everyday purchases of vegetables.

Policy and the Management of Supply Chain Relationships

Policy on GSCOP and GCA

There were a few favourable comments on the appointment of the Grocery Code Adjudicator:

'The Grocery Adjudicator is good news and I think Christine is a very good focus for that. If anyone can make it work she will do that.'

Quote from grower standards advisor/consultant (Con02)

But some were sceptical about the power of the adjudicator and whether growers would make formal complaints against the retailers they were dependent upon for access to markets:

'You've got the adjudicator, so what?[...] The problem we've got is that farmers and or growers are [...] Not willing, if they've got a contract with Tesco's or Sainsbury's or whatever, they're not willing to go to the independent adjudicator and say, "Look, there are some shady practices going on, I only have a daily contract, for example, which is unacceptable," and she'll turn round and say, "Well, OK, what's your name?" Ah...[...] Yeah, Joe Bloggs.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep03)

Two grower representatives conveyed a strong belief in the place of markets in society. Buyer power was perceived to be a natural phenomenon, against which governments were unable to (or should not) respond. Their concerns about the GCA were twofold: one, that governments should not intervene in markets; and two, that the intervention of an adjudicator would not be effective:

'Well, I don't think we'd ever say that you should start legislating between private contracts between grower...

Quote from grower representative (Rep02)

'...supermarkets have got too much power, the government can't really do anything about it...'

Quote from grower representative (Rep03)

'I don't think people like regulated markets. I think that's the issue there. And I think that horticulture has been so independent, as we said earlier, without having any sort of subsidy of any real effect coming into support them. I think the retailer made use of the free market economy to manage inflation for the last decade and a half, two decades. I don't think either end of the chain like being told what to do. And I don't actually think either end of the chain thinks that the ombudsman, the adjudicator, is going to have any teeth anyway.[...] it's taken the government, oh God knows, 15 years to have a, an adjudicator. She isn't even an ombudsman [...] She's merely an adjudicator...'

Quote from grower representative (Rep03)

In the end the grower community seem to have accepted that the state was reluctant to challenge a system of private governance in the grocery supply chain that yielded other benefits such as low inflation and quality standards:

'I don't think our government wants to take on the retailer industry. I think they'd recoil from that.'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr06)

Although it was apparent that there was respect for the individual who had been appointed as GCA, there was not a great deal of conviction that the role would make much difference. Buyer power was seen by many in the grower community as a sort of natural market phenomenon. Whilst some grower-farmers might find it challenging to work with the retailers, an alternative of more regulation was perceived to be ineffective and illegitimate.

Efficient supply chain		
Priority	Key Findings	Indicative Quotes
Market advice and retailer ordering schedules	Very few comments on these policy mechanisms	'Business link successor, I don't think that's actually happened for anyone...' (Pol02)
Access to markets (other than supermarkets)	Farmers' markets useful for small/organic growers but not viable for larger conventional growers More regular, traditional markets also useful	'Farmers' markets are great and I think they're a fantastic starting point for a business.' (Gr04)
Management of supply chain relationships	GCA was a move in the right direction Some worries about its effectiveness But a reluctance to endorse policy mechanisms that interfere with 'free markets'	'The Grocery Adjudicator is good news...' (Con02) '...if they've got a contract with Tesco's or Sainsbury's or whatever, they're not willing to go to the independent adjudicator and say, "Look, there are some shady practices going on..."' (Rep03) '...supermarkets have got too much power, the government can't really do anything about it [...] [but] I don't think people like regulated markets.' (Rep03)

Source: Fruit and Vegetables Action Plan (2010)

Policy Mechanisms to Encourage Increased Consumption of Vegetables

Table 7-2 summarises the policy mechanisms documented in the Fruit and Vegetables Action Plan 2010 aimed at increasing consumption.

Table 7-3 Summary of Vegetable Sector Policy Mechanisms for Increasing Consumption

Priority	Policy mechanism/focus
Promotion	Change 4 Life, 5 A Day potatoes and 'healthy' composite foods Promote best practice in whole category marketing campaigns Include frozen fruit and vegetables in Healthy Start Promotions of healthy frozen/canned fruit and vegetables Align VAT with fruit and vegetable consumption objective
Schools	Evaluate Food Dudes Programme Support grow your own and gardening within schools
Public procurement	Public procurement standards (within cost and competition constraints)

Source: Fruit and Vegetables Action Plan (2010)

Promotion

Communicating better stories about growers

One grower stressed the importance of communication to counter some negative stories about growers in the media:

'PR is a big thing for us because farmers take a far bit of flak from the public. [...] there are still plenty of bad news stories out there – you know stories about run off from fields polluting water systems. And the media portray growers in a negative light.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep06) MR

Sales promotions

Meanwhile a policy expert suggested that consumers did not fully understand the relationship between seasonality and price:

'...in the height of summer you get melons and but they [consumers] don't understand why there's two for one on melons. [...] And there's two for one on melons because there's too many melons [...] And [supermarkets] they're trying to move them and if you're planning on doing a fruit salad, that's fantastic, or if you like a lot, but buying two melons, you may not get through them.'

Quote from policy expert (Pol02)

Communication and smaller growers

Smaller organic growers relied on social media and direct contact with customers:

'Well I suppose once you start having a little web site going that's made a big difference because as soon as you've got a web site you start appearing in web searches. And because people are very committed to local, buying locally, people will find other local people to connect into. [...] And if you're going to markets quite locally you do get to know your core customer who will even come out and see – they'll say 'can I come out and see...?' and then they'll see what you're growing.'

Quote from organic grower (Gr07)

One organic farmer serving the farmers' markets in London said:

'...densities of people in London and the distribution of markets that's potentially lots and lots people and you do get a wide variety of people to try and you get all sorts of characters young lads who you wouldn't think are very keen to try new kinds of vegetable because it does mean something to them. They really notice the difference and it's exposing people to it.'

Quote from organic grower (Gr02) AI

He continued to talk about the importance building trust with consumers and explaining how his produce was different from the vegetables available in supermarkets:

'And to get the quality as well ... I think they begin to understand when we explain it to them'

Quote from organic grower (Gr02)

An expert on grower standards felt that promoting to consumers was not enough. She wanted to see a more joined-up approach in which UK Food Policy sought to improve the nutritional quality of produce as well as simply increasing the quantity of vegetables consumed:

You've got two sets of, on the right hand side you have got farmers who are really skilled at producing, and being productive, consistent products, quality products, and on the left hand side we've got community engagement and enthusiasm about food. How can all that, and I think food policy has been able to really drive that match. [...] we're going to be feeding 9 billion to 12 billion. In terms of when you start equating that to productivity you're then looking back at the hard situation of: is it just a mass of food? Or is it about nutrition? Well it should be about nutrition but it isn't at the moment and so we need to be much more geared up towards looking at how do we develop new foods. So a much more joined up policy involving food, education, health, nutrition type approach. It actually sends a much stronger signal to farmers.

Quote from grower standards advisor/consultant (Con02)

Schools

Educating children about healthy diets was seen as an important communication task.

'I always liked the Bangor [Food Dudes Programme] ... where they actually got children eating fruit and vegetables raw vegetables. That was a great scheme so I think you can do it.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep06)

'...one of the problems that the industry faces which is [inaudible] a little bit is encouraging children to appreciate how vegetables and salads are actually produced, you know. Because you know, I mean even locally, we have a pick your own where the woman was sent out, "Where are the carrots?" "Oh, there're over so and so," and she came back, she said, "There aren't any carrots there." [just a field of green shoots]

Quote from grower consultant (Con 01)

Policy on Public Procurement

There was just one comment on public procurement from a grower representative, who felt that the conflicting goals of ensuring public money was spent carefully, and strict EU rules limiting preferential treatment of local suppliers meant that:

'Public procurement is a mess [...] always has been, always will be.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep03)

UK Food Policy since Curry Report has focused on encouraging better marketing so this chapter explores whether policy mechanisms changed what was happening in the vegetable sector, and

provide evidence of how vegetable growers were engaged in thinking about marketing issues. Tables 7-2 and 7-3 summarise the findings related to the impact on the supply chain and on increasing consumption.

Table 7-4 Summary of Findings on the Impact of Policy to Encourage Increased Consumption of Vegetables

Increasing consumption		
Priority	Key Findings	Indicative Quotes
Promotion and engagement with schools	Promotion to engage consumers, especially the young is important but needs to be part of a joined-up policy Some concern about negative press for growers	'So a much more joined up policy involving food, education, health, nutrition type approach. It actually sends a much stronger signal to farmers.' (Con02)
Public procurement	Few comments on this policy	'Public procurement is a mess [...] always has been, always will be.' (Rep03)

Perceptions and Understanding of Marketing Challenges

Since the findings in this chapter focus on supply chains and markets it seems appropriate to explore here taken for granted assumptions about supply chain customers (the retailers) and end consumers that were found in the key informant accounts.

Marketing Challenges and Consumers

Participants offered descriptions and explanations of consumers' behaviour, their marketplace behaviours, their motivations and how their purchases fitted into their lives. The sovereign consumer, the consumer as chooser (Gabriel and Lang, 2015), were recurring ideas that dominated descriptions from participants from both the conventional and pioneer networks. The consumer was seen as an initiating agent disciplining market interactions. The explanations of consumption were generally consistent with the dominant pattern of consumption articulated by Firat and Dholakia (1982) which suggested that consumption in modern societies was conceptualised as passive rather than active in terms of human involvement; individualised rather than collective consumption; delivered via the private sector rather than through public services; and in which the consumer is alienated (i.e. separated and uninvolved) from production. This dominant pattern of consumption was reflected in participants' accounts of, for example, the alienated consumer:

'...there has been a disconnect generally between the vast majority of the members of the public and food [...]. It's all bought, it's all ready. You can put it in the microwave and eat it within three minutes.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep06)

Many of the accounts were consistent with Powell's market typography (Powell, 1990). Across the supply chain and down to consumers, transactions were generally seen as discrete and flexible, characterised by low commitment, and focused on functional product attributes and price preferences of atomised consumers. The tone was suspicious and adversarial, for example, one grower representative displayed an adversarial undertone in a conversation about the use of PR to counter negative stories about growers in the media:

'PR is a big thing for us because farmers take a far bit of flak from the public. [...] there are still plenty of bad news stories out there – you know stories about run off from fields polluting water systems. And the media portray growers in a negative light.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep06)

An important way of looking at consumer behaviour in the market for vegetables was to see the consumer as a rational, utility maximising actor engaged in private, individualised patterns of consumption:

'[We] expect to go into a store and buy what we want.'

Quote from a manager in a GPMO (GP02)

An individualised, utility maximising perspective was also apparent in the following explanation of the decline in sales of organic vegetables:

'Organic – I think people, the public, have made it clear they don't want it, it's too expensive. So the public have rejected that model...'

Quote from grower representative (Rep06)

Some accounts from those linked to conventional production expressed a belief that consumers were sovereigns with responsibilities as well as rights.

'...if you are getting some support payments as an individual and you have health related issues, actually should we start being, making sure that you have food vouchers? And those food vouchers could only be traded for fruit and veg. Or is that too Draconian for the British?'

Quote from grower standards advisor (Con02)

A sense of consumer responsibility was also apparent in the following response to a question about whether consumers were being duped, one organic grower said:

'Yeah, I do. [...] But I think, I haven't got a tremendous amount of sympathy, I think they are being duped but I think they don't really want to know where... if someone says that they're serving seasonal vegetables and they're serving French beans in January, they're not are they?'

Quote from organic grower (Gr04)

Although the notion of consumer sovereignty was generally acknowledged as a powerful force in shaping markets, there was evidence across participants of a more nuanced understanding of the complexity of decisions a consumer encountered. Consumers were indeed seen as largely driven by functionality and price of produce but in a context in which the consumer was required to balance many competing demands for their money and time:

'...fruit and vegetables are not particularly in one sense expensive and yet people seem to find them [so].'

Quote from grower standards advisor (Con02)

'...whenever people are short of money they economise on food because it's one of the few things where they have real discretion [...] I mean they can't reduce their council tax [...] But food is an area where you have got control.'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr08)

Despite the prevalence of the consumer sovereignty narrative, there were concerns about the difficulties facing low income families in making effective food choices. Choosing was understood to be a psychologically draining activity, consumers' understanding of may be flawed, and information asymmetries may exist:

'...it requires more thinking for a low income family to achieve five a day, that's 35 units a week and if it's a family of three that means moving 105 units of fruit and veg into their household [...] And especially if you don't see it as a priority. And a lot of people don't understand that the veg is more important out of the five a day than the fruit for their health and the veg is cheaper, fruit is more expensive and it has increased in price more.'

Quote from policy expert (Pol02)

It was understood by the above policy expert that consumers depended on habits and heuristics as well as rational assessments of price and quality. Sometimes the consumer was seen as passive and

bewildered, confronted by confusing promotional activity and there was a tacit acceptance that consumers might satisfice rather than maximise utility:

'Well there's some, [inaudible] research also that consumers have no idea what price anything should be in the fresh produce aisle [...] There's so many offers, so many different sizes of packet that it actually confuses them...'

Quote from policy expert (PoI02)

An organic grower picked up on the theme of confusion and the price of vegetables, particularly organic produce and produce from farmers' markets.

'I think people are scared that farmers' markets are dear when they're not [...]. The media has put it forward that they're expensive and a rip off...'

Quote from organic grower (Gr02).

He explained some typical behaviour he observed when people bought produce from his market stall and he challenged the notion that, for vegetables, supermarkets were delivering lower prices:

'...it's all down to portion control because the supermarkets with expensive products will pack it in very small packs [...] at a price that people don't perceive as dear [...] We do baby courgettes say and Tesco's end up with £9.99 a kilo, ours won't be more than £6.50 for those and usually they're £4.50 but then they're £9.99 a kilo in the Tesco's pack. [...]. [I]t's education...'

Quote from organic grower (Gr02).

Another small organic grower claimed he was able to meet customer price concerns:

'But with the supermarkets they aren't that cheap on fruit and veg either. I think we can compete with them on a price level as well.'

Quote from organic grower (Gr03)

Participants from the conventional sector took a different view and were sceptical about the benefits to consumers of organic produce:

'...it's a privilege of the wealthy to eat organic vegetables.'

Quote from grower consultant (Con01)

Although the model of the rational consumer was widely accepted, some accounts showed how consumers made use of heuristics to compensate for incomplete knowledge of quality and prices. In this example, consumers linked the organic label with higher prices:

'[Growers] found just removing the organic name actually increased sales, which is a bit perverse [...] but clearly the perception of the consumer was that hang on, I'm paying more than I could be...'

Quote from grower representative (Rep02)

Whilst participants generally acknowledged the power of the sovereign consumer, one participant from the organic/pioneer sector saw the consumer as a victim of powerful external forces. However this malign view of the persuasive industries was very much a minority view and was only mentioned by a couple of dissenting voices:

'...the real problem of obesity isn't food, it's advertising because if you make stuff readily available and then you tell people that that's what you want to eat because it's cool [...]. I mean my son used to eat a sweet called Toxic Waste [...] Well if you can persuade kids to eat Toxic Waste, why can't you persuade them to eat cabbage? [...] [I]t's the advertising, availability and the lack of respect of food.'

Quote from grower consultant (Con04)

But impacts beyond the buyer-seller dyad were acknowledged as important, for example in terms of costs associated with diet-related illness. Although participants generally accepted the benefits of a market economy, there was also an understanding that societal interests and individuals' interests were not always well-aligned. Participants understood that externalities affected the overall societal outcomes of aggregated individual decisions.

'...what does the public actually want? It wants cheap food, effectively. But is the public willing to pay for that cheap food through increased imports, which may mean increased food miles, have an environmental, negative consequence on the actual, on production itself?'

Quote from grower representative (Rep02)

The sovereign consumer was seen to be responsible for the solution, and responsibility for the development of the market for vegetables lay with consumers:

'People have got to pay more for food.'

Quote from grower consultant (Con01)

In contrast to an orthodox, rational depiction of choice processes, one organic grower described how his customers were in effect ceding choice decisions to a trusted other, a guardian angel (Poiesz, 2004):

'... our customers are extraordinarily interested... [but] most of our customers they just want to be reassured really [...] they're not really interested in the detail, they want us to have made the decisions for them about sourcing and so on.'

Quote from organic grower (Gr04)

But he also acknowledged that consumers remained steadfastly self-oriented, even if they were not always confident in their ability to make choices for themselves. Even his apparently ethical consumers placed a high value on their own self-interest as well as a concern for environmental impact. It would seem that the ethical consumer, as Devinney et al claimed, was a mythical figure: (Devinney et al., 2010).

'...we took people who had ordered 700 grams of tomatoes and we sent them two punnets of 400 grams each and one of them was an English one and one of them was a Spanish [...]and we asked them to tell us which ones they liked, they almost all liked the Spanish ones.[...] I was quite shocked actually, it was really quite an overwhelming response that they would rather have a tasty Spanish one than a less tasty English one.'

Quote from organic grower (Gr04)

Freidberg had explored how the pursuit of freshness in food was reflected in the paradoxical requirements of consumers for healthy foods that maintained a connection with nature and social groups but which were also cheap and convenient (Freidberg, 2009). The availability of a wide range of produce from global markets provided consumers with multifarious options for resolving competing and sometimes contradictory requirements:

'They've [consumers] got accustomed to buying runner beans in November from Kenya(?) despite the air miles and the cost.'

Quote from grower consultant (Con01)

'They've [consumers] got used to the idea of British [...] I'd be amazed if that drops off now. But at the same time they want the range of produce that we can't grow in this country as well.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep05)

Participants' conversations about consumers' perceptions of produce ranged over qualities related to the physical appearance, freshness, taste and convenience of the produce, as well as less tangible qualities such as localness, seasonality, provenance and method of production, and novelty, reflecting the changes in domestic food practices and the symbolic meanings associated with different qualities of produce. It was also acknowledged that the value of some vegetable produce was dependent on

consumers' knowledge and skills. Consumption of vegetables was embedded in a complex of household resources and lifestyle practices.

'I love to eat and I like vegetables but some days in my life, you can't – if I'm travelling a lot or it I'm going from meeting to meeting actually buying vegetables is really difficult.'

Quote from grower standards advisor (Con02)

A more experiential perspective was in evidence in the comments on the popularity of celebrity chefs in the media. Participants felt chefs encouraged a view of cooking as a sensory or experiential consumption activity rather than a utilitarian domestic chore. Feelings, health concerns and a reconnection with the natural environment were also seen as important drivers of changes in consumer demand for vegetables, particularly home-grown produce.

'...whether it's because we're watching programmes about [...] chefs out there who tell us [about] all these new ingredients [...]. [T]he vegetable sector in particular is seeing increased demand for vegetables, greater encouragement now of more healthy lifestyles which inevitably is where the vegetable sector can go in.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep03)

Local was a quality that consumers would have to pay for:

'...I think there's an economic point here though, that the public have got to understand that if you want local food, if you want British produce, you've got to pay for it [...] because our costs of production are far higher than imported...'

Quote from grower representative (Rep03)

The participants' narratives tended to confine descriptions of consumption experiences to the market domain, with fewer descriptions drawing on alternative contexts for consumption. (Carù and Cova, 2003) adapted a framework from (Edgell et al., 1997) in which the market was just one of four different modes of provision of consumption experiences (the others being the state, the household and communal modes). The interviews had signalled a market context for the conversations and thus may explain the prevalence of conceptualisations that drew on market interactions. And the conversations often focused on purchase rather than use which would confine the discussion to a market context. Nevertheless, there were some comments, particularly from pioneer/organic participants that suggested an acknowledgement of communal conditions of consumption experience that described a more active, collective and synergistic view of consumption.

'...you start having a little web site going that's made a big difference [...]. And because people are very committed to local, buying locally, people will find other local people to connect into. [...] And if you're going to markets quite locally you do get to know your core customer [...]. [T]hey'll say, "Can I come out and see?" and then they'll see what you're growing.'

Quote from organic grower (Gr07)

One organic farmer serving the farmers' markets in London said:

'...densities of people in London and the distribution of markets [...]and you get all sorts of characters, young lads who you wouldn't think are very keen to try new kinds of vegetable because it does mean something to them. They really notice the difference and it's exposing people to it. [...] And to get the quality as well ... I think they begin to understand when we explain it to them'

Quote from organic grower (Gr02)

And whilst some interventions to encourage certain behaviours were perceived to be legitimate, it was assumed that consumer preferences were immutable:

'The great word is nudge these days [...] but at the end of the day it is all about actually producing product, what people want.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep06)

Marketing Challenges and the Supply Chain

An orthodox perspective was apparent in the way that participants viewed retailers as agents of consumers:

'...the supermarkets would say, "Well actually, we're being dictated to by our customers, our customers are saying, "We want cheap food."'

Quote from grower representative (Rep03)

'So that's why the retailer's orders are so volatile because the weather's so volatile [...] the retailer didn't want strawberries last weekend because it was crap weather, this weekend it's going to be 28 degrees...'

Quote from a manager in a GPMO (GP02)

But it was also apparent that this conceptualisation of the retailer as consumer agent was not universally accepted, even in the conventional network.

'...the other day, in July I saw sprouts, now who wants Brussels sprouts in July? The supermarkets say, the supermarkets say, "The customer requires this," the customer doesn't require it, they require it.'

Quote from grower consultant (Con01)

In an increasingly buyer-dominated global supply network, new forms of organisation emerged to serve the grocery retail multiples:

'What has probably happened in the past is that in this channel there's been a grower there's perhaps been a packer, there might have been a marketing desk which was set against the packer, this is going back probably twenty years, and then you'd have your retailer. What's happened is that they have all sort of merged together and perhaps now you've got grower-packer-marketeers in one organisation selling to the retailer.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep04)

Interactions were seen as on-going and relationship based, controlled by retailers:

'But it's difficult now to be a supplier to more than one of the major supermarkets, that they, where they feel they're competitive. I mean it's difficult to be in Sainsbury's and an Asda supplier [...] Because they worry about each other [...] But you might be allowed to be a Sainsbury's and a Marks and Spencer's supplier [...]

