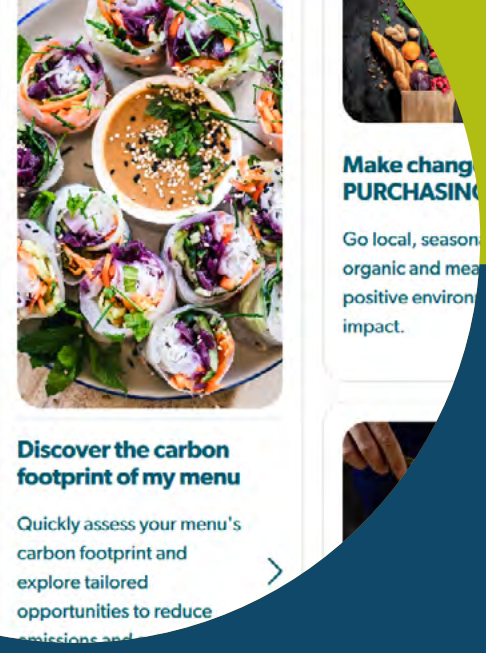

COOL FOOD PRO

Cool Food Pro Impact Report

April 2024 – May 2026

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Executive Summary

With around 25% of carbon emissions coming from the food we eat and how it is produced, the **Cool Food Pro calculator is an invaluable tool in measuring and communicating the environmental benefits of sustainability initiatives within catering operations.**

Over the past two years the Soil Association's environmental impact and savings calculator, supported by Deloitte, has shown the value of **impactful data across five key areas: serving seasonal food, offering less and better meat, purchasing organic, buying local, and reducing food and plastic waste.** This has helped foster a collective understanding on how seemingly small changes can make significant environmental and economic savings.

The Cool Food Pro programme team have been working with caterers across the industry, producing tangible results from the calculator and supporting education programme. The impact savings over the past two years have **firmly positioned Cool Food Pro as an essential tool** in understanding how to make catering practices more sustainable.

Key impact data from the calculator identifies cross sector savings of; **1413 tonnes of CO_2e., 87 million litres of water and over 26km² of biodiversity through reduced deforestation**. These savings are respectively equivalent to; **176 million smartphones** charged from 0% to 100%, the **daily water footprint of about 250,000 people** in Western countries, and approximately the **size of Oxford city centre in biodiversity gains.**

Significant case studies include; **Food Sense Wales** who used the tool to measure the impact of their Welsh Veg in Schools project – switching out over 200,000 portions of imported veg for local and organic, **Norse Catering** who replaced a percentage of meat content in their dishes with vegetable protein, saving 42 tonnes of CO2e, 5 thousand litres of water, and over 2 thousand metres of biodiversity across 14 schools, and **The University of Nottingham** reducing their food waste by 23% resulting in costs savings of over £1000.

With **water usage, biodiversity and carbon emissions at the forefront of the climate agenda**, the impacts of a tool such as Cool Food Pro are clear. Through **providing transparent and accessible data on catering operations and menu analysis**, caterers can be supported to **make climate critical improvements to their operations**, benefiting the entire food system. This improves outcomes for UK farmers and producers, refines the food on the plate and reduces the environmental impact on our planet.

Introduction

Food production creates a quarter of the world's greenhouse gas emissions. Supporting the food and drink industry to take practical steps to reduce their environmental impact is crucial to the transformation of our food system and the protection of our planet.

Cool Food Pro supports caterers and food service organisations to measure, understand and reduce the environmental footprint of their food operations through an environmental savings calculator, supporting resources and educational delivery.

Deloitte, as part of its Beyond Value Chain Mitigation (BVCM) programme, provided a mix of pro bono expertise and grant funding. Over a period of two years ending in May 2026, experts from Deloitte digital, creative and sustainability teams worked on Cool Food Pro to update the calculator with ingredient-level environmental impact data, enhance the user experience for food providers, and increase the educational reach of the project. Deloitte's BVCM programme supports a portfolio of innovative solutions across sectors with the aim of accelerating towards a low carbon society.

This report outlines the environmental and educational impact achieved during that two-year period, highlighting progress against key milestones including carbon emissions reduction, engagement and reach, calculator enhancements, workshop delivery and resource development.

Overview

The Cool Food Pro environmental calculator and educational support programme help save carbon and water, improve the earth's water quality and increase biodiversity by supporting food providers to move to more sustainable working practices.

It works across five key areas:

Through its digital environmental savings calculator and educational support, the programme guides organisations to measure and reduce their food-related environmental impact, driving systems change across the sector.

Project objectives

Cool Food Pro aims to:

- Encourage adoption of more sustainable menus and procurement
- Support food waste management action plans
- Improve understanding of the environmental impact of food through education and capacity-building activities
- Promote evidence-based decision making through environmental footprint measurement
- Strengthen industry collaboration and knowledge sharing

Key achievements

1412.99T
CO_2e saved

87387748.93L
Water saved

26204.85m²
Biodiversity gained

442
New calculator users

300
New UK-based calculator users

127
New French language users

15
International users

20
Workshops delivered

2786
Participants reached

12
Events attended

542.5% increase
LinkedIn impressions

40% increase
LinkedIn followers

Over the funding period, Cool Food Pro enabled caterers to save*:

1,413
tonnes of CO_2e

87,387,749
litres of water

26,205m²
of biodiversity preserved

This is an average saving of 3 tonnes of CO_2e, 198,000 litres of water, and 59 m^2 of biodiversity per organisation.These savings are generated across the five key areas, covering procurement, meal formulation, and waste practices.

