



Food – the key to a better future





Contents

Food that can save the Baltic Sea	4	This is the Diet Unit	23
How we work with food in Södertälje	8	Introducing some of our food heroes:	
Recipes: Diet for a Green Planet	11	Kalle	7
Important Milestones	16	Marie-Louise	10
Frequently Asked Questions	20	Haidar	18
Looking forward	22	Hanaa och Mirsada	19



Thank you for taking the time to read this brochure.
We would like to share our belief that food is a key to a more positive future – both for us and for our planet.



■ **FOOD AFFECTS US ALL.** We may have different tastes, but one thing unites us – we all share the ability to influence what we eat, and our choices have effects greater than we think. In Södertälje we believe in food that is nutritious, tasty and produced using methods that do not harm the environment or pollute our oceans. With this belief we have been working with a concept called “Diet for a Green Planet” spending the past ten years improving the food in our kindergartens, schools and nursing homes.

We are confident that we are on the right track. Not only have we been encouraged by interest from other municipalities, we have also been awarded a range of honours. Amongst other prizes, we have been selected

Sara Jervfors
Head of the Diet Unit in Södertälje and appointed “2014 Food Manager of the Year” by White Guide Junior.



as the “2014 School Food Municipality of the Year” by White Guide Junior, a collaboration between White Guide and Magasin Måltid.

Even more important than awards, is that we feel the support and commitment from students and teachers in our kindergartens and schools, and from our kitchen staff. Everyone is eager to contribute to sustainable development – being able to achieve this through cooking and sharing good food is really fantastic. The Diet Unit of Södertälje consists of approximately 90 kitchens that cook and serve around 24,000 meals every day – food that can make a change.

This brochure is about how we work. Please do not hesitate to contact us to share your questions or comments. ■

Food that can save the Baltic Sea!



The food that we eat affects the ocean more than we think. For example, here in Sweden and the Baltic region, agriculture is the single largest source of eutrophication of the Baltic Sea, contributing an estimated 50 percent. With Diet for a Green Planet, not only can we provide our school children and residents in elderly care with healthier food, we can also make a positive contribution to the Baltic Sea and the environment at large – the climate, soil fertility and biological diversity.



CRITERIA FOR A DIET FOR A GREEN PLANET

✔ **Tasty and healthy**

Sustainably produced food must of course be well prepared, healthy and tasty!

✔ **Organically grown**

Whenever possible the food shall be grown according to “Ecological Recycling Agriculture” (ERA) principles, where the requirements are a little tougher than “regular” organic farms. When there are not enough ERA farms, EU-organic or KRAV labeled products should be used to the greatest possible extent.

✔ **Seasonal**

Items that are produced in an environmentally friendly and energy efficient way in Södertälje and central Sweden are seasonal by nature. When storage is necessary it must be energy efficient. We then choose root vegetables, conserves and dry goods.

✔ **Minimise waste**

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (Naturvårdsverket) Sweden produced 1,2 million tonnes of food waste in 2012. This is equivalent to 127 kg per person – this is an incredible amount of waste. It is important to focus on the entire food system and minimise waste during

production, processing, distribution, preparation and of course from the plate. In our school kitchens we measure the amount of food waste, both in the kitchen and from the students’ plates. By monitoring and reducing our food waste we are able to save money, allowing us to purchase higher quality produce like organic meat.

✔ **Local produce**

What can be defined as local varies for different products and markets. A maximum of 50–250 km from producer to consumer provides a rough guide. It is also important to think about where the animal feed is produced. In Södertälje we try to purchase local produce whenever possible. It is not always easy, as the Swedish Public Procurement Act prevents preferential treatment of local products over imported ones. Taking this into consideration, we do our best based on our position as a public authority.

✔ **Less meat, more vegetables and whole grains**

We eat too much meat in Sweden. Meat production requires large areas of land and has a large environmental impact. We must have animals on our farms, however we need to reduce the amount of meat we consume. A balanced diet should consist of a maximum of 20 percent meat and fish. When purchasing meat and fish we focus on animals reared under natural conditions and fish from sustainable fisheries. We also choose whole grains over refined grains, as they provide a fuller diet, higher nutritional value and less wastage. ■



"It is easy to be inspired here"

In 2008 Kalid "Kalle" Ahmed began working as a chef at Wasaskolan. Today he is in charge of the restaurant and responsible for serving food to over 600 students every day.

