



NATIONAL GOOD FOOD NATION PLAN: CONSULTATION

Report by Depute Chief Executive

PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of the Report is to seek approval of the proposed response to the National Good Food Nation Plan Consultation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Scottish Government is developing the national Good Food Nation Plan. This is a requirement of the [Good Food Nation \(Scotland\) Act 2022](#), which was passed in Summer 2022. This Good Food Nation Plan is intended to set out the Scottish Government's goals for food policy and how it intends to achieve them.
- 2.2 The Scottish food and drink sector generates turnover of around £15 billion per annum, and exports of Scottish food and drink were valued at £8.1 billion in 2022. Our fantastic food industry provides employment from the local farmers' market to the export of Scotland's finest produce across the globe. This success contributes positively to the wellbeing of the food and drink workforce, while also making it easier for the population to access healthy food options. Food enables a healthy population to enjoy life to its fullest. Our establishment of the Good Food Nation body of work recognises this and the importance of Scotland's food and drink sector not only to our economy, but also to our culture, heritage, and society.
- 2.3 The first draft national Good Food Nation Plan sets out the following:
- Part One outlines the history of the Good Food Nation in Scotland and highlights how the plan will take effect. This part does not form part of this consultation, but it provides relevant background information.
 - Part Two proposes a set of six national Good Food Nation Outcomes and sets out how they were developed and how progress will be measured. We will ask you questions about the Outcomes as well as the measures.
 - Part Three highlights how working mechanisms within government will change and presents some of the key food related policies that are currently under way. It also presents what life would be like for different groups of people under a Good Food Nation. We are particularly interested in understanding if we have captured correctly what life should be like in a Good Food Nation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Comhairle, approve the proposed response, focused on island-specific issues and other points raised during consultation events in Uist and Lewis**

Contact Officer:	Murdo Mackay, Development Manager
Appendix:	Draft Comhairle response to Consultation on the National Good Food Nation Plan
Background Papers:	Consultation Question Responses

IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The following implications are applicable in terms of the Report.

Resource Implications	Implications/None
Financial	None at present
Legal	None
Staffing	Staffing resource in future to develop local plans once Good Food Nation legislation in place.
Assets and Property	None
Strategic Implications	Implications/None
Risk	No significant risks identified at this stage
Equalities	Equalities impacts will be considered as part of the implementation of any Good Food Nation Plans
Corporate Strategy/ Economic Recovery Strategy – Action Plan	Identify opportunities for products and produce to be created closer to the point of consumption, e.g. potential for increases in local food production and for that to be better integrated into the local supply chain and the local market.
Environmental Impact	If implemented as planned the Good Food Nation aims and objectives would positively impact the environment.
Consultation	SG Consultation ongoing

BACKGROUND

- 5.1 The Scottish Government published a new food and drink policy in 2014 - [Becoming a Good Food Nation](#). This set out a vision for Scotland to be “*a Good Food Nation, where people from every walk of life take pride and pleasure in, and benefit from, the food they produce, buy, cook, serve, and eat each day*”.
- 5.2 Scottish Ministers sought expert advice from a non-statutory Scottish Food Commission which was formed in February 2015. It was tasked with advising Scottish Ministers about how to realise the ambition of becoming a Good Food Nation. One of its key recommendations was the introduction of framework legislation to bring the great variety of food-related work already underway across government together under a single umbrella.
- 5.3 This framework legislation now exists in the form of the [Good Food Nation \(Scotland\) Act 2022](#) (“the Act”). Under the Act, Scottish Ministers are required to produce a national Good Food Nation Plan which sets out the Government’s goals for food policy and how it intends to achieve them.^[1]

CONTENT OF THE PLAN

- 6.1 There are six overarching Good Food Nation Outcomes, they are:
- **Outcome 1:** Everyone in Scotland eats well with reliable access to safe, nutritious, affordable, sustainable, and age and culturally appropriate food.
 - **Outcome 2:** Scotland’s food system is sustainable and contributes to a flourishing natural environment. It supports our net zero ambitions and plays an important role in maintaining and improving animal welfare and in restoring and regenerating biodiversity.
 - **Outcome 3:** Scotland’s food system encourages a physically and mentally healthy population, leading to a reduction in diet-related conditions.

- **Outcome 4:** Our food and drink sector is prosperous, diverse, innovative, and vital to national and local economic and social wellbeing. It is key to making Scotland food secure and food resilient and creates and sustains jobs and businesses underpinned by fair work standards.
- **Outcome 5:** Scotland has a thriving food culture with a population who are interested in and educated about good and sustainable food.
- **Outcome 6:** Scotland has a global reputation for high-quality food that we want to continue to grow. Decisions we make in Scotland contribute positively to local and global food systems transformation. We share and learn from best practice internationally.

