



WORLD
FOOD
FORUM

GLOBAL
YOUTH
ACTION

Toolkit on how to organize Sustainable Gastronomy Week (SGW)

2026 THEME:
CELEBRATING
FOOD HERITAGE





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Background

The [World Food Forum \(WFF\)](#) is hosted by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and works to advance youth engagement and partnerships in support of sustainable, inclusive agrifood systems. At its core is the WFF Global Youth Action Initiative (Youth Initiative), which harnesses the energy and ideas of young people to drive real change in how the world produces, prepares and shares food. Facilitated by FAO's Office of Youth and Women (OYW), it acts as a hub for knowledge-sharing, innovation and youth-led solutions across a range of thematic programmes.

One of these programmes, the [Youth Culture and Food Heritage Programme](#), focuses specifically on the role of cultural heritage in sustainable food systems. It engages young people in safeguarding and revitalising traditional knowledge and practices – helping them transform that heritage into meaningful livelihood opportunities while strengthening cultural identity and youth employment. SGW is one of the key moments when this work.



Purpose and target audience

Food heritage is central to sustainable food systems – it connects communities to their culinary traditions, preserves biodiversity and strengthens local identities. This toolkit is designed to help its users bring that connection to life by providing practical, step-by-step guidance for planning, implementing and following up on SGW activities under the 2026 theme “Celebrating Food Heritage”. It is primarily intended for WFF National Youth Chapters, who will find here a clear roadmap for leading locally driven initiatives that align with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and WFF priorities. Young chefs and food practitioners can use it as a source of practical ideas, while FAO Decentralized Offices and local partners will find it a useful reference for supporting and coordinating the implementation of Sustainable Gastronomy Week (SGW).

See Annex 1 for the toolkit at a glance.

Who can participate as a chef?

For the purposes of this toolkit, ‘chef’ means anyone who prepares and shares food –whether in a professional kitchen, as a caregiver, as a community-based cook, in informal food enterprises or through traditional and indigenous food practices. This broad definition is intentional: the people closest to food preparation are among the most powerful agents of change in our agrifood systems.

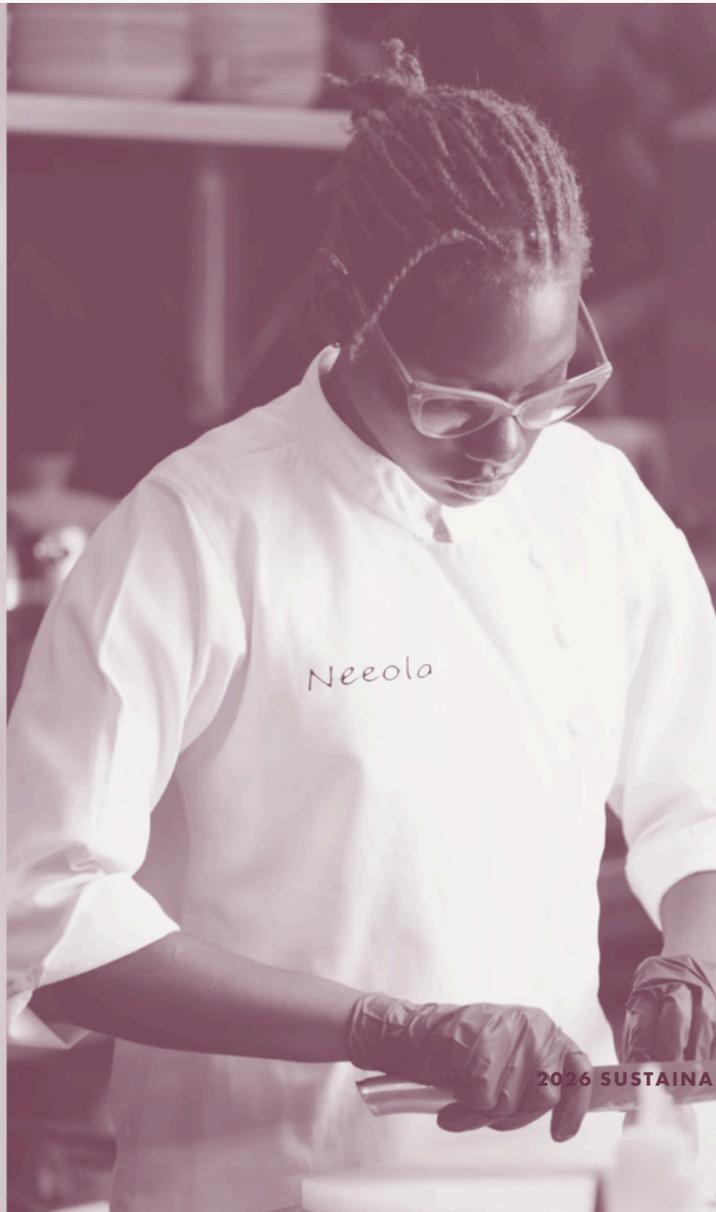
Through the choices they make – what ingredients they source, how they prepare food, and the stories they tell around it – chefs can directly support local producers, reduce food waste and keep culinary traditions alive. By engaging this full range of food preparers, SGW initiatives become more inclusive and more impactful, reaching the communities and knowledge systems that matter most for sustainable gastronomy and for strengthening sustainable agrifood systems.

