

Local food for everyone - a discussion

August 2021

Ministerial Foreword



Scotland has one of the world's best natural larders. Whether it's our incredible seafood, a cut of the finest Scotch Beef, a bowl of hand-picked strawberries covered in organic cream, or a hearty baked potato with seasonal veggies – whatever your tastes or diet, you can find it in Scotland.

However, not everyone in Scotland has access to all that local Scottish food has to offer. Obesity caused by poor diet is a significant problem. The coronavirus pandemic has made it even more difficult for many families to put food on the table, despite the amazing efforts of local store workers, food delivery drivers, local authorities and community groups. This has to change. Whether you're living in Stornoway or Stirling, Elgin or Edinburgh, up in John o' Groats or down in Gretna

Green; everyone should be able to afford and eat healthy, sustainable, local food.

The benefits of local food go past the plate. Through encouraging more locally based production and circular supply chains, we can reduce the distance food travels, as well as enabling more people to be able to get out and grow their own food. I believe that local food can be a central pillar in building the wealth and vibrancy of our local communities, as part of 20 minute neighbourhoods where people can meet their daily needs within a 20 minute walk – enabling people to live better, healthier lives and supporting our net zero ambitions.

Below, my officials have set out a comprehensive programme of actions that the Scottish Government are currently taking to support local food. As you will see, there is already a lot of amazing work going on. However, we know that we don't have all the answers, for that reason I am inviting you to share your ideas on what more can be done to create a future where all can enjoy locally produced food.

Mairi Gougeon MSP
Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands

Responding to this Consultation

We are inviting responses to this consultation by 2 December 2021.

Please respond to this consultation using the Scottish Government's consultation hub, Citizen Space (<http://consult.gov.scot>). Access and respond to this consultation online at: <https://consult.gov.scot/agriculture-and-rural-economy/local-food-for-everyone>

You can save and return to your responses while the consultation is still open. Please ensure that consultation responses are submitted before the closing date.

If you are unable to respond using our consultation hub, please complete the Respondent Information Form to:

Food and Industry Growth Team
Scottish Government
B1 Spur
Saughton House
Broomhouse Drive
Edinburgh
EH11 3XG

Handling your response

If you respond using the consultation hub, you will be directed to the About You page before submitting your response. Please indicate how you wish your response to be handled and, in particular, whether you are content for your response to be published. If you ask for your response not to be published, we will regard it as confidential, and we will treat it accordingly.

All respondents should be aware that the Scottish Government is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and would therefore have to consider any request made to it under the Act for information relating to responses made to this consultation exercise.

If you are unable to respond via Citizen Space, please complete and return the Respondent Information Form included in this document.

To find out how we handle your personal data, please see our privacy policy: <https://www.gov.scot/privacy/>

Next steps in the process

Where respondents have given permission for their response to be made public, and after we have checked that they contain no potentially defamatory material, responses will be made available to the public at <http://consult.gov.scot>. If you use the consultation hub to respond, you will receive a copy of your response via email.

Following the closing date, all responses will be analysed and considered along with any other available evidence to help us. Responses will be published where we have been given permission to do so. An analysis report will also be made available.

Comments and complaints

If you have any comments about how this consultation exercise has been conducted, please send them to the contact address above or at local.food.policy@gov.scot

Scottish Government consultation process

Consultation is an essential part of the policymaking process. It gives us the opportunity to consider your opinion and expertise on a proposed area of work.

You can find all our consultations online: <http://consult.gov.scot>. Each consultation details the issues under consideration, as well as a way for you to give us your views, either online, by email or by post.

Responses will be analysed and used as part of the decision making process, along with a range of other available information and evidence. We will publish a report of this analysis for every consultation. Depending on the nature of the consultation exercise the responses received may:

- indicate the need for policy development or review
- inform the development of a particular policy
- help decisions to be made between alternative policy proposals
- be used to finalise legislation before it is implemented

While details of particular circumstances described in a response to a consultation exercise may usefully inform the policy process, consultation exercises cannot address individual concerns and comments, which should be directed to the relevant public body.

Local food for everyone: a discussion

Section 1 - Introduction

Scotland has some of the best food and drink in the world, enjoyed around the globe and creating jobs the length and breadth of the country. Since 2007 the Scottish Government has dramatically improved the landscape for food in Scotland, from school lunches to whisky exports, from allotment provision to agricultural innovation.