OUTER HEBRIDES CONSULTATION EVENTS

- 7.1 Public “in-person” workshops were held across the country during March facilitated by Nourish Scotland. Two events took place, the first in Daliburgh on the 26th March and in Stornoway on the 27th. Comhairle officers attended those sessions and any issues raised locally were included in the Comhairle’s response to the consultation.
- 7.2 Nourish Scotland’s Chief Executive also held an engagement event with Comhairle officers and colleagues from partner agencies including NHS and third sector organisations involved in local food initiatives.

ISSUES RAISED AT THE DALIBURGH & STORNOWAY WORKSHOPS

- 8.1 Overall comments: Whilst the idea and visioning is well perceived, the overall feedback was it was lacking key information and objectives. Not strong enough and doesn’t make it clear what actions will be taken.
- 8.2 Outcomes and targets imply the focus is on Scotland’s position in the global food market, where the focus should be on feeding Scotland first. Why are we exporting Scottish grown food, to then import a cheaper, more processed version. Food & drink industry should be divided to give a clearer picture on growth and sustainability.
- 8.3 Large organisations (such as whisky distilleries) / SME (small producers etc) should be separate as each have different support needs.
- 8.4 Legislation has become too rigid and costly; it is unfair and sometimes crippling to an SME to demand they follow the same rules and regulations as large organisations. Again, a divide in the industry would help this, with obligations dependant on your size of organisation.
- 8.5 A lot of key indicators are focused on child poverty – which is a necessity and it’s right to have such a focus on this – however there isn’t much mention on poverty as a whole - working adults, retired pensioners, people with debilitating conditions.

CROFTING ROLE IN GOOD FOOD NATION OUTCOMES

- 9.1 Reference is made to the value of crofting in the plan as part of the delivery mechanisms in Part Three of the document: Crofting is recognised as a low-intensity high nature value form of land management that is unique to the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. We published the [National Development Plan for Crofting \(NDPC\)](#) in March 2021, which highlights the core elements necessary to ensure that crofting remains at the heart of our rural and island communities. The Plan encourages crofters to work collaboratively to develop their businesses, share knowledge, access new markets, and connect with others in the food and drink sector.
- One of the priorities in the NDPC is to work with stakeholders to connect crofters with local food networks and Regional Food Groups. Officials are working with the Scottish Crofting Federation and the Scottish Agricultural Organisation Society (SAOS) to develop a crofting food network and crofting brand. This will enable crofters to tap into local food networks, help reduce food miles, and contribute to food security in our rural and island areas. The Comhairle would support this recognition of the contribution of crofting and encourage more support for the sector in achieving this.

FISHERIES – BLUE ECONOMY

- 10.1 Scotland is a major fishing nation in the north-east Atlantic: we are renowned for the quality of our seafood and for how we manage our fisheries in partnership at an international level. We play a full and key role in supporting and delivering international fisheries management.
- 10.2 [Our Vision for a Blue Economy](#) is that by 2045 Scotland's shared stewardship of our marine environment supports ecosystem health, improved livelihoods, economic prosperity, social inclusion and wellbeing. To ensure that our fisheries are in line with this vision we have set out our [Fisheries Management Strategy 2020-2030](#) (FFM Strategy). This strategy forms one of the cornerstones of the Blue Economy approach: it sets out a vision for Scotland as a world class fishing nation delivering responsible and sustainable fisheries management which provides access to a high protein, low carbon food.
- 10.3 Scottish Government recently published their [Vision for Sustainable Aquaculture](#) which sets out long-term aspirations for the finfish, shellfish and seaweed farming sectors. The nine-point Vision will outline support for the sustainable development of a sector that produces high-quality healthy foods and delivers significant economic benefits to Scotland. The Scottish Government supports the development of a sustainable aquaculture sector, operating within environmental limits, and recognises the considerable social and economic benefits the sector delivers today and can deliver.

CONCLUSION

- 11.1 This proposed Good Food Nation plan sets the framework for future Scottish Government interventions supporting both food growing and other wider health benefits accruing from access to affordable, nutritious food. It is hard to disagree with any of the overarching themes and desired outcomes detailed in the Good Food Nation Plan. The challenge will be delivering the desired outcomes in the coming years. The Comhairle will support initiatives that underpin the traditional sectors as well as embracing new and innovative measures that will benefit local producers and consumers.