

Mussel Power



A 'fish fight' against climate change

1x 60 min documentary proposal by Small World Productions

Mussel Power is a strong presenter led investigation to show if and how mussels and other shellfish can help save the world from climate change.

It engages the public in demonstrating shellfish protein as an alternative to meat. Meat is not only destroying the climate but becoming harder to produce in ever increasing quantities as we run out of land. And with the seas overfished, the film postulates that we could turn to aquaculture, farm the oceans, to provide the protein we need.

Mussel Power challenges food industry & retailers to embrace and promote low carbon products as well as expanding the debate encouraging everybody to think about nitrogen and carbon capture. On top of reducing carbon emissions, haven't we got to get carbon back in the ground?

Mussels absorb carbon from the ocean, which contains half the world's CO₂, to make their shells, calcium carbonate, locking the greenhouse gas forever. Oysters are even better at it, comparable with trees. Mussels also absorb nitrogen from the seas as well as cleaning water of pollution.

This 60 min presenter led film could also be the start of a series about how we can 'eat differently to save the world.'

Our presenter begins the investigation by looking at the science of mussel power, visiting a Professor in Sweden where mussel farms are tradeable items in meeting nitrogen reduction targets. Nitrogen oxide is a very powerful greenhouse gas.

Our presenter goes to Scotland where they have been measuring carbon capture rates and the extremely low carbon footprint of harvesting the shellfish. They ask whether mussels could qualify for carbon credits?

And off the English coast, our presenter visits Nicki and John who are setting up Europe's first ever offshore mussel farm. It's a hugely ambitious aquaculture project, 15 square kilometres of sea over 6km off shore, hoping to produce 10,000 tons of mussels a year.

We go underwater & see the thousands of mussels growing on a forest of ropes.

We follow the food trail to the buyers, assess the amazingly low carbon footprint to harvest mussels, we examine their nutritional value versus meat, and the huge benefits over beef.

We hear their history how mussels and oysters were prolific – the poor man's food, so plentiful the Romans built roads out of oyster shell, most of the old A1 is oyster.

So can we bring them back? Our presenter visits Swansea Bay where they are successfully reseeded the seabed and returning oysters which disappeared 100 years ago.

And we get a celebrity chef to rustle up some tasty shellfish sea burger and other recipes that would make them more palatable and marketable to the public. These are then taste-tested on the public

We take that ideas and recipes to the food producers and retailers armed with the low carbon benefits and challenge them to introduce a fight –climate– change range of food products – with carbon labelling, so people know which is the anti–climate change food to buy.

We calculate what a difference to carbon emissions it would make if say only 20% of beef eating was reduced by eating shellfish instead, and the presenter investigates the science & political case, and challenges the trading regulators to allow shellfish to earn carbon & nitrogen credits, will they get it or not ?

So big companies with big carbon/nitrogen tax bills can offset them by investing in shellfish.

Mussel Power would be a film which breaks new ground, that is part of the solution itself, makes real progress with the regulator, with the public and with business in fighting climate change.

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Productions