Quote from conventional grower (Gr08)

Consistent with Towill's investigation into supermarket practices (Towill, 2005), retailers were able to exert their power across a web of networked arrangements to capitalise on a range of mechanisms to capture value in the supply chain:

'...a punnet manufacturer like Charpak [...] Will say to Sainsbury[one of the big four retailers], "If you say to your growers that these are the only punnets that they must use" [...] "We'll give you a couple of million quid." '

Quote from grower consultant (Con04)

'... policies are introduced on our customers [i.e. retail multiples], all they do is pass a load of it on [to growers].'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr02)

Retailer dominance was not always seen as positive at the societal level:

'So as long as you've got the control in the hands of a few big organisations that are constantly taking that extra cut out, how are we going to get a really sustainable situation? [...] [W]e talk about food prices and Tesco's give consumers very low prices but they're taking a hell of a lot of margin out of the supply chain [...] which doesn't come back to the producer to allow them to innovate, to allow them to expand and employ more people, grow more British produce which we could influence to be environmentally quite sustainable compared to imported stuff... '

Quote from conventional grower (Gr05)

One grower linked the pressure on grower margins with political pressure on supermarkets to keep prices low.

'And there's got to be a more of a realistic price on food [...] I perceive it as too much political pressure on the supermarkets to keep costs, the price down [...] And at some point, everybody's getting squeezed and, you know, before long, the whole thing, something's going to blow, isn't it? [...] And, you know, either they'll turn round and half of food production is no longer there, you know [...] in a year when you get a problem, they suddenly realise [...]. Where are all these growers that were there ten years ago? Well, they're no longer doing it, 'cause you didn't pay them any money (laughs).

Quote from conventional grower (Gr01)

Retailers used their network dominance, justified by their role as consumer agent, to shape interactions to create and then appropriate value. However it was clear that some participants, particularly those aligned to the pioneer networks, challenged the legitimacy of some retailer activities:

'And they're going from category management now to strategic suppliers who supply massive areas [...]there's a greenhouse producer now who's paying 8% over-rider to Sainsbury's which means 8% of their turnover goes back to Sainsbury's in cash. [...]. There's not a supermarket that doesn't use over-riders. This is based on turnover. Based on your turnover you've guaranteed to pay them back a certain percentage, not of your profit, of your turnover. They want open book, run at about 5% profit...'

Quote from organic grower (Gr02)

Efficiency in a supply chain could be achieved by specialisation, a common feature of industrialised production. Recent shifts to more direct relationships between overseas growers and retail multiples were not always seen in terms of negative outcomes for producers: One participant was keen to stress the positives for grower-farmers associated with working with what she saw as a professional supply network in which retailers provided time and place utility:

'...and from that point of view the power in that relationship is incredibly strong and, you know, from the farmer's point of view somebody else is getting a cut within that whole thing which is frustrating for the farmer but it is actually also a good thing for the farmer because he's not having to, or she's not having to negotiate [with customers] ...'

Quote from grower advisor on standards (Con02)

The GPMOs almost exclusively served the retail supply chain, with most of their output going into the big four supermarket retailers. The interactions were described in networked relationship terms. There were a small number of active organisations, buyers and sellers, engaged in coordinated activities that extended over long periods of time and across multiple actor bonds:

'70% of all our products or certainly on fresh vegetables are sold through the multiple retailers, through the big four multiple retailers, Sainsbury's, M&S, Sainsbury's, ASDA, Tesco and Morrison's.'

Quote from GP MO manager (GP01)

'... we will actually bid for programmes, very often twice yearly, for a summer or winter programme.'

Quote from grower-packer MO manager (GP01)

'...we are in very close communication with them [the retailers] at all sorts of levels right up to the, you know, the people running those businesses right down to the people who interface with us so... And you need to be, you know, political about how, you know, how you communicate.'

Quote from GPMO manager (GP02)

'...it's really about the relationship with two, maybe three key roles within each retailer.[...] [W]e have account managers and technologists [...] It's their job to manage those, the customer interface, [...] we'll have an account manager for a big customer [...] And a technologist for a big customer who, you know, they'll have a sort of, a direct relationship with the opposite number in the retailer.'

Quote from GPMO manager (GP01)

The accounts referred to that relationships were collaborative and some that were coercive (Free, 2007):

'At a senior level in the retailers, they are much more interested in, and their attitude is changing towards longer term strategic relationships, especially around the element of sustainability and aligning themselves to sustainable supply chains but that does not translate yet to the way the buyers operate.'

Quote from GPMO manager (GP01)

'I think that it's been interesting that increasingly the retailers are realising the collateral of the value of their farmers and farmer groups. [...] [B]ut I think that tends to be collaborating on the terms of the retailers ...'

Quote from advisor on grower standards (Con02)

There seem to be different accounts of the challenges and opportunities in relationships with supermarkets. The GPMOs are largely at ease with their relationships with retail multiples but the grower-farmers on the other hand are more concerned and coerced.

Growers perceived that the government relied on retailer power to enforce standards:

'A lot of the industry's standards are driven by the UK retailers as well because they have standards that are over and above the regulatory standards..'

Quote from grower representative (Rep05)

Trust in industrial food supply networks has always been a problem for policy makers. Specialisation, the homogeneous nature of produce from different producers in different countries, and long supply chains provided opportunities for underhand practices. Policy makers looked to retailers to enforce standards not just in terms of produce but also in terms of trading behaviour. Retailer management of the buying function to minimise opportunities for collusion between the retailer's buyer and a producer was often used to justify a more adversarial approach between growers and buyers at some levels in the network. There were few references to illegal activities in the supply chain:

'...they're [supermarket buyers] only there a short time, and it's partly so they don't get too friendly with suppliers, you know, and become corrupt [...] Which is always a danger with buyers obviously...'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr08)

'Shropshire's lettuce and potatoes, they're farmed in Egypt and Spain, 340 million turnover. Now again, one of Tesco's major suppliers, what are they doing? Relabelling it.'

Quote from grower consultant (Con04)

An interesting example of the performative nature of markets was centred on the issue of acceptable quality standards. As mentioned above, marketing standards for produce were enforced by retailers who could refuse produce that did not meet the standards. But when supply was affected by poor growing conditions in the rainy spring of 2012, supermarkets took the unusual step of relaxing some produce marketing standards and were able to construct a narrative for consumers that 'wonky produce' was of good (eating) quality at lower prices, and supported British agriculture. One policy expert interpreted it in slightly more jaundiced terms:

'The grocery stores, to give them credit, I say give them credit, maybe they were over a barrel, reduced their specification for a lot of commodity products [...]Otherwise they wouldn't get any supply'

Quote from policy expert (Pol02)

Although retailer power wielded an important influence on the supply chain, there were some comments that suggested that supermarkets were wary of upsetting established relationships with large producers in highly consolidated sectors such as carrots as the following example illustrates: A smaller conventional grower (not a GPMO) was successful in gaining access to supermarkets by capitalising on the farm's reputation and the popularity of local produce. Consumer access to produce was influenced not just by the retailer but also by the focal supplier:

'...we act as a food hub for ASDA and Waitrose Local so we bring other producers' products here, and then supply it onto the local shelf, so we sort of category-manage the local shelf. [...] [T]he ultimate for us really would be to, as I see it, would be to have a [own farm] veg stall in all our local supermarkets, that we manage [...] And we put all our own branded vegetables in that. [...] The barrier we come up against is that if we want to put a local carrot, bunch carrot in, we will be, the supermarket will be very nervous of upsetting their carrot supplier, who's providing a standard carrot, but to all their stores across the UK...'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr01)

Most participants accepted as inevitable the present arrangements in buyer dominated supply chains, however one participant provided a critical assessment of retailer governance. For him, it was the ownership structure of supermarkets that was the problem for growers. He sought to present his criticism of the industrial supply network not as a critique of modernism or the application of technology but as a critique of a particular form of corporate governance of the supply chain. In his view some developments in the vegetable supply chain were beneficial to society, some not:

'So it's not the actual fact of having the supermarket that's bad, it's the way it's done, or the business model behind it. And the progress in the barcode technology, that's progress I would say, and the better refrigeration and all that, that's progress. But all the corporate superstructure is not progress at all.'

Quote from policy expert (Pol04)

One problem with retailer dominance was that retailers effectively controlled access to consumers so farmers were encouraged to find new markets such as the wholesale network that served the catering sector, or farmers' markets. To improve access to markets for smaller domestic grower-farmers, one

grower suggested that supermarkets should be compelled to stock local fresh produce (a similar recommendation was proposed in The Curry Report but rejected as unworkable).

'One of the ideas that I came up with was to have a quota system so you could put produce in supermarkets. So supermarkets had to supply 20% of UK produce. Have an offer of 20% of UK produce, or even local produce.'

Quote from organic farmer (Gr02)

Growers and their representatives demonstrated a concern about maintaining a 'dynamic ecological equilibrium' (Cox et al., 1964):

'...the growers are doing this [...] sitting down with retailers and saying 'Look we won't do this anymore, we can't do it any more, we can go and grow wheat, we can go and grow rape at the moment, £380 a tonne for rape [...] and retailers are beginning to get this, it all comes back to the food security thing. They want British vegetables for eight, nine months of the year, which are the cheapest, which are the safest, which are the most environmentally friendly produced then you've got to make sure that you've got growers that are a sustainable business in the long run. And the biggest danger of, particularly around rape is that if people go and plant rape you can't then go and grow your brassicas in there.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep04)

A grower was concerned about whether consolidation, both in terms of the number of organisations and also in terms of the geographical patterns of production, might undermine the food security:

'In terms of the sustainability of the producer base, it's now, it's been ever, ever consolidated [...] Langley's pretty much giving up, saying to G's, "You can have Sainsbury's business," and Sainsbury's suddenly having one supplier, you were getting into quite a precarious situation in certain respects because the production of our food is being consolidated in ever fewer hands. It's also being consolidated geographically as well, which when you have a product which is subject to the vagaries of the great British climate and nature, you know...

Quote from conventional grower (Gr05)

Table 7-5 Summary of Perceptions of Marketing Challenges Relating to Consumers and the Supply Chain

Perceptions of marketing challenges		
	Key themes in findings	Indicative Quotes
Perceptions of Marketing Challenges: Consumers	Consumer sovereignty	'...it is all about actually producing [...] what people want (Rep06)
	Adversarial relationship	'...farmers take a far bit of flak from the public...' (Rep06)
	Bounded rationality and incomplete knowledge	'...consumers have no idea what price anything should be...(Pol02)
	Alienated consumer	'...there has been a disconnect generally between the vast majority of the members of the public and food' (Rep06)
	Embedded choices	'...if I'm travelling a lot [...] actually buying vegetables is really difficult.' (Con02)
	Experiential aspects of food	... it does mean something to them.' Gr02
Perceptions of Marketing Challenges: Supply Chain	Retailer as consumer agent	'...the supermarkets would say, "Well actually, we're being dictated to by our customers..." (Rep03)
	New forms of supply chain organisations	'...now you've got grower-packer-marketeers in one organisation selling to the retailer.' (Rep04)
	Interactions controlled by retailers...	'tends to be collaborating on the terms of the retailers ...' (Con02)
	...may have adverse societal effects	'...they're taking a hell of a lot of margin out of the supply chain [...] which doesn't come back to the producer to allow them to innovate...' (Gr05)
	Increasing supermarket dependence on supply chain	'They want British vegetables [...] then you've got to make sure that you've got growers that are a sustainable business in the long run.' (Rep04)
	Government reliance on retailers	'...too much political pressure on the supermarkets to keep costs, the price down...' (Gr01)

The summary of perceptions of marketing challenges relating to consumers and the supply chain suggest a complex commercial world. It is acknowledged that consumers are sometimes uninformed, confused or simply have other things to think about than the price of parsnips. Participants thought consumers were disconnected to the production of their food, with high expectations on quality, price and convenience that can be challenging to meet. And yet although a rather simple model of consumer sovereignty is frequently used to explain the behaviour of consumers, there is an awareness of a more

nuanced picture of the consumer, one who has to resolve choices *across* spending categories as well as *within* product categories, one that is capable of understanding a story behind the production of food, one that might want to learn more.

As far as supply chain customers were concerned, a major theme was the threat of the supermarkets, other growers as competitors were rarely mentioned. Supermarkets were an opportunity to gain access to consumers because they acted as gatekeepers to the consumer since most vegetables were sold through the retail multiples. Private governance by the supermarkets of the vegetable supply chain could be enforced because of their gate-keeping position with respect to end consumers and governments relied on supermarkets to police quality standards (often at higher standards than the legislation allowed) and to keep inflation in check. Since policy makers relied on supermarkets to enforce standards and keep prices low, it was difficult for growers to convince policy makers of the need to act to limit the influence of supermarkets. So growers felt that policy makers could or would do little to address the problem of buyer power since supermarkets delivered high standards of food availability, quality and affordability that consumers had become accustomed to. But some informants challenged the assumed societal value that supermarkets delivered and warned of potential problems – that the supply base could be adversely affected by the intensely competitive environment of the supply chain.

Failure to Market or Market Failure?

The first three sections of this chapter have explored the impact of UK Policy designed to support better marketing, relating to policy mechanisms focused on supply chains and market issues. This final section of the chapter explores whether UK Food Policy and the mechanisms adopted addressed the full range of marketing problems that growers encountered. As shown in the theoretical and grey literature, an alternative, sometimes radical perspective suggested that the problem for vegetable growers may not have been poor marketing, rather it was that growers had to compete in market contexts that were suboptimal. This section completes the findings by exploring the absence of policy (rather than the impact of the policy mechanisms adopted). The framework below was created to explore the whether the policy should have addressed malfunctions in the markets in the supply chain for vegetables and whether a policy focused on better marketing was inadequate. As explored in Chapter 3, the fair trade movement characterised market malfunction in terms of the absence of what it considered essential features of well-functioning markets, for example, access to information about prices and customer requirements. The framework also used the guidance on good supply chain

Income levels

Many of the participants commented on the problems growers face in making a decent living.

Margins squeezed by supermarkets

There was a great deal of agreement across different grower sectors that there was a problem concerning margins for growers, particularly in the supermarket dominated supply chains:

'One of the major problems that growers face [...] is lack of margin [...] caused by fierce price competition between the supermarkets [...] [I]n the last five years we've seen three very major companies go out of the industry...'

Quote from grower consultant (Con01), he continued:

'Salad producer [...] might be producing a thousand acres of lettuce, right, and his price agreed with the supermarket is 30p. And at the end of the season, the supermarket says, "[...] we want an over rider of 2p on every lettuce you've sold retrospectively from the 1st of March." [...] Does he say, "No, you can't have it," if he does that, he will no longer supply that supermarket [...]. So it is commercial blackmail [...] growers [...] haven't been able to make enough profit for capital reinvestment which is absolutely vital'

Quote from grower consultant (Con01).

'...[growers] they've been squeezed and squeezed and squeezed on margin, they have reacted by getting more and more efficient and [...] there comes a point where you just can't squeeze any more out of it.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep04)

He felt that there needed to be a different way of sharing the risks and rewards along the supply chain:

'...we talk about reconnection but I think that whole circle needs to be reconnected, rewired in a way which there is a better balance. So the retailers don't continuously take 50% margin.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep04)

'... [named grower] they're very big, and one of the rising stars of the [vegetable growing] business and they're they are making [...] a margin of [...] well under 1%.'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr06)

'...they [the supermarkets] were going to put me out of business...'

Quote from organic grower (Gr04)

Margins squeezed by higher costs

Growers face a double bind: pressure from supermarkets on their margins, and the need to invest in scaling up production to achieve lower unit costs. When margins are tight, funding for investment from reinvested profits is under pressure.

'...we've got to spend a quarter of a million pounds each year for the next two years [...] just to maintain the level of equipment. This store here, that's a cold store, the plant, some of it is 1985. We've got to replace the refrigerant as a matter of law by end of 2013/14 and that's 70 grand. A carting tractor now is 65 thousand [...]. Those washers you saw they're 40 thousand. The cost of depreciation is just rocketing up. We are growing [...] but it's quite scary.'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr06)

The grower that does decide to invest in scaling up production becomes more dependent on the supermarket-dominated supply chain for the volumes of sales that a large scale grower operation is able to produce. Sometimes costs rise in response to supermarket requests to conform to a particular environmental standard.

'... retailers like to say that all their crops are residue free [...] or grown to these kind of environmental standards, that these add cost to the grower is never taken into consideration...'

Quote from grower representative (Rep01)

Leaving vegetable production

A grower standards advisor suggested that growers were seeking out alternative ways to make a living, such as renting out land assets rather than producing vegetables themselves. Other participants suggested that growers were switching to easier, more profitable crops:

'...the price of cereals [...] put it down to climate change, put it down to what you like. China is demanding more protein [...] India is the same. Habits, eating habits have changed. Wheat has gone up and last week it was £200 a ton [...] huge increase. [...] [Y]ou're growing cauliflowers [...] which entails an enormous amount of hassle, a lot of staff, frequent visits from the supermarkets and you say to yourself, as a Lincolnshire grower did last year [...] "I've got 500 acres of land, I am going to put it down to wheat."

Quote from grower consultant (Con01)

Impact of global changes in supply and demand

On a more optimistic note for vegetable growers one small grower sensed that the pressure on growers' ability to make a decent living was shifting because of structural changes in global demand and supply. The resulting price rises may reduce pressures on margins and enable growers to make a 'decent' living.

'...food is going to become more and more of an issue [...].[S]o perhaps if population increases, climate change or whatever, food prices might have to go up in which case this way of doing things [small scale, organic market gardening] would be much more viable...'

Quote from small organic grower (Gr03)

One grower representative reflected the shift in how some supermarkets interacted with some grower organisations. He seemed to have experienced category management as an enabling bureaucracy (Adler and Borys, 1996):

'I know you might think that retailers are hard to work with, and yes they are demanding, but they really want British produce. They're far more supportive than wholesale markets for British produce.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep06)

Some of the growers acknowledged that supermarket pressure had worked to the benefit of consumers and society in providing lower commodity prices by incentivising producers to become more efficient. But their accounts also pointed to problems, where seemingly well run grower businesses struggled. There was a belief in the effectiveness and fairness of markets across both conventional and organic growers, small and large, often accompanied by a concern that somehow the present arrangements were not always fair. A key issue was the ability of the large retail multiples to appropriate a large share of the value created in the supply chain.

'If you look at the best grower in this country, and you look at Mr Tesco's results, the difference is that Tesco make huge profits, the grower is not, simple as that...'

Quote from grower consultant (Con01)

Prices cover the cost of production

Six of the respondents made reference to prices, all but one of them could be classified as aligned to conventional growing. The perishable quality of vegetable produce was highlighted as a critical pricing issue.

'And if somebody says to you, "We don't want your lettuce this week," what are you going to do with, you know, half a million lettuce? [...]

Quote from grower consultant (Con01)

A young, innovative grower avoided the retail sector, citing low prices as the reason for moving out of the mainstream retail supply chain.

'...we were losing money on the commodity lines [to supermarkets], like all small growers were and there was a fair, a few round here that disappeared, because the prices weren't sustainable.'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr05)

One crop representative felt that some buyer organisations were advocating fair trade prices for overseas suppliers but seemed to be unconcerned about the problems facing domestic growers of vegetables. He gave an example of a particular retail multiple that supported Fair Trade:

'...they pay less than the cost of production [...] companies who expound their credentials of being the biggest fair trade organisation in Britain [...] are not to apply the same fair trade principles to British suppliers seems perverse...'

Quote from grower representative (Rep01)

Scale was required to ensure low unit costs but scale locked a grower into the retailer supply channel since only about 15% of vegetables go through alternative supply chains. He felt that producers were not able to achieve prices that covered the cost of production:

'They don't want any grant money for the tunnels, for the marketing, for the feasibility study, [...] but what they say is, "We're not investing in this crop [...] to sell this below what it cost us.'"

Quote from grower consultant (Con04)

'... there are hobby farmers out there who are prepared to take, you know, 15,000 a year out and they've got a roof over their heads [...] but in order for the figures to work [...] in order to invest in farming [...] you need a living wage...'

Quote from grower consultant (Gr04)

Capital funding, Investment and Attitude to Risk

Eight of the respondents mentioned these issues, and a variety of perspectives was captured. One grower consultant was concerned about the lack of investment in domestic growing:

'So, to try and instigate this renaissance [in domestic growing], we've got a log jam.[...][Y]ou need the working capital to do it.'

Quote from grower consultant (Con04)

One grower representative suggested that the sector was skilled in accessing funds from financial institutions for investment. He said the sector had in the past been good at finding solutions to capital funding, perhaps because subsidies were, until recently, not an option.

'...until very recently fruit and vegetable growers' land didn't qualify for the Single Farm Payment.[...] And therefore what has happened is the sector is remarkably independent[...] and if it comes down to capital funding they're very good at negotiating with their banks to get that capital to develop their businesses.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep04)

One manager from a GPMO thought a specialist bank for agriculture would be helpful:

'...we could do with a green agricultural bank or some way to actually [...]allow growers and farmers to get funds at a competitive rate to allow them to invest further...'

Quote from a GPMO manager (GP01) RJ

On the other hand, whilst a small but successful organic grower was frustrated by the lack of financial support from banks, he was unconvinced of the need for a specialist bank for agriculture. He was frustrated by the inability of financial institutions to make sound judgements on the quality of a business proposition.

'You need to target success basically or potential success. And you need people [from financial institutions] that come out and look at a business model and make a decision on that.'

Quote from organic grower (Gr02)

He was entrepreneurial and keen to compete in a context that was free of what he saw as government interference. He was frustrated by the bureaucracy surrounding grant applications and government subsidies, pointing to a growing industry of consultants who could construct business proposals.

'...[growers] can use an agent to put forward a bid for planning, or for a grant [...] and you know it can be completely spurious. It was the quality of the agent they've paid for ... nothing to do with the quality of the management skills at the farm...'

Quote from organic grower (Gr02)

He conveyed a view that although markets were tough, they were fair. He was concerned subsidies and grants seemed to go to the best *presented* opportunity rather than to those with the practical know-how in growing produce. The costs associated with compliance and the extra bureaucracy

involved meant that he avoided grants and subsidies and used reinvested profits to enable him to get on with a business project. It seemed to him there was a disconnection between the processes involved in securing grants and the real activity of running a farm.

The complexity of vegetable production was seen as a problem for one grower representative:

'...vegetable production generally is more specialist and has more capital required to invest hugely in it, because each different crop has very, very specific requirements.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep02)

Large scale precision farming required significant investment, and for many growers the technology was not affordable. However, where a grower had land it was relatively easy to borrow against.

'They [growers with land and other fixed assets] certainly find it far easier to access [finance] Than rural businesses...Or other rural businesses [...] Cause they've got an asset.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep03)

Despite the limited funds from profits for reinvestment reported by many growers, one GPMO manager was unsympathetic about growers' approach to investment:

'...our industry in the UK, no one has really invested in it in 20 years so they're asking consumers to pay more because growers haven't bothered investing in their business, they've spent the money themselves.'

