

UK Food Policy History

Economic, Social and Political Influences

This book provides an overview of the history of food policy in the UK, tracing economic, social and political influences from the 1840s to present day. In order to understand current food policies and the current food system, it is necessary to acknowledge the past influences that have led us to the present. Seeing food policy as a complex web of influences, this book traces food policy development from the period of public health reform during the 1840s, the impact of two world wars, the era of new food choices in the 1950s and 1960s, the beginnings of alternative food movement in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, to the modern and postmodern ages of consumer ethics and fair trade. It critically identifies the key influences across the different eras, both direct and indirect and formal and informal, as well as the key actors, and showcases how understanding the socio-political contexts supports our comprehension of food policy development and its adaptation to modern times. Following this roadmap, the book sets out the challenges ahead and discusses ways forward for a pragmatic and effective UK food policy that learns the lessons of the past. This book provides an important introduction to the history of UK food and agricultural policy for students, scholars, policymakers and professionals, as well as those interested in food systems, public health and social policy more widely.

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63,90 €

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Lieferfrist: bis zu 10 Tage

Artikelnummer: 9781032986807

Medium: Buch

ISBN: 978-1-032-98680-7

Verlag: Routledge

Erscheinungstermin: 29.12.2025

Sprache(n): Englisch

Auflage: 1. Auflage 2025

Serie: Routledge Studies in Food, Society and the Environment

Produktform: Kartoniert

Gewicht: 439 g

Seiten: 286

Format (B x H): 156 x 234 mm