■ **What does Diet for a Green Planet mean to you?**

It means being aware and open to thinking about food in another way. For example, how we can reduce meat consumption and work smarter. Or that we have replaced chicken meat with hens meat, which is very exciting.

When we started working with the concept a few years ago, some of the staff had their reservations, but now it feels completely natural and we often share discussions in the kitchen about why some products are more environmentally friendly than others, what items can be sourced locally and what it means to be cooking seasonally.

■ **What is it like to work with food in Södertälje Municipality?**

There are so many cultures here! And that goes for the food too. The recipes in our schools come from all corners of the world. Some staff members make amazing salads, others shine with root vegetables. It is easy to be inspired here.

At Wasaskolan we do not use much meat, the children enjoy a mainly vegetarian diet.

It is important that we listen to the children.

We have a suggestion box that is used by the students and teachers to make suggestions and leave comments. I also have the opportunity to be involved in monthly student council meetings. We start the meetings by discussing the school food, the environment and the atmosphere in the dining hall. This is where I collect valuable feedback.

It is comforting to have the opportunity to develop the food served here at the school. Every month we meet with chefs and kitchen staff from other schools in Södertälje to exchange experiences and knowledge.

■ **Favourite dish on the menu?**

We make great pasta dishes! The children love them and we really like to cook them. We parboil the pasta for a few minutes the day before and then store it chilled. We then use it direct in dishes like gratin. This way, it never dries out.

We make great vegetarian rissoles too; carrot, beetroot, chickpea and all root vegetable rissoles – always made from scratch. ■

How we work with food in



■ **WORKING WITH FOOD** in our kindergartens, schools and elderly homes requires long term vision. This takes time and requires that our chefs, kitchen staff, teachers and students support us. It also requires that we work on several levels: not only with the actual cooking, but also with the development of competencies in our staff, purchase of raw produce, procurement regulations, investment and documentation, monitoring and future development.

We have achieved a lot since 2001. For example almost all school kitchens have been rebuilt and converted – from simple facilities that received food from a central kitchen and then heated it up to serve – to well-equipped professional kitchens where all food is cooked from scratch.

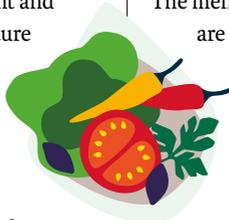
We have also made changes on the or-

ganisational level. Today there is at least one trained chef in each school kitchen. Employing professional chefs ensures that the staff knows how raw ingredients should be handled and how to follow food safety and cooking best practices.

Every kitchen sets its own menu

The menus in our schools and kindergartens are set locally. Each kitchen has control over its own menu and places its own orders. This has incredible effects! It gives the kitchen staff a sense of pride over the food served while allowing them to develop skills and respect for raw ingredients. This encourages kitchen staff to be creative and inspire new recipes at different schools.

We have also introduced a system of food hosts in our schools. Our kitchen staff creates





QUICK FACTS

■ **The scientific research behind Diet for a Green Planet.** Our efforts to prepare a Diet for a Green Planet in our kindergartens, schools and elderly care is grounded in many years of research on sustainable and environmentally friendly agriculture. This kind of farming system is called “Ecological Recycling Agriculture” (ERA). The research has been carried out within a project called BERAS Implementation, where the Diet Unit has been involved.

You can read more at www.beras.eu
There are also many more international reports, including from the UN, which support the direction and conclusions of the BERAS research.



■ **Hens to replace chickens.** Each year around 1 600 tonnes of laying hens are destroyed in Sweden – despite the fact the meat is perfectly edible. In some cases, the birds are transported over 750 km just to be incinerated. This has been because there is no incentive to use the birds. There is one company now that purchases and processes meat from organic laying hens. Via our wholesaler, Södertälje municipality now purchases hens meat. Our goal is to replace half our chicken meat with hens meat in 2014.