Quote from GPMO manager (GP01)

A small organic market gardener avoided such problems by adopting a low-tech model. Not having much machinery means not much investment is required.

'...we haven't had a need to borrow any money from the banks, so it's not really an issue for us. We're not capital intensive and we haven't got big bits of machinery.'

Quote from organic grower (Gr03)

From the policy side, a policy expert reviewed the F&V Task Force Action Plan and commented that the plan to establish a panel to champion the financial needs of the sector did not get started but she argued that the issue seems to be less important as the commercial sector has now identified agriculture as something to invest in.

Business Link successor, I don't think that's actually happened for anyone [...] I think, heightened the interest of the world of banking in agriculture [...] we're not hearing complaints about that [access to financial markets] now...'

Quote from policy expert (Pol02)

One GPMO manager acknowledged that there may be funding problems for smaller producers, but that the larger growers do have more funding options including financial services from overseas.

'...we've had to go to Holland for it [a business loan]. [...] I think in the current climate it would be very hard for the small or medium players to, you know, to make investments...'

Quote from GPMO manager (GP01)

One conventional grower explained how larger growers could address the risks associated with crop growing:

'Well you provide yourself with irrigation, you can spread your risks geographically, there are things you can do...'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr06)

The large growers don't seem to own land and so want to access financial investment based on the quality of their business plan. More traditional growers do have land and can usually borrow against capital assets such as land. One GPMO manager was optimistic and keen to take well-judged business risks because:

'...with the demand profile that's going to be hitting us, it's a good place to be...'

Quote from GPMO manager (GP01)

His optimism was in contrast to the pessimism of medium-sized grower businesses:

It gets progressively more difficult. The level of investment required to maintain [a grower business]'

Quote from grower-farmer (Gr06)

The medium-sized growers were most vulnerable in terms of securing access to funding for investment. The large organisations were able to access the funding they needed, sometimes by using their global connections. Some of the smallest, alternative growers based their business model on a low input, low technology model that did not require high levels of investment. The medium-sized businesses (often traditional farms) used their land to secure funding but were finding it increasingly difficult to continue to invest to achieve the scale they required to keep unit costs competitive. They

had to decide whether to go for scale or whether to focus on niche markets or exit the market. As far as government funding opportunities were concerned some smaller farmers did find it difficult to produce successful grant bids to access funding. Grant application skills were not something they had and buying in administrative skills to write grant applications may have outweighed the value of the grant obtained for some.

Legal Support for Competitive Markets

Written agreements

Most growers, conventional and organic, had little positive to say about contracts. One older grower asserted that contracts between growers and supermarkets were rare. In any case, there was a view that the protection a contract provides was largely illusory:

'Supermarkets don't have contracts in fruit and veg, if you're lucky they give you a programme.'

Quote from grower (Gr08)

'There's no contract, it's just an intention to supply I think. There's nothing written there are very, very few written contracts in this business....'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr06)

'At the end of the day, it's very rare that anyone sticks to the contracts [...] in a difficult season, you know, they can be worthless at the end of the day [...]. You'd just alienate all your customers so, once again, they've got you a little bit.'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr01)

'If you are going to have contracts they've got to be, frankly, legally valid.... And the contracts that we've seen from some supermarkets to some growers have been daily contracts that, if they [the growers] get one thing wrong they'll [the supermarkets] terminate the contract [...] the supermarket buyers have too much power. There is a clear fear factor within the vegetable sector...'

Quote from grower representative (Rep03)

Whether contracts are used or not, there was a sense that growers felt vulnerable. They believed that retailers controlled the governance of contracts:

'We think a lot about being able to guarantee supply [...] because we will lose the business if we fail on the supply to our retailers ..., it won't cost us in year one but next time our customer will say right I'm going to split this business [...] they will try to spread the risk by giving it to somebody on a different land or soil type and then you'll see 20% of your business go away that way. And by the second year you'll see 60% of it go away and you'll lose it all perhaps.'

Quote from conventional grower (Gr06)

So it would appear that reifying relationships in the form of a contract does not always address power asymmetry between growers and the buyers of their produce. One participant suggested that the government's willingness to address problems related to power asymmetry was muted. And contracts were seen as a double-edged sword according to several respondents:

'... the nature of the fresh produce business is [...] feast and famine [...] signing up to long term contractual agreements is very difficult because it really exposes your business.'

Quote from grower (Gr01)

'Contracts, any contract worth its salt says 'you've got to provide A at price all of the time and if you can't do that all of the time then you've got to go and get it, and nine times out of ten when you've got to go and get it, it's going to be a lot more than the price that was agreed.'

Quote from grower representative (Rep04)

'Well, you'd be quite nervous about signing contracts because of the variability of the yields.'

Quote from grower (Gr06)

The GPMOs had a different view of contracts from other grower organisations. Their views were more closely aligned to the retailers' perspective. They saw contracts as fair, and if a farmer failed to produce to the quality standard then the buyer (the GPMO) was under no obligation to fulfil the contract. A key issue was quality specification, which allowed the buyer a legitimate reason for rejecting produce.

*'So if the farmer produces it and he gets a disease problem or a pest problem [...] he will fall out of contract and, you know, the retailers **or we** [my emphasis] would have no rights or reason to take it.'*

Quote from large GPMO manager (GP02)

The lexicon of the market, arms' length transactions, fairness, value creation through competition and so on, pervades many of the accounts. Those aligned to large scale, mainstream production seem less concerned about the inter-dependencies that tie smaller growers to a reduced group of potential buyers but other participants, including some grower-farmers and their grower representatives, also share a similar worldview.

Access to End Consumer Markets and Information on Pricing and Market Requirements

There was some concern that the supermarkets were limiting the options that growers had to get their produce to end consumer markets. One consultant suggested that that growers had not been market oriented, and now supermarkets were able to limit growers' access to markets:

'... farmers have been very lazy about marketing. [...] we haven't needed to market because we have had markets. [...] [but] to a large extent the supermarkets have virtually wiped out our alternative method of marketing [...]. So what have we got left? We've got box schemes, we've got farmers' markets, we've got a few little local markets [that] might happen every Saturday and so on...'

Quote from grower consultant (Con04)

The organic farmers that did have alternative routes to market discussed the quality of the relationship they have with their end customers.

'...given the densities of people in London and the distribution of markets [...] you do get a wide variety of people to try and you get all sorts of characters - young lads who you wouldn't think [are interested] are very keen to try new kinds of vegetable -because it does mean something to them. They really notice the difference and it's exposing people to it.'

Quote from organic grower (Gr02)

Farmers' markets are important for alternative/organic growers. A small organic grower said of his decision to take on running a market stall:

'And having that direct link with the customer. It gives us a chance – and that's the only advantage of doing the market. We can talk to people and find out what they want, what they like and what they don't like.'

Quote from organic grower (Gr03)

For more mainstream growers there was a view that how market access was controlled by supermarkets with few alternative routes to market:

'Effectively, you're relying on the good grace of a supermarket buyer...'

Quote from grower representative (Rep03)

'It's very difficult for you to go and say, "Right, I'm going to use someone else.'"

Quote from grower representative (Rep02)

Plans to develop alternative routes to market using wholesale markets, set out in the F&V Action Plan, were not implemented.

“Extend business development programme for the wholesale markets” [quoting from F&V Action Plan], in fact that’s had to go, it was just too expensive and they couldn’t do it, so that has gone but the NFU has been promoting using wholesale markets.’

Quote from policy expert (Pol02)

Production Methods

Investment in sustainable production is affordable

As far as sustainable production was concerned, investment in renewable energy was discussed, although one manager in a large grower GPMO claimed this was diverting growers from the real issue of growing crops more sustainably:

‘...it’s robbing Peter to pay Paul a little bit. Growers have only got so much money to invest so if they’re putting it into solar [...] and PV instead of actually the next growing system or [...] buying a new system that’s going to save them money on the growing methods or increased yields. It’s, it has its benefits but, it’s also, I think, it’s negative. We [should be] putting all our capital into growing this business and producing more rather than actually into those sort of additional income generation projects.

Quote from GPMO manager (GP01)

One grower consultant suggested policy needs to encourage investment in sustainable production.

‘Now all of that fits really well because we’re eating too much meat, we ought to be eating lots of beans because beans are ever so good for us, beans need to go back in the rotation and so on ... Now, somehow in order to change the whole agricultural dynamic and for that read in this case fruit and veg, we have to convince people [i.e. growers] that there is a market for crops, we have to convince people, the growers, to invest in those production systems and make it happen.’

Quote from grower consultant (Con04)

Later he continued:

‘So there’s this whole dynamic of being able to develop new crops, new months of production in this country which nobody is picking up, or very few people are picking up. So, let’s talk about a renaissance, farmers have got to be confident that they’re going to be able to sell what they’re doing. Farmers have got to find a way of marketing product which is not the, “Eff off, we’ll give you what you’re told,” supermarket production model and somebody has got to [inaudible] [put] R&D into a lot of these crops in order to kick it off.’

Quote from grower consultant (Con04)

Table 7-7 below provides a summary of the findings from the expert interviews on whether policy supports well-functioning markets for the vegetable sector. The analysis suggests a mixed picture. It would seem that in many ways the market is well-functioning, but there are some problems too. Few growers experienced problems with access to financial services, and there are niche opportunities for growers to exploit opportunities. Growers also seem knowledgeable about sustainable production. But access to markets and how contracts work in the real world seem to cause problems for growers.

Table 7-7 Summary of Findings on Well-functioning Markets in the Vegetable Sector

Features of well-functioning markets	Findings	Indicative Quotes
Growers able to earn a decent living	<p>The accounts suggest there are profitability problems for growers</p> <p>Accounts suggest growers are efficient but encounter a challenging supply environment</p>	<p>'...one of the rising stars of the [vegetable growing] business and they're they are making [...] a margin of [...] well under 1%.' (Gr06)</p> <p>'One of the major problems that growers face [...] is lack of margin [...] caused by fierce price competition between the supermarkets...' (Con01)</p>
Prices cover the full costs of production	<p>Supermarkets appropriate a large share of the value created, costs (e.g. of environmental compliance) bourn by growers</p> <p>Accounts suggest growers find it difficult to invest in production technology</p>	<p>A carting tractor now is 65 thousand [...]. Those washers you saw they're 40 thousand [...] We are growing [...] but it's quite scary.' (Gr06)</p> <p>'...a few round here that disappeared, because the prices weren't sustainable.' (Gr05)</p>
Access to financial services to grow the business	<p>Few problems reported as financial institutions recognise the business opportunities in food production</p> <p>Entrepreneurial growers are able to access the funding they require</p>	<p>'...if it comes down to capital funding they're very good at negotiating with their banks to get that capital to develop their businesses.' (Rep04)</p>
Fair and transparent contracts	<p>Contracts embedded in on-going arrangements</p> <p>Individual growers reluctant to seek redress</p>	<p>'At the end of the day, it's very rare that anyone sticks to the contracts [...] in a difficult season, you know, they can be worthless at the end of the day [...].You'd just alienate all your customers so, once again, they've got you a little bit.' (Gr01)</p>
Access to information about prices, market requirements, able to negotiate	<p>The structure of the market enables good access to market information and enables fair negotiation</p> <p>GPOMOs able to dominate supply infrastructure</p> <p>Pioneer growers use niche market opportunities well</p>	<p>'And having that direct link with the customer. It gives us a chance – and that's the only advantage of doing the [farmers'] market. We can talk to people and find out what they want, what they like and what they don't like.' (Gr03)</p>
Production methods are sustainable	<p>Individuals and firms are knowledgeable about how to be more sustainable and willing to implement sustainable production methods</p> <p>Low carbon and renewables dominate</p>	<p>'...it's robbing Peter to pay Paul a little bit. Growers have only got so much money to invest so if they're putting it into solar [...]We [should be] putting all our capital into growing this business (GP01)</p>

Chapter Summary

This chapter presents the findings that, along with the findings in Chapter 6, relate to the second research question. This chapter focused on the impact of policy mechanisms designed to address supply chain and consumption challenges that growers faced. Compared to the policy mechanisms to support a more competitive supply base which were covered in Chapter 6, there are fewer policy mechanisms that address problems in the supply chain or develop opportunities to increase consumption. Most of the policy mechanisms adopted are relatively weak information provision, for example on retailer ordering schedules, and often were not implemented fully. Attempts to change trading behaviour rely on voluntary actions rather than regulation, although many growers acknowledge the GCA as a step in the right direction. Attempts to increase consumption are also relatively weak and efforts to increase public procurement of home produced vegetables were difficult to implement. Tables 7-3 and 7-4 provide summaries of the findings related to policy mechanisms for an efficient supply chain and increasing consumption.

The findings on perceptions of consumption challenges were also presented in this chapter, focusing on supply chain customers and end-consumers. Table 7-5 presents a summary of perceptions of marketing challenges relating to supply customers and end-consumers. The findings suggest that orthodox conceptualisations of consumers figure prominently in their accounts of consumer behaviour, but there was also an understanding of the embedded nature of consumer choices, and that consumers' perceptions of price and value were driven by heuristics (such as pack size, or that organic means expensive) as well objective measures of value. There was an adversarial tone to some informants' views of consumers – and of supply chain customers, although a number of key informants understood the challenges their retail customers encountered. There were some encouraging signs of a desire to rebalance supply chain relationships, although most realised that even if supermarkets and growers were becoming more interdependent, the supermarkets would still wield considerable power in the vegetable supply chain.

Finally, this chapter also explores whether the policy mechanisms to ensure well-functioning markets were effective. Table 7-7 provides a summary of the findings related to well-functioning market structures. The picture on this is mixed. There were many problems reported concerning earnings, prices, contractual arrangements, and access to markets and market information from many growers both conventional and pioneer/organic. Fewer problems were reported across the themes of: attitude to risk, funding for investment, and investment in sustainable production. Generally the GPMOs were more positive about the market conditions than other grower organisations. It would seem that access to markets, a key advantage that GPMOs have that other

growers may not have, is important. But policy mechanisms on improving access to markets have stalled. Problems accessing markets impacts on growers' earnings, farm gate prices, and how contracts are enforced. GPMOs are able to gain access to markets by engaging in downstream intermediary activities and by controlling networks to coordinate supply for retailers. Higher land values and low interest rates have enabled growers who own land to access funding for investment. Farmers seem to display entrepreneurial competency and commercial acumen, perhaps because less capable growers have already exited the market but smaller growers do not always have the administrative capabilities to access state and EU funding opportunities. Policy mechanisms to improve access to low carbon/renewable energy sources seem to be helping farmers reduce GHGs associated with vegetable production. Some were concerned that a focus on renewable energy and low carbon solutions diverted funds from investment in more sustainable production methods.

This brings to an end Part Three which presented the findings from the thesis organised into three chapters, Chapters 5-7. Chapter 5 presented the findings relating to Research Question 1: how have ideas about markets and marketing shaped UK Food Policy since the Curry Report? Chapters 6 and 7 presented the findings relating to Research Question 2: what impact did UK Food Policy have on the production of vegetables in England? Part Four, the final part of the thesis, now moves on to discuss the findings in the light of the policy and marketing conceptual frameworks covered in Chapter 3.

PART FOUR: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Chapter 8 Discussion and Analysis of the Findings

Chapter Introduction

This chapter considers the findings from the document analysis and key informant interviews set out in Chapters 5, 6 and 7, and discusses them in the context of conceptual frameworks from the policy and marketing disciplines that were covered in Chapter 3. The first section of this chapter focuses on the first research question. An analysis that links policy and marketing theory to UK Food Policy is presented to illuminate how marketing ideas, predominantly from orthodox marketing, shaped an evolving market oriented policy that endured albeit in various forms throughout the New Labour and Coalition administrations. The second section focuses on the second research question, the impact of policy on the vegetable sector, bearing in mind that, as shown in Chapter 2, despite more than a decade of market oriented UK Food Policy, ambitions to increase production and consumption of vegetables have not been fully realised. Using a MAN (markets-as-networks) perspective as a lens through which to explore the application of marketing principles to food policy, an analysis of the impact of UK Food Policy in terms of how marketing was understood and practised in the vegetable sector is presented. The aim is to provide an abstracted explanation for the disappointing impact of a policy based on better marketing and to show how a UK Food Policy that makes use of a broader range of marketing ideas, especially those from the MAN standpoint, might provide a way forward to achieving policy goals for increased vegetable production in England, a sector so pivotal for sustainable food and farming. The final section of the chapter brings together the analysis to suggest ways forward for a UK Food Policy to increase vegetable production within a sustainable model for UK agriculture.

Situating UK Food Policy in Policy and Marketing Theory

This section analyses the findings presented in Chapter 5. Chapter 5 explained how a market oriented UK Food Policy evolved throughout the period 2002-2015. This section uses the findings from Chapter 5 and addresses the question set out in the first research question: How have ideas about markets and marketing shaped UK Food Policy since the publication of the Curry Report?

Applying a Policy Typography

Policy Carrots, Sticks and Sermons for a More Competitive Supply Base

Using the Bemelmans-Vidéc et al. typology of public policy instruments set out in Figure 3-1, it is apparent that more policy instruments (and more powerful ones) are employed to address the policy priorities of efficient production and a competitive supply base. Incentive schemes such as the PO scheme provide a carrot but also contain stick components by linking financial support with environmental compliance. Nevertheless, many vegetable growers remain outside of the PO scheme. There are examples of increased regulation - of some inputs, for example plant protection products (PPP), and water usage, which restrict growers' ability to externalise some costs that would otherwise incur on natural resources. Conventional growers accept, perhaps reluctantly in some cases, the need for increased regulation. But they voice their concern for a level playing field with overseas growers on the use of PPPs, and find the bureaucratic nature of the PPP regulatory framework difficult, and claim the UK approach to the implementation of the rules is overly restrictive. But as far as governance of the supply chain is concerned, conventional growers point out that the standards required by supermarkets are often more onerous than government legislation.

Other relevant policy sticks that affected vegetable growers included a regulatory framework for seasonal workers (which was disbanded in 2013), restrictions of the use of GMOs, and the Grocery Code Adjudicator (GCA) – although growers had to report non-compliance, and to date only one investigation has been carried out (Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy, 2017). Voluntary regulation frameworks were used – for example for Assured Produce. Growers may choose to opt into the Red Tractor scheme. But key informants reported that decisions to use the Red Tractor scheme were determined by the grocery retailers' strategy, and the cost of compliance was typically borne by the grower.

Policy Carrots, Sticks and Sermons for an Efficient Supply Chain

Fewer instruments were used to address problems relating to access to markets. Even where these are mentioned in policy documents such as the Fruit and Vegetables Action Plan, they are often not implemented, as was acknowledged by a policy expert from Defra. Policy instruments aimed at increasing consumption are confined to sermons, information provision in the form of social marketing.

A variety of policy mechanisms were employed to support production, improve access to markets and to encourage increased consumption of vegetables. POs have enabled some growers to

collaborate, and offered growers access to funding for investment into projects such as renewable energy but the model did not always fit the English context of larger farms and an adversarial culture. The Assured Produce programme was generally seen as a good idea but not implemented well in the context of vegetables since, as mentioned above, its use was dictated by the supermarkets but the costs borne by the growers. There were also other mechanisms for support via the Single Payment Scheme but an area based funding mechanism did not greatly benefit an intensive production model and since many growers rented rather than own land they could not benefit from the scheme. There was an appreciation of government support for export and farmers' markets provided opportunities for niche growers but there was concern about the legitimacy and effectiveness of a GCA. Efforts to increase consumption were seen as well-intentioned but ineffective and it was felt that schemes to encourage school children to consume more fruit and vegetables benefited fruit growers and growers from overseas more than vegetable growers in England.

[Situating UK Food Policy 2002-2015 in Marketing Theory](#)

The turn to the market in UK Food Policy reflected the broader policy discourse of the time. As discussed in Chapter 3, the choice agenda (Jordan, 2006), Rhodes' hollowed out government (2000), the rise of the Competition State (Cerny and Evans, 2004), and the decline in the redistributive role of policy (Timmer et al., 1983) were evidence of an emerging marketing theme in policy discourse based around the idea of the citizen as consumer. So whilst it is possible to read the Curry Report as simply a pragmatic market-oriented response to serious problems in food and farming in England and the rest of the UK, it is also important to examine the ways in which the arguments were put together to drive forward marketization of agriculture, which since the end of the Second World War had been afforded an exceptionalist policy position based on production subsidies.

In adopting a market-oriented approach policy makers were promoting and reinforcing a globalised version of buyer-dominated commodity supply chains in order to capture its benefits for the nation state. Curry successfully linked the problems in British farming with a lack of reconnection to both markets and to the environment, which supported a (re)turn to a market-oriented UK Food Policy that also protected natural resources for food production. Although the focus in the Curry Report was on competitiveness, economic viability for agriculture and environmental protection, the three pillar model that was used as the framework for UK Food Policy created a policy space for social, health and welfare issues affecting food and farming policy.

Its aim was to create a *'sustainable, competitive and diverse food and farming sector'* (Defra, 2002a, 5)

A problem for the vegetable sector was that it was - and remains - a marginal sector, often overlooked in UK Food Policy². UK Food Policy focused on a vision of market reconnection that may have been appropriate for mainstream agriculture which had been reliant on production subsidies, but seems less appropriate for the vegetable sector. The market oriented policy which stressed better marketing by growers did impact on vegetable production. Chapter 2 shows how the decline in the sector was halted after 2002 but imports met an increasing share of demand from 2002 onwards. Policy provided support for assurance schemes, and for innovation but the key informant interviews suggest that growers were not always successful in capturing the value created for themselves. Improved access to markets, for example via farmers' markets, only served a small proportion of growers, and efforts to expand wholesale markets stalled especially after 2010. The GCA sought to encourage more transparent market transactions and contracts between growers and their supermarket customers – which, although welcomed, were not perceived to be particularly effective by the sector since growers were reluctant to challenge contractual transgressions by grocery retailers for fear of losing long term business. These were policy mechanisms based on orthodox marketing ideas.