The people of Scotland deserve to have access to the best produce Scotland has to offer, whether they're growing it themselves, buying it directly from a local producer, choosing it at a convenience store or supermarket, being served it at school, or in any number of other settings. Low income should not be a barrier to a healthy, balanced diet.

The pandemic has accelerated the pace of change. More and more, people want to know where their food has come from – who made it, what conditions animals were kept in, how far it has travelled and how it supports local jobs and investment. Local food can offer a lot of the answers.

We have worked with the public, industry and other organisations to make sure our policies deliver for the communities we serve. Ambition 2030, the Good Food Nation policy and the Agriculture Bill set out our aspirations for Scotland to become a Good Food Nation, driving environmentally-sustainable, inclusive growth and making sure everyone can afford a healthy, pleasurable diet.

The Scottish Government and the food and drink sector have a uniquely collaborative way of working. In particular, the Scottish Government is an anchor member of the Scotland Food & Drink Partnership brings together multiple industry organisations alongside Scottish Government and its agencies. We are funding the delivery of the Partnership's food and drink recovery plan, a central plank of which is strengthening Scotland's local food culture and supply chain.

But we want to go further. Local production has enormous potential to enrich lives, improve diets, reduce food miles and keep value in communities. We want to make sure that we're learning from others, adopting good practice, and removing the barriers that are stopping people growing, using, choosing or buying Scottish food at every opportunity.

Additionally, the SNP manifesto for the 2021 election made a commitment to support the development of vertical, low carbon farms, fuelled by renewable energy, to produce more of our own fruit and vegetables. Given the relevance to local food production, we are also taking the opportunity to seek views on vertical farming within this consultation.

Part A (Section 1-3) of this consultation presents the three pillars of the Scottish Government's local food strategy - connecting people with food; connecting Scottish producers with buyers; and harnessing public sector procurement. It aims to start a conversation about local food in Scotland, inviting contributions about how everyone involved in food in Scotland could work together to build a food system based around quality local production and short and circular supply chains, to make high quality Scottish produce available to all.

Part B (Section 4) of this consultation provides an overview of vertical farming, a technology which may be able to help Scotland increase its local food production and bring food production closer to the consumer. The consultation contains questions on vertical farming which are primarily focused at people and businesses in the food supply chain, as well as inviting suggestions on other technologies which would help Scotland produce more of its own fruit and vegetables.

Part A – Local Food

Overview: food and drink in Scotland today

The food and drink industry is a major contributor to Scotland's economy, generating turnover of around £14.9 billion and adding close to £5.6 million in Gross Value Added (GVA) in 2018. It is made up of over 17,000 businesses, which employ around 122,000 people, many in remote and economically fragile rural and island communities.

Food and drink is Scotland's biggest export industry, making up 20.7% of Scotland's international exports. Overseas exports of food and drink were worth a record £6.7bn in 2019, an increase of £2.6bn (62%) since 2009 (source HMRC).

Scotland is a nation producing high quality, rather than high volume, food and drink products. Our targets for increasing turnover will only be achieved by strengthening the supply chain, for example, by adding value to the many high-quality food and drink products that we produce in this country, and by looking to expand domestic production and processing of our high quality primary produce, as well as encouraging efficiencies in production.

The replacement of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) gives the Scottish Government an opportunity to review the balance of objectives. In particular it will allow a shift in the way we support farmers, crofters and land managers to be global leaders in sustainable food production. This will ensure the sector makes the emission reductions required to contribute to Scotland's world-leading emissions targets, and supports nature restoration whilst delivering high quality food.

Section 2 – The Benefits of Local Food

Defining local food

In this consultation local food is defined as food that has some or all of the following features:

- it is produced locally (this includes your town, region or elsewhere in Scotland)
- it has short supply chains (there are fewer steps between the primary producer of the food and the person who eats the food)
- it is sustainably produced (ie. produced in a way that is better for the natural environment than large scale industrial production)
- it is produced in a way that places an emphasis on building better relationships of trust, information, fairness and support between local food producers and the people buying and eating their food

This definition reflects the fact that local food means different things to different people. In the minds of Scottish consumers, there is no single interpretation of what is meant by 'local' (my region: 40%, Scotland: 39%, my town or city: 18%, UK: 3%)¹. The Scottish Government celebrates this diversity of views, and aims to make sure people can enjoy local food, whether that means it was grown in their garden, their town, their region, or elsewhere in Scotland.

