

# **sustainable food design**

## **by honey & bunny**



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## Sustainable Food Design

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### PREMISE

**Food |** Food production consumes a major part of natural resources and causes a significant share of emissions and ecological threats. The Green Deal cannot be performed without adapting food production, eating habits and food culture.

**Food is designed |** Almost all foods are processed or treated in some way before we eat it. From breeding to portioning, food is treated and designed by humans. Depending on culture and region, these design processes are by now considerably industrial. Food design is a key factor of the Green Deal and therefore of the New European Bauhaus.



**Food design is political |** The way how food is produced and designed influences our society: Food design determines how we use resources, how we treat ecology and wellbeing of humans involved, how much waste and emissions we cause, etc. Thus, food design is an integral part of the social, economic and ecological status of a society. Thus, food design is eminently political.



**Food is culture |** The way food is designed is determined by culture. Culture tells us what to eat and what to sicken at. It also defines moral values on how to treat nature and fellow human beings.

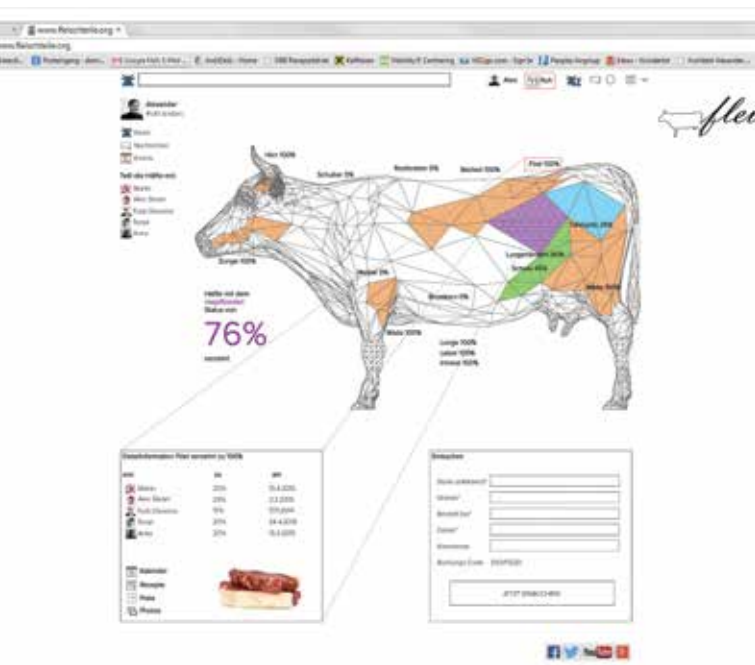


**Food is a public interest** | Primarily to feed people, but also to provide jobs, to sustain ecology and in terms of public money invested: in the EU primary food production is funded by the public by 59 billion Euros per year <sup>1</sup>.

**Design as a tool to trigger change** | Designers work with meanings. People like, accept and use things (services, processes, etc.) because they mean something to them. Designers, with their concepts and approaches, contributed significantly to the digital revolution, therefore it is evident that Design will also play an essential part in a "sustainable revolution". Design sits at the point of intersection between conception and production and is thus significantly involved in the consumption of all types of resources. Design as a discipline provides (a practical) expertise not only on problem solving but on how to bring solutions to users and how to make them accepted by users.

**Design can imagine the future** | Design is key to sustain the much-needed Green Turn, to make it beautiful and convincing. Food Design can create sustainable products, processes, and narratives for a sustainable food future.





## Food Design Project example | "fleischTEILE"

"fleischTEILE" is a project designed to counteract meat wastage. "fleischTEILE" is a cooperative against the current steak mania. "fleischTEILE" is a symbiosis of organic agriculture, respect for animal rights, and digital technology. Two households split an entire animal. The idea is not new, but with "fleischTEILE" there is no need for a freezer. Each member signs a contract for half a cow or half a pig and pledges to buy, cook, and eat the entire half within a given time frame.



The animal is virtual. It only exists in a computer program. When a member feels like eating meat, he or she chooses a cut and orders it from the cooperating butcher, via "fleischTEILE" online. The day after the order is ready to be picked up. From diaphragm to brain, from greaves to blood – the aim is to consume every edible part. Once retrieved, that part no longer exists for the consumer, and he or she must finish off the first half animal before buying the next one. The butcher shop no longer needs to throw food away and has the guarantee that it will sell an entire animal.



