

# THE BETTER FOOD SHED



The Shed is East London's not-for-profit organic fruit and veg wholesaler, set up by award-winning ethical food pioneers Growing Communities.

A key aim of the Shed is to increase the supply of organic and affordable food into London and build a sustainable and fair supply chain from the ground up, through building partnerships and supplying a range of different organisations like veg box schemes, councils and schools, while supporting local farmers with fair prices.

We supply 20 tonnes of organic, seasonal veg and fruit (much of which comes from farms within 70 miles of East London) to organisations and businesses across London who in turn feed over 10,000 people a week, including two primary schools in Hackney and Barking & Dagenham's HAF programme.

While still in the crucial start-up phase, the Shed is currently turning over £1.5 million in produce sales. Keeping our margins and costs low enables us to remain affordable, a principle we intend to stick with as we grow.



## HOW THE SHED BENEFITS COMMUNITIES

- **Delivers social, economic and environmental benefits:** a [study by the New Economics Foundation](#) and the Soil Association found that every £1 spent buying organic food through Growing Communities/the Better Food Shed generates £3.70 in benefits to individuals, farmers, citizens and the planet, including eating better, boosting community engagement, improving soil health, reducing pollution, cutting waste and creating jobs.
- **Enables local, sustainable procurement:** The Shed is based in east London and sources fruit and veg directly from 23 small and medium organic UK farms, many within 70 miles of east London.
- **Expands food access:** the Shed feeds over 4,000 households and [600 schoolchildren](#) a week and has the capacity to feed many more.
- **Enhances health and reduces emissions:** the Shed delivers good fresh, unprocessed organic food, grown sustainably and locally. Half the London deliveries are done by electric van.
- **Improves education:** the Shed supports schools programmes that provide healthy food education and foster a positive attitude to the environment and climate change.
- **Reduces waste and feeds communities:** the Shed's trading model designs out waste by enabling buyers and consumers to adapt their menus and orders to what is seasonably available. We donate £5K a year of produce which we distribute to food banks and local projects.
- **Creates meaningful jobs:** the Shed employs six local people earning at least the London Living Wage – and supports many other good jobs at local farms in and around east London.
- **Operates as a not-for-profit:** any surplus is ploughed back into delivering the [aims of the Shed](#), combating climate change and creating a greener economy. We keep our prices competitive with conventional wholesalers.



*"It's been one of my dreams to be able to use affordable, locally farmed organic produce in my primary schools and thanks to Better Food Shed & Growing Communities, it's finally happening. I've been working on transforming the school kitchens I oversee from kitchens that serve mostly frozen ingredients, unhealthy menus and nutrient-poor food to kitchens that serve fresh, healthy, diverse, tasty, colourful food made with great ingredients."*  
Hackney school chef James Taylor

*"We are delighted to work with Growing Communities and the Better Food Shed; a fantastic resource for the borough that can supply locally grown, organic produce, and which supports us in the development of food education programmes in schools. With a sustainable business model, they are fantastic example for young people that we are lucky to have on our doorstep."*  
Lily McSweeney, Food Education Partnership Coordinator, Barking and Dagenham Council