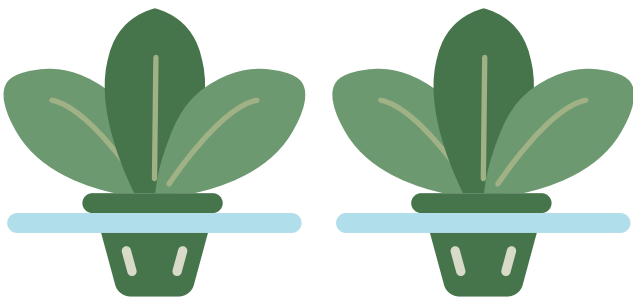
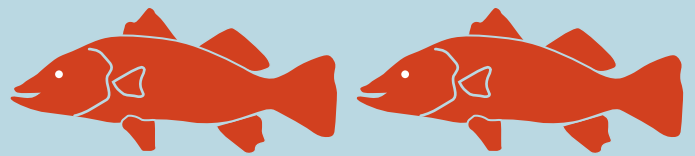


# Response to Recommendations

from the Citizens' Workgroup on  
increasing demand for local produce



by the  
Ministry of Sustainability and the Environment (MSE)  
and the Singapore Food Agency (SFA)

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# Foreword



Ensuring a safe and sustainable food supply is an existential challenge for Singapore. We currently import more than 90 per cent of our food. This leaves us vulnerable to disruptions in the global food system due to climate change, disease outbreaks and volatility of food prices in world markets that could easily spike from unpredictable events like internal conflicts in food producing countries. Increasing local food production as a supply buffer is therefore critical in safeguarding Singapore's food security.

We convened the Citizens' Workgroup on increasing demand for local produce amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Many countries implemented lockdown measures and border closures during the pandemic that led to adverse impacts on global trade and supply chains. Workgroup participants found it difficult to meet with safe distancing measures in place, but its formation was timely. Today, the circumstances we face globally underscore the importance of having this workgroup to look at increasing demand for local produce so as to encourage more local production.

Our efforts to produce 30 per cent of our nutritional needs by 2030 (or "30 by 30") require us to build sustained demand for our local produce to support a commercially-sustainable and vibrant agri-food ecosystem. It will take a whole-of-nation effort to reach this goal. I am heartened that citizens from diverse backgrounds have volunteered their time to further this common cause.

I would also like to express my appreciation for the support from our resource panel and industry partners, including the Singapore Agro-Food Enterprises Federation Limited (SAFEF). Their experience and insights helped the various groups to formulate robust and practical recommendations.

The Ministry of Sustainability and the Environment (MSE) and the Singapore Food Agency (SFA) have carefully studied the recommendations in consultation with SAFEF, and this report outlines our responses and plans to co-deliver these ideas with Workgroup members going forward.

In response to the six proposals put forth by the Workgroup, we will pilot two projects, while exploring two other projects on a smaller scale, in order to gauge the market demand and impact on consumer behaviour. We look forward to continuing this journey with our Workgroup members and industry partners on these projects, and we hope Singaporeans will join us in our efforts to realise our "30 by 30" goal.



**Dr Amy Khor**  
**Senior Minister of State**  
**Ministry of Sustainability and the Environment**

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# Citizens' Workgroup on Increasing Demand for Local Produce

The Citizens' Workgroup (CW) on increasing demand for local produce was convened in July 2020, amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

To ensure that a diverse group of citizens was recruited for the Workgroup, MSE and SFA did a public call for applications in March 2020. Close to 400 people signed up and potential members were shortlisted by the Economics and Behavioural Sciences Research Unit (EBERU) in MSE by random selection to ensure diversity in age, race, household type, education and knowledge/purchase level of local produce.

A total of 50 people accepted the invitation to be part of MSE and SFA's Citizens' Workgroup.

start



## MARCH 2020

MSE and SFA did a public call for applications in March 2020

## 400 SIGN UPS

Close to 400 people signed up to be part of the Workgroup



## DIVERSITY

Participants were selected to ensure diversity in age, race, household type, education and knowledge of local produce



## 50 CITIZENS, 15 RESOURCE PERSONS

A total of 50 citizens accepted the invitation to be part of this Workgroup while around 15 Resource Persons from MSE and SFA joined in to lend their knowledge and expertise



## JULY 2020

The Citizens' Workgroup (CW) convened digitally in July 2020, amidst the COVID-19 pandemic



## OCTOBER 2020 - HYBRID WORKSHOP

To maximise participation while adhering to strict social distancing measures, a hybrid of digital and physical workshops was planned and conducted in the ThinkPlace Singapore studio and the Environment Building

**How might we (individuals, private and public sectors) creatively boost the market demand for Singapore's local produce?**





The Workgroup members were given a central problem statement: How might we (individuals, private and public sectors) creatively boost the market demand for Singapore's local produce?