"fleischTEILE" is an attempt to approach meat consumption in a more ecological and fairer way, and it gives consumers and meat processors the opportunity to create a digital distribution system independent from supermarkets. The project "fleischTEILE" combats the waste-producing practices of eaters using the tools and competence of designers. "fleischTEILE" is an example of how creative work – in other words design – can be applied to change eating practices and gives a hint of how Food Design can be applied by consumers, the food industry, and policymakers in order to create a sustainable food future.<sup>2</sup>

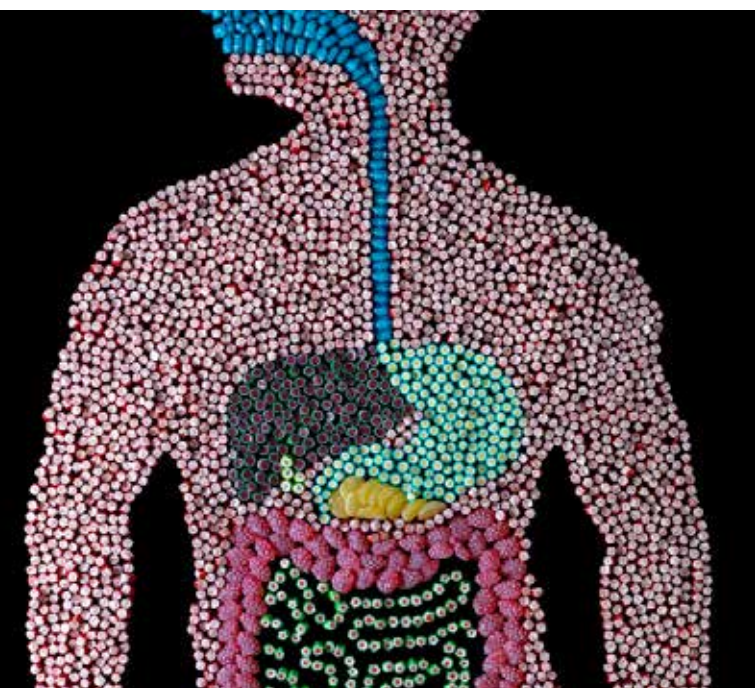
**Food production is major consumer of resources and a major producer of emissions and externalities |**

The production of food uses the lion's share of the earth's natural resources, with agriculture responsible for 70 per cent of the world's freshwater consumption and around 30 per cent of its overall CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. In addition, around 53 per cent of the earth's land surface is used for agricultural purposes, thus creating mankind's 'agricultural footprint' on the earth. Food production is responsible for the extinction of animal and plant species, the pollution and destruction of living space, as well as the neglect of human and labor rights. Finally, in Europe up to 40 per cent of food is thrown away.

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**Food is cultural, sustainable food systems will only work in accordance with a sustainable food culture** | Food and Eating are the foundation of culture. Every society defines itself with the help of the selection, preparation and consumption of food. Food reveals cultural standards, social, economic and geographical origin, gender, state of health, age, etc. Food is always designed and eaten according to cultural rules, conscious and unconscious ones. If we intent to make future food sustainable, we need to transform these cultural rules into sustainable rules. Food is an expression of both individuality and membership in a group. Food is a political statement. Food shows whether people are provocative or mannerly, traditional or progressive, open-minded or misanthropic, believers in innovation or simply believers, willing to take risks, fearful, lavish, stingy, hedonistic or ascetic. Food is always a cultural good. Eating is always a cultural act. In order to make food production sustainable (compatible with the green turn) we can only succeed if we also intervene in the design of our food and eating culture.

**The Green Deal** strongly depends on cultural solutions. At present we live in a society where sustainability is not yet a cultural value. We need strategies now. **Food Design is THE tool to establish new sustainable values.**

- 1 58,82 billion in 2019; [https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/key-policies/common-agricultural-policy/cap-glance\\_de](https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/key-policies/common-agricultural-policy/cap-glance_de); 18.03.2021
- 2 Source: European Union Joint Research Centre, Erwan Saouter.
- 3 Idea: Alex Diem & Martin Hablesreiter