■ **The food chain's environmental impact can be reduced sharply.** The entire food chain – including agriculture – is the single largest source of today's carbon footprint (total emissions of greenhouse gases), an estimated 50 percent. A complete conversion to ERA farming (Ecological Recycling Agriculture) coupled with reduced meat consumption and locally produced food can reduce the food chain's carbon footprint by 70 percent.

Södertälje

a positive atmosphere in the dining hall by being present and approachable for the students. In addition, many schools allow the children to be actively involved in the preparation of the food.

No extra costs

The Diet Unit assumed responsibility for all the food in kindergartens and schools in 2011. We have not received any extra funds to carry out this work. We have the same budget of 9.10 SEK per serving in our schools. The increased costs involved in purchasing organic and locally produced foods are recovered through our work in reducing food waste and reducing meat consumption. The fact that we have been able to do this without any extra money has certainly raised some eyebrows. Several other Swedish municipalities have contacted us wanting to know more. We see this as proof that we are doing something right.

Support from politicians

We adopted a Diet Policy in Södertälje in 2010. This policy is not just any document; it shows that we have the politicians in the municipality – from both the left and right – supporting us. It also shows that Södertälje as a municipality takes these issues very seriously.

We are always learning

Our work with Diet for a Green Planet is both long term and ongoing. We must be constantly developing our skills, finding new ways to increase organic and locally produced items, and minimise the amount of food waste. ■

“We are like one big family”

Marie-Louise Holleczek started work in the Glasberga Elderly Care facility in December 2012 when the business was first started. In the kitchen Marie-Louise and Eva Björklund cook lunch and dinner for almost 70 people every day.

■ **What does Diet for a Green Planet mean to you?**

For me it means quality, knowing where the food comes from. It feels good to be working with something that is positive for the environment and I hope more people will start to work with Diet for a Green Planet. The ultimate goal would be if all food production was organic and the entire food system from producer to consumer was environmentally friendly.

■ **What is it like to work with food in Södertälje Municipality?**

There is sound environmental thinking here. I like that we focus on organic ingredients and that we are given freedom in our cooking. It allows us to create a diverse menu and listen to what the residents think and feel about the food we make. There is great cohesion and collaboration in the Diet Unit; we are like one big family. We receive great support and can contact the Diet Unit as soon as we have any questions.



■ **Favourite dish on the menu?**

I like Eva's mashed turnips! says Marie-Louise as she glances at her colleague beside her. When it comes to the residents' favourite dishes, Marie-Louise and Eva say it has to be the fish dishes and the homestyle cooking. ■



COOK

YOUR OWN DIET

FOR A GREEN

PLANET

We have collected some of our favourite recipes for a Diet for a Green Planet – simple recipes from different seasons that anyone can make. Food that everyone is sure to love!





Crumbed celeriac, 4 servings

1	large celeriac
2	eggs
100 ml	breadcrumbs
1	sprig of parsley
+	salt and white pepper
+	oil for frying

To make:

1. Cut the celeriac into 1 cm thick slices.
2. Beat eggs in a bowl. Mix the bread crumbs with the chopped parsley and season to taste.
3. Dip the celeriac slices first into the egg mixture, and then in the breadcrumb mixture. Heat the oil. Fry the slices over medium heat until they are golden brown.
4. Bake in the oven (160°) for about 10 minutes.



Broccoli soup, 4 servings

1	broccoli head
1/2	cauliflower head
1/2	onion
500 ml	vegetable stock
100 ml	sour cream
1	bunch of parsley
50 ml	white wine
+	salt and white pepper

To make:

1. Rinse and cut up broccoli and cauliflower. Peel and chop the onion.
2. Place the vegetables in a saucepan and add the stock and wine. Let simmer for 10 minutes.
3. Blend until smooth and gently stir in the sour cream. Season with salt and pepper. Garnish with freshly chopped parsley.