A further element of local food is allowing for shorter supply chains. This means that there are fewer steps between the primary producer of the food (eg. a farmer) and the person who eats the food. The concept of local food is also commonly linked with a focus on food that is sustainably produced (ie. produced in a way that is better for the natural environment than large scale industrial production), and with an emphasis on building better relationships of trust, information, fairness and support between local food producers and the people buying and eating their food.

Benefits of local food

The Covid-19 pandemic has been hugely challenging and recovery work is ongoing. It is an opportunity however to do things differently - to rebuild our economy with wellbeing, sustainability, and fair work at its heart.

As a practical and outcomes focused approach to local economic development, Community Wealth Building (CWB) can play a central role in this recovery and support the delivery of a wellbeing economy in Scotland. CWB requires us to think about how we can restructure our economic system in a way that allows citizens and communities to own more – delivering actions that give the people of Scotland a greater stake in our economy and shared wealth, making it work better for us and our planet.

Case Study A: Why does local food matter? A locally focused emergency response

Like everywhere else in the UK, Argyll and Bute Council's catering service was disrupted by the effects of Covid-19. By the beginning of June, the Council was sending out approximately 3,000 fresh food parcels and 2,000 ambient food parcels a week. By making an effort to source the contents from local suppliers as much as possible, the council were able to support the local economy, while providing local residents with quality, varied fresh food. Through supporting local businesses, the Council found an incredible ally in providing their emergency response, with Christine Boyle, Catering and Cleaning Officer at Argyll and Bute Council saying of local suppliers "They have been absolutely unbelievable. Whatever we need, they have fulfilled the ask and more. The suppliers aren't just supplying our food. They're supporting us and the whole project."

¹ An online survey conducted by Scotland Food & Drink where a total of 1,010 interviews were undertaken with a nationally representative sample of adults (aged 18+) living in Scotland between 10th and 16th February 2021.

Increasing the proportion of food that is grown, processed and consumed locally will keep value within local, regional and national economies, supporting jobs across agriculture, retail, tourism, manufacture and hospitality.

There are many benefits to encouraging greater consumption of Scottish food, as part of a balanced food policy. We will never be in a position to produce all our own food, nor would it be wise to do so – countries that engage in trade gain significantly from doing so, and being reliant only on domestic production makes a country poorer and more exposed to risk (for example from failed harvests). In considering the future direction of Scottish food policy, we need to take into account areas of production where Scotland has particular strengths rather than aiming to meet all food needs domestically, and consider the differences between what Scotland produces and what Scottish people enjoy eating, as well as the seasonality of Scottish production of certain products.

A thriving and accessible local food and drink sector can contribute to wider public priorities such as national and household food security and our diet and healthy weight objectives.

Local economy

Sourcing food locally can provide better returns for local communities. For example, Food for Life Scotland (FFLS) encourages local authorities to use local, organic ingredients and estimates that every £1 invested by FFLS certified local authorities over 3 years can yield social return on investment of £4.41 in value in the local economy². A UK case study indicates that £10 spent on a locally sourced organic produce box scheme generated £25 for the local economy (24km from the farm), compared with £14 generated for the local economy if that £10 had been spent in the supermarket³.

Case Study B: Why does local food matter? Bringing people together

Forth Valley Food & Drink's growing network includes a diverse range of organisations from farms, breweries, restaurants and cafés, to producers, social enterprises and community growing projects. In 2020, Forth Valley Food & Drink were awarded funding from Scotland Food and Drink, which helped to support network activities including the running of their annual Food and Drink festival. Despite the challenges of Covid-19, the two week festival in October 2020 was a great success, including a daily programme of online and socially distant events: from foodie podcasts with Forth Environment Link and pumpkin picking at Arnprior Farm, to online kitchen medicine workshops with Trossachs Wild Apothecary and family friendly cook-alongs, including meatball making with Stirling's Mamma Mia restaurant. During the festival, over 2300 people also tuned into two cook-alongs were broadcast live on Facebook from Bannockburn House.

² Jones M, Pitt H, Oxford L, Orme J, Gray S, Salmon D, Means R, Weitkamp E, Kimberlee R & Powell J (2016) Food for Life: a Social Return on Investment Analysis of the Locally Commissioned Programme. Full Report. UWE Bristol.