Rationale of Sustainable Gastronomy Week (SGW)

SGW was launched by the WFF Youth Initiative in 2024 to celebrate Sustainable Gastronomy Day on 18 June. It is a global initiative that engages young chefs as champions of sustainable agrifood systems. FAO views chefs as powerful agents of change for sustainable agrifood systems; since their food choices influence how ingredients are sourced, prepared and consumed across the food value chain.

Sustainable gastronomy recognizes chefs – both professional and community-based – as key actors linking producers and consumers across agrifood value chains. Through everyday culinary practices such as sourcing local and seasonal ingredients where possible, supporting small-scale farmers, safeguarding traditional recipes, and reducing food waste, they contribute to more resilient, inclusive and environmentally responsible food systems. As custodians of food heritage and cultural knowledge, chefs and food practitioners help shape how food is valued and consumed. In this light, gastronomy can be a practical pathway toward sustainable agrifood systems for people and the planet.

YCP Chef
@_neeola_



The **2025 edition of SGW** mobilized **71 young chefs across 28 countries** in all FAO regions, demonstrating the growing reach and impact of youth-led gastronomy initiatives. Building on previous editions, SGW continues to strengthen youth leadership and position sustainable gastronomy as an accessible entry point for advancing sustainable consumption, cultural diversity and agrifood systems transformation.

Building on this momentum, the 2026 edition of **SGW (16–22 June)** will focus on the theme **“Celebrating Food Heritage”**, aligned with the **International Year of the Woman Farmer (IYWF 2026)**. Food heritage comprises knowledge of food and culinary skills that communities consider as their shared legacies and common social practices. It encompasses a wide range of socio-cultural aspects, from agricultural products, different dishes and cooking utensils to manners of eating, drinking and sharing meals¹. Women farmers, women chefs and Indigenous Peoples play a central role as custodians of food heritage, biodiversity and traditional knowledge, contributing to cultural continuity, sustainability and inclusive agrifood systems.

Celebrating food heritage through the 2026 SGW will highlight the vital link between culture and sustainability. By valuing traditional cuisines and locally sourced ingredients, SGW promotes biodiversity, supports small-scale producers – particularly women farmers – and encourages healthy diets grounded in local contexts. SGW also contributes to the creation of green jobs and sustainable livelihood opportunities across agrifood value chains. Sustainable gastronomy provides communities with an opportunity to reflect on where food comes from, how it is produced and consumed and how culinary choices affect biodiversity, nutrition, livelihoods and climate resilience. Gastronomy communicates through taste, storytelling and everyday practice, making it a uniquely accessible means of sparking dialogue and shifting attitudes towards more sustainable food choices – reaching people in ways that technical policy discussions alone cannot.

These activities are localized primarily through WFF National Youth Chapters, which are independent youth-led platforms that support the WFF Youth Initiative in translating its work to the local level to meaningfully engage youth and women in sustainable agrifood systems transformation. Currently, there are 62 WFF Youth Chapters worldwide supporting sustainable gastronomy at the local level. Through closer collaboration with FAO Decentralized Offices, young chefs and local partners, they play a key role in convening communities and stakeholders to promote sustainable gastronomy while encouraging broader partnerships and locally driven initiatives.