Savings are tracked against individual targets, set by the organisation. These can be targets relating to individual products or full menus.

Cool Food Pro is designed to meet the needs of caterers and food providers with varying levels of time, capacity and resources. The calculator provides accurate meaningful data, whether an organisation wants to map the environmental impact of their entire operation, or to measure the impact of changing supplier for a single ingredient. Online and in-person support was given throughout the reporting period to help caterers identify and implement the most appropriate changes for their organisations. The environmental impact and savings data generated by the calculator contributes to a wider programme of food systems change.

The calculator offers a variety of metrics to give a comprehensive view of environmental impact beyond just carbon emissions. While CO2e. emissions and savings are always displayed, the five impact areas generate additional metrics. For instance, the menu analyser offers data on water and biodiversity impact; the organic area provides information on water quality and species protection; and the waste reduction feature shows estimated financial savings.

*Based on data collected by the Cool Food Pro team to achieve contractual milestones agreed directly with Deloitte.

Case study 1

Procurement

Welsh Veg in Schools used Cool Food Pro to generate impact data for their research pilot. The project swapped 200,000 portions of conventionally grown or imported vegetables in over 200 schools for local, organically grown vegetables. Using Cool Food Pro, Welsh Veg in Schools calculated that the swap saved 4 tonnes of CO2e. over one year. The calculator also showed that sourcing organic vegetables from the participating farms improved water-quality impacts due to the reduced run off from synthetic pesticides. The change also supported an estimated 35% improvement in species protection. The calculations demonstrated in their 2025 report that if the project scaled up the number of local growers providing produce to schools from 8 to 100, the savings could reach 60 tonnes of CO2e. a year. The data from the Cool Food Pro calculator has supported the continuation and expansion of the project, illustrating its purpose as a tool for advocacy as well as to meet sustainability goals.

Moving to a more local, sustainable supply chain, which is less prone to disruption, strengthens British catering, food production and farming. It supports the local economy and allows organisations to better meet the demands of changing regulations such as the new School Food Standards.

The benefit of requiring producers to go through organic certification is that, without having to spend time collecting sustainability metrics, certain sustainability benefits are well researched and documented and can be attributed to organic produce. Cool Food Pro[39] is a carbon savings calculator tool designed for the catering sector to calculate environmental impact. It has been used here to calculate the carbon saving made when local organic produce replaces worldwide and European non-organic:

> Cool Food pro has been really useful for us to tell the story of how much carbon saving and biodiversity gains Welsh Veg in Schools has helped to create through Local Authorities switching from non-local non-organic to local organic. We also use it to model possible future impact with scaling.
>
> **Amber Wheeler, Coordinator and Lead Researcher, Welsh Veg in Schools**

Case study 2

Recipe modifications

Norse Catering replaced 10g of beef with a locally grown sustainable pea protein in one of the beef meals served in schools. During the reporting period, they saved 41.78 tonnes of CO2e, 5,380,406.62 litres of water, and 2,301m2 of biodiversity across 14 schools. These results show how small changes can deliver a significant environmental impact over a sustained period and when rolled out across multiple settings.

Case study 3

Food waste reduction

The University of Nottingham reduced their food waste by 23% across 11 sites over one year, saving 1.03 tonnes of CO2e. and approximately £1367 during the reporting period. The university worked closely with their catering partners to better understand food waste across their operations, identify key areas of avoidable waste, and implement practical measures to reduce it.

Alongside operational changes they also engaged students through awareness campaigns and incentives that encouraged them to consider food waste and make more sustainable food choices. The combination of data, operational improvements, and student engagement helped create a shared focus on reducing waste, impacting positively on budgets, and improving sustainability outcomes.

> "The Cool Food Pro calculator was an invaluable tool for the University of Nottingham, enabling us to clearly measure and communicate the environmental benefits of our sustainability initiatives. By working closely with our catering teams and engaging students through targeted campaigns, we achieved a 23% reduction in food waste and increased plant-based menu offerings by 25%. The ability to quantify the associated carbon savings was instrumental in demonstrating the impact of these actions and strengthening support for sustainable practices across our campus community."

Hema Jankee, Senior Operations Manager, The University of Nottingham

New user sign ups

442
Total new sign-ups

300
Total new UK sign-ups

127
Total new French language sign-ups

15
International sign-ups

Overview

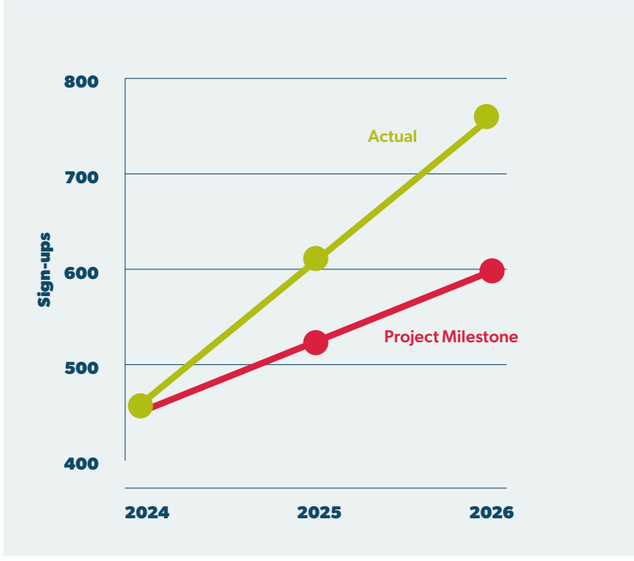
Cool Food Pro's growing number of sign-ups and active users show sustained engagement across the foodservice sector.

