



Food Data Collaboration

Insights & Innovations from three years
of Research & Development

"You can't change society with tech.

You have to have the **vision** for society first,
then build the tech to do it."

Karen Palmer

Vision

We envision a food system powered by independent businesses - enterprises that put **social and ecological values first**, delivering **nutritious, affordable food for all**.

Monocultures might be economically efficient. But the natural world models another way: **mutually beneficial, interdependent relationships**.

We build digital infrastructure to bridge the gap between uniformity and diversity, enabling agroecological food businesses to collaborate - unlocking **shared economies of scale, nurturing diversity** and creating the conditions to **coordinate as a movement**.



R&D Pilot: Regional cross-selling

Two Regional Pilots

South West England Pilot



Can we increase efficiency for Hodmedods to supply small food hubs and box schemes?

Galloway Pilot



Can we reduce the administrative load for Barnbarroch Organic to supply their local food hub?

Linking Platforms







Beef Burgers - Small 2oz - Gluten Free
£5.25 GBP



Beef Cheeks
From £12.66 GBP



Beef Diced
From £6.30 GBP



Beef Fillet Steak
From £11.88 GBP




Tamar Valley Food Hub


Galloway Food Hub
Dairy


Beef Diced - 458g Pack
Take your homemade steak pie or beef casserole to the next level with our delicious Barn...
from [Barnbarroch Organic Farm](#)
Certified Organic | Produced within 30 miles
Beef Diced - 458g Pack © £5.30 £0.00 Add
458g £13.76 / kg


Beef Fillet Steak - 244g x 1 Steak
Customers have said that Barnbarroch Fillet Steak is... 'the best they have ever tasted'. We...
from [Barnbarroch Organic Farm](#)
Certified Organic | Produced within 30 miles
Beef Fillet Steak - 244g © £14.64 £0.00 Add
244g £60.00 / kg Only 1 left

1. **Authenticate** businesses between platforms
2. **Share** supplier inventory with food hub
3. **Aggregate** food hub customer orders for wholesale supply
4. Automatically **place order** in supplier system

Hodmedods -> Good Food Loop



6 order cycles

13 product lines 



133 line items

82 customer orders 



£350.81 value



Delivery mileage 1,926
(vs 21,454 point-to-point)



Packaging for 6 aggregated orders
(vs 82 individual customer orders)



From the customer's perspective, the **ordering process was seamless**. "Our customers were really pleased to see the range of produce."



Clear value in reducing the time spent on both the administration and logistics of stocking additional suppliers and fulfilling these orders.



An early bug demonstrated that it is possible for errors to negate the time savings. **Quality assurance is critical** for scale.

Hodmedods -> Good Food Loop

This could really help us supply more small box schemes and food hubs. Their orders are small and fiddly and end up being quite costly for us to fulfil. Having an efficient way to aggregate and supply these orders, the cost savings for us would be massive. And the benefit comes with the volume.

Josiah at Hodmedod's

Currently we, and our producers, have to manually manage the inventory of the produce we sell on our hub. If we could connect with their existing inventories it would save us all so much admin time. I can really see the potential of this to increase the number of cross-selling collaborations we can support, and to extend our range, which in turn increases our average basket size.

Claire at Tamar Grow Local

Barnbarroch -> Galloway Food Hub



15 order cycles

89

product lines



520 line items

82 customer orders



£4,913.05 value



Time saving 30hrs

up to 2 hrs per order cycle saved on
updating stock and prices and checking
low stock across platforms



Automating the admin of cross-selling **unlocks the potential for more collaborations**, including with procurement, catering, wholesale and retail.



Clear value in simplifying operations, saving time, money and precious mental energy.



Scale requires clear, **shared error handling across integrations** and strong quality assurance processes.

Barnbarroch -> Galloway Food Hub

The integration gave us access to new stock when we needed it, and showed the potential to connect with more producers. We have more demand than supply, especially for ethical and local products, and we want to work with more producers like Kylie.