YCP Chef Safa Nessmarie Rodas

Why get involved?

Safeguard and revitalise food heritage through local ownership

SGW will provide a platform to safeguard and revitalise local and traditional food cultures by placing them at the centre of youth-led action. By working with young chefs, local producers and communities, SGW will promote a sense of ownership over food heritage, support the transmission and preservation of traditional knowledge and affirm the role of gastronomy in strengthening cultural identity while advancing sustainable agrifood systems.

Strengthen young women's leadership and Indigenous knowledge

SGW will highlight the critical role of women, particularly young women farmers and chefs, as knowledge holders, producers and custodians of food heritage and biodiversity. It will also bring to the fore the importance of Indigenous Peoples and their traditional knowledge in sustaining local food cultures and agrifood systems, by bringing forward perspectives and knowledge that are often overlooked in formal agrifood systems conversations, SGW fosters pride, inspiration and a stronger sense of community, while raising awareness of the barriers young women face in accessing resources, visibility and decision-making spaces.

In doing so, SGW supports FAO's better fours framework for inclusion, positioning young women and indigenous knowledge as drivers of more inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems.

Advocate for better culinary practices

SGW creates structured spaces for exchange between FAO Decentralized Offices, WFF National Youth Chapters, civil society, local authorities and communities. These dialogues focus on pressing agrifood systems challenges -- including nutrition, **healthy and sustainable diets, food heritage and the role of women farmers, Indigenous Peoples and chefs.**

Through chef-led dialogues, moderated discussions, cooking demonstrations, public-facing events, and online campaigns, SGW enables young chefs, including young women, to share firsthand knowledge and practical solutions that can inform local and national conversations on agrifood systems transformation. The SGW menu – which guides the culinary programme of events – together with broader SGW activities, are designed as advocacy and awareness-raising tools. These tools allow chefs and food practitioners to interpret sustainable gastronomy principles in ways that reflect their own culinary realities and local food cultures.

Build partnerships and reach new audiences

Getting involved in SGW expands the reach and visibility of both WFF National Youth Chapters and participating chefs by connecting them with communities, schools, universities, youth groups, women's organizations and the broader public. Through gastronomy, complex agrifood systems challenges become accessible, relatable and rooted in everyday food experiences.

SGW activities strengthen national and local presence by positioning Chapters and young chefs as active contributors to dialogue on sustainable agrifood systems. Chef-led cooking demonstrations, youth dialogues, storytelling initiatives and online campaigns create spaces for exchange between chefs, young people, women farmers, Indigenous Peoples, FAO Decentralized Offices, civil society, local authorities and communities.

The SGW menu and complementary activities also serve as advocacy tools, allowing chefs and food practitioners to interpret sustainable gastronomy principles in ways that reflect local culinary realities and food heritage. By engaging diverse audiences, SGW encourages new conversations around healthy diets, nutrition, biodiversity, climate resilience and cultural identity.

Where possible, SGW can be co-organized with FAO Decentralized Offices, universities, NGOs, farmer organizations and culinary or cultural institutions. These collaborations help strengthen local networks, foster long-term partnerships and support continued action beyond the week itself

Receive structured support from the WFF Youth Initiative

Throughout the preparation, implementation and follow-up stages of SGW, participating Chapters and chefs can count on a range of support from the WFF Youth Initiative – including this toolkit, the SGW chef's menu, communication templates, visibility through WFF platforms, and facilitated connections with FAO Decentralized Offices and partners.

While SGW encourages creativity and local ownership, WFF National Youth Chapters lead coordination at the country level. Meanwhile, chefs and food practitioners contribute by developing SGW menus aligned with the [Sustainable Gastronomy Guidelines](#) and engaging in storytelling and outreach activities that promote food heritage and sustainable gastronomy principles.



Objective of this toolkit

This toolkit is designed to complement, strengthen and localize the impact of SGW by supporting the use of gastronomy as a catalyst for dialogue, learning, reflection and action.

It serves as a practical guide for planning and delivering SGW activities that generate meaningful engagement among youth and women around sustainable agrifood systems and their links to food heritage, women's empowerment, biodiversity, nutrition, climate resilience and youth leadership.

