

# Social Gastronomy for Sustainable Food System

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## Abstract

Today's way of food production and consumption causes depletion of natural resources, environmental pollution, climate change, loss of biodiversity and injustice. For this reason, sustainable food systems that need to be created aim to make food production fairer, more efficient, and more environmentally friendly considering the principle of environmental, social, and economic sustainability at all stages from food production to consumption. An important approach that contributes to these systems is social gastronomy, and chefs working in this field play an important role. It can be easily said that social gastronomy chefs play a critical role in promoting sustainability and environmental stewardship through their culinary practices and advocacy work. By incorporating sustainable practices into their work, they can help to create a more equitable and environmentally friendly food system for all. Therefore, to understand sustainable food production systems, it is necessary to define social gastronomy and the chefs, who are also defined as social entrepreneurs working in this field.

**Keywords:** Food Security; Sustainable; Agriculture; Nutrition; Food education; Food system

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## Mini Review

While some countries in the world are struggling with the problem of obesity, even basic food becomes a luxury in some countries or regions, and consumers seriously compromise both the quantity and quality of products. Whether it is a developed or a developing country, for many reasons (not being able to eat properly due to time constraints or economic reasons, etc.), healthy nutrition and even nutrition have now been replaced by the anxiety of feeding the stomach for many people. As Fanza et al. [1] mentioned, our global food systems are at a crucial turning point, and there is a growing interest in transforming these food systems in ways that benefit the environment, provide healthy and safe nutrition, provide fair wages and livelihoods, and prosper. In late 2021, the world met at the UN Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) to discuss and commit to this transformation. Following the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit (FSS), the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub assumed key coordination functions to bring together food systems knowledge and expertise from different support regions to support national progress on the Sustainable Development Goals in response to country priorities ([www.unfoodsystemshub.org](http://www.unfoodsystemshub.org)). Also, the Biennial Work Plan 2022-2023 was prepared and implemented ([www.sfc.fao.org](http://www.sfc.fao.org)). In this context, it is seen that the focus is on the catalytic role of sustainable food systems in reaching the sustainable development goals, and great efforts are made to raise awareness on this issue.

Building sustainable food systems has become a dominant effort aimed at guiding our food systems and policies towards better-adjusted goals and improved societal well-being (Allen and Prospero, 2016). As FAO [2] defined, a Sustainable Food System (SFS) is a food system that delivers food security and nutrition for all in such a way that the economic, social, and environmental bases to generate food security and nutrition for future generations are not compromised. This means that: -It is profitable throughout (economic sustainability); -It has broad-based benefits for society (social sustainability); and-It has a positive or neutral impact on the natural environment (environmental sustainability). At this point the social gastronomy

movement, which started with the aim of creating nutrition opportunities for countries, regions or social segments that have serious problems in accessing food, has started to be important for societies with many positive effects. Therefore, gastronomy is now implemented by practitioners as a phenomenon that goes beyond serving a plate of food and is discussed in the academy.

The gastronomy industry optimizes the environmental and social benefits of social entrepreneurship [3-5], social innovation [6,7], sustainability [8]. It also works by focusing on improving local quality of life and creating social value. Additional specific benefits of social gastronomy entrepreneurship include communication with local people, preservation and distribution of local food products and local food culture, minimizing food waste, promoting food sharing platforms, but providing more employment and integration opportunities in F&B businesses for immigrants, minority groups and non-local entrepreneurs [9]. Social gastronomy [10] involves a wide range of activities, including community gardening, food education, cooking classes, and the creation of social enterprises that employ and empower marginalized groups. It also includes initiatives that focus on food waste reduction, food recovery, and the promotion of sustainable agricultural practices. It is possible to say that the social gastronomy movement, which is considered within the tourism sector as an economic return, is still a new field. It is said that after the gastromotiva movement that David Hertz started in 2006 ([www.gastromotiva.org](http://www.gastromotiva.org)), the main interest in academic terms started in 2015 [11]. In this social gastronomy movement, chefs also stand out as social entrepreneurs and individuals creating social innovations. Andres and Wolffe (2018) indicates this reality as "A dish do not only consist of some ingredients prepared and served together, but it is also the story of who you are, the source of your pride, the foundations of your family and your community. Cooking does not it is only nurturing, it is empowering" [12]. They bring their culinary expertise and creativity to the table, developing recipes and menus that reflect the local culture and food traditions. They also work closely with local farmers and food producers to source high-quality ingredients that are sustainably produced and help to support the local economy. In addition to their culinary skills, chefs involved in social gastronomy are often also advocates for social justice and community empowerment. They use their platform and influence to raise awareness about social issues, and to promote initiatives that improve access to healthy, nutritious food for all members of the community.