Lesley at Galloway Food Hub

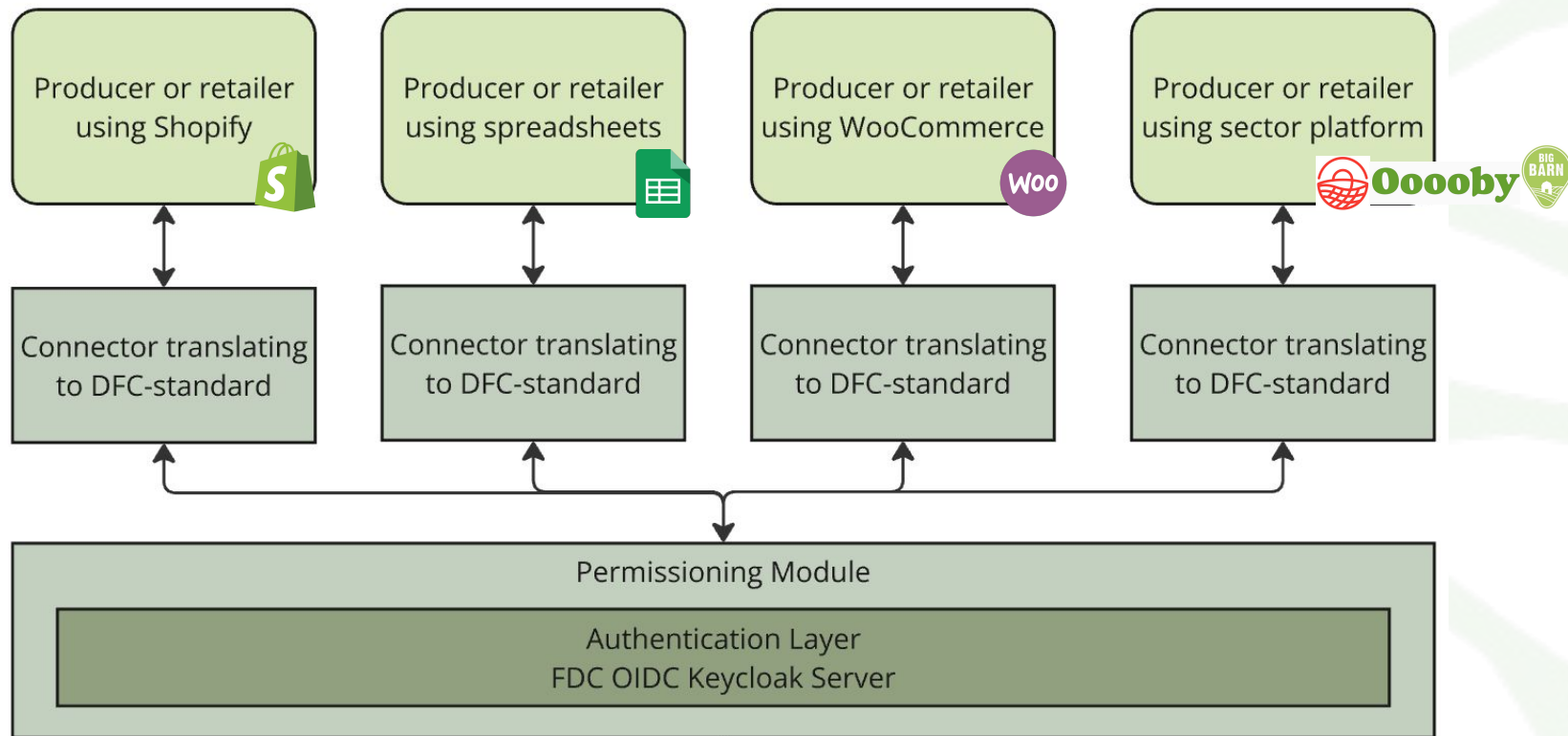
The integration means we only need to update stock in one place - that's huge. This lets us stay connected to the grassroots Food Hub without the overhead of running two inventories and avoiding double allocation of stock. We reach more customers, make use of special offers and benefit from the features of our preferred ecommerce tool.