³ New Economics Foundation (2002), Plugging the Leaks: Making the most of every pound that enters your local economy [2891 NEF handbook redone \(neweconomics.org\)](https://www.neweconomics.org/)

Environment

Where food is produced within Scotland, we can have confidence that it has been produced in a way that complies with Scotland's high standards for sustainable production. Buying local means that we are not exporting our environmental footprint to countries with less sustainable methods, or different pressures around resources like water. Local food systems can allow for shorter supply chains meaning that are fewer steps and less 'food miles' travelled between the primary producer of the food and the person who eats it.

Health

The act of growing food brings health benefits, as well as the benefits from consuming the food produced. Scottish qualitative research with people who have engaged in urban farms reports health benefits in the form of increased physical activity, greater intake of fruit and vegetables, as well as the ability to grow a greater variety of vegetables which are fresher than those available in shops⁴. Community gardening projects across Scotland have been associated with mental health benefits⁵.

Food waste

20% of food waste in the UK is associated with food processing, distribution and retail⁶. The Scottish retail sector has been estimated to generate approximately 31,000 tonnes of food waste annually⁷. Interviews with UK retailers found that the majority of food waste outside the home occurs through retailers rejecting produce, poor stock rotation, and inflated orders of produce to make store shelves look more full. This research suggested that shopping local can reduce food waste by removing steps in the supply chain where waste occurs⁸.

Reducing barriers to food

Our response to and recovery from the COVID pandemic has provided further momentum for integrated local food system design that supports us to be able to eat more of what we produce, produce more of what we eat, and in which factors such as age, disability or income is not a barrier to being able to eat well.

Designing local food systems so as they are accessible to those facing the greatest barriers will maximise the benefits for all. Partnership working across sectors and services can help to overcome barriers through a shared and coherent ambition to make good food accessible locally. The knowledge and experience of community food organisations and social enterprises are a valued part of our local food landscape. Employment in local food can provide households with sustainable and secure incomes, preventing poverty and hardship.

⁴ Dinnie, L., Bourke, A. J., Kyle, C., & Wilson, R. Public perceptions on the role and value of locally grown food.

⁵ Crossan, J., Shaw, D., Cumbers, A., McMaster, R, Glasgow's Community Gardens: Sustainable Communities of Care (2015) [Media_622132_smx.pdf \(gla.ac.uk\)](#)

⁶ WRAP. 2008 The food we waste. Banbury, UK. ISBN: 1-84405-383-0

⁷ [ZWS1557 EEBS food waste guide Preventing food waste in retail.pdf \(zerowastescotland.org.uk\)](#)

⁸ Mena, C., Adenso-Diaz, B., & Yurt, O. (2011). The causes of food waste in the supplier–retailer interface: Evidences from the UK and Spain. *Resources, Conservation and Recycling*, 55(6), 648-658.

Scotland's geography and the specific needs of remote areas

The geography of Scotland means that there is enormous diversity in how easy it is to produce or obtain food. Islands and remote rural areas, for example, face acute challenges, including higher costs for food, predominantly because of transport costs. This means that the cost of a standard basket of goods on an island can be substantially higher than on parts of the mainland. This situation can be further impacted by reliance on fragile transport links and dependence on ferries to get main supplies, the unavoidable breakdowns, bad weather and capacity issues on ferries can also heighten these challenges. Delays impact not only on quality and freshness but also on basic supply.

Encouraging local production is a potential mitigation for this, although agriculture also faces challenges in these areas - getting food supplies on, and food products and animals for slaughter off the islands, as well as having limited access to specialist help, including things like machinery repairs, is a challenge at times, particularly in winter.

However, 'produced on an island' has the potential to enhance the appeal of a product, adding something special to its story. Of the 14 Scottish products protected under the EU protected names scheme, 5 are from our islands, which shows the importance of these areas to the Scottish food landscape.

Local food in Scotland

Scotland's local food scene has gone from strength to strength, with the North Sea and Atlantic surrounding our country and its lush rolling hills, fertile soil and farmland and varied weather, the building blocks are in place for produce of unrivalled quality and, importantly, to have more and more people championing and using the fine produce available. No longer seen as niche, the interest in and demand for local is now mainstream. Scotland's diverse range of producers, with stories, heritage and passionate people behind them, are all around us, and make up a crucial part of the country's economic, social and cultural fabric. These products and people, in all their regional diversity, tell a story about Scotland itself and provide a 'taste of place' for visitors and locals alike.

