



HEALTHY SOIL
HEALTHY FOOD
HEALTHY PEOPLE

H3 News July 2021

Welcome to the the inaugural newsletter from the H3 programme. We look forward to keeping you up-to-date with our groundbreaking interdisciplinary research aimed at transforming the UK food systems 'from the ground up'.

[Visit the H3 website](#)

NEWS

Kickoff Meeting Marks Start of H3 Project

The five-year UKRI funded H3 project kicked off with an online meeting of the full academic team on 22nd January 2021.

Collaboration with local firm: Launch of H3 Project Website

We have worked with Sheffield-based design firm Ink and Water to develop our website: www.h3.ac.uk which provides an overview of the project scope, team and collaborating partners.

Transforming UK Food Systems Strategic Priority Fund



In March, H3 project team members met virtually with the coordination team at BBSRC, and staff from the other 3 consortia and the Centre for Doctoral Training funded within the scope of the £47.5m Transforming UK Food Systems Strategic Priority Fund. The meeting aimed to initiate collaboration between teams by developing a

shared understanding of the overall scope of research, and identify areas of potential synergy. The other projects are:

- **'FixOurFood'** led by Bob Doherty at the University of York;
- **'Transforming urban food systems for planetary and population health'** led by Martin White at Cambridge University; and
- **'Co-production of healthy, sustainable food systems for disadvantaged communities'** led by Carol Wagstaff at the University of Reading.

A UK Food Systems Centre for Doctoral Training has also been established, see: [UK Food Systems Centre for Doctoral Training - Home \(foodsystems-cdt.ac.uk\)](http://UKFoodSystemsCentreforDoctoralTraining-Home(foodsystems-cdt.ac.uk))

Q and A with Peter Jackson



What are the transformations that you hope to achieve over the life of the project? And what will you personally do to help achieve this?

Peter Jackson: "We are hoping to make significant changes to the UK food system over the life of the project: improving the efficiency of hydroponic and conventional agriculture; enhancing the nutritional content of food; encouraging the uptake of regenerative agriculture; increasing fibre consumption; and improving the resilience of food supply chains. My personal contribution as H3 director is to make sure that the interventions and innovations we introduce in each work package are fully integrated and 'scaled up' to achieve system-wide transformation. Working with our partners in government, business and civil society will also help achieve the traction that is required to achieve lasting, large-scale change."

NEW STARTERS

H3 work packages and cross-cutting themes have staggered start dates. WP1, WP3, and CCT2 have started:



Novel growing technologies (WP1) Samuel Wilkinson joined the WP1 team under the leadership of Stephen Rolfe at Sheffield at the beginning of April.

Prior to this Samuel completed both his undergraduate degree and his doctorate at Sheffield. His doctorate was primarily supervised by Jurriaan Ton (Sheffield) and included a diverse programme of research to investigate long-lasting acquired resistance to disease in Arabidopsis and Norway spruce.

The project also included a year working in Norway under the supervision of Melissa Mageroy (Norwegian Institute for Bioeconomy Research).

Within WP1 Samuel is currently working to combine known beneficial microbes to develop synthetic microbial communities, which when introduced into hydroponic systems growing crops (such as tomato), provide protection against disease and improve both growth and flavour properties of the crops.

Excited to be part of a large project, Samuel's work has the great potential to be translational to a larger scale, as a precursor to WP2 which hopes to trial promising synthetic microbial communities in peri-urban farm systems.



Landscape-Scale regenerative farming (WP3)

welcomes Coline Jaworski to the team in Cambridge, working alongside team lead Lynn Dicks.

Coline's background includes physical chemistry, agronomy and applied ecology. She completed her PhD in evolutionary ecology at the University of Toulouse, France and has since worked as a post doc on climate change ecology and genomics. Coline is keen to develop her social science skills within H3. She is excited to engage in knowledge exchange with farmers, and the opportunity to scientifically demonstrate some of what may already be known through practice.

The WP3 team have met regularly online since February working on the co-design of a 'before and after' experiment which will assess the impacts of regenerative agriculture at a landscape scale on food quality, ecology and soil health.

The work is being co-designed with farming clusters in the East and South West of England, and also aims to determine how the effects of regenerative agriculture can best be monitored by farmers.

CONSUMPTION AND DEMAND (CCT2)

Consumption and Demand (CCT2) activity has focused on a number of discrete pieces of work:

- Developing a state-of-the-art H3 position on consumption and its role in food system transformations
- Initiating an international review of dietary change initiatives with a view to understanding which levers and mechanisms work
- Taking stock of what data currently exists to help establish baseline understandings of diets in the UK and making plans for a new H3 survey of changing UK diets

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND FUTURE PLANS FOR H3 PROJECT

We welcome thoughts and input from all stakeholders on any aspect of our current work. Please contact David Evans d.m.evans@bristol.ac.uk

Stakeholder engagement is vital to the transformational success of H3, to ensure that research is valid and that findings are impactful at scale.