Kylie at Barnbarroch Organic



**Technical
background**

Technical concept



Delivery Strategy

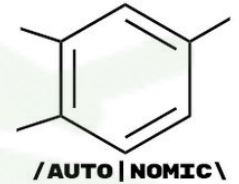
- 👉 No in house software development
- 👉 We contracted with development teams who each focused on single integrations and tools
- 👉 This enabled us to:
 - work in parallel to deliver responsively at pace (agile)
 - and more effectively leverage the specialist skills of different teams



DATA FOOD
CONSORTIUM



Digital Commons
Cooperative



STARTIN' BLOX

Integrations

- Stage 1 **Authentication**: integration with OIDC authorisation layer
- Stage 2 **Product & Inventory**: sharing with the product/inventory data models and API endpoints
- Stage 3 **Orders & cross-selling**: integration with data models, API endpoints and business logic to enable cross-platform ordering

Open Food Network	Shopify (Hodmedod's)	Ordle (Cambridge Organics)	Big Barn	Ooooby
Stage 3 Orders & cross-selling	Stage 3 Orders & cross-selling	Stage 2 Products & Inventory	Stage 2 Products & Inventory	Stage 1 Authentication



**Working
group deep
dive into
governance**

Governance Working Group

Our Governance Working Group involved farmers, retailers, digital providers, sector membership orgs, a group that shared deep values alignment - social + ecological outcomes - agroecology

We met 10 times (4 in person and 6 virtually) over the 3 years



CAMBRIDGE
organic

sustain
the alliance for better food and farming



OPEN FOOD
NETWORK UK

Ooooby



Governance Findings

On governance <ul style="list-style-type: none">-> Data sovereignty & data commons-> Be careful not to burden actors with responsibilities too early-> Take time to build shared vision and adequate resources first	On agroecological focus <ul style="list-style-type: none">-> Deep dive research to explore scale, certification and monitoring-> Practical ways to create a boundary to our agroecological commons
On scaling <ul style="list-style-type: none">-> Create flexibility in data sharing-> Storytelling to navigate complexity-> Build partnerships & aim to move at the pace of trust - which means having the right funders.	On viability <ul style="list-style-type: none">-> Scale revenue models - low margin-> Focus on creating real value for farmers, producers, retailers.-> Grow sector adjacent revenue streams - data products



**Looking
ahead**

Strategic Approach

Experience-first approach

Delightful experiences.
Tech that is simple to use
and understand.
Tech that is always free
from errors.