A different conceptualisation of markets and marketing would have provided other policy mechanisms to reconnect growers and their customers. As outlined in the review of the theoretical conceptualisations, one alternative depiction of reconnection was provided by Kneafsey et al. (2008). They also used reconnection as a metaphor for understanding the problems in food supply chains. But their critical standpoint framed the problems - and thus the solutions - very differently from the type of market reconnection outlined in the Curry Report. As discussed in Chapter 3, the analysis by Kneafsey et al (2008) suggested that the problems of a disconnection between producers and consumers of food were not as a consequence of subsidies but rather as a result of long supply chains in which production and producers were physically distanced from markets and consumers. The complex processes of production were concealed behind the factory gates of industrial farms in far off places so that the disconnection contained both physical (locational distance) and mental (lack of knowledge of production processes) components. Their study focused on two key problems that arise from the existing arrangements along the globalised

² It is noticeable, incidentally, that in the post-Brexit food and farm debate, the soft fruit sector has been 'noisier' about its concerns. PELHAM, J. 2017. The Impact of Brexit on the UK Soft Fruit Industry. London: British Summer Fruits.

commodity food supply chains: *health*, particularly for vulnerable groups of the population; and what they termed *food-related anxiety*, that is, the paradoxical notion that something as beneficial and benign as food can potentially cause harm. Addressing these issues was aligned with the broader public interest and thus distributional food policy goals in their analysis.

Kneafsey et al (2008) also suggested there were further intrinsic grounds for seeking to address food-related anxiety. Food, it was argued, should be a source of pleasure and enjoyment, not a source of concern and a good society should pursue policy goals to address food-related anxiety. This argument revealed an underlying radical, critical ideology that questioned the advantaged position of global capitalism in policy discourse. Their analysis privileged health and environmental aspects of a sustainable food and farming policy.

New Labour Food Policy put economic and environmental issues at the heart of a sustainable food policy. The Kneafsey et al (2008) analysis attempted to bring to the fore solutions beyond the existing neo-liberal mainstream arrangements for food production. Their vision of producer-consumer reconnection, in contrast to the more impersonal production-market conceptualisation envisaged in the Curry Report, was of consumers reconnecting directly with producers. The examples they provided of reconnection covered a range of levels of interconnectedness. At the most extreme, this reconnection was manifest in the *consumers as producers* model, for example in the form of community gardens, community co-ops and allotments. Somewhat less interconnected were the examples of producer-consumer partnerships such as CSAs, community supported agriculture schemes, and direct sales arrangements such as box schemes and farm shops. It was a vision of reconnection based on exchange but the nature of the exchange was qualitatively different from that envisaged in UK Food Policy 2002-2015. The Curry Report's original conceptualisation of reconnection as market orientation was based on an ethical stance of self-interest whereas the alternative Kneafsey et al (2008) view of reconnection was based on an ethic of care for others. The Kneafsey et al (2008) vision can be seen reflected in some early Labour Policy, for example in support for farmers' markets, and support for organic production, but these remained relatively unimportant for most English vegetable producers

The analysis of the policy documents presented in Chapter 5 shows that UK Food Policy shifted, for example, concern for food security became more important in late Labour Food Policy. The new Coalition's policy was influenced by its priority for austerity. Its UK Strategy for Agricultural Technologies (2013) represented significant funding for technology for agriculture to '*meet the challenge of feeding a growing population without damaging our natural environment.*' HM Government (2013:3). The UK Strategy for Agricultural Technologies was distinctive because it

was i) industry led and ii) focused on increasing overall food production. The Coalition's view of market reconnection emphasised global production to meet rising global demand. Health was reduced to sufficient production to meet demand and avoid hunger, and the imperative of ensuring sufficient production was used to drive through a high tech vision of British production, selling expertise and produce across world markets. Diversity, a feature that was desired and promoted in the Curry Report, was side-lined since scale and technology were the way forward. The economic becomes environmental through low input production and high yield to minimise the land mass used for agricultural production.

UK Food Policy 2002-2015: A Turn to the Market

Table 8-1 Situates UK Food Policy 2002-2015 in marketing theory by comparing New Labour and Coalition Policies with an alternative critical approach adopted by Kneafsey et al. (2008). It presents a framework for understanding how orthodox marketing theory influenced UK Food Policy 2002-2015. The analysis of key policy documents presented in this chapter has provided the empirical evidence from which the theoretical framework was developed. The table summarises the abstracted explanation of how marketing ideas from an orthodox tradition were applied in New Labour and Coalition Food Policy 2002-2015 that is discussed above. It shows how ideas about markets and marketing from an orthodox tradition were adopted and then evolved to shape a vision for UK Food Policy engaged with addressing serious economic, environmental, and then health challenges. Simply as a contrasting perspective, and to illuminate another theoretical tradition in marketing theory, the orthodox perspectives are compared to an alternative vision for a reconnected food policy that was proposed by Kneafsey et al (2008), based on a critical theoretical standpoint, as outlined in Chapter 3. The New Labour and Coalition Food Policies are based on an orthodox marketing conceptual framework but whilst the late New Labour Food Policy showed signs of a deepening engagement with what Lang and Barling term the 'emerging sustainable' food discourse, the Coalition's more laissez-faire approach retreated to a primary focus on production (Lang and Barling, 2012). Concerns about expanding global demand were used to marginalise the emerging sustainable food analysis in UK Food Policy and instead increasing global demand was framed as a commercial opportunity for British agriculture, as can be seen in the Strategy for Agricultural Technologies (HM Government, 2013). In contrast, the Kneafsey et al. (2008) study, by focusing on alternative networks, provides a critical alternative vision to underline how taken for granted assumptions about the nature and role of markets and marketing shape the goals and mechanisms adopted in UK Food Policy.

Table 8-1 Situating an Evolving UK Food Policy 2002-2015 in Marketing Theory – a Comparison of Two Contrasting Policies and an Alternative Critical Approach

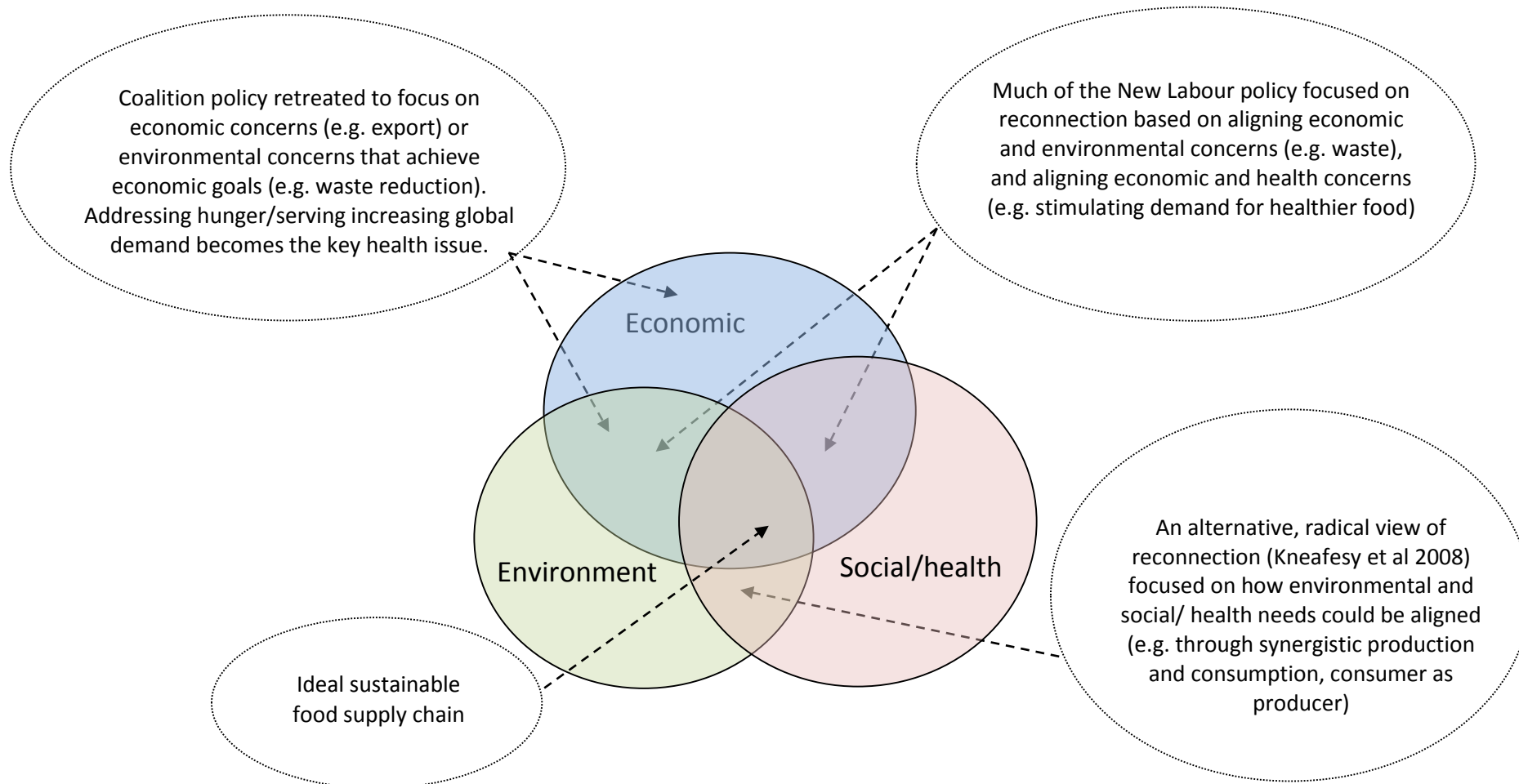
	New Labour UK Food Policy: Turn to the Market	Coalition UK Food Policy: Markets Dominate	Alternative Critical Standpoint: Alternative Food Networks
Marketing perspective	Orthodox marketing standpoint	Orthodox marketing standpoint	Critical marketing standpoint (based on Kneafsey et al 2008)
Theoretical themes	Modernist and some postmodernist themes Pragmatic, third way	Modernist Managerialist, scientist	Critical Radical
Underlying causes of market disconnection	Disconnection caused by production subsidies (overproduction and/or inappropriate production)	Disconnection caused by insufficient supply to meet rising global demand (insufficient production)	Disconnection caused by a long supply chain (inappropriate production)
Ethical orientation	Self interest	Self interest	Care for others
Nature of consumers	Rational consumers , differentiated preferences – value and values for money Public as consumers of environmental goods Public sector as a sovereign consumer	Rational consumers Rising global demand based on atomised and innate food preferences	Co-producers -actively involved in production Food as a source of pleasure
Consumer/ producer orientation	Consumer sovereignty	Producer/ production orientation	Consumer as producer
Policy aims for market reconnection	Wealth creation - to create value To appropriate a greater share of the value in the supply chain for producers	Wealth creation - to satisfy global demand To capitalise on global opportunities	Redistributive -to reduce inequalities in access to healthy food To address food-related anxiety
Links with the three pillars of sustainable development	Privileges the economic and environmental aspects of sustainability Constructs environmental protection as a public good The hyper-real farm and food experience	Privileges economic considerations, some environmental aspects of sustainability that are consistent with lower costs are also emphasised Increase production to address hunger	Privileges the health and environmental aspects of sustainability Economic concerns a lower priority
Policy Solutions	Within the existing Competition State paradigm Globalised trade and local markets Diverse producers and production methods	Within the existing Competition State paradigm Globalised trade including exports Large scale producers, high tech production	Alternative to the existing Competition State paradigm Local trade, self-sufficiency Small scale community-led solutions
Priority strategies for producers	Differentiate and add value Assured produce (Red Tractor) Support for organic as an added value alternative	Scale and reduce cost Investment in technological solutions led by industry	Consumers actively involved in production Organic production

Source: Author

Is a Market Oriented UK Food Policy a Sustainable Food Policy?

Using the findings from Chapter 5 which focus on Food Policy as it impacted on the vegetable sector in England, Figure 8-1 attempts to show how New Labour and Coalition Food Policy addressed the triple bottom line goals of sustainability. Both New Labour and Coalition governments attempted to link economic and environmental concerns, although the tone in Coalition Policy, for example in the Fruit and Vegetables Action Plan (2010), and in the Strategy for Agricultural Technologies (2013), suggest that economic priorities are the most important since the main food policy goal for health was to be translated into meeting increasing global demand. Earlier New Labour also attempted to link health and economic priorities, most notably by social marketing campaigns to increase consumption. As a comparison, the Kneafsey et al. (2008) alternative food networks approach is situated in the intersection of environmental and health. The challenge for UK Food Policy will be to reconcile the three sustainability goals but it seems that the policy drift from a turn to the market in UK Food Policy to a market dominated policy is moving away from an integration of the three pillars of sustainability – economy, society and the environment. Vegetable production provides the potential to achieve sustainability goals for profit, people and the planet but UK Food Policy 2002-2015 did not fully grasp the opportunity to do so.

Figure 8-1 A Summary of Different UK Food Policies and their Alignment to the Three Pillar Model of Sustainability – Economy, Society and Environment



Source: Author

Understanding the impact of UK Food Policy through a Heterodox Marketing Lens

This second section uses the findings from Chapters 6 and 7 and addresses the question set out in the second research question: What impact did UK Food Policy have on the production of vegetables in England, in particular on how marketing challenges for vegetable crops were perceived and understood. This section analyses the findings presented using MAN (markets-as-networks) ideas that were covered in Chapter 3 as a conceptual lens. Principal MAN Conceptual Themes were summarised in Table 3-4, and are used here to provide a theoretical framework for discussion of the findings. Table 8-2 provides a summary of the discussion based on the themes from Table 3-4 and includes indicative quotes from the findings.

Retailer dominance and how the economy works in the real world

The findings in Chapter 7 show widespread agreement that margins for growers were low. Supermarkets were able to appropriate a large share of the value created in the supply network. The perishable quality of vegetable commodities means that they cannot be stored until prices improve so prices below the real cost of production have to be accepted.

One grower consultant highlighted the interconnected problems associated with growing vegetables. Scale was required to ensure low unit costs but scale locked a grower into the supermarket supply network since only about 15% of vegetables go through other routes to market. Without funding from profits, innovations in domestic production (such as extending the growing season) were being stifled, and the large grower-packer marketing organisations (GPMOs) that typically acted as focal suppliers in the conventional network, could turn to overseas suppliers as an alternative to domestic produce. The policy solution proposed to retailer dominance was to encourage growers to become more competitive by reducing costs, by collaborating and forming Producer Organisations (POs), or by adding value (e.g. through provenance schemes such as organic or Red Tractor), and seeking new routes to market. These strategies did not always sit easily with the real-world problems that growers encountered: retailers could continue to take a disproportionate share of the value whatever the production cost base or margin on added value produce. Becoming part of a PO might disrupt existing agreements with retailers, and growers were wary of upsetting retail buyers. Policy-makers, who rely on competitive retailers to keep food prices low, and to enforce quality and safety standards, are reluctant to tackle issues of retailer power.

Table 8-2 Principle MAN Conceptual Themes

MAN Conceptual Theme	Findings	Indicative Quotes
<p>Retailer dominance (retailer managed networks)</p> <p>An alternative explanation of how the economy works in the real world ‘below the surface’ in contrast to the orthodox competitive markets narrative</p>	<p>Low margins for growers</p> <p>Dependence of supermarkets for main access to markets</p> <p>Benefits of improved competitiveness and innovation does not translate to better profits for growers</p>	<p>‘And if somebody says to you, “We don’t want your lettuce this week,” what are you going to do with, you know, half a million lettuce?’ (Con01)</p>
<p>AFNs and conventional networks - two or more distribution networks operating largely in parallel with limited inter-network interaction</p>	<p>Growers ‘stuck’ in one (or a few) networks, not able to easily move from one network to another</p> <p>Conventional growers use supermarket supply chain, efforts to stimulate other routes to market have stalled</p> <p>Organic/pioneer growers use farmers’ markets and other routes</p>	<p>So what have we got left? We’ve got box schemes, we’ve got farmers’ markets, we’ve got a few little local markets might happen every Saturday and so on...’ (Con04)</p>
<p>Managing Relationships relationship management processes</p>	<p>Private governance of the supply chain</p> <p>Contracts do not regulate interactions – GCA welcomed but perceived as having limited impact</p>	<p>: ‘...if the farmer produces it and he gets a disease problem [...] he will fall out of contract and [...] we would have no rights or reason to take it.’ (GP02)</p> <p>‘... there has to be a bit of give and take [...] [...] we’ll be working very hard to try and return whatever we can to our growers because I really want them to be there next year...’ organic grower network leader (Gr04)</p>
<p>Sustainability networks, channels and partnerships are essential to the development of sustainable food supply chains</p>	<p>Two distinct visions for sustainable development: one focused on sustainability within the vegetables sector (low carbon, low cost)</p> <p>The other focused on sustainability across food production sectors (diversity, replacement of consumption of less sustainable produce with sustainable produce such as vegetables)</p>	<p>‘Growers have only got so much money to invest so if they’re putting it into solar [...] I think it’s negative. We [should be] putting all our capital into growing this business and producing more...’ (GP01)</p> <p>‘...somehow in order to change the whole agricultural dynamic [...] we have to convince people [i.e. growers] that there is a market for crops, we have to convince people, the growers, to invest in those production systems and make it happen.’ (Con04)</p>
<p>Bridging orthodox and heterodox perspectives learning across paradigms</p>	<p>Potentially an overlap between RM and MAN, despite the fact that RM and MAN have theoretically distinct roots</p> <p>Informants made use of different ways of understanding the processes of transvection - from orthodox marketing ideas such as consumer sovereignty to more MAN ideas about coordination of productive and supply chain activities.</p>	<p>‘...I actually think that there’s a more grown up way of doing things, and the growers are doing this now, [...] sitting down with retailers [...] and retailers are beginning to get this...’ (Rep04)</p>

Source: Author

Parallel networks

The dominance of the supermarket supply chain meant that AFNs remained at the margins of vegetable supply: Growers in AFNs discussed the quality of the relationships they have with their end customers suggesting that, for some customers, identity and authenticity are important. The AFN growers also challenged the view that their produce was more expensive, suggesting that clever marketing and packaging gave the impression of lower prices in supermarkets for some lines of fresh produce. Policy experts agreed that consumers' knowledge of prices for vegetables is rudimentary and focuses on headline price rather than price per kilo, but supermarkets are convenient and fit in with mainstream consumers' lifestyles better than AFNs. There are few alternative routes to market for many growers apart from the retail multiples. One conventional grower claims that supermarkets do want British vegetables, reflecting consumers' interest in local produce. But it would seem that the long term consequences of contraction and consolidation in vegetable supply might have adverse effects not only for society which would benefit from increased consumption of vegetables in many ways but also for supermarkets since without a supply base their ability to provide the vegetable produce consumers want may impact on their reputation and their bottom line.

Policy initiatives to develop alternative routes to market included AFNs but also some support for wholesale markets and for export. Some of the larger growers see long term opportunities in export, but at the moment it remains a small part of the overall market. A policy expert acknowledged that plans for a business development program for alternative routes to market have been cut as part of the UK Government's policy to reduce public spending. The pattern of separate, parallel networks of retailer dominated supply chains for conventional growers and AFNs for smaller, organic producers remained and it was not easy for growers to shift from one network to another.

Managing relationships

As a mechanism for managing relationships, contracts are perceived as relevant only when relationships fail. The protection that a contract provides to growers was largely illusory because the retailers controlled the enforcement of contracts. For growers, contracts were seen as a double-edged sword, a formal mechanism whereby powerful downstream actors could require compliance from the grower, secure in the knowledge that few growers would use contracts to enforce agreements. The retailers normally dealt with growers via a focal supplier, often a large grower-packer marketing organisation that coordinated year round supply of produce to a retailer. Whilst there was a more collaborative approach in AFNs, the GPMOs in the conventional sector were more closely aligned to supermarkets in terms of their view of contracts. The GPMOs are gatekeepers to large retail markets who have effectively integrated the downstream supply chain, taking on more intermediary functions that were once performed by the retailer. Market-based, arms' length relationships between growers

and intermediaries have been replaced by longer term arrangements and coordinated interactions within managed networks dominated by a retail multiple and the GPMOs. The GPMOs continue to exercise control upstream through contractual arrangements with individual growers at home and overseas. As far as managing relationships was concerned, policy makers relied on the Grocery Code Adjudicator and a voluntary code of conduct but growers did not see them as an effective control mechanism to address retailer power in conventional food networks because reporting supermarket breaches of the code could jeopardise future business plans. Growers were reluctant to do anything that might upset relationships with an important customer, and there were few alternative routes to market should an existing relationship with a supermarket fail.

Sustainability

The MAN literature suggests that networks, channels and partnerships are essential to the development of sustainable food supply chains. The conventional network tended to see sustainable production in terms of incremental improvements in resource use within the sector. Policy initiatives encouraged the development and use of alternatives to fossil fuel energy such as anaerobic digestion facilities but some were concerned that a focus on renewables diverted growers from investing in growing crops. Those in AFNs generally talked of sustainability in terms of transformation of the whole system of production and consumption of food. In terms of sustainability, policy initiatives provided incentives for growers to engage in practices to reduce waste and to make more use of low carbon energy. As shown in Figure 8-1 above, these options aligned economic and environmental considerations, within a narrative of sustainable intensification. Policy largely ignored the potential for realignment of agricultural production towards more vegetable production and away from reliance on sectors that have more impact on the environment such as livestock and dairy.

Bridging Multiple Perspectives

The findings presented in Chapter 7 explored whether there were structural malfunctions in the supply chains and markets for vegetables but although some features of malfunctioning markets were highlighted, such as the low margins for growers, and the dominance of the supermarkets in controlling access to markets, there was also evidence of well-functioning markets. For example, the findings showed that growers had to access information on prices and customer requirements and to access funding for investment in production. The orthodox and critical perspectives framed the marketing challenges for the vegetable as failure to market (the orthodox marketing explanation) or market failure (the critical marketing explanation). Orthodox and critical perspectives make similar assumptions about the nature of exchange and the nature of organisations (arms' length transactions, complete organisations) and don't conceptualise some essential features of commercial activity, in particular embedded interaction amongst interdependent firms. Heterodox marketing makes use of

a different conceptual framework, and avoids a normative critique of markets, instead focusing on how interactions actually take place between interdependent organisations, and how the actors attempt to improve their position in the network. As discussed in Chapter 3, Mattsson (1997) noted that developments in orthodox marketing based on relationship marketing, signalled a shift towards some heterodox ideas. Although relationship marketing and MAN take their theoretical frameworks from very different disciplines, it is argued that it may be possible to find common ground between them. The findings suggest that participants slipped between different ways of understanding customers (the retailers) and end-consumers that ranged from conventional orthodox depictions to heterodox ones.