Section 3 – Scottish Government Activity

The 2014 paper *Recipe for Success: becoming a good food nation* highlighted the interplay between food and wider socio-economic factors, and aimed to ensure that everyone in Scotland has the opportunity, skills and confidence to access an affordable, healthy and balanced diet for themselves and their families.

Communities the length and breadth of Scotland have established thriving local food initiatives, and food businesses have been launched and grown providing quality produce direct to consumers or to other businesses. The Scottish Government has worked to grow the Scottish local food economy under three pillars:

- connecting people with food
- connecting Scottish producers with buyers
- harnessing public sector procurement

In the next pages we set out just some of the range of activities already under way or planned.

Pillar One: Connecting people with food

Making land available for growing

The Scottish Government is helping communities access land for food growing purposes through:

- the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. This Act places a number of duties on local authorities in relation to allotments and includes a duty on local authorities to prepare a Food Growing Strategy. A group of representatives from Local Authorities, the Scottish Government and the Scottish Allotment and Gardening Society (SAGS) support the implementation of the Act and the development of Food Growing Strategies.
- the land and assets pillar of the Community Wealth Building strategy, which help communities access land for community growing and community gardens.

Grow Your Own

The Scottish Government provides funding to:

- Trellis Scotland (£30,000 in 2021/22) for the 'Growing Good Health' project which will enable more people to improve their health and wellbeing through Grow Your Own initiatives and improve the support and resources Trellis Scotland offers in a range of care settings. The area of land under cultivation will increase and more individuals and communities will gain the necessary skills and knowledge to grow their own food.
- Social Farms and Gardens (£37,000 in 2021/22), which represents over 300 organisations and works directly with grassroots community groups across Scotland, to deliver actions to increase the land available for community food growing. The funded project aims to improve food growing skills and knowledge to support communities and individuals to grow their own food.
- Green Action Trust (£100,000 in 2021/22) to establish community growing activities, particularly in areas of social deprivation and practical support for people in such areas to use green space for food production.

Learning about food

The Scottish Government encourages learning about food through:

- the Good Food Futures partnership programme, which brings together Government-funded projects run by the Royal Highland Education Trust, Education Scotland, Food and Drink Federation Scotland and Soil Association Scotland. It ensures a more joined up approach to food education planning and delivery, with better opportunities for organisations in Scotland with an interest in food education and careers in the food and drink sector to work together effectively.
- making food education an integral part of the national educational curriculum, meaning that all schools are expected to deliver on this subject in line with the experiences and outcomes detailed in Curriculum for Excellence. The food and health experiences and outcomes are designed to ensure children and young people are taught about food in its widest sense and to understand the impact

their choices have on their health and wellbeing, the environment and the economy. This learning includes exploring where food comes from and career opportunities in the food and farming industry.

The Scottish Government provides funding to:

- Education Scotland (£190,000 in funding for 2021-22) to distribute grants to educational settings for projects which contribute to achieving Good Food Nation outcomes.
- Royal Highland Education Trust (£75,000 of funding in 2021-22) for the delivery of digital farm visits for school children, with accompanying classroom resources.

Improving access to locally produced food

The Scottish Government seeks to improve access to locally produced food through:

- investing over £2 billion in support to low income households in 2020-21. Maximising income and reducing the cost of living enables households to better access food that meets their needs and preferences. Our prioritisation of cash-first responses to financial hardship help to boost income and prevent future crisis.
- supporting Public Health Scotland to run Community Food and Health (Scotland) which provides capacity building, resource and evaluation support to local initiatives. Their aim is to ensure that everyone in Scotland has the opportunity, ability and confidence to access a healthy and acceptable diet for themselves, their families and their communities. This work can include local growing initiatives and agreements with local producers.
- over £140 million was invested in tackling food insecurity during the pandemic, and partnership working at pace between different sectors and services ensured that people were able to access food and other essentials. We continue to work with local partners to build on these relationships and support action that boosts household income alongside help to access food where needed.

The Scottish Government provides funding to:

- four community food networks (£100,000) (Lanarkshire Community Food & Health Partnership, Glasgow Community Food Network Community Food Initiatives North East and Edinburgh Community Food). Their activities increase the access to affordable, healthy food to members of their local communities. This will include community growing and agreements with local producers.
- the Investing Communities Fund, which includes a wide range of local food-related activities, including food banks, food pantries, community gardens and growing, education/cooking skills, and community cafés. Children's clubs and activities for older people also include elements of supporting healthy eating including lunch clubs, homework clubs, after school provision.