Sector ownership

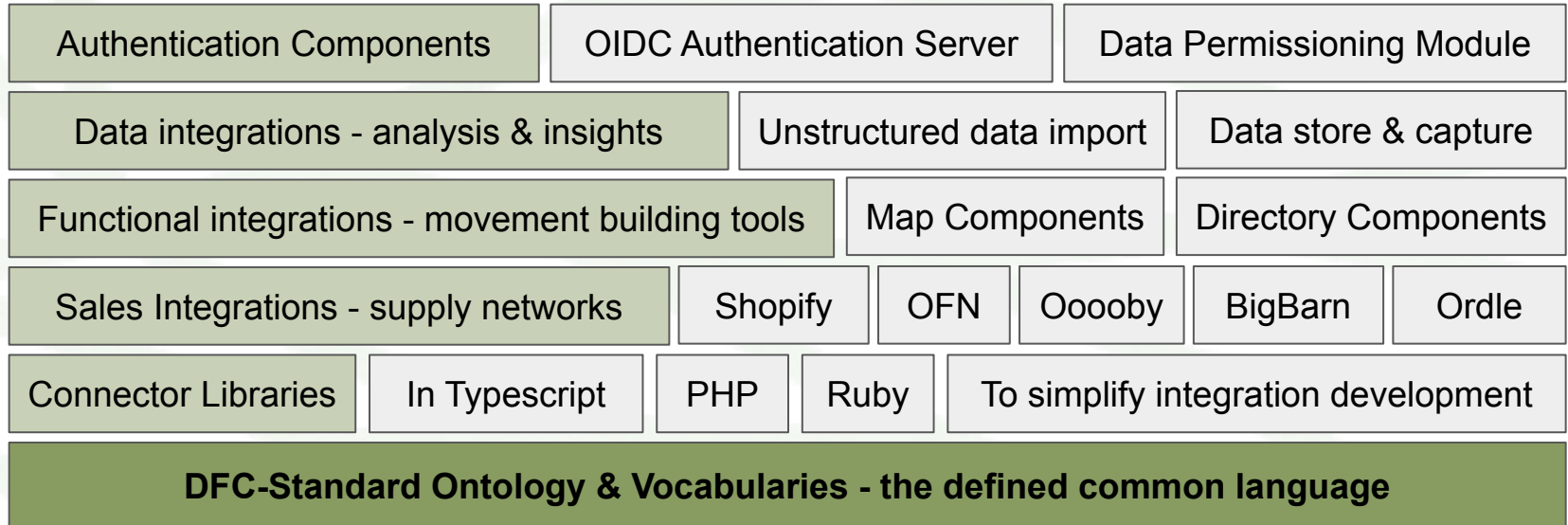
Governance for
participation,
transparency & inclusivity.
Move at the pace of trust.
Flexible data sharing to
suit wide-ranging needs.

Focus on value

Cut admin, increase
collaborations, boost
sales, streamline
operations, increase
visibility, create data &
insights

Building Blocks

Reaching this stage has meant investing in a range of reusable components and building blocks, which decrease the costs of future developments



Growing Adoption

Sector...

Our next project is a scoping project in partnership with Soil Association, Pasture For Life, Landworkers' Alliance, Biodynamic Association and Better Food Traders to explore risks and benefits of integrating members and licensees.

Internationally...

Groups in France, Australia and Canada are also using the FDC-standard, building integrations, and contributing toward the global commons of sector infrastructure.

Growing Adoption

Technical...

Adding WooCommerce to our current integrations will integrate 72% of food retail SMEs

Linking with gov/industry partners eg Food Data Transparency Partnership

Regional...

Partnering with with local authorities and Local Food Partnerships

Platform	Businesses
WooCommerce	21%
Shopify	17%
Spreadsheets/email	16%
Ooooby	11%
Custom/bespoke	7%
Wix	6%
Open Food Network	6%
Squarespace	6%
Growing Good	3%
Phone orders	2%
Other	5%

Achieving Viability

It goes without saying that this project must be commercially viable, which is a unique challenge for an infrastructure project...

Trade-based revenue - Tiny (~0.5%) margins on cross-selling trade facilitated by the infrastructure.

Data & insights revenue - Meta-data licensing and meta-data insights portals.

Integration support - Bespoke support packages for platforms and businesses integrating.

Novel tool development - The possibilities are yet to be imagined.



**With
Thanks
To**

Team

Core project team: Lynne Davis, Gareth Hughes, Sophie Paterson, Guru Thiru

Technical delivery stream: BigBarn, Cambridge Organic, Data Food Consortium, Hodmedod's, Ooooby, Open Food Network, Yalla Cooperative, Autonomic

Governance stream: Bob Mehew (Apricot Centre), Julia Kirby-Smith & Natasha Soares (Better Food Traders), Anthony Davidson (BigBarn) Duncan Catchpole (Cambridge Organic), Tony Little & Peter Samsom (Landworkers' Alliance), Pete Russell (Ooooby), Martyn Bragg (Shillingford Organics), Rachel Jones & James Woodward (Sustain)



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Fiscal hosting by Open Food Network
UK as National Lottery Community Fund
grantholder



OPEN FOOD
NETWORK **UK**



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