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## British Foods and the Emergence of Local Food Initiatives

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### Introduction

*The Food Programme* on BBC Radio 4 was established in 1979 by Derek Cooper, and is now in its 38th year and presented by Sheila Dillon. Each year the programme hosts the annual Radio Food and Farming Awards, which celebrate specific entrepreneurial initiatives within the food supply chain. As we go to press, Sheila Dillon announced the launch of the 2017 awards, in which local food and small food businesses faced some of the greatest challenges ever. The award, and indeed *The Food Programme*, celebrates both the production of traditional foods and new creative ideas within food businesses. The programme and the awards have done much to promote local and authentic foods and raise the interest of the British consumer. This contribution introduces *The Food Programme* and two businesses which have received these awards in the dairy supply chain, a chain which has been much affected by the neoliberal agenda.

### The nature of the Food and Farming Awards

The award celebrates entrepreneurs and innovators throughout the supply chain, including farmers, producers, retailers and foodservice; recognised through the range of awards delivered. These awards are offered under a number of different categories and celebrate farmers, producers, and retailers. These change each year but normally include categories of:

- Best Food Producer
- Best Drink Producer
- Future Food (open to all parties in supply chain)
- A farming award
- Best Food Retailer
- Best Market
- Best Takeaway or Street Food
- Derek Cooper award

**Table 14.1:** Categories for 2016 and 2017 food and farming awards

2017 categories	2016 categories	Winners of 2016
Best Food Producer	Best Food Producer	Charcutier Ltd
Best Drink Producer	Best Drink Producer	Hallet Real cider
You and Yours Best Takeaway and Street Food	Best Food Market	St Dogmaels local producers market
Future of food award	Future of Food Award	Our Cow Molly
Country File Young Farmers	Countryfile Farming Hero	Julia Evans
Best Food Retailer	Best Food Retailer	Almeley Food Market & Deli
The One Show Cook of the Year	Cook of the Year	Dee Woods
World Service Food Chain programme's award *	BBC Radio Bristol's Food Hero	Barry Haughton
Derek Cooper Outstanding Achievement Award	Derek Cooper Outstanding Achievement Award	Joan Morgan

\* The first international award in 2017 for the person or organisation who's changed the global food system for the better.

As is evident – whilst there are some standard categories, other categories such as the World Service Food Chain and BBC Radio Bristol's Food Hero vary year on year.

The initiative is launched each year and listeners are called upon to put forward nominations for each category. A panel of judges make a long list from thousands of nominations, then a short list of three is chosen in each category. Everyone on the short list is then visited by two specialist judges. From this journalistic exercise the winners are chosen (except in the case of the *Derek Cooper* and the *World Service Awards*, which are researched and chosen by the judges themselves).

Such initiatives bring farmers, small producers, cooks, and other parties who are passionate about food and offer them the limelight to further develop their businesses and activities. Not all awards will be given to businesses. For instance the Derek Cooper Award for outstanding achievement was awarded in 2016 to Joan Morgan, who wrote *The Book of Pears* and *The Book of Apples*, based on her