

A Seat at the Table:

Becoming a Good Food Nation is everyone's business



How did we analyse the responses? It's explained here, [Annex: Methodology](#)

What are your top 5 concerns about the food system in Scotland?

Affordability of healthy diet

Environmental impact of our food

Disconnect from the origin and value of food

Food waste

Plastics and packaging

What are the top 5 actions that Government should take for Scotland to become a Good Food Nation?

Facilitate local food economies

Invest in education and skills training

Make all food production sustainable

Improve access to good food

Support community food initiatives

People also said...

"It would be great to make the Kitchen Table Talk format known and accessible to a wider range of people - we're conscious that we are, to varying extents, "the usual suspects", and there is huge potential to use the format to gather the views of people who are not!"

A group in Glasgow

"Even folk who are involved in a local food growing group still feel dis-empowered when it comes to suggesting change at Government level. We need to make it relevant to everyone."

A group in Shetland

"We are a small group in our village ... sometimes we feel quite isolated ... We thoroughly approve of ... how you are engaging us to take part, thank you, very excited about our food future."

A group in Argyll

Kitchen Table Talks made clear that people care about the future of Scotland's food and have strong views on what the Scottish Government could do to transform the food system. These are the 10 actions that were mentioned most:

1 Facilitate local food economies

Action to help Scotland grow more of what we eat, and eat more of what we grow. This could be regulation, subsidies, and investment in infrastructure to stimulate local food economies, where small businesses from field to fork can thrive, and everyone can access food produced in their local area.

2 Invest in education and skills training for all ages

Resources need to be invested to provide more free skills training opportunities for children and adults, including growing and cooking food, and to provide clear and accessible information about the food system including on nutrition, social justice and sustainability issues.

3 Make all food production sustainable through incentives and regulation

'A reform of farming and land management policy is critical to supporting the delivery of public goods and protecting the environment. We need to reduce the use of pesticides, chemical fertilisers and routine antibiotic use, and support small-scale producers and organic farmers.

4 Improve financial and geographical access to good food

Policies should tackle poverty and ensure universal access to food, including through fair wages, adequate social security, targeted subsidies or price controls on healthy foods, especially fresh produce, and action to make affordable fresh produce available in all local communities.

5 Provide more and longer-term support to community food initiatives

More funding and investment in infrastructure are needed to support existing and new community food projects, including growing, cooking, distributing, and sharing meals. Community food activities are central to social cohesion, empowerment and resilience.

6 Regulate the food industry for healthier food environments

Intervention to reduce the sugar and fat content of foods, control the use of potentially harmful substances in food processing, and restrict advertising and marketing of unhealthy foods.

7 Ensure access to land for food production

Land reform should make urban land available, with secure tenancy, for food growing in allotments, market gardens, and community garden, as well as facilitate rural land access and ownership for new entrants and small-scale farmers.

8 Take action to reduce plastic packaging

Taxation and/or regulation powers should be used to reduce packaging, especially of fruit and vegetables. Minimising single-use plastics and improving recycling is essential too.

9 Lead by example through public procurement

Public food procurement ought to favour local and organic produce, and the highest nutritional standards should be applied in public kitchens, especially in hospitals and schools.

10 Make food policy more coherent and democratic

Food policy should be coherent, with coordination between Government departments, and grounding in evidence-based practice. There should be more restrictions on corporate lobbying, and opportunities for civil society participation, for example through Local Food Councils.

What next?

We need an ambitious and inclusive consultation on the Good Food Nation Bill.

With over 800 people participating in Kitchen Table Talks, it is clear that there is public appetite for a national conversation on what it means to be a Good Food Nation.

The Good Food Nation Bill is no ordinary piece of legislation: food touches everyone's lives, and this legislation is an opportunity to get it right for people today, and into the future.

This requires leadership and ambition. The Scottish Government's national objectives for a fairer, healthier, safer, greener, and smarter Scotland, and our international commitments on the Sustainable Development Goals, cannot be met without changing the food system.

Scotland could be a European leader by taking a framework approach to food challenges. Creating a new legislative framework for our food will be relevant to social security, rural economy, health, environment, climate change and land reform, economy and fair work, portfolios.

People in Scotland must be at the centre of developing this new framework for our food system.

We are calling for an extended public consultation on the Good Food Nation Bill, that is designed to maximise participation and ensure that everyone's expertise, lived experience, and priorities are heard.

The Scottish Government is recognised as a pioneer government in the Open Government Partnership and has committed to foster openness, transparency, and citizen participation.

The Kitchen Table Talks process generated valuable learning points that can help to ensure that the consultation process on the Good Food Nation Bill is effective and inclusive. The main points of feedback are:

1. The consultation needs to facilitate group responses alongside individual responses;
2. The consultation process needs to be longer than 12 weeks to ensure wide participation;
3. Time and resources have to go into designing and delivering an inclusive consultation process that goes far beyond online engagement;
4. The consultation needs to provide accessible but authoritative information on food system issues in Scotland, in different formats.

Greater participation can help make food policy more transparent, responsive, accountable, and effective.

The Scottish Government committed to consulting on a Good Food Nation Bill in their 2016 and 2017 Programme for Government, but without a clear timeline for the consultation, the Bill could easily slip down the Government's priorities.

We need leadership to keep the Good Food Nation Bill on the agenda and provide a seat at the table to everyone who wishes to be involved in making Scotland a Good Food Nation.



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