Farmers omelette, 4 servings

4	eggs
400 ml	milk
500 g	boiled potatoes
50 g	oyster mushrooms
1	onion
1	handful of baby spinach
2	tomatoes
1	bunch of parsley
1 tbsp	canola oil
+	salt and black pepper

■ To make:

1. Preheat the oven to 175°.
2. Peel and slice the onion. Cut up the remaining vegetables, mushrooms and potatoes in equal pieces. Roughly chop the parsley.
3. Beat the eggs and milk together well. Salt and pepper to taste.
4. Fry the potatoes, mushrooms, and the remaining vegetables lightly. Place in a greased baking dish. Pour in egg mixture and sprinkle with parsley.
5. Place the omelette in the oven for approximately 25 minutes until the surface is golden brown



Climate smart bolognese, 4 servings

100 ml	red lentils
1	onion
1	carrot
2	cloves of garlic
200 g	minced beef
200 g	chopped tomatoes
500 ml	vegetable stock
3 tbsp	tomato paste
1 tsp	dried thyme
1 tsp	dried oregano
1 tsp	dried basil
1	bay leaf
+	salt and white pepper
+	canola oil for frying

■ To make:

1. Chop the onion, garlic and carrot.
2. Brown the meat in oil together with the chopped vegetables. Use a large saucepan.
3. Add chopped tomatoes and red lentils. Allow to simmer for about 20 minutes or until the lentils become soft. Thicken with tomato paste. This creates the perfect texture for the bolognese.
4. Add the dried spices and the bay leaf. Season with salt and pepper.



Pearl barley salad with spinach and sun-dried tomatoes

200 ml	pearl barley
1 litre	water
1 tsp	salt
1	red onion
1	carrot
50 g	celeriac (optional)
1	handful of fresh spinach
200 g	sun-dried tomatoes
1	lemon
1	bunch parsley, chopped
SALAD DRESSING:	
50 ml	oil from the tomatoes
1 tbsp	lemon juice
+ salt and white pepper	

■ To make:

1. Boil the pearl barley over low heat for about 35–40 minutes. Pour the water through a colander or something similar. Cool quickly by flushing the barley in ice cold water.
2. Prepare the vegetables in the meantime. Peel and finely chop the onion. Peel and roughly chop the carrot and celeriac
3. Pour off and save the oil from the tomatoes. Cut the tomatoes into thin slices. Wash and dry the lemon. Cut the peel into fine strips.
4. Mix the barley with all vegetables, lemon zest and parsley.
5. Mix together all the salad dressing ingredients. Pour over the salad and mix together.



Homemade ketchup, 1 litre

1 kg	of chopped tomatoes
2	celery stalks
1	onion
2	cloves of garlic
1	red chilli
1/2	fennel head
100 ml	vinegar (10%)
500 ml	water
20 g	fresh basil
20 g	fresh thyme
2 tbsp	white wine vinegar
1 tbsp	Worcestershire sauce
+ salt and white pepper	

■ To make:

1. Chop the vegetables into equal pieces.
2. Mix everything in a big pot and cook over low heat for about 30 minutes.
3. Mix everything to a smooth and fine paste. Strain through a fine sieve. Allow to cool.



Hummus with yellow peas

200 ml	yellow peas (dried)
1	clove of garlic
2 tbsp	olive oil
1 tbsp	lemon juice
1 tsp	cumin
+	salt and white pepper

■ To make:

1. Soak the peas in water overnight. Boil in fresh, lightly salted water with the lid on for about 1 hour.
2. Allow the peas to cool. Blend the peas in a food processor and mix in remaining ingredients. Season to taste.



QUICK FACTS

■ We are living beyond our means.

We are approximately 7 billion people on earth, sharing 1.4 billion hectares of cultivated land.

This gives around 2000 square metres of growing space per person. In Sweden, we use double the amount.



- ### ■ More game meat.
- Södertälje municipality purchases game meat through a local game meat supplier. Elk, wild boar and deer meat is offered in the schools and nursing homes. Organic and locally grown!



- ### ■ We waste food.
- Ecosystems produce surplus and as long as we harvest the surplus we do not have a negative effect on natural systems. We can live on what the earth provides us, without causing negative effects. But we do not do this today. We throw away leftovers and sometimes perfectly edible food, we feed livestock with things we could feed people with and we often eat more than we need. Today, one third of all food produced in the world does not make it to the plate.