During the reporting period, new users have turned to the calculator for practical, credible ways to measure and reduce the environmental impact of their menus and operations. Deloitte set a project milestone of an increase of 140 UK sign-ups from a starting baseline of 459. This was exceeded by 160 additional registrations, with the 300 sign-ups representing a 65.4% increase from the baseline and a 214% completion of the milestone over the two years.

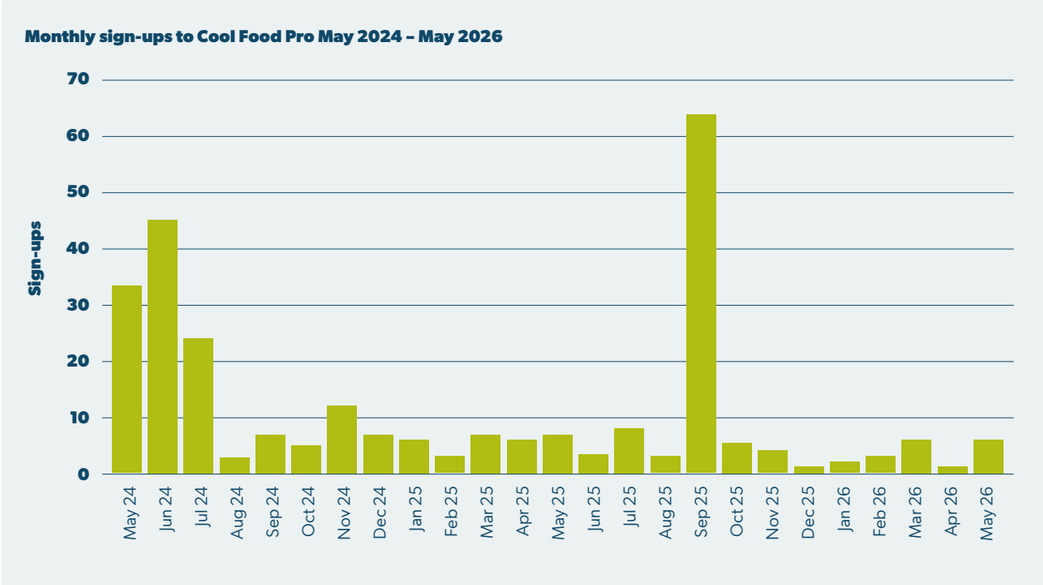
This growth has been driven by project outreach including workshops, events, partner networks, ambassador activity and direct engagement with caterers. Users value the calculator's practical focus, clear savings outputs and supporting resources, which help teams identify where change is possible and build knowledge to drive change.

Interreg France (Channel Manche) England
European Regional Development Fund

The fact that the calculator is free to access, (secured through Interreg funding until March 2028) remains a key driver for engagement. In a challenging operating environment, Cool Food Pro offers a low financial investment route into carbon measurement and reduction for organisations of different sizes and sustainability maturity. Organisations also value the breadth of metrics reported on in addition to carbon emissions, which sets it apart from other products on the market.



Overall, increased sign-ups along with sustained user engagement shows that Cool Food Pro is reaching new audiences and converting that interest into meaningful involvement. This creates a strong foundation for continued impact and collaboration.



Commentary

A targeted engagement campaign helped increase Cool Food Pro sign-ups by reaching caterers and food providers through a mix of established networks, sector events, partner communications and direct outreach.

This included organisations already engaged with Soil Association programmes such as Food for Life Served Here and Green Kitchen Standard, as well as local authority caterers, large contract caterers and suppliers, including Bury Council caterers, Norse Group and Dunsters' Farm.

Sign-up spikes early in the reporting period reflect an increase in team capacity, which enabled more direct outreach to potential leads. Interest also grew between May and July 2024 through the offer of educational workshops using newly created resources co-designed and developed with Deloitte. During this period, Bury Council caterers signed up 55 schools to monitor and reduce food waste. A further spike of 64 new sign-ups in September 2025 was driven by engagement with a large contract caterer - who registered 51 school sites – and a Cool Food Pro webinar launching the new menu analyser and demonstrating its features.

Events played an important role in extending the project's reach. Attendance at the Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges (EAUC) conference generated new interest from the further and higher education sector, with users accessing the calculator and supporting resources.

Speaking opportunities at sector network meetings also helped convert awareness into action. Presentations and discussions with groups such as the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) and Sustainability Support for Further Education (SS4FE) created opportunities to demonstrate the calculator, share learning and encourage new users to register.

Communications activity reinforced this outreach across multiple channels, including the dedicated LinkedIn page, the Soil Association Sustainable Catering newsletter, Sustainable Food Places networks and direct email engagement. Together, these activities increased awareness and supported sign-ups from local authorities, independent food providers and large contract caterers, demonstrating the value of combining trusted networks with practical, targeted engagement.