Over the course of 4 months, the Workgroup adapted to the challenges stemming from COVID-19. Virtual meetings were held through digital conferencing tools (e.g. Zoom) and collaborative platforms, such as MURAL, to discuss the issue and generate ideas in the first four sessions.

The Workgroup met in person under stringent COVID-19 safe management measures to work on prototypes in the fifth session and presented their final ideas at the sixth session, which was also livestreamed on Facebook.

To support them in their work, MSE and SFA provided members with an information kit which included survey findings on consumer behavior towards local produce, as well as past and current outreach efforts done to increase demand for local produce. Meetings were also set up between subject matter experts from the Government and the agri-food industry to allow the members to tap into their views and experience.

By the end of the second session, the Workgroup had formed themselves into six teams to further develop their key ideas. The enthusiasm and passion of the members were evident throughout the process as the groups continued to meet up over Zoom for discussion beyond the sessions and conducted their own user testing via social media platforms or with their friends and family. MSE and SFA supported these efforts by linking them up with relevant industry players and providing funding for their prototyping.

In the final session held on 24 Oct 2020, all 6 teams presented their ideas to the Minister of Sustainability and Environment Ms Grace Fu, Senior Minister of State Dr Amy Khor and Minister of State Desmond Tan. The Workgroup has also submitted a report with all their proposals and recommendations.

MSE and SFA would like to thank every Workgroup member for their dedication and effort throughout the Citizens' Workgroup journey and for the well-developed recommendations in the final report.

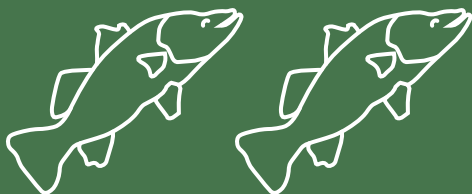
We would also like to extend our appreciation to our subject matter experts, facilitators and partners who helped to facilitate the process.

The CW journey continues as MSE and SFA will work with members to follow up on their recommendations and see some of their ideas to fruition to increase demand for local produce, as we collectively work towards strengthening Singapore's food security.



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# Summary of Recommendations from the Citizens' Workgroup



The Workgroup submitted six proposals to MSE and SFA, with each proposal outlining various recommendations to help increase demand of local produce in Singapore.

MSE and SFA have studied the recommendations carefully and have grouped them under four themes:



**Education & Building Awareness**



**Product Design**



**User Experience**



**Demand Aggregation**

---

# Summary of Recommendations from the Citizens' Workgroup

## Education & Building Awareness

PROJECT

### LoveSGMums Meal

Develop a quarterly campaign featuring local produce as new mothers' first meal after delivery

## Education & Building Awareness

PROJECT

### Promoting Local Produce in Wet Markets

'Made in SG' visual merchandising to allow shoppers to identify the source of the fresh produce at wet markets

## Product Design

PROJECT

### InstaChef Smart Meal Box

Ready-to-cook meal boxes comprising carefully curated local produce and recipes which are hassle-free, nutritious and fresh

## User Experience

PROJECT

### 'Snip & Go' Harvest your own produce

Create a unique buying experience where consumers can harvest what they need from 'live' displays or vending machines that dispense on demand, to show the benefits of buying local

## Product Design

PROJECT

### SG Fresh Mobile App

A comprehensive one-stop mobile app that connects local farmers with consumers who are looking for information on local produce and the best deals available

## Demand Aggregation

PROJECT

### Centralised Neutral Platform (CNP) for Aggregating Demand

A website created with a listing/directory of local farms, F&B operators and logistics providers with a forum/blog section serving as a common space for reaching out, sourcing and meeting demand

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# Responses from the Ministry of Sustainability and the Environment (MSE) and the Singapore Food Agency (SFA)

Based on the six proposals to MSE and SFA, this section outlines our comments on each of the six proposals, in no particular order.