H3 Stakeholder Advisory Board met on 29th April 2021, chaired by Kate Halliwell of the Food and Drink Federation. Board members commented on the workplans outlined by the Executive team of Work Package (WP) and Cross-Cutting theme (CCT) leaders. Stakeholders also provided feedback on the proposed stakeholder engagement strategy and suggested engagement with growers as additional means and points of engagement to the project. AHDB will follow up on Knowledge Exchange discussions with the landscape scale regenerative agriculture work (WP3), and the Coop suggested future collaboration with produce developed and grown within WP2.

All four consortium leaders, Project PIs including Peter Jackson, joined a meeting with over 100 officials from Defra on 25th March.

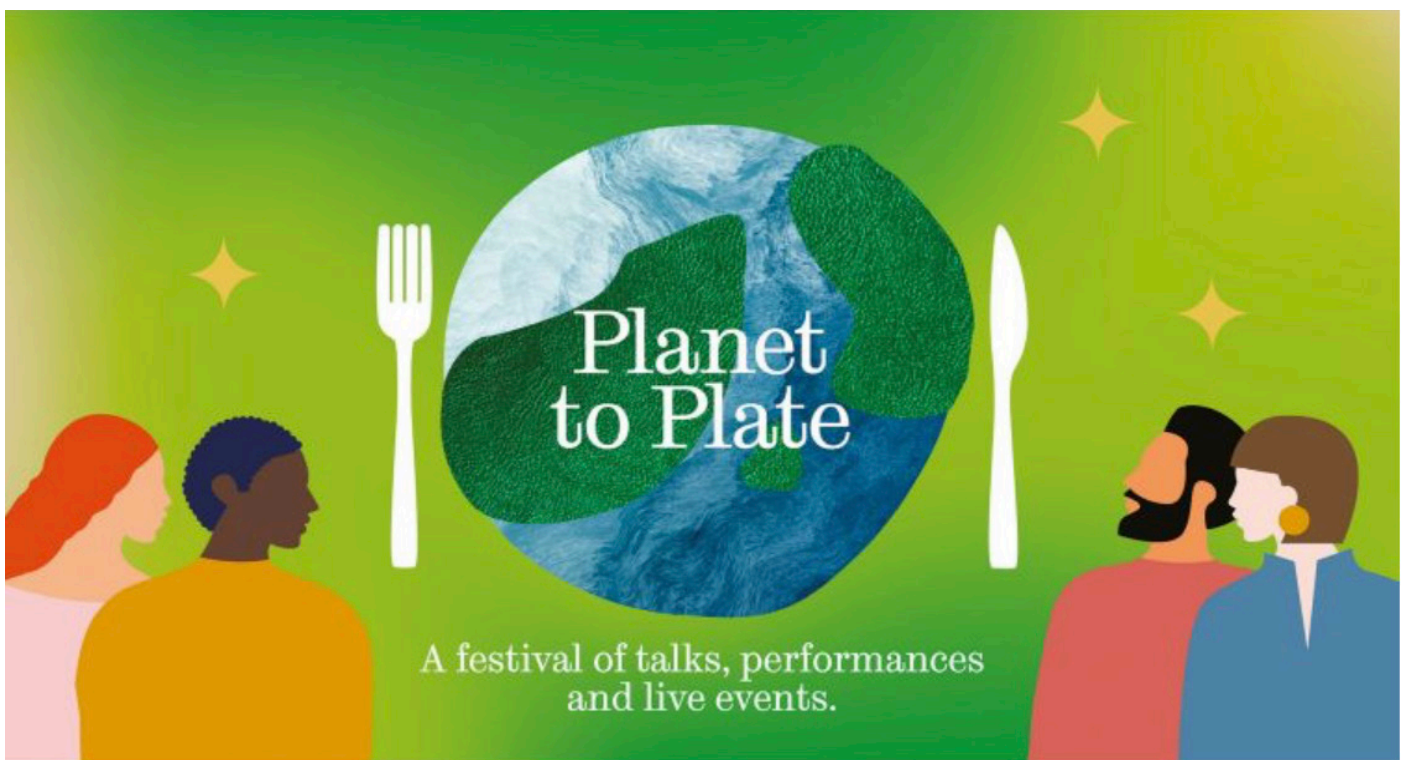
Louise Dye, Bernard Corfe, and Neil Boyle met with **Cracking Good Food** a Manchester based Social Enterprise to catch up on activities during lockdown, and to discuss plans for [H3 Work Package 5 \(WP5\)](#) activity. WP5 seeks to increase fibre uptake in low income households and will work with Cracking Good Food as a delivery partner towards this goal. The work package will start in January 2022.

An on-boarding meeting with colleagues from the Coop was held on 6th May.

We would be happy to organise similar meetings with other stakeholders. Please contact us if this would be of interest.

OTHER NEWS

H3 colleagues were heavily involved in the recent 'Planet to Plate' festival, organised by the Institute for Sustainable Food at Sheffield. All of the events can be viewed using the 'watch again' facility on the festival website: [Planet to Plate: a three-day festival of talks, performances and live events | Institute for Sustainable Food | The University of Sheffield.](#)



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