As the findings in Chapters 6 and 7 show, a variety of policy mechanisms were employed to support production, improve access to markets and to encourage increased consumption of vegetables. In this direct way, the Curry Report had its effect. Later the EU PO scheme encouraged some growers to collaborate, and offered growers access to funding for investment into projects such as renewable energy but the model did not always fit the English context of larger farms and an adversarial culture. The Assured Produce programme was generally seen as a good idea but many felt that the Red Tractor mark was not implemented well in the context of vegetables. There were also other mechanisms for support via the Single Payment Scheme but an area based funding mechanism did not greatly benefit an intensive production model and since many growers rented rather than own land they could not benefit from the scheme. There was an appreciation of government support for export, and farmers' markets provided opportunities for niche growers, but there was concern about the legitimacy and effectiveness of a GCA. Efforts to increase consumption were seen as well-intentioned but ineffective and it was felt that schemes to encourage school children to consume more fruit and vegetables benefited fruit growers and growers from overseas more than vegetable growers in England. It is apparent in UK Food Policy since the Curry Report that more policy instruments (and arguably more powerful ones) are employed to address the policy priorities of efficient production and a competitive supply base. This reflects the orthodox marketing assumption that takes as its starting point '*want regarding principles*' (O'Neill, 1993), that is, that consumers' preferences are immutable, and that supply needs to actively respond to them. Fewer instruments are used to address problems relating to access to markets. Even where these are mentioned in policy documents such as the Fruit and Vegetables Action Plan, they are often not implemented, as was acknowledged in the findings by a policy expert. Policy instruments aimed at increasing consumption were confined to a rather narrow implementation of social marketing mainly aimed at individual behaviour change, also reflecting a perception of marketing rooted in the orthodox tradition.

A Heterodox Critique of Better Marketing as UK Food Policy 2002-2015

This section presents a heterodox critique of UK Food Policy 2002-2015. The Curry Report was written when buyer power was highlighted as a problem in the grocery sector by academics and by the competition authorities at the time (Dobson et al., 2001, Competition Commission, 2000). Yet structural issues along the food supply chain were not viewed in the Curry Report as something that could or should be addressed by policy interventions. Curry was successful in framing problems in the vegetable sector as a failure to market rather than as a result of structural problems in the functioning of the supply chain. Retailer multiples in the grocery sector had effectively aligned themselves to the consumer-citizens' interests by providing lower prices and better choice which they delivered. It would have been difficult for the farming community, especially given its declining constituency, to argue for higher end consumer prices to support farmer/grower incomes and the report's authors seemed cognisant of this. So the Curry Report focused on better marketing to help farmers. Although the findings in Chapter 7 suggest that growers did experience problems related to retailer dominance, in other respects the market did seem to be functioning well, for example in terms of knowledge of prices and customer requirements, and access to credit.

Competitiveness was emphasised in UK Food Policy. Collaboration was framed as one way of competing better so growers were encouraged to collaborate horizontally with other growers to counter buyer power by re-engineering production, packaging and processing in order to reduce costs and add value, and by coordinating to achieve all year round supply for large retail buyers. Markets were assumed to be natural, inescapable and inevitable, rather than something constructed, shaped and performed by actors and institutions (Araujo et al., 2010, Tadajewski and Brownlie, 2008).

From a heterodox perspective the policy mechanisms derived from orthodox marketing did not address some important problems for growers. For example, growers reported that existing supply chain arrangements of resources, activities and actors were not easily incorporated into the PO structure. Investment in production produced cheaper and better produce but grower margins remained low. The New Labour policy on public procurement aimed to provide a route to public sector markets for producers that adhered to certain environmental and social features. However, the findings suggested that this did not sit easily with EU competition regulations that proscribed preferential treatment for local suppliers. The Coalition Government looked to industry to address rising global demand. In a market where demand outstrips supply failure to market recedes in terms of its impact on producers. And the problem of unity of object also recedes when food policy priorities are framed as addressing increasing global demand (Donovan et al., 2015). Rising demand provides opportunities to create value and increase production. The vertically integrated network of grower-packer marketing organisations, GPMOs, and the retailer multiples were well placed to efficiently

coordinate global production and distribution of food based on a large scale technologically advanced model of production. But the problem of how the value could and should be appropriated across the supply network remained and an orthodox perspective typically overlooks this problem.

By framing environmental protection in market terms, UK Food Policy also encouraged farmers to reconnect with the natural environment. On behalf of the citizen consumer the public purse would reimburse farmers who engage in environmental protection, by switching support from production to rural development in line with developments in the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (Cardwell, 2004, Greer, 2005) but this policy encouraged within sector improvements in sustainable agriculture and did not address the broader question of cross sector sustainability challenges, for example to replace more resource intensive food production with more sustainable food production such as vegetables.

The vegetable sector in England has undergone significant transformation since the 1980s. This is manifest in the decline in the output in volume terms of many crops, and the increasing dependence on fewer crop varieties that were explained in Chapter Two. A market-oriented UK Food Policy 2002-2015 did halt the decline in production somewhat. There are successes in niche products such as asparagus but their impact on overall production is small. The findings suggest that production is more efficient - carried out on less land, and especially in the use of labour in the conventional vegetable supply networks. Growers in the conventional sector are embedded in networks that require investment in technology and large scale production.

Supply of vegetables has increased but has been met mainly by imports, often coordinated by domestic growers. More recently consumption has stalled in Britain as in a number of other developed countries as austerity and recessions constrained consumers' budgets, particularly those from low income groups (Van Rijswijk, 2013). Consolidation, category management and other co-ordinating structures are established features and institutions of vegetable supply. Ideas and innovations from the pioneer networks are picked up and used by the conventional sector and vice versa, although the two networks are largely separate so that routes to market for pioneer organic growers are not typically appropriate for the conventional growers. The mainstream conventional sector is focusing on technology to reduce labour costs and looks to high tech, low input production models to deliver more sustainable production in terms of low input and low carbon. The alternative pioneer networks are also harnessing innovations in marketing and technology to create and appropriate value in their supply chains.

The GPMOs have evolved into organisations capable of operating successfully in the globalised buyer-dominated commodity supply chains. A nexus of approximately a dozen GPMOs and half a dozen retail

multinationals dominate the conventional network of vegetable supply in England. They control access to retail markets for the farmer-growers and overseas suppliers and ensure continuity of supply to the retail multinationals. Vegetables are a small but important sector for the retailer, where visual display is important in the retail environment. The GPMOs are able to appropriate value in the supply chain by coordinating the link between retailers and those involved in the physical growing of produce but relationship management seems rudimentary. Consolidation has brought about benefits in the form of efficiency and availability. The GPMOs are able to invest in innovations focused on increasing convenience and some aspects of quality (e.g. produce consistency, produce able to withstand transportation). They are also able to invest in environmental improvements that deliver lower costs and in so doing demonstrate progress towards more sustainable production (e.g. integrated farm management, renewable energy use).

The Coalition Government's priority has shifted somewhat from increasing home consumption to serving export markets. Early New Labour policy wanted to create a sustainable, competitive and diverse food and farming sector but the Coalition's policy seems to have reordered these priorities for those involved in vegetable production: competitive, first and foremost; sustainable where possible; diverse - not at all. This means that opportunities to appropriate health and environmental benefits from a stronger vegetable sector in England may not be fully realised.

[From Better Marketing to a Different Sort of Marketing: Ways Forward for a UK Food Policy for Increasing Vegetable Production](#)

Can a market oriented food policy work? The Curry Report argued that better marketing would bring about a sustainable future for English vegetable growers but the success of the policy in achieving policy goals for increasing production and consumption of vegetables was mixed. One explanation for this was that policy had failed to address malfunctions in the market for vegetables, which was scrutinised at the end of Chapter 7. But the findings suggest that although there were some structural challenges for growers it did not amount to market failure. The explanation presented here argues that the failure to market/market failure depiction that draws on orthodox and critical marketing perspectives does not adequately explain the real world of vegetable production in England and the impact of policy on it. Heterodox marketing provides an alternative way of understanding this complex policy and marketing context and as such brings a novel conceptual framework to the policy discourse. Table 8-3 contrasts the orthodox and heterodox explanations of food policy goals, production and

consumption. It serves to bring to the fore taken for granted orthodox marketing assumptions and offers heterodox alternatives.

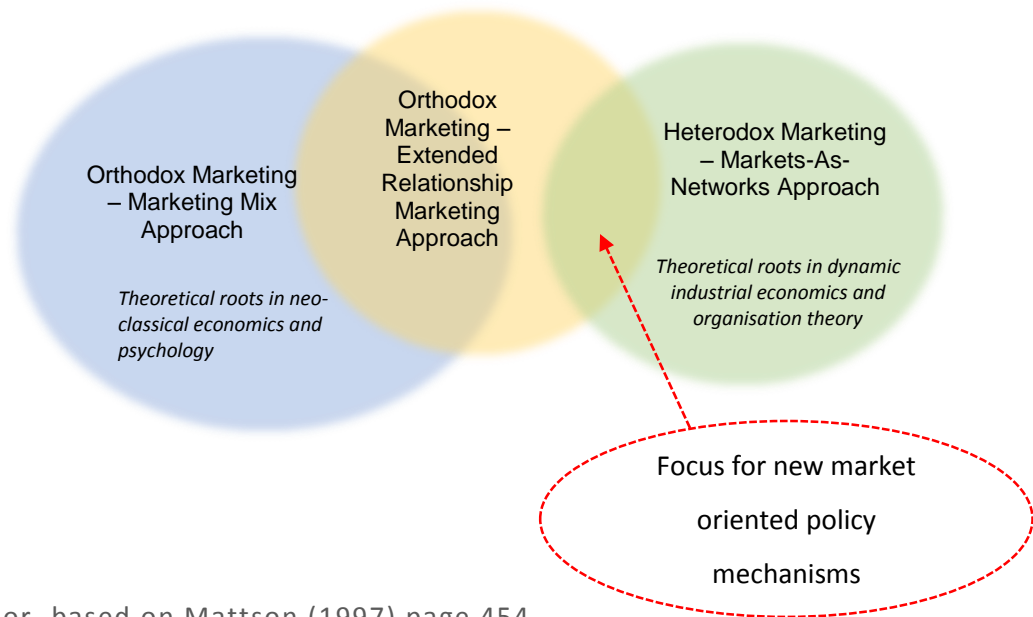
Nicholson et al. (2014) encourage a critical pluralist approach and advocate the use of multiple perspectives to illuminate problems in different ways without trying to reconcile different perspectives into one overarching general theory. With that in mind, it is also worth considering that despite their very different theoretical roots, perhaps the two frameworks are not as different as they might first appear. Mattsson (1997) noted the overlap between relationship marketing RM, from orthodox marketing, and the markets-as-networks MAN approach, from heterodox marketing. This is illustrated in Figure 8-2. The overlap between RM and MAN can tap into the increasing interest in relationships between buyers and sellers as the basis for productive exchange. RM could provide a bridge between policy thinking based on marketing management and the relatively unexplored terrain of the MAN tradition. Focusing on the areas of agreement between orthodox and heterodox marketing could generate novel, practical policy mechanisms to increase production of vegetables in England. A realist perspective could also provide the basis for reconciling these two seemingly different theoretical frameworks by arguing that although they stem from very different theoretical traditions, they are both frameworks for making sense of the same external reality.

Table 8-3 A Summary of Orthodox and Heterodox Perspectives: Policy, Production and Consumption

		An Orthodox Perspective	A Heterodox Perspective
POLICY	Policy goals	Hunt's policy goals: Productivity, economic growth, wealth creation	Goals for sustainability: Efficient resource use, prosperity and stability well-being (Jackson, 2009),
	Theoretical frameworks	Market Economics, orthodox conceptualisations of markets and marketing Dynamic disequilibrium of markets drives innovation and better ways of satisfying consumers (Hunt, 2000)	Cultural ecology, heterodox ideas of networks, industrial marketing The maintenance of the dynamic conditions for dynamic ecological equilibrium (Alderson in Cox et al., 1964, p. ch 6)
	Problem to be addressed	Economic demise - an inability to compete in global markets	Ecological disequilibrium – resources depleted by destructive technologies
	Policy solutions based on	Competitive, free markets; sustainable intensification of global commodity supply chains	Networks; institutional and structural change to support network interaction
	Food supply priority	Efficiency and consolidation	Resilience and diversity
CONSUMPTION	Consumer and choice (Firat & Dholakia, 1982)	Consuming unit Individual Type of choice (choice among) packs/brands/products	Consuming unit : society Type of choice (choice among) product classes (e.g. choice between vegetables and other foods)
PRODUCTION	Models of production	Mainly conventional production, some organic production as value-added produce	Sustainable production
	Features of interactions with supply chain	Thin, discrete, adversarial	Thick, embedded, interdependent based on mutual benefits
	R&D	Focused on mechanisation and bio-tech developments, high tech	Focused on the adaptation of natural ecological systems, low and high tech
	Desired output	Affordable, plentiful produce, low carbon, efficient production, competitive markets	Healthy food, sufficient production, balanced appropriation of value across supply networks

Source: Author

Figure 8-2 Marketing Mix, Relationship Marketing and Markets-as-Networks



Source: Author, based on Mattson (1997) page 454

Table 8-4 below brings together the analysis based on heterodox themes, and compares the orthodox perspective and its policy mechanisms with heterodox marketing alternative policies and the thinking that underpins them. The final column sketches options for ways forward. These might be considered as middle-ground suggestions that offer a link with UK Food Policy 2002-2015 but ones that might address some of its short-comings of UK Food Policy 2002-2015. These are simply suggestions that serve as examples of ways forward and are not intended to be comprehensive. They show that the orthodox range of policy mechanisms could be augmented with suggestions from RM/MAN. They acknowledge the embedded nature of relationships based on on-going interaction between interdependent organisations but that also acknowledge the orthodox alignment with lightly regulated markets (or networks).

Table 8-4 RM/MAN Ways Forward

MAN Conceptual Theme	Existing orthodox perspective and policy mechanisms	Findings	Heterodox solution	RM/MAN ways forward
<p>Retailer dominance (retailer managed networks)</p> <p>An alternative explanation of how the economy works in the real world ‘below the surface’ in contrast to the orthodox competitive markets narrative</p>	<p>Not as problem so long as consumer prices remain low</p> <p>Red Tractor quasi-brand adds value</p> <p>FCC to reduce costs</p> <p>‘Horizontal’ POs</p> <p>Industry-led investment in technology</p>	<p>Low margins for growers and dependence on supermarkets for main access to markets</p> <p>Benefits of improved competitiveness and innovation does not translate to better profits for many growers</p>	<p>State intervention in managed networks to prevent them becoming hierarchies and to ensure fair and sustainable outcomes</p> <p>State to determine and enforce governance of the supply chain Examples: include supplier harm test in competition regulation, enhance d remit for GCA, extend code to cover indirect suppliers</p> <p>Local regulation of local grocery monopolies</p>	<p>More active role for the state in supporting and monitoring networks</p> <p>Examples: Support to invest in branded/licenced varieties</p> <p>State leadership in developing a framework to support effective business interaction, embedded in on-going business relationships (cannot be led only by dominant actors)</p>
<p>AFNs and conventional networks - two or more distribution networks operating largely in parallel with limited inter-network interaction</p>	<p>Alternative routes to market provide opportunities for competitive growers</p>	<p>Growers ‘stuck’ in one (or a few) networks, not able to easily move from one network to another</p> <p>Conventional growers use supermarket supply chain, efforts to stimulate other routes to market have stalled</p> <p>Organic/pioneer growers use farmers’ markets and other routes but remain niche</p>	<p>National and local planning to regulate/incentivise retail space for vegetables</p> <p>Regulate supermarket prices for other foods (e.g. fat tax)</p>	<p>Examples: Reinstate policy support to improve wholesale markets to create opportunities for the development of new managed networks</p>
<p>Managing Relationships relationship management processes</p>	<p>Private governance is consistent with societal outcomes</p> <p>Support for contracts, voluntary COP and GCA</p>	<p>Private governance of the supply chain</p> <p>Contracts do not regulate interactions – GCA welcomed but perceived as having limited impact</p>	<p>Increased role for the state in governance of the supply chain</p> <p>Strengthen GCA framework - to regulate supplier-retailer interactions beyond written contracts</p>	<p>Examples: Policy support for a ‘fair trade’ mark for growers and retailers</p> <p>Develop PO model - encourage more supply chain collaboration and interdependence</p>
<p>Sustainability networks, channels and partnerships are essential to the development of sustainable food supply chains</p>	<p>Sustainability <i>within</i> the vegetable sector</p>	<p>Two distinct visions for sustainable development: one focused on sustainability within the vegetables sector (low carbon, low cost), the other focused on sustainability across food production sectors (diversity, replacement of consumption of less sustainable produce with sustainable produce such as vegetables)</p>	<p>Systems approach – overall sustainability of food/agriculture systems</p>	<p>Policy to address within <i>and</i> cross sector sustainability challenges</p>

Source: Author

Chapter Summary

The chapter has discussed and analysed the findings using a policy typography and by situating UK Food Policy in marketing theory. It analyses the findings from Chapter 5 to address the first research question on the impact of marketing ideas on UK Food Policy 2002-2015. It addresses the second question of the impact of policy on the vegetable sector by considering how orthodox ideas influenced both those involved in policy and those involved in production, using the findings from Chapters 6 and 7. It used the MAN perspective to provide an abstracted explanation of why a policy based on better marketing did not fully achieve the policy goal of increasing domestic production of vegetables in England. Finally it brings together the academic literature, the policy, and the findings from the study to offer ways forward for a UK Food Policy to increase vegetable production within a sustainable model for farming and food. The next and final chapter, Chapter 9, concludes the thesis and shows how a market oriented UK Food Policy might benefit from insights provided by a MAN perspective.

Chapter 9 Conclusion, Contribution to Knowledge, and Reflections

Chapter Introduction

This final chapter concludes the thesis and returns to themes related to the research questions and assesses the broader implications of the impact marketing ideas on food policy and on vegetable production. It explains the contribution of the thesis to marketing and policy knowledge. It also reflects on the process of the doctoral research.

Conclusions

The thesis began with a simple question: what should a government do to support a vegetable sector in decline? This simple question opened up an exploration of UK Food Policy 2002-2015, a fascinating period for those interested in marketing because it involved a rejection of the previously dominant productionist UK Food Policy in favour of one based on better marketing and more 'free' markets. The focus on vegetable production was also of interest to marketers because of the pivotal role of the vegetable sector in achieving sustainability goals relating to people, planet and profit. Sustainable development might mean confronting some difficult decisions on production and consumption but increased vegetable production, particularly of seasonal, indigenous produce, is one economic activity where marketing's notorious ability to stimulate consumption could potentially be put to good use.

Two research questions were formulated:

Research question 1: How have ideas about markets and marketing shaped UK Food Policy since the publication of "*Farming and Food: A Sustainable Future, Report of the Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food*" (the Curry Report)?

Research question 2: What impact did an evolving market oriented UK Food Policy, based on particular notions of market reconnection, have on the production of vegetables in England, in particular on how those involved in growing vegetable crops perceived and understood their marketing challenges?

The aim of this thesis was to explore the impact of more than a decade of market oriented policy on the production of vegetables in England. Reconnection had become a key theme in food and farming policy since the publication of the Curry Report in 2002 which set out a food policy in which farmers

would become both more market oriented and more engaged with environmental protection. Chapter Two showed how, in the decade or so following the publication of the Curry Report, a policy evolved which attempted to deliver a market oriented vision of a reconnected, sustainable system of agriculture and food supply. A documentary analysis, presented in Chapter 5, and insights from key informants presented in Chapters 6 and 7, were used to examine the impact of marketing ideas on UK Food Policy 2002-2015, and the impact of a market oriented policy on the vegetable sector in England.

The findings show that marketing ideas from mainstream orthodox marketing did have an effect and brought about significant changes in UK Food Policy 2002-2015. Other factors inside supermarkets might well have also contributed to this, but the purpose of this thesis was to focus on the *policy effectiveness*. Others have, do and will continue to study the internal business dynamics and their effects. The findings show that UK Food Policy's analysis of the problems in the vegetable sector (and the rest of British farming) - and the solutions to those problems - drew on marketing management principles rooted in an orthodox neo-classical economics framework. Nevertheless the ambiguity inherent in the marketing discipline and its lack of internal consistency meant that its ideas could be adopted in a myriad of ways. This was manifest as a proactive market oriented Early New Labour policy evolved to become a more reactive market dominated UK Food Policy which only intervened in cases of serious market failure, for example the creation of the GCA in 2013 in response to serious problems for (and protests by) suppliers.

In the early years of the new millennium the decline in the vegetable sector was halted but it did not recover to previous levels. UK Food Policy 2002-2015 did not achieve its sustainable development goals to increase the vegetable sector in England. It did, however, enable and support efficient and effective vegetable supply networks, controlled by a few large grocery retailers and their focal suppliers. The findings provide support for the view that there has been a basic change in how vegetable supply is functioning. Heterodox marketing, using themes from a MAN perspective, provides a compelling explanation of the new ways growers interact with their competitive environment, and how the orthodox marketing policies that were implemented were not particularly effective in increasing vegetable supply. Given the limited success of policy in the context of vegetable supply (few would argue that the present arrangements are optimal), there is a need to adjust a market-oriented UK Food Policy. It does not mean a return to a state managed food supply as adopted in the post-war era. Hierarchies enable control (whether state controlled or private monopolies) but have a number of problems associated with them in terms of problems with innovation and the efficient allocation of productive resources. Networks, as an alternative to markets or hierarchies, may be more efficient and effective in both coordinating productive activities and creating innovative improvements over time. However, they have some negative effects in terms of fairness of outcomes

for all parties and as such present policy makers with a challenge of ensuring that networks deliver improvements in coordination and innovation without regressing into less flexible hierarchies.

The thesis concludes that exchanges in the vegetable sector are not isolated discrete events; they are part of a network of coordinated activities between interdependent actors engaged in interactive on-going business relationships and need to be understood as such. Orthodox marketing management does not capture these features of networks, although developments in relationship marketing seem to be moving orthodox marketing theory and practice to a more networked perspective. We need to encourage those involved in UK Food Policy to broaden their understanding of marketing to encompass heterodox ideas so that policy mechanisms can be devised to create wealth for different involved parties (growers, retailers, end consumers, citizens) without endangering the long run habitability of the environment. So as a starting point, relationship marketing, which developed from within an orthodox marketing tradition, could provide a bridge between existing UK Food Policy and a new market oriented UK Food Policy based on supporting marketing networks.

Contribution to knowledge

All doctoral theses have to demonstrate their distinctiveness and contribution to knowledge. The thesis here is distinctive because of its realist, integrative and pluralist features. It attempts to contribute to knowledge by introducing a body of literature from the marketing discipline to the food policy discourse, and by demonstrating how both the orthodox and heterodox wings of this body of literature have been and may be used in food policy. It adopts a realist ontology based on the idea that our perception of the real world - what is noticed and how it makes sense - is theory laden because perception of the social world in particular is '*conceptually-saturated*', that is, we cannot perceive without conceptualising (Sayer, 1984). It contributes to emerging policy analyses about how social values can give policy direction to aspects of food systems (New York City Food Policy Center, 2013).