# LoveSGMums Meal

Project 1 of 6





## The Workgroup submitted a proposal for a nation-wide ‘LoveSGMums Meal’ campaign featuring a meal made up of local produce ingredients for all new mothers as their first meal after delivery.

As part of the campaign, collaterals that provide information on nutritional benefits, the merits of local farms and retail options on where to purchase local produce including offer deals will be produced. These will be disseminated to educate new mothers and potentially convert new parents into long-term consumers of local produce.

The campaign is intended to be cyclical and will showcase 12 farmers and their produce each year.

### **MSE & SFA support piloting this idea, together with relevant industry partners.**

We agree with the recommendations in this proposal for a campaign to educate new mothers on the benefits of local produce. This could influence their decisions from an early stage to potentially convert parents and families into long-term consumers of local produce.

While MSE and SFA have conducted national campaigns to raise awareness of Singapore’s food security and promote support of local produce, we agree that there is room to do more in reaching out to targeted segments.

For a start, SFA will work in close partnership with SAFEF and the Workgroup to engage hospitals on offering the ‘LoveSGMums Meal’ as a pilot. We agree that catering companies who offer confinement meals are also potential partners and could incorporate local produce in their meals. The campaign could leverage existing web pages of associations and networks for publicity during the pilot.

### **Next Step**

SFA will work with the Workgroup to pilot this proposal by:

- identifying suitable hospitals and/or catering companies to pitch the campaign idea to and to seek interest;
- facilitating link-up with industry partners to help gather local producers and produce to be featured;
- leveraging networks of relevant industry associations and their social media platforms to propagate the campaign upon roll-out of the pilot.

We invite Workgroup members to work with us on this pilot project.



FINAL PRESENTATION AT MSE BUILDING



FILMING SESSION



EDUCATION & BUILDING AWARENESS

# Promoting Local Produce in Wet Markets

*Project 2 of 6*



## The Workgroup submitted a proposal to introduce ‘Made in SG’ visual merchandising to allow grocery shoppers to easily identify the source of fresh produce at wet markets.

The suggested visual merchandising includes:

- mapping wet market stalls that sell local produce in the floorplan which can be made available through posters or an interactive signboard;
- banners featuring faces of local farmers and the SG Fresh Produce (SGFP) logo to indicate stalls that sell local produce;
- using indicative signs at the stalls, e.g. distributing SGFP logo ‘lollipop’ signs to stall holders;
- informational aids explaining the benefits of local produce in multiple languages.

### MSE and SFA support piloting this idea at selected suitable wet markets.

We agree that currently, it is challenging for consumers to identify local produce in wet markets. While SFA has been working with farmers and retailers to incorporate the SGFP logo in produce packaging and in point-of-sale materials, current efforts have been largely focused on supermarkets.

More can indeed be done in wet markets to increase the visibility and consumer awareness of local produce. With 83 wet markets in Singapore, there is potential for wet markets to be a vital ground for promoting local produce. We also agree that wet market goers will be a suitable target segment to promote local produce to, as they are typically more particular about the freshness of food purchased.

### Next Step

For a start, we will pilot the initiative at selected established wet markets which have larger stalls, and where some of our local producers are supplying produce for sale.

We invite Workgroup members to work with us to further develop the visual merchandising, and pilot them in two to three selected wet markets to observe their impact.



INTERVIEWING EXPERTS



PROTOTYPING SESSION



PRODUCT DESIGN

# InstaChef Smart Meal Box

Project 3 of 6



**The Workgroup proposed a ready-to-cook (RTC) meal box comprising carefully curated local produce and recipes which are nutritious, fresh and hassle-free. They have suggested a two-person meal that can be prepared in 15 minutes.**

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The meal box targets working adults, parents and international students and is intended to promote local produce through bringing together fresh local produce and local food culture to cater to Singaporeans' palate and busy lifestyles.

**MSE and SFA will explore introducing this idea at suitable pop-up events promoting local produce.**

Currently, there are local farmers who have 'farm-to-plate' initiatives. These include subscription programmes that deliver fresh produce to homes, as well as ready-to-eat products featuring local produce as the main ingredient.

We agree that a ready-to-cook meal box will open up more channels for local farmers to reach out to new consumer segments for their local produce. We are mindful that fresh local produce is perishable, and the shelf life differs depending on the type of produce. We will need to consider food safety concerns such as preventing cross-contamination when different ingredients are in the same box.