Beyond planning, the toolkit also serves as an operational and strategic resource to support collaboration between WFF National Youth Chapters and FAO Decentralized Offices, governments, youth groups and organizations, academic institutions, civil society actors and local organizations.

By outlining key steps to take before, during and after SGW, the toolkit ensures activities are purposeful and aligned with WFF Youth Initiative priorities. It also supports the generation of concrete, localized impact and follow-up actions, while recognizing the leadership of youth – particularly young women farmers and chefs – as key drivers of sustainable gastronomy and agrifood systems transformation.

ACTIVITIES PRE–SUSTAINABLE GASTRONOMY WEEK (SGW)

1. Define the purpose

This section seeks to identify the purpose and priority issue or issues to be addressed through a SGW menu developed in line with the SGW Guidelines, alongside young chef-led activities that support learning, engagement and knowledge exchange. Chapters are encouraged to define priority themes together with local partners, ensuring that SGW activities reflect local food heritage, inclusive participation, and the leadership of young women farmers and chefs.

Possible focus areas may draw inspiration from the **WFF Global Youth Action Plan**, which reflects priorities identified by youth through global consultations. Chapters are encouraged to adapt or define themes based on their local context and community needs.

Focus Areas to consider:

- enhancing digital skills and preserving traditional knowledge;
- increasing awareness of better nutrition and food literacy;
- addressing food loss and waste;
- strengthening multistakeholder partnerships and intergenerational knowledge exchange;
- promoting accessible education for sustainable agricultural practices; and
- advancing youth engagement in sustainable food systems.
- climate action and resilience;
- strengthening local collaborations;
- women farmers and women-led agrifood systems;
- food heritage and traditional knowledge; and
- youth leadership in agrifood systems.

When defining the purpose of your SGW activities, consider the following:

- Clarify your objectives, target audience and expected outcomes before planning begins.
- Ensure activities align with FAO's Strategic Framework 2022–31 priorities – including reducing food waste, promoting local sourcing, strengthening youth leadership, and encouraging healthy, diverse and culturally relevant diets.
- Ensure activities reflect WFF priorities, including local youth and young women's empowerment, agrifood systems transformation, innovation and the safeguarding and revitalisation of food heritage.

2. Set up the programme and partnerships

Before developing activities, Chapters are encouraged to identify key partners and institutions that can support the implementation and visibility of SGW. This may include FAO Decentralized Offices where possible, universities, culinary schools, farmer organizations, youth groups, cultural institutions and local media.

When engaging partners, Chapters may consider:

- Positioning SGW as a youth-led initiative that supports sustainable gastronomy, food heritage and community learning;
- Identifying shared priorities such as nutrition, food heritage, green jobs or youth leadership; and
- Clarifying roles early, including coordination, communication support or technical input.

Early outreach and clear messaging on these points can help secure collaboration and resources, thus building a stronger foundation for locally driven activities before planning begins.

3. Identify and engage young chefs

Once the priority theme has been identified, the WFF National Youth Chapter should identify and engage at least one young chef to lead the culinary dimension of SGW activities.

Selection criteria

When selecting a chef, Chapters should:

- identify at least one young chef between the ages of 18 and 35;
- prioritize chefs whose practices reflect sustainable gastronomy principles – including the use of seasonal and local produce, reduction of food waste, promotion of biodiversity, and broader economic, social and environmental sustainability in agrifood systems;
- select chefs working or associated with a restaurant or food outlet; and
- ensure meaningful participation of young women chefs, recognizing the barriers they face in visibility and leadership.

The young chef and their menu are the core medium through which SGW communicates its values and engages communities.

4. Plan the structure of your SGW activation activity

Plan at least one accompanying activity with the young chef during SGW to support learning, knowledge exchange and the safeguarding of food heritage, while strengthening engagement with local communities. Activities should aim to create spaces for dialogue, visibility and continued collaboration – whether through follow-up events, ongoing community partnerships or connections with local and national networks – extending the impact of SGW long after it is over.

