

Presentation

Here is something which makes no sense. Each year 600k tonnes of UK food industry surplus is buried in a hole in the ground, burnt or spread on crops while 2m people in the UK are malnourished. How crazy is that?

In France there's a law which forces the food industry to prioritise charity donation over other means of disposing of surplus food. But not here. So The Felix Project was set up to address the mismatch between the huge excess supply of good, quality food and the need for it by those living on the margins of our prosperous country. It's such obvious common sense. There's more than enough good food to go around. Felix's mission is to get it to the right people.

What we do at the Felix Project is so simple. We collect surplus food from 135 food retailers, wholesalers and producers, sort it in our depots and deliver it to 158 charities every week, who cook and provide food parcels for the homeless, the elderly and other marginalised groups.

Many of these frontline charities are operating close to breadline themselves. You can imagine what a difference it makes to them when their essential food costs are removed or slashed because of our free deliveries.

Our growth has been extraordinary. We started just over two years ago and last month we made 1,600 collections and deliveries each month and delivering over 2 tonnes of food a day. That's 1.5m meals p.a.

This growth has happened because Londoners have recognised the obvious good sense of what we are doing. We've been volunteer powered. They have given us their money and their time. We now have nearly 300 volunteers.

We are a community based movement. Our food is locally supplied (and sometimes even locally produced) and it is delivered to local charities and schools by local volunteers.

Unlike most food banks, which deal in longer life food, our focus is on fresh and high quality, nutritious food. Our suppliers include Fortnum & Mason; Harrods; Daylesford; Mash; Hello Fresh; Waitrose; M&S; Sainsbury's. Our emphasis is on fresh fruit, vegetables, dairy products and bakery items. 70% of the food we deliver is fresh.

We try to operate as responsibly as we can. Some of our volunteers now collect and deliver food by bicycle and by foot. Renault have agreed to provide us with 7 new electric vans.

The breadth of engagement with us by our suppliers suggests we have struck a chord and they don't like waste any more than the rest of us. (Fortnum, Hello Fresh, Sainsbury's, Daylesford, Paul and Mash as examples, who fund raise and provide volunteers etc).

You can come and see what we do at the pioneering Refettorio Felix, launched last June in collaboration with the world's top rated chef, Massimo Bottura. This is a soup kitchen with a difference. High quality surplus food is cooked by leading volunteer chefs, many with Michelin stars. Model for community kitchens elsewhere.

We are always trying to innovate. I don't think any other organisation is tackling at scale, as we do, the obscene levels of food being dumped in the streets of London each evening by the lunchtime food retailers like X. Now we are extending from charities to Primary Schools in deprived areas of London. 70k London children go to school hungry (i.e. without breakfast)

each day. Fresh and high quality. Our after school market stalls are food banks except in name, although we prefer to ask children to take food home and help save the planet! A typical take home bag might include fruit, vegetables, bread, cheese squares, a smoothie and a packet of raisins.

We need more volunteers. It always strikes me as ironic that on Sunday mornings I make deliveries to various Catholic churches in West London but none of them has ever sent us a volunteer. You have a great ability to mobilise volunteers to eradicate food poverty in London by addressing food waste.