St Mary's University Catering Team

> I'm glad we decided to join Cool Food Pro. It's our responsibility as caterers to care for people and planet. If you're thinking of using the calculator, I'd recommend it. You can calculate your food waste and impact in a positive way and all for free.
>
> **Nikhil Santos, Catering and Bar Manager, St Mary's University.**

International sign ups

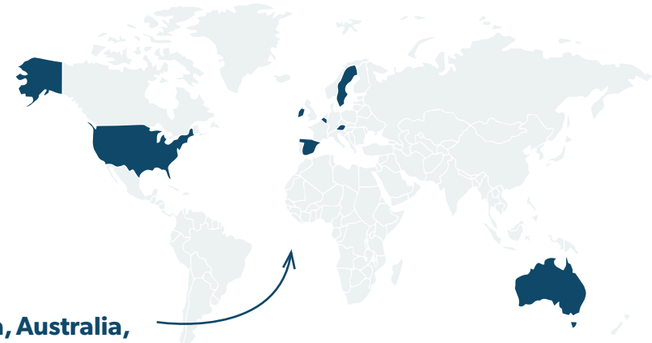
The project continues to expand its international reach and influence.

15 International users

7 Countries represented

14 International organisations registered

The initial Cool Food Pro project, delivered from April 2021 to 2023, was led by French and British partner organisations and created a bilingual calculator and website in French and English. The bilingual platform is a key feature, enabling users to easily access the calculator and supporting resources in both languages. As a result, most calculator sign-ups have originated from France and the UK. During the reporting period there have been 15 sign-ups outside of these two countries, predominantly from Spain and Australia.



Wider geographic reach: Austria, Australia, Spain, Ireland, Belgium, Sweden, USA

New international markets reached

Project partners and external stakeholders have helped extend Cool Food Pro's international reach.

Engagement with contacts within NHS foundation trusts has generated interest overseas, including from an Associate Professor and paediatric intensivist leading sustainability work at Erasmus MC Sophia Children's Hospital in Rotterdam.

Cool Food Pro has also established links in Ireland with Dundalk Institute of Technology (DKiT), which secured external funding to train its Culinary BSc students in using Cool Food Pro and adopting more sustainable working practices. The Cool Food Pro and Soil Association Food training teams worked with the Department of Hospitality Studies at DKiT to design a practical two-day training course delivered on site for departmental staff and students. This collaboration with university staff provided a valuable opportunity to share knowledge about sustainability practices beyond the UK.

> "I would like to thank you all for delivering such engaging talks and sessions. It was a fantastic opportunity for our students and staff to deepen their understanding of sustainability in cooking which is an essential perspective for the next generation of chefs.

Diako Khodaei, Assistant Lecturer, Dundalk Institute of Technology

International partners

In addition to the new international relationship developed with DKiT, Cool Food Pro has maintained positive working relationships with the French project partner organisations Universite de Bretagne Occidentale (UBO) MAB29 and LABOCEA, collaborating on all aspects of project delivery throughout the reporting period.

Educational delivery

Cool Food Pro's educational resources and workshops are designed to raise awareness among staff and customers about the environmental impact of food production and consumption, while giving food service professionals practical tools and knowledge to reduce that impact.

20
Total workshops delivered

2,786
Total participants

Year One Delivery

In year one, Deloitte supported the co-design and delivery of new interactive resources for educational settings with a focus on food waste reduction, using seasonal produce and organic food and farming. The resources were tested at three sites: two catered by Caterlink, (Food for Life Served Here Silver certified caterer), and one by Bury Council Caterer, (Food for Life Served Here Gold certified). The testing phase reached 284 school children and staff, and the resources were reviewed and updated based on user feedback.

Test sites

1. **St Stephens C of E Primary Bury**
   School | Bury CC
2. **Poplar Primary School London**
   School | Caterlink
3. **Beecholme Primary School London**
   School | Caterlink

> "The children gained a solid understanding of the impact of food waste on climate change and were engaged throughout the session. The lesson was highly engaging, with many children actively participating by asking and answering questions. It might be helpful in the future to include more opportunities for them to discuss ideas with a partner, especially for those with English as an additional language. This can help them clarify their thoughts, as some may feel too shy to ask an adult directly. This workshop provided a fantastic opportunity for the children to connect with the community and learn important concepts around food waste, encouraging them to make positive changes from an early age.

Sahra Raja, Class Teacher, Beecholme Primary School.

“

The class as a whole learnt from the session and had a clear understanding of where food comes from and how it impacts our planet. It was great to hear a suggestion for a school committee on food waste and composting from one of the pupils at the end of the session. The lesson was really engaging, specific terms and ideas relating to food waste and the environment were explained well to the pupils. Very effective, the puzzle was fun and engaging, the powerpoint informative and set the scene well for the activity.

Alice Brealy, Nutritionist, Caterlink

Following the test period, the workshop activities were refined in response to observer and user feedback and were then rolled out to nine additional sites across sectors in the UK. Deloitte’s grant support enabled free in person delivery, facilitating access to a wider range of settings.

Roll out sites

Skelton Primary
Caterer: Hutchisons

Heaton Park Primary
Caterer: Bury Council

Walsall College
Caterer: In house

Milton Keynes College
Caterer: In house

St Johns Primary
Caterer: Walsall Council

St Marys University Twickenham
Caterer: In house

The University of Nottingham
Caterer: In house

Earth Day
Workplace

De Montfort University
Caterer: Chartwells

Year two delivery

In Year two, the focus shifted to developing resources for adult audiences in colleges, universities, and workplaces. Deloitte Digital and the Cool Food Pro team co-designed three digital resources: an interactive drag and drop game on seasonality, an interactive card game on organic food and farming, and a sustainable meal builder. The prototypes were tested in three sites, with a second version then rolled out across three further settings. The resources are free for calculator users, and easy to access and deliver, helping to increase reach and impact while strengthening understanding of the link between food and the environment. Designed to be fun and interactive, they are suitable for both adults and younger audiences.