A distinctive feature of the thesis is its critical examination of the conceptual frameworks that underpinned a market oriented UK Food Policy 2002-2015. The impact of the policy is played out in the context of domestic vegetable production, a pivotal but relatively unexamined sector in British agriculture, and one that has serious implications for health and the environment. It uncovers the distinctive marketing frameworks that shaped UK Food Policy, which relied predominantly on orthodox marketing ideas, and shows how alternative frameworks that draw on heterodox marketing could be applied to deepen our understanding of the problems and possible solutions for sustainable farming and food.

One approach to justifying how a body of work contributes to knowledge would be to present the new knowledge as a new theory, an 'ordering-framework' but such as approach assumes a clear distinction between the conceptual and the empirical that is challenged by realists who argue that sense and reference are interdependent, and that the data we gather are already '(pre)-conceptualised' (Sayer, 1984). Thus the thesis contributes to knowledge by revealing the pre-conceptualisations that are formed in an orthodox marketing analysis, and attempts to show how a heterodox marketing perspective that draws on systems thinking and a markets-as-networks (MAN) approach provides a credible alternative account of the problems and solutions in food policy. The critical/macromarketing approach adopted by (Kneafsey et al., 2008) has already provided an alternative account that frames reconnection as social transformation in food production and consumption networks. This thesis proposes an explanation that is distinctive from both the orthodox and the critical/macromarketing perspectives. It is based on MAN theory that challenges the assumptions of neo-classical economics and the 4Ps. A revitalised market-oriented UK Food Policy that uses relationship marketing (RM) as a bridge between orthodox and heterodox marketing will, it is argued here, develop a more nuanced understanding of the problems and solutions in the vegetable sector and thus create more practically adequate solutions to increase the production of vegetables in England.

The thesis contributes to knowledge because the turn to the market in UK Food Policy has been scrutinised not just in terms of its surface features - actors, mechanisms and distributional outcomes - but also in terms of how a spectrum of ideas about markets and marketing were appropriated and applied as sense-making devices in the processes of policy formation. The thesis contributes to intellectual efforts that demonstrate how alternative conceptual frameworks can reveal insights into policy formation and implementation, some of which might be more practically adequate than those in play currently. Examining and using an extensive body of literature on markets and marketing reveals original insights into policy ideas and practice, and offer alternative explanations of policy, and new ways forward for policy.

The thesis also adopts a critical pluralist perspective (Nicholson et al., 2014) which consciously applies different ontological lenses through which to examine real world phenomena, avoiding the temptation to assume, *a priori*, that any one perspective is privileged over another. Since it is a novel approach to combine marketing literature and a policy context the thesis succeeds in only beginning to sketch out how heterodox marketing ideas may link in with an orthodox market oriented policy.

The theoretical frameworks shifted during the process of developing the thesis. The lens through which policy development was explored began with an orthodox perspective that focused on individual grower organisations and considered how policy could support growers to become better

marketers. A critical macromarketing perspective enabled the researcher to consider higher level theoretical constructs of structure and agency as an organising framework for exploring the impact of policy on the sector. Moving beyond the either/or debates, as advocated by O’Driscoll (2008), a heterodox marketing perspective provides an opportunity to understand the vegetable sector as a marketing system of managed networks, where firms and individuals cooperate in order to access resources they do not have in order to achieve better outcomes for themselves, in a dynamic ecological equilibrium (Cox et al., 1964). Mattsson’s insight that, despite orthodox and heterodox marketing’s radically different theoretical underpinnings, there could be common ground between an orthodox relationship marketing perspective and a heterodox markets-as-networks approach (Mattson, 1997) was useful in generating realistic policy options that link back to orthodox policy but provide a way forward for a revitalised UK Food Policy.

The thesis contributes to knowledge by critically exploring how policy was articulated and how problems were framed. The impact of the policy is played out in the context of domestic vegetable production, a pivotal sector but relatively unexamined part of British agriculture, and one which has serious implications for health and the environment. It identifies what policy instruments were advocated, which policies were implemented, and assesses their impact and distributional outcomes. A distinctive feature of the thesis is its critical examination of the conceptual frameworks that underpin the market oriented policy. It uncovers the distinctive marketing frameworks that shaped UK Food Policy, which relied heavily on orthodox marketing ideas, and shows how alternative frameworks that draw on heterodox marketing could be applied to deepen our understanding of the problems and possible solutions for sustainable farming and food.

Reflections

This section presents reflections on the research process with a view to recognising what went well, and, looking back, what could have been done differently. Interdisciplinary research is challenging and it is possible to underestimate the complexity of the terrain of the new subject area and at the same time fail to develop sufficient depth of knowledge in the original discipline. On the other hand, exploring the world through the lens of another discipline can offer new insights that may be the basis of further academic research. In reflecting on the conceptual frameworks adopted, initially the research adopted an orthodox marketing conceptual framework since this is the dominant theoretical framework for academic marketing research. A guiding framework was Hunt’s general theory of competition (2000), not only because it was an overarching theoretical account of how markets work,

but also because it provided clear advice to policy makers on the place of markets in successful societies. Critical marketing provided a critique of neo-classical ideas and suggested radical solutions for vegetable production and consumption. The Kneafsey et al. (2008) study provided a very different vision for the sector than that adopted in UK Food Policy and served as an example to highlight how different theoretical perspectives frame issues in very different ways. The MAN theoretical approach from the heterodox wing of marketing, has also been a useful theoretical framework because it provided a way of understanding the embedded nature of marketing interactions, something that neo-classical perspectives often overlook. The initial review of marketing frameworks meant that a broad understanding of industrial marketing concepts was gained prior to the fieldwork. However, once the fieldwork had been completed I returned to the marketing literature, focusing on industrial marketing, in particular the ideas from the IMP group, which used networks as its organising framework, and this encouraged me to explore the findings from the fieldwork through the lens of the MAN approach. In the same way that learning a second language can help one understand the grammar and syntax rules of language, using a different organising framework enabled me to see how different marketing models organised and made sense of empirical evidence. Critical pluralism advocated by Nicholson et al. (2014) suggested an approach to research that was open to alternative theoretical perspectives (without being unnecessarily concerned with commensurability to create one over-arching theoretical framework) and it was this approach that I attempted to adopt in developing insights into the interplay of structure and agency in the context of the vegetable sector in England. Thus my conclusions are not to challenge the orthodox perspective with a view to replacing it with a MAN approach, but rather to encourage those involved in shaping food policy for the vegetable sector in England to consider how a MAN perspective might reveal improve policy solutions to support a secure food system of affordable, healthy food within environmental limits.

Originally I set up the problem as one of structure *or* agency, based on orthodox and critical marketing ideas. As the thesis developed it seemed as though a market oriented UK Food Policy framed the problem for English vegetable growers as one of agency, failure to market, whereas I was concerned that market failure might be the cause of many of the problems facing English growers. But in using a MAN perspective I came to understand that the problem was neither market failure nor failure to market. From the evidence of the key informant interviews it was possible to understand the English vegetable supply system as a network rather than a market. A network is a hybrid structure, neither a pure market nor a pure hierarchy and this seemed a better way to understand the vegetable sector and its relationships to its supply chain and markets. In addition to the ideas from industrial marketing I also found that Wroe Alderson's ideas, which I explored in more depth after the empirical research

had been carried out, were particularly helpful because they enabled me to adopt a systems approach to understanding vegetable supply.

A radical critique of markets challenges the validity of the global trade model; it is noticeable that some analysts are now looking towards emancipatory agro-ecological models as a route to the transformation of society based on a more synergistic relationship between production and consumption, for example see the recent reports from the International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems (IPES, 2015, IPES-Food, 2016). The work of (Kneafsey et al., 2008) was inspirational to me in opening up a vision of a different sort of society. It served as an ideal of an alternative society. But I also felt that it presented something that was unattainable in Britain at the beginning of the twenty first century. That is not necessarily a reason to discard its ideas but whilst a retreat to a simpler way of life might suit some, it was unlikely to gain widespread support in policy circles. An industrial marketing MAN approach opened up incremental steps that might work broadly within a global trade framework not by transforming society but by reframing how we see the interactions within it. That is not to say that a global trade model is the ideal but if it is the model that has widespread support (and maybe that is dwindling) it may be useful to consider ways that it could be made to function better. Linking it to orthodox ideas of relationship marketing provides a bridge from existing UK Food Policy to more effective solutions for the vegetable sector. Realism and critical pluralism helped me become more aware of the way I used orthodox marketing ideas to frame the problems in the vegetable sector and to consciously explore how different conceptualisations might develop a more nuanced understanding of the real world.

As far as data collection was concerned, there were also a number of challenges. The interviews took place over a two year period from August 2012 to September 2014 and both my skills as an interviewer and my theoretical insights developed over this period. The initial design of the fieldwork and the choice of interview topics were predominantly informed by orthodox marketing ideas, for example models of market orientation, and relationship marketing concepts. I began an analysis of the key informant data using a framework for market failure derived from the fair trade movement (Nicholls and Opal, 2005), and informed by guidance on well-functioning markets from competition authorities in Britain and the EU (High Level Forum for a Better Functioning Supply Chain B2B Platform, 2011). I think this analysis provided insights into the problems that English growers encountered but I also realised that the framework for a well-functioning market inadequately captured the issues that confronted growers. For example, I anticipated that the lack of clear written contracts might be an issue but growers themselves were wary of contracts. The problem, as they saw it, was not the

absence of written contracts, but that growers were reluctant to enforce contracts because by doing so they might jeopardise future interactions. Thus embedded interactions, rather than simply transactions needed to be understood in UK Food Policy. Understanding the problems as either structure or agency was too simplistic and this was where heterodox marketing, which is interested in the interplay of structure and agency, provided useful insights.

With respect to the interview procedure adopted, all key informants were contacted by email and given the option of a face-to-face interview. Participants were sent consent forms and an interview schedule prior to the interview. Six of the interviews were conducted by telephone although I tried to obtain face-to-face interviews where possible. One respondent unexpectedly contacted me after various email exchanges to explain that since it was raining that day he had time to conduct the interview. As he was located some distance away the interview was conducted by telephone but since the grower had chosen to speak to me at that particular time he was forthcoming in his comments and the interview went well. But usually the quality of information from the face to face interviews was richer than the telephone interviews and it was easier to develop a rapport face to face. Unexpectedly, two organisations wanted two representatives present at the interview and this might possibly have encouraged respondents to provide more guarded comments, or avoid comments that might have been critical of their organisation, however once a rapport was established, rich conversations ensued. One interview was conducted via Bluetooth from a car phone. I had arranged a time slot for the telephone but the respondent had a more pressing issue to deal with so the interview had to be conducted en-route to her next meeting. The quality of the recording was poor but transcription immediately after the interview meant that most of the interview was recoverable.

Interviews conducted on farms were affected by background noise that made small sections of the conversation unintelligible but the farm visits were extremely useful, particularly at the beginning. I managed to visit both organic and conventional farms. At first I did not fully grasp the necessity of transcribing soon after the interviews. Later interviews were transcribed almost immediately after the interview. This helped with a speedier transcription of audio material that was sometimes of variable quality but also helped in terms of a clearer understanding of the meaning the interviewee was attempting to convey. Farm visits were particularly illuminating in terms of developing my understanding of farm production processes.

It was challenging to obtain interviewees. Growers are busy people with unpredictable schedules and there may have been concerns about sharing commercial information. One respondent, for example,

had had an unpleasant experience of being misreported by a journalist and was unsurprisingly cautious throughout the interview. This problem was resolved by giving him control of the recording device which was switched off whenever he wanted to make an off the record comment. Some policy experts were in senior roles with many demands on their time so unfortunately I was unable to obtain an interview with a relevant Member of Parliament despite getting close to an agreement with two interviewees. Detailed records were kept of contacts and emails using an excel spreadsheet to ensure a balanced representation from the various constituencies across the vegetable sector. Having obtained several participants from the pioneer network as a result of a single West Country farmers' market website, I explored more options to find conventional sector experts and in this way the search for key informants was partly shaped by the previous interviews.

The Centre for Food Policy was extremely helpful in securing access to several key informants. The growers themselves put me in touch with others who might be able to share their insights and one grower was able to put me in contact with a member of the Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food, a very important interviewee who could offer insights from his experience as a policy expert, grower and as a grower representative. Various trade organisations were helpful and their representatives were able to provide excellent cross-sector insights. They also recommended specific farmers who could be approached. As mentioned above websites such as farmers' market websites were useful to obtain contact information. Serendipity played a part too: one important grower and grower representative was identified by a friend and contacted via LinkedIn.

Initially I took a long time to transcribe the interviews but speedier transcriptions were possible as it dawned on me that I was more interested in their substantive accounts rather than the precise way they expressed themselves. There is a balance to be reached in producing a faithful transcription and the time taken to complete the transcription. One of the earlier interviewees displayed some verbal ticks that, looking back, I did not need to record but it was only with experience that I understood the level of detail that was required for this particular piece of fieldwork. The former interview took nearly two weeks to transcribe, later ones were closer to two days. The fieldwork took place over a two year period, partly because the fieldwork had to fit in with my work obligations but also because securing access to key informants, conducting the interviews and then transcribing them was a lengthy process. Even so, gathering data over such a long period of time during which specific events such as weather problems or sudden commodity price rises or falls, affect the tone of the conversations and the salience of some issues in the minds of the key informants. Nvivo was very useful in generating reports

from the coded data. These reports were retained so that multiple analyses of the transcriptions could be created as I encountered a wider range of policy and marketing theoretical frameworks.

The documentary analysis focused on major food and farming policy documents. The Curry Report was an appropriate starting point for the analysis because the Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food was a significant review of food and farming and The Curry Report was important because it was the first time that food and farming policy had seriously engaged with sustainability. My tutors were helpful in pointing me to the appropriate documents. The aim was to explore how the policy discourse was reflected in the documents in terms of its scope, the policy mechanisms used and the distributional outcomes. It was also illuminating to see how different issues rose up (and down) the policy agenda and how one issue was framed and re-framed over time.

Defining the scope any study of a network is challenging because in a sense everything is networked so deciding what is included in a network and what is not contains an arbitrary component. Given that most vegetables consumed in England are domestically produced whereas most fruit is not, the vegetable sector was chosen because it was more relevant in policy terms. The pioneer network was distinctive and perhaps should have been excluded but I think the alternative perspective these key informants provided on the impact of policy added important insights that may not have been captured had I confined the study to the conventional network. Nevertheless, given the vegetable sector's potential to achieve multiple sustainability goals across economics, health and the environment - often incompatible in other contexts - I think there is a need for more research focused on policy to support the conventional vegetable supply base in order to increase production and consumption of vegetables.

Future research

The previous paragraph suggests that conventional vegetable production should be the focus of further research. This study has stimulated my interest in the MAN approach to understanding industrial marketing. More empirical work on how networks work in practice using heterodox industrial marketing ideas may lead to a more nuanced understanding of the policy mechanisms that can align economic, environmental and health concerns and support an efficient, innovative and sustainable food marketing system. But much may be gained by linking orthodox and heterodox traditions, particularly by exploring the common ground between RM and MAN.

Marketing is more readily associated with activities involved in stimulating production and consumption so does not always seem compatible with sustainable development; for some sectors of the economy being more environmentally friendly involves constraining rather than increasing production and consumption. The vegetable sector is potentially one sector where it may be possible to align economic, social/health and environmental concerns. For this reason it is necessary to continue to explore the marketing systems of vegetable production and consumption, to explore how the marketing systems can be made to work better, and to consider what role policy should take in ensuring optimal outcomes. RM and MAN theoretical frameworks represent interesting and fertile terrain on which to explore ways forward for policy with regard to vegetable production, and to continue the search for a better dynamic equilibrium based on innovation to create value today without jeopardising the long run habitability of the environment.

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Appendix 2 Key Information Interview Question/Topic Guides

Indicative questions for grower organisations

Market orientation questions – related to customer/collaborator partner(s) information acquisition, dissemination and responsiveness.

Does your producer organisation make good use of information on customers and collaborative partners (e.g. from trade publications, informal sources)? Is the information timely?

How is the information disseminated across the organisation? (Discussions on customer trends and collaborative opportunities, look for evidence of formal and informal activity, look for specific examples)

What approach to planning for future opportunities is adopted? (Look for evidence of impact of new information on formation of plans)

What happens when customers and collaborators experience problems with the quality of your produce (look for evidence of responsiveness)

Relationship marketing orientation questions – evidence of bonding, communication, shared values, empathy, reciprocity and trust between grower and other members of the supply chain
Considering the main business relationships with major customers (e.g. buying groups, retailers):

Describe the nature of the cooperation and contact. How important is it for your business to establish long term relationships?

How would you describe the communication process between your organisation and its major customers (frequent, honest, able to show discontent)

Would you say that you share the same worldview as your major customers in terms of opinions, feelings and values? If not how are they different? Do you think there is empathy, reciprocity and trust between you and your major customers? Can you provide some examples to demonstrate this? Or examples that show a lack of these qualities?

Marketing strategies employed (linked to policy mechanisms)– evidence of strategies based on added value, reduced costs, diversification and business performance (in broad terms: worse than, better than other competitors in main market): sales growth, customer retention, return on investment, and market share:

Over the last decade describe the business strategies your organisation has engaged in – e.g. adding value, cost reduction, diversification into up- or down-stream activities, diversification outside of the F&V supply chain (e.g. tourism, biofuels). Were these strategies successful? How did government initiatives help you engage in any of these strategies?

Environmental concern (in terms of priority/not a priority for this organisation) - reducing GHG emissions; reducing fertilizer and pesticide usage, increasing diversity, enhancement of landscape:

- Would you say that environmental concerns are important for your organisation? What kinds of strategies are employed to address environmental concerns? What reasons underpin your organisation's attitudes to environmental issues?

Governance of supply chain issues – access to information on prices, market requirements, access to financial markets and credit, attitude to risk, ability to diversify, existence and nature of contracts and written agreements.

What kinds of problems does your organisation experience in its dealings with supply chain customers? (Allow unprompted issues to be exhausted before prompting on the above supply chain issues).

Indicative questions for policy experts

Food policy priorities for the F&V sector

The fruit and vegetable action plan was published in October 2010.

- What progress is being made towards the goals of the plan i.e. in terms of a) a competitive supply base; b) an effective supply chain c) increased consumption and d) environmentally benign production of fruit and vegetables?
- To what extent do the goals remain relevant – or has the agenda changed?

Impact of a decade of policy

There have been a number of initiatives that have affected the fruit and vegetable sector since the publication of the Curry report.

- What was the impact of the various initiatives? (Allow unprompted responses first before mentioning specific initiatives, look for evidence of policy continuation and policy shift across the sustainability debate (economic, health, environment))

Focus on key policies

FVPOs are now the main vehicle for delivering public support to the sector but many growers remain outside of the scheme.

- What do you think are the issues to be overcome in supporting English F&V producers? (prompt for evidence of shifts in the policy community, changes in agenda, and impact of events once initial response given, probe on tension between competitive producers, and buyer dominated global supply chains).
- What improvements can be made in the process of implementing support for the F&V sector?

Future developments – general themes

How do you see the role of government (national and regional) in shaping the future development of fruit and vegetables production in England? (probe for evidence of policy continuation and policy shift in terms of reconnection (with market, supply chain and the environment), and shifts in the policy development process – e.g. which actors are shaping the development of the debate; does market reconnection remain a theme for food policy?)



School of Health Sciences Research Ethics Committee

RESEARCH REGISTRATION FORM (*Replaces form EC3 for SHS approvals*)

This form must be completed for all research projects regardless of whether the proposal is going to an NHS, School or other approved research ethics committee. All sections must be completed as indicated; failure to do so will lead to the form being returned to you, and the project remaining unregistered.

Please complete this form and **email** it to Alison Welton (██████████).

PhD, Master's and other students must ensure that the form is emailed by their supervisor at City University, and contains the following statement **"I have read & approved Jan Moorhouse's submission: Reconnection as a theme in food policy and its impact on the production of fruit and vegetables"**.

Application date:

2	0	/	0	6	/	2	0	1	2
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Short project title:

(80 characters)

Reconnection as a theme in food policy and its impact on the production of fruit and vegetables

Name of Principal Investigator(s)³: **Dr David Barling**

Investigator(s)³:

Professor Tim Lang

Jan Moorhouse

Department or Unit:

Centre for Food Policy, School of Health Sciences

Name of Student:

Jan Moorhouse

³ Should be a member of academic staff at City University London

(if applicable)

Name of Supervisor: Dr David Barling

(For Students Only) Professor Tim Lang

Course: PhD Food Policy

(For Students Only)

Student number: 060052612

(For Students Only)

External organisation(s) involved: (if any)

Funding bodies: (if any)

Planned completion date:

3	1	/	1	0	/	2	0	1	3
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A Research Proposal

Full title of research proposal:

Reconnection as a theme in food policy and its impact on domestic production of fruit and vegetables in England

Please provide a **brief structured lay summary** of your proposed research, including: aims, rationale, methodology, and any ethical issues. (<500 words)

[PLEASE DO NOT ATTACH YOUR FULL PROJECT PROPOSAL.]

Lay description of research:

Reconnection has become a key theme in food policy since the publication of the Curry Report in 2002. It represented a turn to the market in which farmers were urged to reconnect to their markets, supply chains and environment. What impact did this policy shift have on the domestic production of fruit and vegetables?

This is an interdisciplinary project in which marketing concepts in the context of food policy are examined. Reconnection is conceptualised as market orientation (MO), the ability to gather, disseminate and respond to signals from the external environment. Reconnection also mirrors relationship marketing ideas of collaboration based on trust, commitment, shared values and reciprocity. Reconnection also brought to the fore the idea of reconnections with the natural environment.

Have domestic growers of fruit and vegetables become more reconnected? In other words **what evidence is there that growers have become market oriented, collaborative, and more environmentally responsible?**

Has reconnection worked? In other words **have policy interventions helped growers to become more competitive and more environmentally responsible?**

Policy developments since Curry have accepted its conceptualisation of reconnection as the solution to problems related to food policy. The development of buyer-dominated global supply chains has had an impact on domestic production of fruit and vegetables. So a further question is: was reconnection really the problem? **What evidence is there that there were problems related to market failure in globalised food supply?**

Desk research is undertaken which involves an analysis of domestic production of fruit and vegetables using the publically available including the Farm Business Survey data builder. This enables a tailored and focused analysis of domestic fruit and vegetable production.