**Next Step**

We acknowledge the Workgroup's consideration that more market research is required to ascertain the market demand and long-term viability of a ready-to-cook meal box venture. To determine the market demand for such a meal box, MSE and SFA are open to explore trialling this initiative at suitable pop-up events. Workgroup members who are interested to contribute and co-deliver this recommendation can sign up to be part of the project team.



PROTOTYPING



PRESENTATION AT MSE



# SG Fresh Mobile App

Project 4 of 6



## SG FRESH APP IS HERE



### Objective

Create a common platform to connect consumers

### Community Consolidator

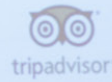
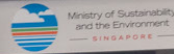
Provide recommendations to consumers by aggregating public reviews and comments

Search function capability to filter online sources

### Search Engine

Metasearch engine enables comparison (price, quality, vendors)

Automatic filter provides filtered access to options



## The Workgroup proposed to develop a comprehensive one-stop mobile app that connects local farmers to consumers and retailers who are looking for information on local produce and the best deals available.

The app would feature:

- **Search Engine** – for local produce featured on the app, with comparison of prices and vendors. Users will be redirected to vendors' online sales pages for purchase of local produce.
- **SG Buzz** – curated news information, stories and live chats with farmers/retailers.
- **Chit Chat** – a space for local communities to share knowledge and recipes using local produce.
- **Best Buy** – a paid space meant for online vendors and farmers to advertise and market their local produce.

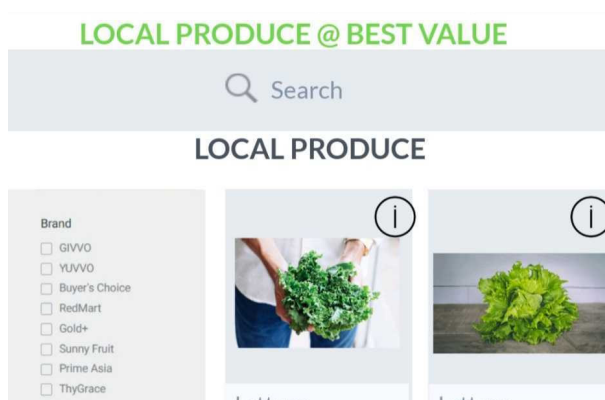
**While MSE and SFA agree that the mobile app is a good idea to build support towards local produce, we suggest incorporating some of the proposed features into existing initiatives.**

We agree that a one-stop mobile app can serve as an easy-to-access platform to connect consumers, farmers and retailers via the proposed platform features. However, MSE and SFA recognise that the development of an app requires a substantial amount of time, funding and manpower and is a challenge to sustain.

SFA and its partners have been working on making information on local produce accessible to consumers. Examples include the #fromSGtoSG microsite (<https://www.sfa.gov.sg/fromsgtosg>), and SAFEF's blog to promote and feature local farmers (<https://safef.org.sg/blog/>).

### Next Step

SFA will work on including some of the suggestions proposed by the Workgroup within existing information channels promoting local farmers and their produce.



PROTOTYPING



STORYBOARDING & PLANNING



USER EXPERIENCE

# 'Snip & Go' - Harvest your own produce

*Project 5 of 6*





## The Workgroup recommended creating a unique buying experience which emphasises the benefits of purchasing local produce, i.e. freshness and traceability.

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Two ways of presenting local produce to consumers are suggested:

- 1) 'Snip & Go' live produce transplanted from local farms into modified growing systems in supermarkets which allow consumers to harvest their own produce and ensure that what they buy is the freshest possible; or
- 2) Choose fresh local produce from a vending machine that dispenses live plants on demand.

To complement the experience, the Workgroup also proposed developing and putting up educational materials next to the live harvest system set up in supermarkets that contain information on the different types of produce offered and how they are grown.

**MSE and SFA will explore introducing this idea at suitable locations or events, to increase awareness of local produce and gauge market demand.**

There are currently efforts by industry partners to feature hydroponics set-ups in supermarkets. These are part of outreach and education efforts on farms in Singapore around the different types of produce grown and how to identify local produce.

We recognise that there are space and logistics constraints which need to be considered for a permanent live harvesting system in supermarkets.