“

The new games are very engaging and appealing to the students, with lots of great initiatives and incentives.

Daniel Fitzhugh, lecturer in Culinary Arts, Northampton College

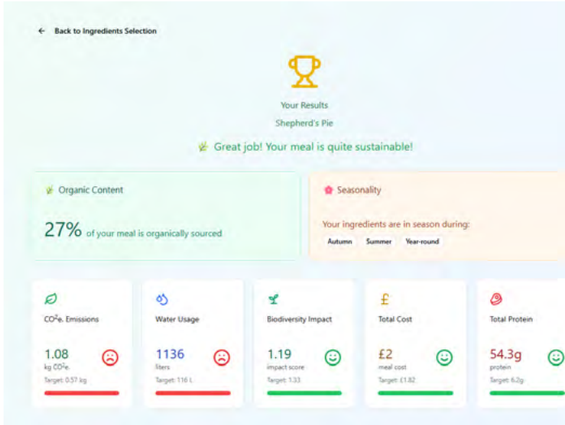
“

The students really valued the practical insights and hands-on learning over the two days. It’s great to see sustainability being brought to life in such an engaging way.

Dr Kevin Burns, Head of the Department of Hospitality Studies School of Business and Humanities, DKiT

Test sites

1. **Northampton College**
   Caterer: In house
2. **DKiT**
   Caterer: In house
3. **SWYFT**
   NHS Trust Caterer: In house



Roll out sites

1. **Eat Curious**
   Supplier
2. **Soil Association Food**
   Training team
3. **The Bull Inn**
   Organic pub

Food waste pop-up events

Milton Keynes College

The first event was delivered with commis chef apprenticeship students and staff at Milton Keynes College. Students learned about sustainable catering and food waste reduction with the Cool Food Pro team, taking part in a range of educational activities.

As part of the session, students prepared dishes using surplus food, including onion soup with potato skin crisps. At lunchtime, they shared their learning and offered samples of the dishes to staff and other students in the college's brasserie restaurant.

Northampton College

The second food waste event took place in year two with culinary arts students at Northampton College. The Cool Food Pro team delivered an in-class session on sustainable catering practices using the newly developed digital resources.

At lunchtime, the team hosted a stand to highlight the importance of reducing food waste. The college catering team prepared dishes using repurposed ingredients, including nasi goreng made with leftover breakfast items, while culinary students gave out free samples and explained the value of food waste reduction.

Several food suppliers also took part. The college now hopes to make the event an annual activity, supporting both learning and practical experience around more sustainable food choices.

Webinars

To expand reach across the food service sector, Cool Food Pro delivered two webinars during the reporting period.

In Year one the webinar provided a practical overview and demonstration of the calculator's new menu analyser. In Year two, the focus shifted to sourcing and serving more seasonal produce.

Together, the webinars helped extend Cool Food Pro's visibility, and to position it as a credible tool and education programme for catering teams, sustainability leaders and food service decision-makers.

Attendees represented a broad cross-section of the sector, including:

- local government and public health teams
- NHS Foundation Trusts
- schools, colleges and universities
- food partnerships
- local authority and contract caterers

99 Attendees

78 Organisations reached

Partnerships

Attendance at events strengthened partnerships, raised awareness of the environmental calculator and furthered understanding of the education support programme. This led to an extended and established network across the sector and the adoption of more sustainable catering practices.

Cool Food Pro attended a range of industry events, including The School Food People (LACA) conferences in 2024 and 2025. Here the team connected with key partners such as NHS England, local authority caterers and suppliers. Targeted engagement with key suppliers, including Lentils. helped strengthen the ambassador scheme which was launched in 2022 to increase the reach and awareness of Cool Food Pro. Identifying aligned partners at LACA conferences enabled tailored recommendations to food providers that support more sustainable menus and practices.

Collaborative attendance at ScotHot with the Food for Life Scotland team increased Cool Food Pro's visibility across the Scottish food sector, as well as communications through Food for Life Scotland channels. Networking with exhibitors such as Notpla and National Association of Care Caterers (NACC) led to an invitation to exhibit at the 2025 NACC national conference and to Notpla subscribing to the Soil Association sustainable supplier scheme.

Speaking at both in-person and online Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) regional events helped engage local authority caterers, including a large site in Scotland, leading to sign-up and active use of the Cool Food Pro calculator.

Exhibiting at the Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges (EAUC) provided an opportunity to demonstrate how Cool Food Pro aligns with the association's aims and values, while connecting with sustainability leaders and catering managers across further and higher education.

12
Events attended

61
Partnerships established

Association for Science and Discovery Centres

Strategic engagement with the Association of Science and Discovery Centres, including participation in its annual conference in London, opened access to a national network of education specialists, researchers and science centre catering managers. Cool Food Pro used the platform to position sustainable food provision as part of a wider culture of environmental responsibility, helping science and discovery centres align catering decisions with their education and sustainability objectives and decarbonisation plans.