Qualitative data are gathered using non-standardised expert/key informant interviews to explore the underlying reasons behind policy shifts and to provide detail on the context and processes of policy change. Key informants from specific backgrounds are required:

- Policy insiders
- Growers
- Industry representatives

B Research Ethics Approval

After you have received confirmation of initial registration, you will need to prepare a full application and submit it to **one** approved research ethics committee.

In general, projects involving the participation of patients recruited through the NHS or NHS staff will need to go through the **NRES** (<http://www.nres.npsa.nhs.uk/>), as will projects involving non-anonymised patient records and patient tissues. The applications can be made through the IRAS portal (<https://www.myresearchproject.org.uk/>). You will also need to register such projects with NHS Trust R&D offices and obtain an honorary NHS contract or research passport.

However, some NHS research ethics committees do not require approval for health services research. If you can submit an email or letter from the appropriate R&D office(s) or NRES committee confirming that NRES approval is not required, you may **instead** submit your proposal to a SHS Ethics Committee or Senate Research Ethics Committee.

Please indicate to which one of the following committees you intend to submit a **full research ethics application** (Please *check as appropriate*)

1. NRES (NHS research ethics committee)

YES NO

2. Senate Research Ethics Committee⁴

YES NO

3. SHS Research Ethics Committee⁵

YES NO

4. Another research ethics committee (*please give details below*)

YES NO

⁴ A full application on form EC1 will have to be made to Senate REC for research ethical approval

⁵ A full application on form EC1 (SHS version) will have to be made to SHS REC for research ethical approval

5. This project does not require ethical approval (*please give details below*)

i) It is a service evaluation or audit

ii) It does not involve human subjects or participants

(Please check as appropriate)

C Research involving staff or Students at City University London

Projects which involve the recruitment of School staff or students require approval by the appropriate associate dean for research, undergraduate or postgraduate students. This ensures that the same group of staff/students are not repeatedly contacted to become involved in research projects. Principal investigators should not contact students or staff directly.

If you wish to recruit staff or students into a research project please contact the administrator to the SHS REC Alison Welton (XXXXXXXXXX) in the first instance to discuss obtaining approval.

Does this project involve the recruitment of staff or students at City University:

1) This project will recruit staff YES
NO

2) This project will recruit postgraduate students YES
NO

3) This project will recruit undergraduate students YES
NO

(Please check as appropriate)

Statement from Supervisor:

I have read & approved Jan Moorhouse's submission: "Reconnection as a theme in food policy and its impact on the production of fruit and vegetables in England".

Dr David Barling



Senate Research Ethics Committee

Application for Approval of Research Involving Human Participants

Please tick the box for which Committee you are submitting your application to

<input type="checkbox"/>	Senate Research Ethics Committee
<input type="checkbox"/>	School of Arts & School of Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	School of Community and Health Sciences Research Ethics Committee
<input type="checkbox"/>	Learning Development Centre
<input type="checkbox"/>	Optometry Research Committee

For **Senate** applications: return one original and 17 additional copies of the completed form and any accompanying documents to Anna Ramberg, Secretary to Senate Research Ethics Committee, City Research Development and International Relations Office, Northampton Square, London, EC1V 0HB.

For **School of Arts & School of Social Sciences** Research Ethics Committee submit a single copy of the application form and all supporting documentation to [redacted] (Social Sciences) and [redacted] (Arts) by email..

For **School of Community and Health Sciences** applications: submit all forms (including the Research Registration form) electronically (in Word format in a single document) to [redacted], followed up by a single hard copy with signatures.

For **Optometry** applications: submit A SINGLE COPY OF THE APPLICATION FORM AND ALL SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION to [redacted] by email.

Refer to the separate [guidelines](#) (for students) [guidelines](#) (for staff) while completing this form.

PLEASE NOTE

- Please determine whether an application is required by going through the [checklist](#) (for students) [checklist](#) (for staff) before filling out this form.
- Ethical approval **MUST** be obtained before any research involving human participants is undertaken. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary procedures being instigated, and you will not be covered by the University's indemnity if you do not have approval in place.

- You should have completed every section of the form
- The Signature Sections must be completed by the Principal Investigator (the supervisor and the student if it is a student project)

Project Title:
Reconnection as a theme in food policy and its impact on the domestic production of fruit and vegetables in England.
Short Project Title (no more than 80 characters):
Reconnection as a theme in food policy and its impact on the production of fruit and vegetables.
Name of Principal Investigator(s) (all students are require to apply jointly with their supervisor and all correspondence will be with the supervisor):
Dr. David Barling (Supervisor) Professor Tim Lang (Supervisor) Jan Moorhouse (Student Researcher)
Post Held (including staff/student number):
Dr David Barling – Reader in Food Policy – 80008109 Professor Tim Lang – Professor of Food Policy - Jan Moorhouse – PhD Research Student – Centre for Food Policy – 060052612
Department(s)/School(s) involved at City University London:
Centre for Food Policy, School of Health Sciences
If this is part of a degree please specify type of degree and year
PhD part time 2008
Date of Submission of Application:
June 2012

1. Information for Non-Experts

Lay Title (no more than 80 characters)

Reconnection as a theme in food policy and its impact on the production of fruit and vegetables

Lay Summary / Plain Language Statement (no more than 400 words)

Reconnection has become a key theme in food policy since the publication of the Curry Report in 2002. It represented a turn to the market in which farmers were urged to reconnect to their markets, supply chains and environment. What impact did this policy shift have on the domestic production of fruit and vegetables?

This is an interdisciplinary project in which marketing concepts in the context of food policy are examined. Reconnection is conceptualised as market orientation, that is, the ability to gather, disseminate and respond to signals from the external environment. Reconnection also mirrors relationship marketing ideas of collaboration based on trust, commitment, shared values and reciprocity. In addition, reconnection brought to the fore the idea of reconnections with the natural environment.

Have domestic growers of fruit and vegetables become more reconnected? In other words **what evidence is there that growers have become market oriented, collaborative, and environmentally responsible?**

Has reconnection worked? In other words **have policy interventions helped growers to become more competitive and more environmentally responsible?**

Policy developments since Curry have accepted its conceptualisation of reconnection as the solution to problems related to food policy. The development of buyer-dominated global supply chains has had an impact on domestic production of fruit and vegetables. So a further question is: was reconnection really the problem? **What evidence is there that there were problems related to market failure in globalised food supply?**

2. Applicant Details

This project involves: (tick as many as apply)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Staff Research	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Doctoral Student
<input type="checkbox"/>	Undergraduate	<input type="checkbox"/>	M-level Project
<input type="checkbox"/>	Externally funded	<input type="checkbox"/>	External investigators

<input type="checkbox"/>	Collaboration	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other
Provide details of collaboration and/or other			

Address for correspondence (including email address and telephone number)

<p>Dr David Barling (Principal Investigator)</p> <p>██████████</p> <p>████████████████████</p> <p>██████████</p> <p>██████████</p> <p>██████████</p> <p>tel: +██████████</p> <p>██████████</p>
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Other staff members involved

<i>Title, Name & Staff Number</i>	<i>Post</i>	<i>Dept & School</i>	<i>Phone</i>	<i>Email</i>
Prof. Tim Lang	Professor of Food Policy	Centre for Food Policy, School of Health Sciences	+██████████ ██████	██████████

All students involved in carrying out the investigation

<i>Name & Student Number</i>	<i>Course / Year</i>	<i>Dept & School</i>	<i>Email</i>
Jan Moorhouse ██████████	PhD Food Policy, 2008-13	Centre for Food Policy, School of Health Sciences	████████████████████

External co-investigators

<i>Title & Name</i>	<i>Post</i>	<i>Institution</i>	<i>Phone</i>	<i>Email</i>

Please describe the role(s) of all the investigators including all student(s)/external co-investigator(s) in the project, especially with regards to interaction with study participants.

Jan Moorhouse will review relevant literature and data and will manage and undertake all interactions (including interviews) with the study participants. She will also be responsible for data handling/storage and for protecting the data for period following the research project.

If external investigators are involved, please provide details of their indemnity cover.

N/A

Application Details

2.1 Is this application being submitted to another ethics committee, or has it been previously submitted to an ethics committee? *This includes an NHS local Research Ethics Committee or a City University London School Research Ethics Committee or any other institutional committee or collaborating partners or research site. (See the guidelines for more information on research involving NHS staff/patients/ premises.)*

YES NO

If yes, please provide details for the Secretary for the relevant authority/committee, as well as copies of any correspondence setting out conditions of approval.

N/A

2.2 If any part of the investigation will be carried out under the auspices of an outside organisation, e.g. a teaching hospital, please give details and address of organisation.

N/A

2.3 Other approvals required – has permission to conduct research in, at or through another institution or organisation been obtained?

YES NO

If yes, please provide details and include correspondence

N/A

2.4 Is any part of this research project being considered by another research ethics committee?

YES NO

If yes, please give details and justification for going to separate committees, and attach correspondence and outcome

N/A

2.5 Duration of Project

Start date: October 2008 Estimated end date: October 2013

Funding Details

2.6 Please provide details of the source of financial support (if any) for the proposed investigation.

This is a PhD research project, partial funding is provided by the employer, University of Hertfordshire.

2.6a Total amount of funding being sought:

N/A

2.6b Has funding been approved?

YES NO

If no, please provide details of when the outcome can be expected

N/A

2.6c Does the funding body have any requirements regarding retention, access and storage of the data?

YES NO

If yes, please provide details

N/A

3. Project Details

3.1 Provide the background, aim and justification for the proposed research.

This research is a requirement for the PhD in Food Policy. The research builds on prior work undertaken by the applicants, investigating the turn to the market in UK food policy, and in particular the market orientation and collaboration advocated and supported through various policies such as the formation of FVPOs (fruit and vegetable producer organisations), the school fruit schemes, farmers' markets etc. At this stage, relevant literature has been reviewed, and the methodology has been outlined.

The aim of the research is to understand:

Have domestic growers of fruit and vegetables become more reconnected? In other words **what evidence is there that growers have become market oriented, collaborative, and more environmentally responsible?**

Has a policy based on reconnection worked? In other words **have policy interventions helped growers to become more competitive and more environmentally responsible?**

Policy developments since Curry have accepted its conceptualisation of reconnection as the solution to problems related to food policy. The development of buyer-dominated global supply chains has had an impact on domestic production of fruit and vegetables. So a further question is: was reconnection really the problem? **What evidence is there that there were problems for domestic producers of fruit and vegetables related to market failure in globalised food supply?**

This research explores reconnection as a theme in food policy discourse. Since the Curry Report in 2002 reconnection has been a key theme in the food policy discourse. Reconnection was conceptualised as market orientation, as collaboration, and as environmental stewardship. Policies have been implemented to encourage domestic farmers, growers and producers to be more market oriented, to collaborate with other producers and downstream actors, and to take on environmental stewardship roles.

Since this research adopts a pragmatic and critical realist ontology it not only explores the impact of the policy using empirical research but asks questions about necessary and contingent causality. It explores how problems were conceptualised, how reconnection was defined, how this led to particular context-specific outcomes, and explores whether there are alternative ways of defining and addressing problems in domestic supply chains for fruit and vegetables.

3.2 Provide a summary and brief justification of the design, methodology and plan for analysis that you propose to use.

The aim of this study is to explore the impact on domestic production of fruit and vegetables of a decade of food policy based on reconnection, a turn to the market for solutions to domestic food policy problems.

The study will involve: a literature review (already done); a review of the policy context, to determine relevant drivers (already done); a review of published data on domestic fruit and vegetable production; and an investigation of key actors' perceptions of the policy making process and its impact on domestic grower commercial and environmental practices.

The research will focus on the domestic production of fruit and vegetables in England.

Methods will include desk research and key informant interviews. Publically available documents from state, non-state and academic sources will be studied to map the terrain of food policy in the decade since the publication of the Curry report. Purposive, key informant interviews will probe actors' interpretations, expectations, perceptions, interactions and reflections on policy development, and on commercial practices and attitudes towards environmental issues amongst domestic fruit and vegetable growers. Documentary, qualitative data will be collated and analysed.

Interviews will be conducted with actors involved in the development of food policy since 2002, and with those affected by the introduction of policy instruments designed to encourage in the fruit and vegetable sector the development of a market orientation, collaboration and environmental concern: growers, farmers, and their industry representatives (e.g. Fruit Produce Consortium, Horticulture Development Company).

Interviews will be digitally recorded and transcribed. They will last no longer than one hour. Confidentiality will be assured. All protocols relating to research ethics (covering informed consent, confidentiality, data handling, data storage and health and safety) will be observed, as described below.

The sample/selection frame and design will be controlled by Jan Moorhouse, and she will be responsible for appropriate data storage and protection. It is expected that a maximum of 25 interviews will be used. It is expected that face to face interviews will be carried out but where this is not possible telephone interviews will be used.

The PhD thesis will include a thematic analysis of documentary and interview data to shed light on the research questions and set these within the context of theoretical debate. The data will primarily be used for the PhD study, but may also inform journal articles or presentations.

3.3 Please explain your plans for dissemination, including whether participants will be provided with any information on the findings or outcomes of the project.

The main output of this research will be the student researcher's PhD thesis. In addition, material may be disseminated in academic journals, conference presentations and lectures.

Interviewees will be asked whether they wish to receive feedback on the outputs of the research. Provision will be made for them to receive a short report based on the analysis of the research, which will be an abridged version of the analysis presented in the PhD thesis. This will be supplied electronically.

3.4 What do you consider are the ethical issues associated with conducting this research and how do you propose to address them?

Participants in this study will not experience risks greater than those they encounter in their daily lives. Interviewees will be policy insiders, domestic farmers/growers of fruit and vegetables, farmer/grower industry representatives. They will be interviewed and surveyed on issues relating to their professional, not their personal, lives.

Because interviewees are likely to include senior members of organisations which may take oppositional positions in the policy development process, or which may be commercial competitors, anonymity and confidentiality of data are likely to be the most important ethical issues in this research.

Interviews and the completion of questionnaires will commence after informed consent is gained from the participants. Informed consent involves providing participants with relevant information regarding the aims and scope of the project. Contributions made by participants will remain confidential, and data will be made anonymous and will be stored securely.

Another concern relates to health and safety issues during the interviews. For face-to-face interviews, the researcher will ensure that the interview location, arrival and departure plans are known to a family member or colleague. This will ensure the safe travel and return of the researcher.

3.5 How is the research intended to benefit the participants, third parties and/or local community?

The research is intended to benefit policy makers, those involved in the domestic fruit and vegetable production and the wider research community by adding to knowledge of the complex issues involved in developing, implementing and evaluating food policy.

3.6a Will invasive procedures (for example medical or surgical) be used?

YES NO

3.6b If yes, what precautions will you take to minimise any potential harm?

N/A

3.7a Will intrusive procedures (for example psychological or social) be used?

YES NO

3.7b If yes, what precautions will you take to minimise any potential harm?

N/A

3.8a In the course of the investigation might pain, discomfort (including psychological discomfort), inconvenience or danger be caused?

YES NO

3.8b If yes, what precautions will you take to minimise any potential harm?

N/A

3.9 Please describe the nature, duration and frequency of the procedures?

N/A

4. Information on participants

4.1a How many participants will be involved?

The final sample size for the interviews will not exceed 30 interviews. If saturation is reached, the number may be smaller.

4.1b What is the age group and gender of the participants?

The participants will all be adults (18+) and will be both female and male.

4.1c Explain how you will determine your sample size and the selection criteria you will be using. Specify inclusion and exclusion criteria. If exclusion of participants is made on the basis of age, gender, ethnicity, race, disability, sexuality, religion or any other factor, please explain and justify why.

In deciding how many interviews are necessary there are a number of factors to be considered. Whilst a larger selection of informants would generally be considered better than a smaller selection, other factors are relevant in determining the choices involved in the selection of respondents for a piece of qualitative research. These factors include:

The context of the study – in policy analysis there is an awareness that different actors and communities have different priorities and perspectives. The sample of respondents needs to be sufficiently large to ensure that different voices are heard across the policy terrain. The selection of respondents is purposeful to ensure that the views of different groups are explored fully. In this case, the selection of respondents is divided into three key groups: policy insiders; growers; and grower representatives. Then there needs to be enough respondents within the three subgroups to reflect the range of views within each group.

Other considerations include the following:

There is a trade-off between fewer, longer interviews and more interviews of a shorter duration. Gaining access to respondents may be difficult since many of those involved are likely to have busy working lives. Overlong interviews may adversely affect the response rates amongst some groups and potentially introduce a source of bias into the interview selection process. On the other hand interviews need to be long enough to capture the complexity of the issues under scrutiny.

A desire for parsimony – all other things being equal a researcher should only gather the data required to address the research questions. Gathering data that is not required is wasteful of the researcher's time, and potentially unethical since it involves the time of the respondents too.

Qualitative research requires extensive data processing and analysis. Smith cites one of Yardley's principles for quality qualitative research as 'commitment, rigour, transparency and coherence' ((Smith, 2003) page 233). Qualitative research should only gather data that can properly be examined and explored within the duration of the project. Saunders et al (2009) suggest ten hours are required to transcribe, process and analyse each hour of recorded interview.

In view of the above constraints, it is expected that a maximum number of respondents for the study will be thirty, drawn from the three sub-groups mentioned above. It is likely that, given the heterogeneous nature of the fruit and vegetable sector in England, a larger number of respondents will be drawn from growers, and fewer from the grower representatives and policy insiders since the latter group populations are likely to be smaller and more homogeneous.

- Policy insiders (5-10)
- Growers (10-20)
- Grower representatives (5-10)

Maximum number of total respondents: 30, if saturation is reached fewer may be used.

There is no exclusion or discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, race, disability, sexuality, religion or age, with the exception of those under the age of 18 who will not be eligible to be interviewed.

4.2 How are the participants to be identified, approached and recruited, and by whom?

For the interviews the names of potential interviewees will emerge from desk research and networking. To avoid pre-definition, a snowball technique will allow the researcher to approach interviewees who may not initially have been identified, but whose names emerge as the research progresses.

Recruitment of policy advisors: purposeful selection of respondents via networking using contacts from the Centre for Food Policy at City University. Defra is to be the main focus for policy advisor respondents, although policy advisors from other organisations (e.g. agricultural colleges) may also be accessed. Care is to be taken to ensure that respondents are not over exploited for research purposes (so, for example, respondents who have not participated in research at the Centre for Food Policy in the last 12 months would be preferred).

Recruitment of grower representatives: At least one representative from the main domestic grower industry bodies (e.g. Fresh Produce Consortium, FPC, Institute of Horticulture) plus a purposeful selection of grower representatives from the individual produce organisations. A list of fruit and vegetable associations and industry bodies is available from the Horticulture Development Company website: <http://www.hdc.org.uk/>. A purposeful selection of grower organisations is gathered to reflect the scope of domestic fruit and vegetable production: prospering and declining sectors, open and protected crops, fruit and vegetables etc.

Recruitment of growers: A purposeful selection of respondents is generated using contacts from the Centre for Food Policy at City University and contacts developed using a snowballing technique from the interviews with policy advisors and grower representatives. The FPC's list of growers, published annually in the *re;fresh directory* will provide a framework to ensure that the selection of growers reflects the range of organisations involved in the production of fruit and vegetables (FVPOs and non-FVPOs; fruit and vegetable growers; field and protected produce; small, medium and large farms, location etc).

Interviewees will be contacted in the first instance by email, followed up by phone; or directly by phone where this is the only means of contact available; contact will be made by the researcher (Jan Moorhouse).

4.3 Describe the procedure that will be used when seeking and obtaining consent, including when consent will be obtained. Include details of who will obtain the consent, how are you intending to arrange for a copy of the signed consent form for the participants, when will they receive it and how long the participants have between receiving information about the study and giving consent.

The initial email contact will include a summary of the nature and purpose of the research, as well as a description of how the interview will be conducted and how the data will be used and stored. If the initial contact is by phone, arrangements will be made for this material to be supplied by email or post.

For the key informant interviews: once candidates have agreed to be interviewed, the researcher will arrange the interview, at a time and place to suit the interviewee. It is anticipated that a few days may intervene between the arrangement and the interview. The participants will be given a copy of the consent form and will read through it with the researcher. An opportunity for questions and refusal will be given. The participant will sign two copies of the consent form: one to be retained by the participant, one for the researcher. The researcher will keep all consent forms in a locked file separate from the data.

4.4 How will the participant's physical and mental suitability for participation be assessed?

N/A

4.5 Are there any special pressures that might make it difficult to refuse to take part in the study? Are any of the potential participants in a dependent relationship with any of the investigators (for instance student, colleague or employee) particularly those involved in recruiting for or conducting the project?

No

4.6 Are there any issues related to the ability of participants to give informed consent themselves or are you relying on gatekeepers on their behalf?

No. All participants will be able to give informed consent by themselves.

4.7 Will the participant's doctor be notified?

YES NO

(If so, provide a sample letter to the subject's GP.)

4.8 What procedures are in place for the appropriate referral of a study participant who discloses an emotional, psychological, health, education or other issue during the course of the research or is identified by the researcher to have such a need?

N/A

4.9 What steps will be taken to safeguard the participants from over-research? (i.e. to ensure that the participants are not being used in multiple research project.)

For the qualitative research: the researcher will avoid re-interviewing people who are known to have been repeatedly interviewed.

4.10 Where will the research take place?

The research will take place in the UK.

For the qualitative research: interviews will be asked to designate a convenient meeting place, which may be their place of work or a mutually agreed public space which is suitable for interviews. Participants will also be able offered the opportunity to have the interview at City University, in which case a meeting room will be reserved by the researchers.

4.11 What health and safety issues, if any, are there to consider?

The main health and safety issues are the safety of the room where interviews are taking place, the personal safety of the researcher travelling to and from interview sites and general health and safety issues such as fire safety.

4.12 How have you addressed the health and safety concerns of the participants, researchers and any other people impacted by this study? Have you conducted a risk assessment?

As interviews are to be conducted at a convenient place nominated by the interviewee, it will not be possible to risk-assess these spaces in advance. Interview locations are likely to be either the interviewee's office, a public meeting room at their workplace, a convenient public space (such as a cafe), or a room at City University or at the University of Hertfordshire. In the latter two cases, rooms comply with university-wide safety policies, and the researcher will escort interviewees from reception to the interview room, check the rooms in advance for possible hazards, and inform interviewees of emergency exit routes.