- ### ■ Organic food is on the rise.
- We purchase more and more organic food each year in Södertälje municipality. Last year **49.5%** of all food purchased was organic – and we keep getting better!

Percentage of organic food purchased by the Diet Unit:

2009: 21% | **2010:** 33% | **2011:** 45%
2012: 47% | **2013:** 49,5%

Important milestones



2001

■ The Södertälje City Council makes the decision to use the **PURCHASE OF FOOD AS A TOOL IN ENVIRONMENTAL WORK** and that the food in kindergartens, schools and elderly care should be improved, both for our children and the environment. The position of Head of Diet Unit is created.

2004



■ The current Head of the Diet Unit **SARA JERVFORS** begins her work. Only a few schools are under the administration of the Diet Unit.

2006

■ The process of creating a **DIET POLICY** – a political document that guides the direction of the work with food in kindergartens, school and elderly care – is set in motion.

2010

■ **THE DIET POLICY IS ADOPTED** by the City Council. The policy states that food “...shall be produced under ethical conditions and with as little harm to the environment as possible.” The food policy guides us in our work. It

also states that the municipality shall whenever possible purchase organic food and promote locally sourced and produced products. **THE DIET POLICY** is available to download at www.sodertalje.se.

■ Södertälje municipality becomes a partner in the project **BERAS IMPLEMENTATION**. The Diet Unit is given the task to develop the criteria for, and implement the concept Diet for a Green Planet. The BERAS project produces research which shows that food produced on ERA farms can help save the Baltic Sea. This research is important for us, as we want to build our work on concrete facts and evidence.

■ We are finalists in the **ORGANIC FOOD CHALLENGE** (Ekomatsligan) – a challenge between municipalities, counties and regions with the highest percentage purchase of organic food and products.



2011

■ All kindergartens are under the administration of the **DIET UNIT**.



■ Södertälje receives an **HONORARY AWARD** from the WWF (World Wildlife Fund) for its work with food and climate as part of the Earth Hour Challenge, a competition for Swedish municipalities.

■ We are finalists in the **ORGANIC FOOD CHALLENGE** (Ekomatsligan).

2012

■ All schools are under the administration of the **DIET UNIT**.

■ We are **FINALISTS** in the category “Best Environmental Work” in the Arla Golden Cow (Arla Guldko) awards. Arla Golden Cow (Arla Guldko) recognizes outstanding

achievement for by retailers, restaurants and catering facilities in the food industry.

■ We are finalists in the **ORGANIC FOOD CHALLENGE** (Ekomatsligan).

2013

■ Södertälje is selected as a **LEADING EUROPEAN EXAMPLE** by URBACT (a European exchange and learning program promoting sustainable urban development) and begins work on transferring the **DIET FOR A GREEN PLANET** concept to other parts of Europe.



■ We are **FINALIST** in the category “Best Environmental Work” in the Arla Golden Cow (Arla Guldko) awards.

■ Magasin Måltid nominates head of the Diet Unit Sara Jervfors for 2013 **FOOD PERSONALITY OF THE YEAR**.

■ We are finalists in the **ORGANIC FOOD CHALLENGE** (Ekomatsligan).

2014



■ Södertälje municipality is named 2014 **SCHOOL FOOD MUNICIPALITY OF THE YEAR** and Sara Jervfors is named 2014 **FOOD MANAGER OF THE YEAR** by Junior White Guide. Proof that we are onto something important and doing a great job!

■ We are **FINALISTS** in the category “Best Environmental Work” in the Arla Golden Cow (Arla Guldko) awards.

■ Around **90 PERCENT** of all kitchens in kindergartens, schools and elderly care are fully equipped kitchens, able to cook from raw ingredients.

■ Lina Primary School receives an **HONORABLE MENTION** from Martin & Servera for the greatest increase in the percentage of organic food purchased. ■



“I learn new things all the time”

Haidar Kourie has worked in the kitchen at Västergård since June 2013. With no prior kitchen experience, he is now part of a large team of food professionals that cook around 1 200 meals for the students at four different high schools and one kindergarten. Every day.