We agree that the Workgroup's proposed plan to enhance user buying experience would highlight the distinguishing advantages of local produce vis-à-vis imports, namely freshness, traceability, and lower carbon footprint due to shorter distances travelled. The plan is a novel way to increase awareness, which could subsequently be converted into sales.

### Next Step

Various factors such as location, infrastructure (e.g. electricity) and logistics (replenishment and distribution) will need to be considered for long-term viability and feasibility of such an initiative. SFA is open to explore introducing a vending machine concept that dispenses vegetables on demand at suitable locations or pop-up events together with the Workgroup to gauge effectiveness and market demand. Workgroup members who are interested in contributing to and co-delivering this recommendation can sign up to be part of the project team.



STORYBOARDING & PLANNING



PROTOTYPING



# Centralised Neutral Platform for aggregating demand

Project 6 of 6



**The Workgroup suggested creating a centralised neutral website, with no business interests involved, to provide a listing/directory of local farms, F&B operators and logistics providers in Singapore’s food industry.**

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The website would include a forum/blog section for parties to reach out, source and meet demand. There would also be a section featuring stories of Singapore’s signature dishes, and encouraging sustainable living.

**While MSE and SFA agree that a centralised platform would facilitate the matching of supply and demand between local farms and F&B operators in Singapore, a neutral platform may not be financially sustainable in the long run.**

We agree that the platform could provide F&B operators with easy access to a variety of local producers, and vice versa for producers sourcing for potential buyers. This could in turn increase demand for local produce.

MSE and SFA note that the positive benefits of such demand-aggregating platforms would require all parties involved to be sustainable in the long term.

There are existing demand-aggregation cooperatives connecting local farmers with F&B operators. Although these platforms are run by commercial entities, they achieve the objective of matching supply and demand in a commercially viable and more sustainable manner.

#### **Next Step**

SFA could share the Workgroup’s suggestions with existing demand aggregation cooperatives to enhance existing platforms and further raise demand and awareness of local produce.



STORYBOARDING & PLANNING



GROUP BONDING ACTIVITY

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# Next Steps



## *Citizens' Workgroup Recommendations*

## *MSE's and SFA's Responses*

LoveSGMums Meal	Pilot
Promoting Local Produce in Wet Markets	Pilot
InstaChef Smart Meal Box	Explore
SG Fresh Mobile App	Share recommendations with industry
'Snip & Go' - Harvest your own produce	Explore
Centralised Neutral Platform (CNP) for aggregating demand	Share recommendations with industry

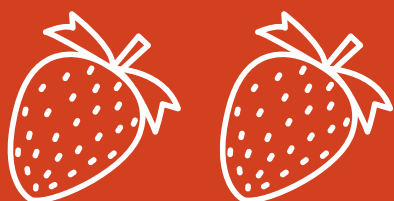


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# Annex

## List of Subject Matter Experts

In addition to the support provided by officers from MSE and SFA, members of the Workgroup also had the support and expertise of external subject matter experts. We would like to thank the following subject matter experts for their generous support and participation.



**Mr Dave Huang**  
Board Member

*Singapore Agro-Food  
Enterprises Federation  
Limited*

**Mr Allan Lim**  
Chairman and  
Founder

*ComCrop Pte Ltd*

**Mr Ma Chin Chew**  
CEO

*N&N Agriculture Pte Ltd*

**Mr Malcolm Ong**  
CEO

*Metropolitan Fishery  
Group Pte Ltd*

**Ms Nichol Ng**  
CEO

*FoodXervices Inc Pte Ltd*

**Mr Darren Tan**  
Education and  
Outreach Manager

*ComCrop Pte Ltd*

**Mr Fabian Liao**  
Sales and Marketing  
Manager

*Quan Fa Organic Farm*

**Mr Wong JingKai**  
Managing Director

*Scaled @ Ah Hua  
Kelong*

**Mr Wymon Lim**  
Category Manager

*NTUC FairPrice  
Co-operative Ltd*

**Ms Felicia Tao**  
Commercial Manager  
(Singapore and  
Malaysia), Fresh  
Produce - Vegetables

*Dairy Farm Singapore*

**Ms Veronica Lumy**  
Category Manager  
(Fresh Produce &  
Bakery)

*Lazada Redmart*

**Ms Shanice Lim**  
Sales and Marketing  
Manager

*Barramundi Asia  
Pte Ltd*



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