- the Supporting Communities Fund and Communities Recovery Fund (CRF), which has included support to address food challenges and poverty over the course of the pandemic. The final phase of Covid funding through the CRF is currently underway which aims to support communities in their recovery from the pandemic, such as transitioning from emergency services and activities toward more sustainable provision. Food has continued to be a strong theme with communities looking at ways in which they can adopt longer term solutions to ongoing poverty/food related challenges while encouraging the provision of more dignified options, that make best use of local resources and assets.

The communities funds above are designed to identify and address local issues associated with poverty and disadvantage while supporting a range of community goals including local economy, local production, environment and climate objectives. These funds are community-led, recognising that communities themselves know best what they need to address their local challenges and identify local solutions.

Pillar Two: Connecting Scottish producers with buyers

Foster short and circular supply chains

In order to foster short and circular supply chains:

- the Scottish Government works with members of the Scotland Food and Drink Partnership through the [Food and Drink Recovery plan](#) to:
 - Raise the profile of producer/farmer markets across Scotland,
 - promote access to fresh local produce through butchers, fishmongers, bakers and farm shops
- the Scottish Government is developing a new Retail Strategy to support the sector through to the next 5 years and beyond. This will link in with work across government to support local businesses and suppliers.
- the newly-launched 2021-22 Food Processing, Marketing and Cooperation Scheme offers over £7m of grants to businesses, with a focus on activity promoting short supply chains and low carbon.
- the Scottish Government is exploring the opportunities offered by vertical farming, including offering a grant to SRUC to support the development of a vertical farm at their Edinburgh campus. Further work on vertical farming will involve community engagement and identification of the different applications of the technology in different contexts, and the nature of SG support.
- enterprise agencies efforts to support local food production, for example through Co-operative Development Scotland (CDS), the arm of Scotland's enterprise agencies that works to support company growth through employee ownership and co-operative business models. CDS help businesses and community enterprises grow by offering a range of advice and services, including free masterclasses and one-to-one support.

Encourage retailers to stock Scottish food

Retailers are encouraged to stock Scottish food through:

- frequent ministerial-level engagement with major retailers to encourage them to source and promote Scottish produce in their stores.
- Scottish Government and Scotland Food & Drink facilitation of regional showcase trade events to bring together more suppliers and buyers to drive local sales. An event covering producers and suppliers across the Highlands and Islands and North East is planned for November 2021, with further events scheduled later in 2021/22..

The Scottish Government provides funding to:

- Scottish Grocers Federation (SGF) pilot of “Go Local”. 10 stores were provided with £10,000 match funding to develop a Scottish Produce section and engage with local producers as suppliers. An Interim Evaluation showed positive results with a 40% increase of sales of local produce in stores. A second phase of the programme providing £190,000 funding to SGF was announced in June 2021 to roll the project out further over 2021/22.
- create new posts in buying teams of the major UK retailers and food service companies to broker more sourcing of Scottish produce. Two new joint Scotland Food & Drink/Business graduate roles currently in development, one with Morrisons and one with Brakes Foodservice.
- support small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs) via Scotland Food & Drink to obtain SALSA or BRC food safety accreditation, to help them access more markets.
- deliver a programme in partnership with key retailers and foodservice customers to increase listings of Scottish products in Scottish outlets. This is led by Scotland Food & Drink’s UK Market Development team who are working hand in hand with major retailers and foodservice companies, who are proving very receptive and open to the local sourcing agenda.

Encourage consumers to buy Scottish food

Consumers are encouraged to buy Scottish food through:

- the major ‘Scotland on the Table’ campaign, which runs across media and other outlets to drive increased sales and awareness of Scottish food and drink. The first 4 week tranche of this launched in early 2021. A second 4 week phase of the campaign is in development, due to run in September 2021 aligned to Scottish Food and Drink Fortnight.
- the annual Scottish Food & Drink Fortnight campaign (September 2021), which showcases and highlights the strength of the local food and drink offering.
- Scottish Government supporting producers to obtain Geographical Indication (GI) status for their products, offering them protection from imitation as well as market differentiation in the UK and abroad. This is accompanied by promotion activity for GI products, including the Quality Meat Scotland “Make it Scotch” campaign.