■ **What does Diet for a Green Planet mean to you?**

It gives me perspective, on how food is produced and about those who do not have access to food. It also makes me think of my daughter and what food and food culture I give her.



■ **What is it like to work with food in Södertälje Municipality?**

Working with food is completely new to me, I learn things all the time. The days are so varied and no two days are ever the same. Working here in Södertälje has really been an eye opener for me. The more I find out, the more I realise that everything is connected when it comes to food and the environment.

Here at Västergård we are very active in communication with the students. We often sit in the dining hall and talk to them. It is great to hear positive comments about the food, and even the negative comments too. This creates meaningful conversation, and I always try to have a twinkle in my eye and have a good laugh when I talk to the children. It really shows – I have seen the wastage from students plates decrease.

■ **Favourite dish on the menu?**

Spaghetti Bolognese is a favourite of the students, I love it too! ■

"We can make our own decisions"

Hanaa Shamsoki and Mirsada Niković work as cooks at Rösberga Early Childhood Center, a centre of 200 children and 50 staff. Hanaa and Mirsada have shared responsibility for the kitchen since August 2013 when it was converted into a full scale working kitchen.

■ **What does Diet for a Green Planet mean to you?**

It means many things – to make everything from scratch, to not waste food and to avoid chemicals and plastics as much as possible, says Hanaa. For us here at Rösberga it also means greater job satisfaction and gives us pride in our work, says Mirsada.

■ **What is it like to work with food in Södertälje Municipality?**

Here we can make our own decisions, says Hanaa and Mirsada together. We decide what is served on the menu. We bake our own bread, we serve a lot of fruit, we have reduced meat and now serve over 8 kinds of salad. The children love the salads. Being responsible for what we serve has made a huge difference, and we feel the support from our leadership at the Diet Unit. The dialogue we share works very well and we often have the possibility to meet other schools to share experiences.

And we try new tastes, says Hanaa. Since we come from different cultures – I am from Iraq and Mirsada is from former Yugoslavia – we enrich each other's work all the time.

■ **Favourite dish on the menu?**

Our homemade meatballs are really good, says Hanaa. Mirsada nods in agreement and mentions how great the fish is. I've actually never seen children eating so much salmon! she says with a laugh. ■



Frequently asked questions

We are asked a lot of questions about our work with food in kindergartens, schools and elderly care. Below are the ones we get asked the most.

■ Children need meat to grow. Why are you reducing meat consumption?

Reducing meat consumption is a critical step in overcoming climate change. Simply put, we must eat less meat if we are to have a positive effect on the environment. In Sweden, meat consumption has increased exponentially, doubling in mass since 1984. Today we eat 87 kg of meat per person, which is much more than we need to.

Children do need protein. Therefore it is important to highlight that we have reduced the amount of meat, not eliminated it. Essential proteins are easily obtained through other food sources as well, for example legumes.

■ Isn't it expensive to buy organic food and products?

We have not received any extra budget to buy ecological food or to carry out the work. Instead, we chose to employ skilled cooks who know how



to handle fresh produce in smart ways, for example by reducing the waste. We also replaced some of the meat with beans, lentils and other vegetables. This is how we have been able to purchase organic and KRAV labelled beef mince.

■ Is the school food nutritious?

Absolutely. We do not see the need to measure the individual nutritional value of the meals, instead we use a tool called “Swedish School

Meals” which measure various nutrients (such as fat, Vitamin D and iron) based on their frequency and amount. We also look at other factors such as the dining hall experience, the presence of teachers and class time-tabling to provide the best food experience possible. Having the children eat is the most important.

When it comes to elderly care however, it is very important to measure nutritional intake.

■ Does the staff have sufficient knowledge and education to serve a Diet for a Green Planet?

Yes. During recent years we have worked very hard to educate our staff. There is at least one professionally trained chef in each kitchen and we offer ongoing professional development to our staff. Our education programs include everything from learning to process game meat to how to use hens meat and more!



"Meat consumption must be reduced if we are to save the environment"

■ **Can you see any positive health effects of your work?**

It is still too early to see any measurable effects on the children's health. However, we know that eating more vegetables and less meat is good for your health. As is eating more vegetables that are free from chemicals and pesticides.