PRE-SUSTAINABLE GASTRONOMY WEEK ACTIVITIES

Examples of in-person activities

- Organize a “Visit the Restaurant” activity with partners and community members, which includes the tasting or purchasing of dishes from the chef’s SGW menu, learning about ingredients and traditional knowledge, and showing tangible support for the chef’s work.
- Conduct cooking demonstrations that share skills, sustainable practices and stories behind heritage dishes.
 - Host youth dialogues with young chefs, farmers and stakeholders to exchange knowledge on food heritage, nutrition or local agrifood challenges.
 - Engage universities, schools or youth groups to encourage intergenerational learning and documentation of traditional food knowledge.
 - Implement media or digital storytelling activities – such as social media campaigns or national media features – to amplify voices and extend the impact of SGW beyond the week itself.

Examples of virtual and online activities

- Host an online cooking demonstration with a young chef showcasing sustainable cooking practices and nutritious meals using local and seasonal ingredients where possible.
- Launch a social media storytelling series during SGW highlighting local food heritage, particularly the contributions of young women farmers, producers and chefs using traditional recipes.
- Organize virtual dialogues or panel discussions with chefs, youth, women farmers and FAO colleagues on sustainable gastronomy and food systems.
- Conduct online sessions with school or universities on healthy diets, food heritage and nutrition, led by or featuring the young chef.
- Host live Q&A sessions with young chefs or food system actors via Instagram Live, Facebook Live or Zoom.

Chapters are encouraged to draw on whichever formats best suit their local context, resources and community needs – combining in-person and virtual approaches where possible to maximize reach and impact.