The Scottish Government provides funding to:

- Scotland Food & Drink to develop the Support Local Directory, as a first response to Covid-19 and the closure of traditional routes to

market for many food and drink suppliers. It has acted as a national supplier directory for businesses who had increased online selling. Post-pandemic, further work is being done now to develop the industry's ecommerce strategy and route to market.

- support the expansion of Visit Scotland's Taste our Best scheme across the tourism sector, delivering more opportunities for local suppliers
- Scotland's Town Partnership (£10m multi-year fund), to deliver the recently launched 'Scotland Loves Local' programme. This programme builds community and business resilience by encouraging people to 'choose local', supporting their local businesses.
- the Regional Food Fund, which provides grants of up to £5,000 to a variety of projects promoting local food. The most recent funding round (announced July 2021) means that since 2018 the fund has now awarded over £550k to 121 creative, innovative & collaborative projects across the regions of Scotland
- joint Scotland Food & Drink/Local Authority posts to support regional food groups. These groups championing their area's food and drink sector. From Shetland and Orkney to East Lothian, Angus and Fife to Ayrshire & Arran and the Outer Hebrides, the current network of 18 groups work to help grow their local businesses, develop their regional identities, drive spend on local food and develop food tourism

Encourage use of Scottish products as inputs

The Scottish Government provides funding to:

- a joint Scotland Food & Drink, Scottish Wholesale Association and SAOS supply chain study on logistics and fulfilment for small and micro businesses. This will help educate both sides of the supply chain – wholesalers about benefits of sourcing Scottish, also educating producers on how to sell into wholesale.

Pillar Three: Harnessing public sector procurement

Leverage public sector buying power to support Scottish producers

To encourage better access to public sector procurement for local food producers:

- the Scottish Government's Better Eating, Better Learning guidance provides a framework for sustainable, local food and drink within procurement practice for educational settings.
- education authorities, supported by Scotland Excel, remain committed to using local and sustainable produce in school catering wherever possible as they have done for many years recognising the wide ranging benefits of doing so.
- the Scottish Government will use feedback gathered via this consultation and engagement with local authorities and public sector procurement groups to inform an update of 'Catering for Change: buying food sustainably in the public sector', providing guidance for anyone involved in the procurement of food or catering services in the public sector.

The Scottish Government provides funding for:

- the Food for Life Programme, which now operates across 15 local authorities in Scotland, supporting the provision of more locally sourced, healthier food being served in schools. In 2021/22 we will target all 32 local authorities through £400,000 of funding.

Part B – Vertical farming

Section 4 - Overview of Vertical farming

Vertical farming is a new technology which may offer particular opportunities to help Scotland increase its local food production and bring food production closer to the consumer, whether in city centres or in remote communities. The SNP manifesto for the 2021 election made a commitment to support the development of vertical, low carbon farms, fuelled by renewable energy, to produce more of our own fruit and vegetables.

Vertical farming is an indoor farming technique where crops are produced in vertical structures such as stacks, trays, or small towers to increase production per square metre. All or some elements of the environment are controlled (such as lighting, ventilation, and water/nutrient provision) to match conditions to the crop's needs and to optimise output. The technology can be used in small, scalable shipping containers; in retrofitted buildings; or in purpose-built facilities. Vertical farming often incorporates hydroponic or aeroponic growing systems rather than traditional growing media. Leafy greens are currently the most common crop, but research is in progress on a range of other plants, fish, insects, and algae.

Because of their comparatively small land use and controlled climates, vertical farms can be situated in areas not traditionally associated with food production or in areas where the climate is not favourable to the crop. They can also support production out of season. Remote communities could benefit from security of supply and fresher produce. Vertical farms could also be used to bring food production into urban centres and make use of brownfield sites. Different technologies may be suitable for different crops and different locations.

Vertical farming may offer efficiencies in water usage, fertiliser usage, and pesticide usage. However, vertical farming is energy-intensive compared to outdoor production, and the food miles that are saved have to be balanced against the increased energy emissions. They are expensive to build, and currently only a small range of crops are at the stage of commercial production. Their role in supporting Scotland to produce its own local food is still to be better understood. The consultation also invites suggestions on other technologies which would help Scotland produce more of its own fruit and vegetables.



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