■ **Why doesn't the municipality buy direct from local growers and producers?**

The Swedish Public Procurement Act applies to purchases made by taxpayer funded agencies, e.g. municipalities.

To give preference to locally sourced and grown produce is seen as an act of discrimination under EU law.

■ **My child is very active – how will he/she have enough protein for lunch on the days where only vegetarian meals are served?**

Protein intake is very important for active children. More important however, is the overall energy intake – calories. The vegetarian meals we serve are lacto-ovo-vegetarian, meaning they also contain milk and egg products. Served together with beans and lentils it is

easy to achieve the recommended dietary intake of protein in the meal.

Consider the following example: A 17 year old student who attends an athletic college has a weight of 85 kg and a recommended intake of 23–38 grams of protein at lunch. This is approximately 30 percent of the recommended daily intake. If this student drinks two glasses of milk, eats a cheese sandwich alongside 3 deciliters of pasta with 1 deciliter of beans or lentils plus one egg – he/she will have consumed over 45 grams of protein, more than enough. ■



Looking forward

■ OUR WORK TOWARDS A Diet for a Green

Planet, is constantly evolving and adapting. We have an important responsibility towards the children at our kindergartens, the students at our schools and the residents in our elderly care to continue to serve food that is produced and served in a sustainable manner. We extend this responsibility to each other and the society we live in. We must find ways to produce the food we eat in a manner that does not deplete the earth's resources.

Here are some of the challenges we face working with food:

■ Educational tools

We want to integrate food into the school syllabus in greater depth through subjects such as home economics, environmental studies and sport. School food is a large expense, (the cost of school food is 50 percent higher than the cost of teaching materials, IT and library services) an increased integration with current subjects can generate positive synergies in the economy, pedagogy and health of our society.

■ Educating the whole family

In order for our work to have a holistic and long term effect we must have the students on-board as active collaborators. It is also incredibly important that as many parents as possible understand what we are trying to achieve and the effects it creates. Parents create the developmental environment for children that influence their behaviours and habits. This is why we invest a lot of time and energy in parental education, communication and dialogue. For example, during March we hosted parent education events at Rosenborgskolan, where we cooked and shared meals together in the spirit of a Diet for a Green Planet.

■ Local produce – how to increase self sufficiency

In Södertälje we have a fantastic opportunity to create a vibrant urban and rural connection. There are many local producers who grow organic produce – it is these people we want to support and encourage! A thriving local food economy would benefit the entire region of Södertälje, this is why we are constantly looking for ways to support our farmers, producers and parents close to home. ■



This is the Diet Unit in Södertälje

■ **THE DIET UNIT** is responsible for all the public meals served in Södertälje. That means all the food in kindergartens, schools and elderly care. Since 2010 our work has been guided by Södertälje municipality's Diet Policy – a holistically based political document that sets guidelines for the work with food within the municipality.



NUMBER OF KITCHENS WITHIN THE DIET UNIT, APPROX.

90

WE ARE MORE THAN
200
PEOPLE WORKING
IN THE DIET UNIT

■ **SINCE 2010**, we have developed the concept of a Diet for a Green Planet – to serve tasty and nutritious food that also has positive effects on the Baltic Sea and the surrounding environment. An example of this work is that we prioritise the purchase of organic products. In 2013 49.5 percent of all food purchased was organic. Our goal is to purchase 60 percent of organic food in 2014.



■ **THE DIET UNIT LEADERSHIP GROUP** consists of the Head of Diet Unit and four unit managers responsible for different units (a unit is a kindergarten, school or nursing home). You can find us at Bangatan in Södertälje, opposite the city hall (Stadshuset). If you have any questions or comments about the work we do, please contact us at this address: kostenheten@sodertalje.se.



NUMBER OF MEALS SERVED EVERY DAY, APPROX.

24 000



Connecting cities
Building successes



URBACT is a European exchange and learning programme promoting sustainable urban development. It enables cities to work together to develop solutions to major urban challenges and helps them to develop pragmatic solutions that are new and sustainable, and that integrate economic, social and environmental dimensions. www.urbact.eu/dietforgreenplanet