In this context, chefs have many duties as a leader, team manager and artist with their creative aspects. Chefs can contribute in many ways to achieve the goals of social gastronomy. For example, they could open social restaurants that cater to the poor or provide education to local communities about healthy and sustainable food. They can also play a leading role in reducing food waste and promoting sustainable agriculture. In addition, chefs support the cultural dimension of the social gastronomy movement. They can increase intercultural understanding by learning and sharing the dishes of their home country and other cultures around the world. This can help preserve traditions about food and foster dialogue

and connections between communities. Social gastronomy focuses not only on food preparation and serving, but also on food production and agricultural activities. Therefore, food production is very important in social gastronomy. Food production contributes to the production of healthy, sustainable, and culturally compatible food, which is one of the main objectives of social gastronomy. The involvement of local communities in food production can bring many benefits, such as food security, economic development, and environmental protection. The contribution of food production to local communities can increase social welfare by supporting local economic development. Social gastronomy also advocates the promotion of sustainable agricultural practices and the realization of food production without harming natural resources. Food production can contribute to maintaining the sustainable use of natural resources, including water and land resources. Therefore, sustainable food encourages the consumption of healthy and nutritious foods. While social gastronomy helps people access healthy and sustainable foods, it also contributes to the spread of healthy eating habits.

In line with the general principles put forward by FAO [13] in 2014, three basic variables of sustainability are discussed for a sustainable food system. In this context, the intersection of economic and social impact is considered inclusive growth, the intersection of economic and environmental impact is green growth, and the intersection of social impact and environmental impact is eco-social progress. In these areas, chefs also have important duties for sustainable food production. At the same time, these chefs who take up social entrepreneurship with their entrepreneurial identity, make social innovations and carry out social gastronomy movement, for example, can create more effective income models, ensure the continuity of cultural movements, provide healthy nutrition for a healthy society, include disadvantaged groups in production, can implement measures to reduce carbon footprint and they can work for biodiversity. With this approach, we see that different chefs in different countries of the world are working for a sustainable food system within the social gastronomy movement. Since 2016, these chefs have been nominated for the Basque Culinary Awards, which was established with the motto transforming society through gastronomy and mediate social change through gastronomy ([www.basqueculinaryworldprize.com](http://www.basqueculinaryworldprize.com)). As a result, the social gastronomy movement aims to produce healthy, sustainable, and culturally appropriate foods to meet the food needs of societies by emphasizing the sustainability and social benefits of food production. It is possible to say that the results of the social gastronomy movement have a wide impact on the concept of sustainability. These positive effects created economically, environmentally, and socially have a critical importance for a more livable world.

## Conclusion

Overall, for these purposes and reasons, we should consider food production and all kinds of food presentation in the context of social gastronomy as an important way of a sustainable food system and increase the number of chefs with entrepreneurial characteristics, which we can define as the most important actor.

Because, both for today and for the future, the protection of healthy nutrition and natural resources is a priority. It should be noted that social gastronomy is an innovative approach to food that brings people together, promotes social inclusion and helps create a more sustainable and equitable food system.

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