For interviews conducted away from City University and the University of Hertfordshire, the researcher will inform a family member or colleague of her travel plans and estimated interview timings.

The use of mobile phones will ensure contact can be maintained between the research student (Jan Moorhouse) and the research supervisor (David Barling).

4.13 Are you offering any incentives or rewards for participating? YES NO

If yes please give details

5. Vulnerable groups

5.1 Will persons from any of the following groups be participating in the study? (if not go to section 6) NO

Adults without capacity to consent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Children under the age of 18	<input type="checkbox"/>
Those with learning disabilities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prisoners	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vulnerable adults	<input type="checkbox"/>
Young offenders (16-21 years)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Those who would be considered to have a particular dependent relationship with the investigator (e.g. those in care homes, students, employees, colleagues)	<input type="checkbox"/>

5.2 Will you be recruiting or have direct contact with any children under the age of 18?

YES NO

5.2a If yes, please give details of the child protection procedures you propose to adopt should there be any evidence of or suspicion of harm (physical, emotional or sexual) to a young person. Include a referral protocol identifying what to do and who should be contacted.

N/A

5.2b Please give details of how you propose to ensure the well-being of the young person, particularly with respect to ensuring that they do not feel pressured to take part in the research and that they are free to withdraw from the study without any prejudice to themselves at anytime.

N/A

5.2c Please give details of any City staff or students who will have contact with young people (under the age of 18) and details of current (within the last 3 years) enhanced City University London CRB clearance.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Dept & School</i>	<i>Student/Staff Number</i>	<i>Date of CRB disclosure</i>	<i>Type of disclosure</i>

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5.2d Please give details of any non-City staff or students who will have contact with young people (under the age of 18) and details of current (within the last 1 year) enhanced CRB clearance.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Institution</i>	<i>Address of organisation that requested the disclosure</i>	<i>Date of CRB disclosure</i>	<i>Type of disclosure</i>

5.3 Will you be recruiting or have direct contact with vulnerable adults? YES NO

5.3a If yes, please give details of the protection procedures you propose to adopt should there be any evidence of or suspicion of harm (physical, emotional or sexual) to a vulnerable adult. Include a referral protocol identifying what to do and who should be contacted.

N/A

5.3b Please give details of how you propose to ensure the well-being of the vulnerable adult, particularly with respect to ensuring that they do not feel pressured to take part in the research and that they are free to withdraw from the study without any prejudice to themselves at anytime. You should indicate how you intend to ascertain that person's views and wishes.

N/A

5.3c Please give details of any City staff or students who will have contact with vulnerable adults and details of current (within the last 3 years) enhanced City University London CRB clearance.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Dept & School</i>	<i>Student/Staff Number</i>	<i>Date of CRB disclosure</i>	<i>Type of disclosure</i>

5.3d Please give details of any non-City staff or students who will have contact with vulnerable adults and details of current (within the last 1 year) enhanced CRB clearance.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Institution</i>	<i>Address of organisation that requested the disclosure</i>	<i>Date of CRB disclosure</i>	<i>Type of disclosure</i>

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5.4 Will you be recruiting any participants who fall under the Mental Capacity Act 2005?

YES NO

If so you **MUST** get approval from an NHS COREC approved committee (see separate guidelines for more information).

6. Data Collection

6.1a Please indicate which of the following you will be using to collect your data

Please tick all that apply

Questionnaire	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interviews	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Participant observation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Focus groups	<input type="checkbox"/>
Audio/digital-recording interviewees or events	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Video recording	<input type="checkbox"/>
Physiological measurements	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quantitative research (please provide details)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Please give details	Desk research – review of academic literature and other publically available material such as policy documents, government reports and plans.

6.1b What steps, if any, will be taken to safeguard the confidentiality of the participants (including companies)?

The researcher, Jan Moorhouse, will not disclose the identity of the interviewees or their organisations to anyone other than her supervisors.

Identifying information will not be attached to recorded interviews or transcripts. All electronic data (audio files, transcripts, emails) will be held on a password protected computer. Once uploaded to the computer, interviews will be deleted from the recording device. Hard copies of anonymised transcripts and consent forms will be held in separate locked files. Interviewees will be asked to suggest the short description by which they wish to be identified (eg 'retail buyer').

Data will be recorded on Windows Media Audio (WMA) files and will be transcribed by Jan Moorhouse.

The master record reconciling interviewees' identities, the date and place of interview, and occupation or other description, will be handwritten, and will be stored in a locked file separate from other data.

Data will be stored for seven years.

6.1c If you are using interviews or focus groups, please provide a topic guide

Preliminaries (before tape switched on):

Confirm interviewee has read background information – any questions? Read through Consent Form: opportunity to withdraw. Sign two copies, retain one. Ask interviewee to suggest short form of job description to use as identifier (e.g. 'grower', 'F&V sector representative', 'policy expert').

Switch tape on.

Indicative questions for policy experts/insiders:

Food policy priorities for the F&V sector

The fruit and vegetable action plan was published in October 2010.

- What progress is being made towards the goals of the plan i.e. in terms of a) a competitive supply base; b) an effective supply chain c) increased consumption and d) environmentally benign production of fruit and vegetables?
- To what extent do the goals remain relevant – or has the agenda changed?
-

Impact of a decade of policy

There have been a number of initiatives that have affected the fruit and vegetable sector since the publication of the Curry report.

- What was the impact of the various initiatives? (Allow unprompted responses first before mentioning specific initiatives, look for evidence of policy continuation and policy shift across the sustainability debate (economic, health, environment))

Focus on key policies

FVPOs are now the main vehicle for delivering public support to the sector but many growers remain outside of the scheme.

- What do you think are the issues to be overcome in supporting English F&V producers? (prompt for evidence of shifts in the policy community, changes in agenda, and impact of events once initial response given, probe on tension between competitive producers, and buyer dominated global supply chains).
- What improvements can be made in the process of implementing support for the F&V sector?

Future developments – general themes

- How do you see the role of government (national and regional) in shaping the future development of fruit and vegetables production in England? (probe for evidence of policy continuation and policy shift in terms of reconnection (with market, supply chain and the environment), and shifts in the policy development process – e.g. which actors are shaping the development of the debate; does reconnection remain a theme for food policy?)

Indicative questions for growers:

Market orientation questions – related to customer/collaborator partner(s) information acquisition, dissemination and responsiveness.

Does your producer organisation make good use of information on customers and collaborative partners (e.g. from trade publications, informal sources)? Is the information timely?

How is the information disseminated across the organisation? (Discussions on customer trends and collaborative opportunities, look for evidence of formal and informal activity, look for specific examples)

What approach to planning for future opportunities is adopted? (Look for evidence of impact of new information on formation of plans)

What happens when customers and collaborators experience problems with the quality of your produce (look for evidence of responsiveness)

-

Relationship marketing orientation questions – evidence of bonding, communication, shared values, empathy, reciprocity and trust between grower and other members of the supply chain

Considering the main business relationships with major customers (e.g. buying groups, retailers):

Describe the nature of the cooperation and contact. How important is it for your business to establish long term relationships?

How would you describe the communication process between your organisation and its major customers (frequent, honest, able to show discontent)

Would you say that you share the same worldview as your major customers in terms of opinions, feelings and values? If not how are they different? Do you think there is empathy, reciprocity and trust between you and your major customers? Can you provide some examples to demonstrate this? Or examples that show a lack of these qualities?

Business strategies employed – evidence of strategies based on added value, reduced costs, diversification and business performance (in broad terms: worse than, better than other competitors in main market): sales growth, customer retention, return on investment, and market share:

Over the last decade describe the business strategies your organisation has engaged in – e.g. adding value, cost reduction, diversification into up- or down-stream activities, diversification outside of the F&V supply chain (e.g. tourism, biofuels).

Were these strategies successful? How did government initiatives help you engage in any of these strategies?

-

Environmental concern (in terms of priority/not a priority for this organisation) - reducing GHG emissions; reducing fertilizer and pesticide usage, increasing diversity, enhancement of landscape:

- Would you say that environmental concerns are important for your organisation? What kinds of strategies are employed to address environmental concerns? What reasons underpin your organisation's attitudes to environmental issues?

Governance of supply chain issues – access to information on prices, market requirements, access to financial markets and credit, attitude to risk, ability to diversify, existence and nature of contracts and written agreements.

What kinds of problems does your organisation experience in its dealings with supply chain customers? (Allow unprompted issues to be exhausted before prompting on the above supply chain issues).

Indicative questions for sector representatives:

Policy impact

How has food policy over the last decade affected domestic production in the fruit and vegetables sector in England? (allow unprompted responses before suggesting specific government interventions: e.g. FCC, FVPOs, SPS, School Fruit Schemes, public procurement policies, assured provenance schemes, environmental stewardship schemes, changes in pesticide policies, support for IPM).

Industry practice:

F&V production has changed a great deal over the last decade. What are the key changes? Is the sector in better shape than it was a decade ago?

Supply chain structure and governance:

What are the paths to the marketplace for F&V growers today? What organisations are involved in the marketing processes of storage, transportation and processing of basic F&V commodities to end consumers? What problems/constraints face growers in creating and appropriating value in their supply chains?

Sector perspective

Going forward what support would the F&V sector like to see from the state and from the EU?

Thanks, switch off recorder.

7. Confidentiality and Data Handling

7.1a Will the research involve:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complete anonymity of participants (i.e. researchers will not meet, or know the identity of participants, as participants are a part of a random sample and are required to return responses with no form of personal identification)? 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • anonymised sample or data (i.e. an <i>irreversible</i> process whereby identifiers are removed from data and replaced by a code, with no record retained of how the code relates to the identifiers. It is then impossible to identify the individual to whom the sample of information relates)? 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • de-identified samples or data (i.e. a <i>reversible</i> process whereby identifiers are replaced by a code, to which the researcher retains the key, in a secure location)? 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • subjects being referred to by pseudonym in any publication arising from the research? 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • any other method of protecting the privacy of participants? (e.g. use of direct quotes with specific permission only; use of real name with specific, written permission only) 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Please give details of 'any other method of protecting the privacy of participants' is used	

7.1b Which of the following methods of assuring confidentiality of data will be implemented?

Please tick all that apply

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • data to be kept in a locked filing cabinet 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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• data and identifiers to be kept in separate, locked filing cabinets	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• access to computer files to be available by password only	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• storage at City University London	<input type="checkbox"/>
• stored at other site	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If stored at another site, please give details	University of Hertfordshire, De Havilland Campus, Hatfield, AL10 9EU

7.1c Who will have access to the data?

Access by named researcher(s) only YES NO

Access by people other than named researcher(s) YES NO

If people other than the named researcher(s), please explain by whom and for what purpose

7.2a Is the data intended for reuse or to be shared as part of longitudinal research?

YES NO

7.2b Is the data intended for reuse or to be shared as part of a different/wider research project now, or in the future?

YES NO

7.2c Does the funding body (e.g. ESRC) require that the data be stored and made available for reuse/sharing?

YES NO

7.2d If you have responded yes to any of the questions above, explain how you are intending to obtain explicit consent for the reuse and/or sharing of the data.

N/A

7.3 Retention and Destruction of Data

7.3a Does the funding body or your professional organisation/affiliation place obligations or recommendations on the retention and destruction of research data?

YES NO

If yes, what are your affiliations/funding and what are the requirements? (If no, please refer to University guidelines on retention.)

N/A

7.3b How long are you intending to keep the data?

It is intended that the data will be kept for a period of seven years.

7.3c How are you intending to destroy the data after this period?

At the end of this period, all electronic records will be deleted and hard copies shredded.

8. Curriculum Vitae

CV OF APPLICANTS (Please duplicate this page for each applicant, including external persons and students involved.)

NAME:	David Barling
CURRENT POST (from) October 2010	Reader in Food Policy
Title of Post:	
Department:	Centre for Food Policy, School of Health Sciences
Is your post funded for the duration of this proposal?	Yes
Funding source (if not City University London)	
Please give a summary of your training/experience that is relevant to this research project	
Long experience of conducting, collating and analysing elite semi-structured interviews and publishing findings – for a wide variety of public funded research projects and charitable funded consultancies. Currently PI on 3 EU 7th framework funded interdisciplinary projects	
Research outputs peer reviewed as world class and internationally significant by RAE 2008.	
Former member of SCHS research ethics committee.	

CV OF APPLICANTS (Please duplicate this page for each applicant, including external persons and students involved.)

NAME:	Jan Moorhouse
CURRENT POST (from) October 2010	Research Student (PhD)
Title of Post:	
Department:	Centre for Food Policy, School of Allied Health Sciences
Is your post funded for the duration of this proposal?	Yes
Funding source (if not City University London)	University of Hertfordshire/Self
Please give a summary of your training/experience that is relevant to this research project	
<p>I am a senior lecturer in marketing at the University of Hertfordshire and have been involved in teaching and research (commercial/professional and academic) for more than twenty years both on my own behalf and as a supervisor for others.</p> <p>I have carried out qualitative research and quantitative surveys which included identifying and approaching target interviewees; securing ethical approval for the research; planning appropriate arrangements for handling and storing data; preparing interview materials, including consent forms and interview guides; making and maintaining contact with interviewees; transcribing interviews; analysing data; and writing up reports.</p> <p>I have an MA in Marketing (University of Westminster), a Certificate in Education, and a PG Diploma in Research Methods (University of West London).</p>	

8.1 Supervisor's statement on the student's skills and ability to carry out the proposed research, as well as the merits of the research topic (up to 500 words)

This research explores an important area of food policy and supply chain governance. Concerns about the role of the fruit and vegetables sector in shaping food policy priorities on health, environmental issues, competitiveness and resilience relating to the domestic food supply chain have intensified in the last decade. A range of policy interventions at both state and regional (EU) level have emerged including producer organisations, the Fruit and Vegetable Task Force, and School Fruit Schemes.

The proposed interviews are an important step in the data collection stage of the research project. The student has worked as an academic for more than twenty years, with experience of interviewing, and of observing relevant protocols concerning consent, confidentiality and data storage and handling. She has completed a PG Diploma in research methods. The student has recently successfully presented on her work to fellow PhD students and Masters students in food policy.

Supervisor's Signature	
Print Name	Dr. David Barling

9. [Participant Information Sheet](#)



**CITY UNIVERSITY
LONDON**

Centre for Food Policy

Room C307, Northampton Square

London EC1V 0HB

Project Title:

Reconnection as a theme in food policy and its impact on domestic production of fruit and vegetables in England

Participant information sheet

I have contacted you to ask whether you would be willing to be interviewed for a study I am conducting at the Centre for Food Policy, at City University London, as part of my PhD research. This sheet provides you with more information about the project, and about what your participation would involve. If you would like more information, please contact me via the email or phone number below, or at the above address.

Principal Investigators: Jan Moorhouse, Dr David Barling

Contact details for Jan Moorhouse: [REDACTED] **Tel:** [REDACTED]

Why you are being asked for an interview:

The purpose of the research is to explore the impact on the domestic production of fruit and vegetables of a decade of food policy since the Curry Report of 2002. The Curry Report was a watershed in food policy in which growers and farmers were encouraged to reconnect with their markets, their supply chain, and the natural environment. In the decade since the Curry Report a range of policy initiatives have been proposed to help farmers collaborate, become more competitive, and more environmentally responsible. This research seeks to gather the thoughts, perspectives and reflections of i) those involved in the development of food policy, ii) growers and farmers working within the domestic fruit and vegetable sector, and iii) their representatives. Domestic fruit and vegetable producers operate as participants in a buyer-dominated global supply chain. To what extent has policy been successful in

ensuring an effective market context in which domestic growers of fruit and vegetables can prosper and thrive?

An important aspect of this research is to gather views from a range of perspectives. I do not expect you to be the repository of definitive wisdom, I am interested in your thoughts as an informed observer or participant. Nor am I seeking personal or commercially sensitive information.

Procedure

If you agree to be interviewed, please reply to this letter by contacting me by email or phone. I will then get in touch to arrange an interview, at a time and place to suit you. Interviews can be face-to-face, or by telephone. They will take no more than an hour, and will be recorded. Your participation is entirely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time should you change your mind. You will be asked to sign a consent form, agreeing to the terms of the interview, as outlined in this letter.

Potential Benefits

This will be an opportunity for you to 'think aloud' and feed into debate about an important policy area. At the end of the research, I will compile a summary of the (anonymous) findings and my analysis, which will be made available electronically to participants.

Confidentiality

Every effort will be made to ensure confidentiality. Interviewees' participation will not be made known to other interviewees. Identifying information will not be attached to interview transcripts. No information that discloses your identity or your organisation's identity will be used in any project outputs (reports, articles, presentations) and all comments made in the interview will be used anonymously. The recorded data will be stored on a password-protected computer and will be transcribed by the researcher. Transcripts and other data will be held securely. The data will be held for seven years, after which time it will be deleted / shredded.

University Complaints Procedure

If there is an aspect of the interview that concerns you, you may make a complaint. If you would like to complain about any aspect of the study, City University London has established a complaints procedure via the Secretary to Senate Research Ethics Committee. To complain about the study, you need to phone 020 7040 3040. You can then ask to speak to the Secretary to Senate Research Ethics Committee and inform them that the name of the project is: 'Social sustainability in UK food supply chains'.

You could also write to the Secretary:

Anna Ramberg

Secretary to Senate Research Ethics Committee, City University London, Northampton Square,
London, EC1V 0HB

Email: Anna.Ramberg.1@city.ac.uk

10. [Participant Consent Form](#)



**CITY UNIVERSITY
LONDON**

Centre for Food Policy

Room C307, Northampton Square

London EC1V 0HB

Participant consent form: (Name)

Project Title: Reconnection as a theme in food policy and its impact on the domestic production of fruit and vegetables

Principal Investigators: Jan Moorhouse, Dr David Barling

Contact details for Jan Moorhouse: [REDACTED] **Tel:** [REDACTED]

Principal Investigators: Jan Moorhouse, Dr David Barling

- I agree to take part in the above City University research project. I have read the Information Sheet and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.
- I understand that my participation is entirely voluntary, and that I can choose not to participate in part or all of the project and can withdraw at any stage without being penalised or disadvantaged in any way.

I understand that agreeing to take part means that I am willing to:

- Be interviewed by the researcher
- Allow the interview to be audio taped
- Allow anonymised quotations from my interview to be used in the PhD thesis and research publications - *please delete this option if you do not wish quotations to be used*

Data Protection

This information will be held and processed only for the purposes of the project. The data will be retained and stored for seven years.

I understand that any information I provide is confidential. I agree that the interview can be tape-recorded and I agree that verbatim quotations from the interview can be used

anonymously in presentations, reports and other publications, on the understanding that no information that could identify me or my organisation will be presented or published in any reports on the project, or to any other party.

I have received a copy of this consent form for my own records.

Name	Signature (unless returning by email)	Date
Interviewee: (Print name)		
Interviewer: Jan Moorhouse		

11. Additional Information

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12. Declarations by Investigator(s)

- I certify that to the best of my knowledge the information given above, together with any accompanying information, is complete and correct.
- I have read the University's guidelines on human research ethics, and accept the responsibility for the conduct of the procedures set out in the attached application.
- I have attempted to identify all risks related to the research that may arise in conducting the project.
- I understand that **no** research work involving human participants or data can commence until **full** ethical approval has been given

	Print Name	Signature
Principal Investigator(s) (student and supervisor if student project)	David Barling Jan Moorhouse	
Associate Dean for Research (or equivalent) or authorised signatory		
Date		

Researcher's checklist for compliance with the Data Protection Act, 1998

This checklist is for use alongside the *Guidance notes on Research and the Data Protection Act 1998*. Please refer to the notes for a full explanation of the requirements.

You may choose to keep this form with your research project documentation so that you can prove that you have taken into account the requirements of the Data Protection Act.

	REQUIREMENT	✓	
A	<i>Meeting the conditions for the research exemptions:</i>		
1	The information is being used <i>exclusively</i> for research purposes.	✓	Mandatory
2	You are not using the information to support measures or decisions relating to <i>any</i> identifiable living individual.	✓	Mandatory
3	You are not using the data in a way that will cause, or is likely to cause, substantial damage or substantial distress to any data subject.	✓	Mandatory
4	You will not make the result of your research, or any resulting statistics, available in a form that identifies the data subject.	✓	Mandatory
B	<i>Meeting the conditions of the First Data Protection Principle:</i>		
1	You have fulfilled one of the conditions for using personal data, e.g. you have obtained consent from the data subject. Indicate which condition you have fulfilled here: <u>All participants will sign consent forms and will have the opportunity to disassociate themselves from the research project at any time.</u>	✓	Mandatory
2	If you will be using sensitive personal data you have fulfilled one of the conditions for using sensitive personal data, e.g. you have obtained explicit consent from the data subject. Indicate which condition you have fulfilled here:	N/A	Mandatory if using sensitive data
3	You have informed data subjects of: i. What you are doing with the data; ii. Who will hold the data, usually City University London; iii. Who will have access to or receive copies of the data.	✓	Mandatory unless B4 applies

4	<p>You are excused from fulfilling B3 only if all of the following conditions apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The data has been obtained from a third party; ii. Provision of the information would involve disproportionate effort; iii. You record the reasons for believing that disproportionate effort applies, please also give brief details here: <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <p>N.B. Please see the guidelines above when assessing disproportionate effort.</p>		Required only when claiming disproportionate effort
C Meeting the conditions of the Third Data Protection Principle:			
1	You have designed the project to collect as much information as you need for your research but not more information than you need.	✓	Mandatory
D Meeting the conditions of the Fourth Data Protection Principle:			
1	You will take reasonable measures to ensure that the information you collect is accurate.	✓	Mandatory
2	Where necessary you have put processes in place to keep the information up to date.	✓	Mandatory
E Meeting the conditions of the Sixth Data Protection Principle:			
1	<p>You have made arrangements to comply with the rights of the data subject. In particular you have made arrangements to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Inform the data subject that you are going to use their personal data. ii. Stop using an individual's data if it is likely to cause unwarranted substantial damage or substantial distress to the data subject or another. iii. Ensure that no decision, which significantly affects a data subject, is based solely on the automatic processing of their data. iv. Stop, rectify, erase or destroy the personal data of an individual, if necessary. <p>Please give brief details of the measures you intend to take here:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. <u>All participants will be informed that no personal data will be included in the research and that efforts will be undertaken to protect their identities. At each phase of the research, participants will be informed of how the data is being used.</u> ii. <u>Participants may withdraw their participation from the study at any time. They will be made aware of this at the time of signing the consent form. If they choose with withdraw, none of the data collected through interviews will be used in the study.</u> 	✓	Mandatory

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