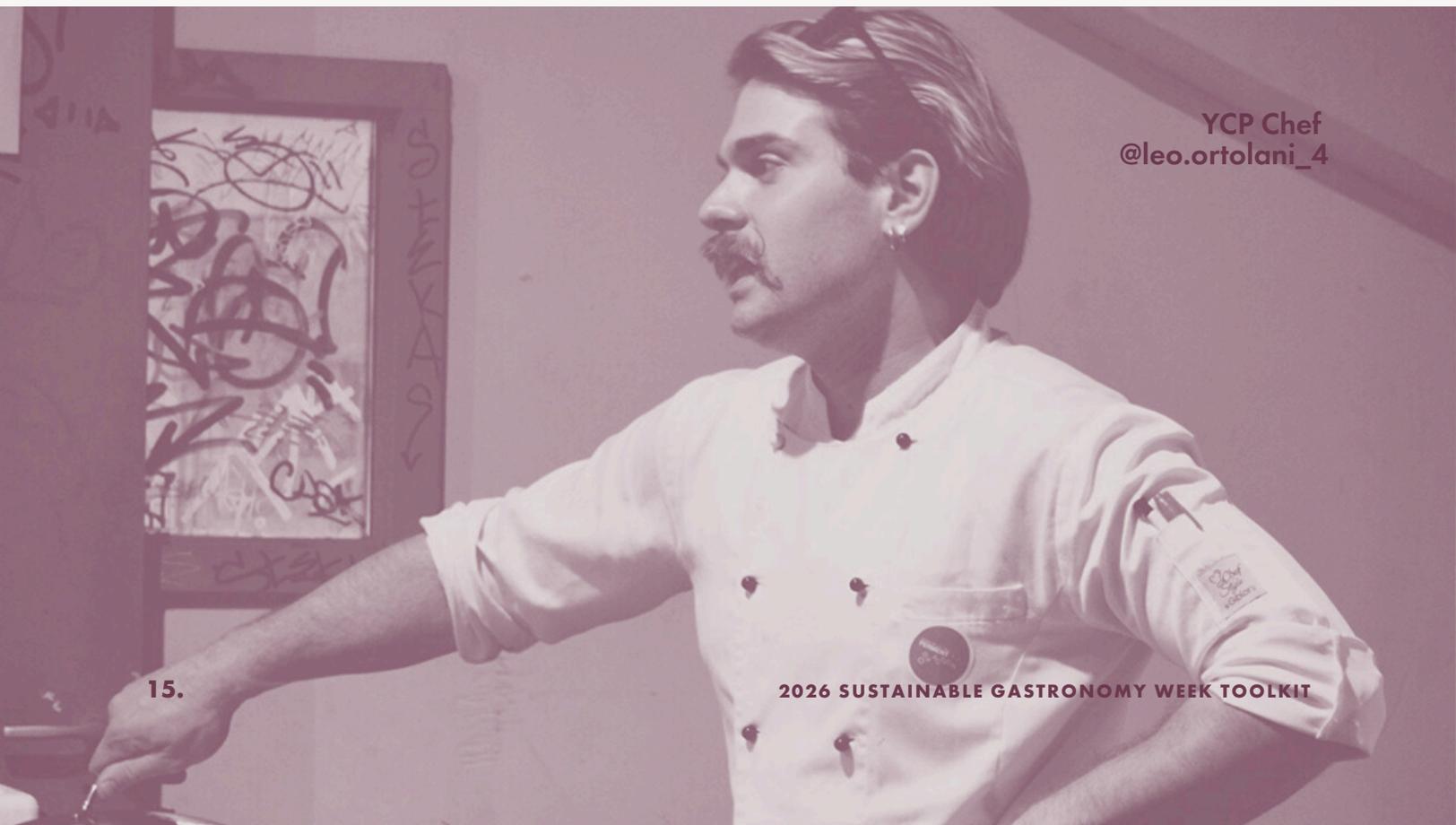
□ 5. Align the SGW menu

The Chapter can support where possible the chef in developing a SGW menu (see Annex 9 for menu template) to be served during SGW, using the SGW Guidelines as a reference.

The menu designed with the template can be displayed in a restaurant, food outlet, social media page, where possible.

The menu may consider including:

- at least one heritage dish;
- local and seasonal ingredients, where possible;
- local sourcing practices; and
- food waste-reduction approaches.



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PRE-SUSTAINABLE GASTRONOMY WEEK ACTIVITIES

Contextualize the chef and menu

Prepare a short introductory note explaining:

- why the chef and menu matter for sustainable gastronomy;
- how ingredients link to food heritage, biodiversity or climate resilience; and
- how the menu reflects local agrifood systems realities.

6. Promote the initiative

Where possible, involve national press to extend reach and outreach beyond existing networks. Chapters should develop a communication strategy for the social media campaign, aligned with WFF Youth Initiative branding (**see Annex 8 for Communications and Social Media Templates**).

This strategy should:

- highlight the young chef, menu and partners;
- include venue, dates and a call to action for more chefs to join the movement;
- use a simple registration tool such as Google Forms or Microsoft Forms to track attendance and seek to understand the profiles of participants;
- ensure that all registration and feedback forms include a clear consent statement in line with data protection guidelines. (If personal data [e.g. names, emails, photos] are collected and used for communication or visibility purposes, explicit consent must be obtained, and participants must be informed of how their data will be used); and
- maintain engagement through timely confirmation, reminders and updates about the event.

Use the concept note that was developed when applying for the SGW as a guide.

Activities During Sustainable Gastronomy Week (SGW)



| Create an engaging environment for both online and offline activities

Creating the right environment — whether in person or online — helps participants feel welcome, informed and ready to engage meaningfully with SGW activities.

set the scene

- Introduce SGW, the chef and the purpose of the initiative.
- Explain why gastronomy matters for sustainable agrifood systems transformation (see Annex 2 for more information).
- Acknowledge partners and situate activities within the FAO and WFF context.
- Ensure a respectful and inclusive space by considering diversity of perspectives and gender balance. For online activities, this may include clear participation guidelines and accessible formats.

| Facilitate interaction

- Encourage dialogue between participants and the young chef.
- Host informal exchanges or moderate discussions to maintain energy and focus.

Where relevant, include other voices such as youth leaders, farmers or FAO staff to broaden the conversation.

Activities During Sustainable Gastronomy Week (SGW)



Communications and visibility

Communicating SGW activities helps extend their reach, give visibility to participating chefs and communities, and contribute to the broader WFF narrative on sustainable gastronomy. Chapters should refer to Annex 8 for Communications and Social Media Templates and ensure all content aligns with WFF branding guidelines.

- capture photos, quotes, videos and audience reactions to document the event;
- share real-time or timely content on social media tagging WFF channels and using agreed SGW campaign hashtags; and
- follow WFF branding guidelines across all communications.