Speaking opportunities

Earth Day

A workshop to present the Cool Food Pro calculator was hosted at Spear House (Soil Association's Bristol HQ) in April 2025. This gave an opportunity to demonstrate the digital platform and supporting educational resources to a group of employees from Deloitte. Approximately 50 people attended, including staff who had supported development on both Cool Food Pro and wider Soil Association collaborative work such as the Food Systems Map.

This meeting strengthened relationships between Cool Food Pro, The Soil Association and Deloitte, and helped develop awareness and understanding of the calculator, educational resources and its purpose. Deloitte employees who attended this meeting supported further development of Cool Food Pro resources in year two, demonstrating the value of the workshop.

Strategic partnerships

NHS England

A strategic partnership with NHS England developed over the two-year reporting period, building on an existing relationship between the Soil Association Food business development team and NHS England's Net Zero Food team.

This led to an introduction to the Senior Sustainability Manager for the Northeast and Yorkshire region, who recognised the value of Cool Food Pro and was keen to explore how the programme could support hospital trusts across the region.

The partnership created a route to engage NHS foundation trust teams already adopting sustainable procurement across their catering practice. This included delivering staff training for catering, facilities and data teams, and encouraging sign-up to both Cool Food Pro and the Food for Life Served Here accreditation.

Staff training sessions; co-delivered with the Food for Life Programme team in West Northamptonshire, also helped raise awareness of the impact data Cool Food Pro can provide for NHS Foundation Trusts in the locality. This engagement led to further involvement with the food and facilities team from the local Trust, who attended subsequent webinars and signed up to the calculator.

The NHS England Net Zero Insights Manager continues to engage with Cool Food Pro, attending the webinar on seasonality and using the calculator to demonstrate retrospective impact.

Sustainability Support for Education

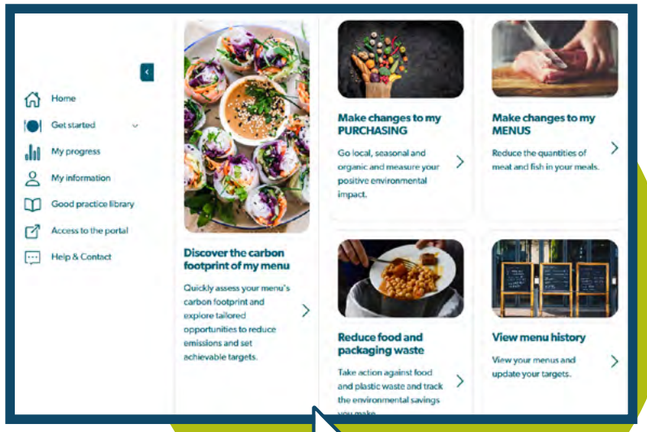
A key partnership with Sustainability Support for Education (SSE) was developed during the first year of the reporting period. SSE is part of a group of projects commissioned by the Department for Education (DfE) to support delivery of the government's sustainability and climate change strategy for education and children's services. Cool Food Pro provided a range of relevant resources, including the food waste pack, which were quality assured by SSE and aligned with practical actions to help schools meet the strategy requirements. The inclusion of Cool Food Pro resources on the SSE hub continues to support education settings globally to work more sustainably, helping them take action on climate education, operations and procurement.

New development

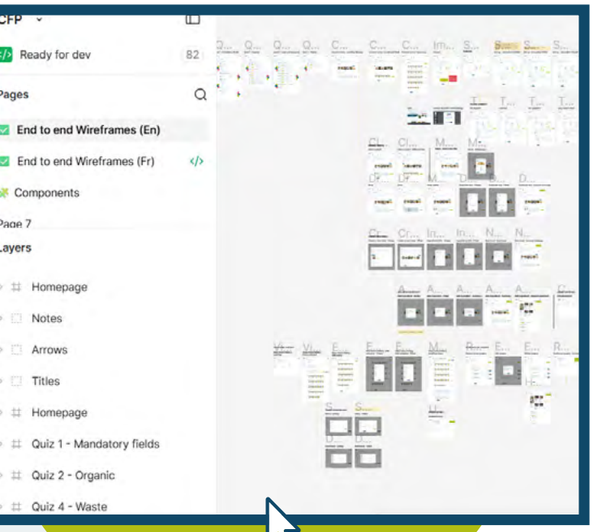
Calculator enhancements

With financial and digital support from Deloitte, Cool Food Pro has introduced a significant package of new calculator features. The most important development is the full-menu analyser, created in response to user feedback asking for a way to calculate the current CO_2e., water and biodiversity impact of complete menus.

The new functionality enables caterers to build bespoke meals and menus, assess their overall environmental impact, and set targets across different impact areas. This means users can now measure both their baseline impact and the savings achieved through changes to procurement, menu design and waste practices.



User-led design and accessibility



The menu analyser was developed collaboratively. The Cool Food Pro team worked with Deloitte to interview existing users, create prototypes and design user journeys. They also managed development of the new features and produced the accompanying open-access methodology and user guide. Web agency Manifesto delivered the technical work, managed by the Cool Food Pro team.