Optional interactive elements

Chapters may also consider:

- facilitating group discussions on food heritage or sustainability;
- organizing tastings paired with storytelling about the ingredients or dishes; and
- guiding reflections that link dishes to local agrifood challenges.

Activities Post-Sustainable Gastronomy Week Activities (SWG)

□ 1. Document and amplify

Right after SGW activities, Chapters are encouraged to:

- write a short recap article for publication on the WFF Youth Initiative webpage, using the article template provided in Annex 11;
- prepare highlights and key moments on social media to share with the WFF Communications team.
- submit photos, videos and key materials to the WFF Communications team for broader visibility across WFF platforms and networks; and
- archive all documentation – including photos, menus, participant lists and activity reports – in an organised format for future reference and reporting.

□ 2. Consolidate insights

Right after SGW activities, Chapters are encouraged to:

- collect feedback from participants and chefs feedback using the monitoring and reporting form provided in Annex 10;
- identify recurring themes and lessons learned;
- use anonymous feedback tools where possible to encourage honest and inclusive responses from participants and chefs; and share key insights with the WFF communications focal point to inform future SGW planning and contribute to broader programme reporting.

Key definitions

Gastronomy: is sometimes called the art of food. It can also refer to a style of cooking from a particular region. In other words, gastronomy often refers to local food and cuisine. Sustainability is the idea that something (e.g. agriculture, fishing or even preparation of food) is done in a way that is not wasteful of our natural resources and can be continued into the future without being detrimental to our environment or health.

Sustainable gastronomy: Sustainable gastronomy, therefore, means cuisine that takes into account where the ingredients are from, how the food is grown and how it gets to our markets and eventually to our plates.

Sustainable Gastronomy Day: Sustainable Gastronomy Day, celebrated every year on 18 June since 2017, was introduced by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) with the aim to promote food security, agricultural development, sustainable food production, nutrition, and the conservation of biodiversity.

Sustainable Gastronomy Week: [Sustainable Gastronomy Week \(SGW\)](#) was launched by the World Food Forum (WFF) Youth Initiative under the [Youth Culture and Food Heritage Programme](#) in 2024 to celebrate

Sustainable Gastronomy Day. It is a global initiative that engages young chefs as champions of sustainable agrifood systems. It aims to encourage people to support local and sustainable agrifood systems, to contribute to a healthier planet through gastronomy and highlight the leadership role of youth as chefs and entrepreneurs in sustainable gastronomy.

Food heritage: Food heritage comprises knowledge of food and culinary skills that communities consider as their shared legacies and common social practices. It encompasses a wide range of socio-cultural aspects, from agricultural products, different dishes and cooking utensils to manners of eating, drinking and sharing meals.

WFF National Youth Chapter: A WFF National Youth Chapter is a self-organized national youth platform aligned to the principles and mission of the WFF and convened by a local network of partners/organizations. WFF National Youth Chapters undertake activities and projects in line with the WFF's mission, tracking and mobilizing youth-led local action to help achieve more sustainable agrifood systems in their respective communities, cities and countries. With National Youth Chapters, young people have a platform to initiate and sustain solution building in their communities, inform policymaking in their countries and regions, and build lasting transformation in their local agrifood systems.

ANNEXES



- Annex 1: [Sustainable gastronomy week Tool Kit at a glance](#)
- Annex 2: Learn more about Sustainable Gastronomy and the official UN observance. [FAO Sustainable Gastronomy Day](#). [WFF Sustainable Gastronomy Week](#). [FAO Sustainable Gastronomy Chefs in promoting sustainable food systems](#). [Chefs as agents of change](#). [Recipe books for sustainable gastronomy champions](#). [Tool kit Sustainable Gastronomy Day MICHELIN GUIDE](#). [IGCAT Sustainable gastronomy day](#)
- Annex 3: [SGW Concept Note Template](#)
- Annex 4: [Timeline Document](#)
- Annex 5: [SWG Checklist](#)
- Annex 6: [Run of Show / Activity Agenda Template](#)
- Annex 7: [Registration and Feedback Questions](#)
- Annex 8: [Communications and Social Media Templates](#)
- Annex 9: [SGW Menu Template](#)
- Annex 10: [Monitoring and Reporting Tools](#)
- Annex 11: [Article Template](#)