Key features

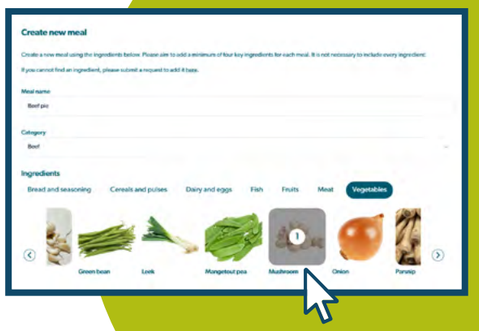
- Users with limited time or data can use existing Cool Food Pro meal examples to generate quick indicative figures.
- Users who need more accurate results can use the "request ingredients" feature to create more bespoke meals.
- A comprehensive user guide is available through the calculator and website portal to support use of the new features.

Market position and value

The additional functionality strengthens Cool Food Pro's position against comparable products such as Klimato and Foodsteps. Its value comes from a combination of practical benefits:

- a broad range of environmental metrics, including but not limited to carbon;
- flexible options for caterers with different levels of time, data and resource;
- meaningful impact data to inform menu planning, sustainability reporting and decision-making;
- free access, with the calculator fully funded until 2028.

Together, these strengths make Cool Food Pro an accessible and credible tool for caterers seeking reliable environmental impact data, regardless of their budget or internal capacity.



Methodology and data development

The new menu analyser combines and significantly expands the methodology and data used in the earlier version of the calculator.

It draws on Agribalyse, a comprehensive open-source database for food environmental data, which provides life-cycle analysis data for CO2e. emissions across thousands of ingredients in non-organic production.

Cool Food Pro carried out additional calculations using Pieper, Michalke and Gaugler (2020)[1] and Pouil et al. (2024)[2] to produce meaningful estimates for organic production. The methodology also uses ADEME's 2020 report "Soil, energy and the carbon footprints of food" [3], alongside its Eco-score system, to identify typical production locations for different food types and estimate associated transport emissions.

In line with Cool Food Pro's holistic approach to environmental impact, the calculator now looks beyond CO_2e to include water consumption and biodiversity impact for every ingredient. This gives users a broader and more practical view of the environmental consequences of food choices.

The updated dataset draws on a range of recognised sources:

Water consumption for non-animal products:
Data was taken from Mekonnen and Hoekstra (2010)[4], who produced a comprehensive dataset covering specific ingredients and the 14 main crop categories.

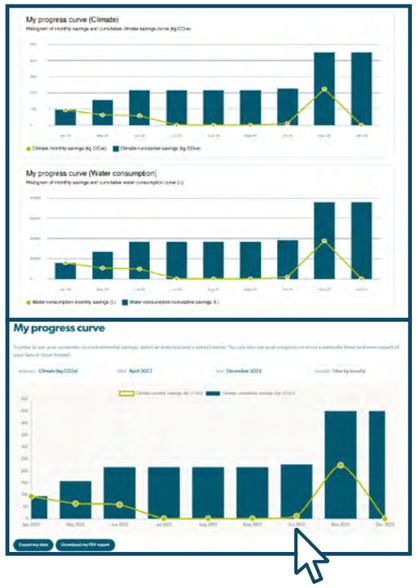
Water consumption for animal products:
Cool Food Pro used calculations from the Water Footprint Network (2025)[5].

Biodiversity impact:
Data was taken from Pendrill et al. (2019)[6], who calculated the overall percentage and hectares of deforestation linked to different products.

Cool Food Pro has also updated and expanded the information available for existing ingredients, using a newer version of Agribalyse alongside additional sources. New ingredients have been added in response to user demand; for example, wild venison has been included to reflect its increasing use across public sector supply chains.

Together, these improvements give Cool Food Pro a wide-ranging and reliable environmental impact dataset, covering an industry-leading breadth of metrics and ingredients.

Reporting and visualisation features



Cool Food Pro has also worked closely with Deloitte to create new reporting features and visualisations for calculator users and internal teams.

These include comprehensive, customisable PDF reports that show a user's chosen metrics, impact areas and timeframe through clear visual outputs.

This has made calculator data much easier to use. Caterers and sustainability staff can now export charts and summaries directly from the calculator and include them in reports or presentations.

Improved backend analysis and insight

The backend functionality has also been strengthened. Cool Food Pro can now analyse data in significantly greater detail, producing quicker, easier and more comprehensive information.

This supports:

- a better understanding of users and how they engage with the calculator
- more effective targeting of new audiences and groups
- faster provision of impact data for colleagues across the wider Soil Association
- stronger integration of Cool Food Pro within a wider package of sustainable catering support and analysis

Comms

Social Media

Cool Food Pro has grown its online presence on LinkedIn throughout the reporting period.

Key achievements from May 2025 to May 2026:

a 542.5% increase in reach

a 40% increase in followers

1 day per week dedicated comms team support

a shift to engaging visuals and impact-driven copy

Press coverage

The project also had notable press coverage. Press releases have led to the new menu analyser being covered by industry outlets such as Public Sector Catering and the Hospital Caterers' Association, leading to increased sign-ups and attendance at webinars. It also resulted in the Cool Food Pro team being asked to write an article for FoodFuture Lancashire's Thrive Magazine, about the development of the calculator and its purpose.

Case studies and blogs

A variety of case studies and blogs have been written, showing how the calculator and wider support package have been used in practice by a variety of caterers. These have covered topics from teaching primary school pupils about food waste, to how Cool Food Pro is being incorporated into a university's food sustainability initiatives. Cool Food Pro has also provided impact data for wider Soil Association communications, including its recent report on Bury Council's pioneering approach to food.

All of these have led to Cool Food Pro's increased visibility and reputation in the UK food industry, directly driving increased sign-ups and interest, and putting it in an excellent position as the project enters its next stage.

Project evaluation

What worked well

Deloitte partnership and support

Pro bono support from Deloitte's BVCM and digital teams helped the Cool Food Pro team to meet, and in several areas exceed, key targets across the reporting period.

The partnership strengthened delivery by providing specialist digital, strategic, and project management expertise. It also helped build team capability in several areas:

- stronger digital delivery and platform development skills
- a more structured approach to planning, timelines and budgets
- more efficient ways of working across the project
- more confident public speaking and stakeholder engagement

Overall, Deloitte's support has improved both project delivery and internal capability, leaving the team better equipped to deliver future digital and sustainability initiatives.

Key outcomes during the reporting period

Environmental impact exceeded expectations: Cool Food Pro saved 1412.99T tonnes of CO_2e, more than double the target total set by Deloitte, demonstrating strong delivery against its core climate objectives.

Practical innovation strengthened the offer: New digital functionality, including ingredient-level analysis and full menu-cycle tracking, has made the calculator more useful, responsive and relevant to caterers.

User-led development improved quality: Regular consultation, pilot activity and direct feedback have shaped the tool and resources, ensuring improvements reflect user need to enable food system change.

Engagement converted interest into action: Workshops, webinars, case studies, support forums and direct outreach created a strong feedback loop and helped build confidence among caterers and sustainability teams.

Collaboration increased credibility and reach: Deloitte support, ambassador engagement, sector networks and emerging international interest have strengthened delivery and created a platform for future growth.

Strong strategic fit supports sustainability: The programme aligns with climate, food systems, public procurement and Soil Association priorities, while its free-to-use, multi-metric model sets it apart from many fee-based carbon tools.

Wider Soil Association collaboration: Cool Food Pro supported wider Soil Association programme work. The programme contributed to delivery in Walsall and West Northamptonshire, collaborated with Sustainable Food Places and Food for Life Scotland, and maintained strong working relationships with Cool Food Pro's French and UK project partners. This joined-up approach helped extend the programme's reach, share learning across teams and places, and position the calculator as part of a broader sustainable catering offer.

> Working with Deloitte has been a hugely valuable learning experience. Their financial and pro bono support has helped us strengthen Cool Food Pro as a practical digital tool, while also building my own confidence and capability in delivering platform enhancements, managing project milestones and working to clear timelines and budgets. The collaboration has equipped me with skills and insight that I can apply to future digital and sustainability projects and has left the programme in a stronger position to grow its impact.
>
> **Deborah Taylor Cool Food Pro Project Manager**

Areas for improvement

A key area for improvement is strengthening cross-organisation work. Wider internal visibility of Cool Food Pro is only recently gathering momentum, and embedding the programme more firmly within the Soil Association Food portfolio would improve integration, strategic connectivity and shared ownership across teams. Stronger internal alignment around the outcome framework, alongside closer cross-team collaboration, would also improve the quality and consistency of impact reporting. Introducing a more narrative-based reporting format would help complement headline metrics by capturing behavioural change, systems influence, and the wider value of the programme.

Future funding also requires earlier and more coordinated planning. Delivery demands were prioritised during the reporting period, but should continuation funding be secured for Cool Food Pro beyond January 2027, stronger collaboration with fundraising colleagues is crucial, including funder mapping, income strategy development and identification of strategic prospects. There should be a clear funding case that sustains current delivery while positioning Cool Food Pro for long-term enterprise development. A targeted pitch pack sharing internal objectives, and alignment with fundraising timelines should be prioritised.

Summary and priorities for the next phase

Cool Food Pro remains strategically relevant, delivering measurable environmental benefits and supporting more sustainable purchasing across a growing user base.

Its alignment with national and international policy priorities reinforces its credibility as a practical solution for climate-friendly catering. Cool Food Pro also addresses a clear market need. Unlike many fee-based tools, it remains free to use and provides a fuller view of environmental impact by reporting on carbon, water, biodiversity and imported deforestation, rather than carbon alone.

Next steps

The focus during the next quarter will be to gather insights and strengthen impact data by working closely with a small number of pilot sites to support commitment to target impact areas and monthly data input. The ambassador scheme will also be extended to extend the project's reach and enable advocacy.

Cool Food Pro has strong potential to develop a scalable monetised offer as the project moves into its next stage. While the calculator must remain free to access until March 2028 under current funding, the programme can begin testing paid-for services that sit alongside the core tool, including training, facilitated workshops, consultancy-style support, food waste education and tailored implementation packages for schools, workplaces, universities, councils and caterers. This approach would protect the low-barrier access that has helped drive adoption, while creating new income routes from audiences with a clear need for practical support to measure and reduce food-related environmental impact.

To build a sustainable enterprise model, the next phase should focus on defining what remains free, what can be charged for, and how offers can be priced affordably for budget-conscious catering and sustainability teams. A refreshed market review will help clarify Cool Food Pro's unique value proposition against other carbon and sustainability tools, particularly its multi-metric approach across carbon, water, biodiversity and imported deforestation, as well as its practical education and engagement resources. By testing offers before March 2028 and exploring corporate, public sector and international opportunities, Cool Food Pro can shape a scalable, fundable model that is ready for longer-term growth once current funding restrictions end.

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Methodology

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/17cpvOA119KEJS-v7PTJYkF3WbaxnRjbL?usp=sharing

Case Studies

https://coolfoodpro.net/en/about/case-studies

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