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Becoming a Good Food Nation:
An analysis of
consultation responses

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BECOMING A GOOD FOOD NATION:
AN ANALYSIS OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

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The views expressed in this report are those of the researcher and do not necessarily represent those of the Scottish Government or Scottish Ministers.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Scottish Government consultation paper *Becoming a Good Food Nation* set out an aspiration for Scotland to become a 'Good Food Nation'. This would entail a cross-policy approach encompassing – amongst other things – health and wellbeing, environmental sustainability and local food production, as well as the continued development of the food and drink sector. Views were invited on a range of matters relevant to achieving the vision set out. The 229 submissions included written responses, survey responses and feedback from stakeholder events.

The overall message from the consultation was one of widespread support and, indeed, enthusiasm for the aspiration for Scotland to become a Good Food Nation. Respondents welcomed the cross-policy approach, and recognised the benefits that the successful implementation of such a programme might deliver. The Good Food Nation agenda was seen by some as providing an opportunity to encourage debate and bring coherence to this cross-cutting issue.

Alongside this broad support, however, there was a recognition that this is a very challenging and long-term agenda which would require to be underpinned by a clear blueprint for action. Respondents highlighted the complex policy terrain, the array of stakeholders, the many competing interests, and the inherent tensions between different strands of the vision (e.g., in relation to environmental sustainability and economic growth). There was a widespread view that any focus on economic growth would need to be framed in terms of *sustainable* economic growth. Respondents emphasised the importance of translating the vision into a clear plan with agreed definitions and measurable aims and objectives, specific actions, and adequate funding and support.

The five proposed priorities for action all attracted some support, with 'food in the public sector', and 'local food' both affirmed on a broad basis. 'Economic growth' was a particularly high priority for those involved in the food producer, retail, and enterprise sectors but was thought to be less important by respondents from other sectors. The other priorities – 'a children's food policy' and 'good food choices' – attracted more mixed comments, although respondents from all sectors were clear that improving the diet of children was vital. In terms of the overall coverage and balance of the vision, there was a strongly expressed view across all respondent types that addressing food poverty was essential to being a Good Food Nation.

Respondents wished to see an inclusive, integrated and bold approach which capitalised on the full range of available policy levers. The importance of a robust evidence-based approach was affirmed (both in terms of developing policy and monitoring progress and success), and there was a desire to link to, and learn from, international evidence and experience. The proposed Food Commission was seen as having a clear role in coordinating effort and providing leadership.

The consultation responses indicated a high level of commitment to the Good Food Nation concept. There was a clear appetite to build on the many initiatives (at national, local and community levels) already running in Scotland. Individual respondents also described a range of ways in which they would like to contribute to Scotland becoming a Good Food Nation in a personal capacity.

1   INTRODUCTION

1.1   This report presents an analysis of the 229 submissions received in response to the Scottish Government's consultation *Becoming a Good Food Nation*.

Background

1.2   Scotland's first national food and drink policy, *Recipe for Success*, was published in 2009.[1] The current discussion paper, *Becoming a Good Food Nation,* invited views on a range of matters to help shape the development of a revised food and drink policy. The document set out an aspiration for Scotland to become a 'Good Food Nation'. The intention was that this would be based on a cross-policy approach encompassing – amongst other things – health and wellbeing, environmental sustainability,   local food production, and the continued economic development of Scotland's food and drink sector. These align with a number of the Scottish Government's strategic objectives and national outcomes, [2] highlighting the cross-cutting nature of the issue and the multiple benefits that might be achieved in becoming a Good Food Nation.

1.3   The discussion paper described the progress made since the launch of *Recipe for Success*, particularly in relation to the continuing economic success of the food and drink industry. However, it also identified substantial challenges – both economic and cultural – which still remain. Thus, while reaffirming the commitment to growing the food and drink industry, the paper also set out an increased emphasis on ensuring that future policy addresses issues relating to diet, health, food culture and awareness, food security and the environmental impact of the food industry.

1.4   The discussion paper set out a vision for 2025 and sought opinions on the vision and on a range of related matters including priority areas to be addressed; preliminary steps to be taken; the role of a Food Commission; indicators of progress and success; and possible approaches to adopt. In addition, individuals, communities and organisations were invited to consider the impact that being a Good Food Nation would have on them, and actions they could take to help achieve the vision.

The consultation process

1.5   The discussion paper included 13 open questions inviting views on different aspects of the paper, while an additional question in the consultation questionnaire sought information on how people had become aware of the discussion paper.[3] More generally, there was a stated wish to see 'wholehearted participation from people in all walks of life', and an invitation to people to offer their views on the propositions contained in the discussion paper, and to submit 'food stories, inspiring pledges and how you think Scotland can become a Good Food Nation'.

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[1] http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/06/18104108/0
[2] http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/Performance/scotPerforms/objectives
[3] The consultation questions are presented in full in Annex 1.

1.6   The discussion paper was issued on 18 June 2014, with a closing date for submissions of 17 October 2014 (subsequently extended to 31 October 2014). A launch event at Inch Park Community Sports Centre in Edinburgh was attended by the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Food and the Environment and around 70 invited stakeholder representatives.

1.7   The Scottish Government took a number of steps to help ensure the consultation reached its target audience. Around 800 copies of the discussion document were issued to an initial distribution list of organisations and individuals including local authorities and community planning partnerships; key stakeholder organisations in the food and drink, health, and environment sectors; and respondents to previous relevant consultations. Additional copies of the document were provided on request. It was also available on the Scottish Government's website, was promoted through the Government's email alerts, email newsletters, and social media channels, and was distributed at appropriate events (the Royal Highland Show and Food and Drink Fortnight). Stakeholders were alerted to the consultation and were encouraged to promote the discussion paper through their own communication channels and to circulate it within their own networks.

1.8   A total of 229 submissions were received in a range of formats including written responses (accounting for the majority of responses), responses received via an online questionnaire developed by a stakeholder organisation, and responses which took the form of feedback from events and activities run by stakeholder organisations.[4] Given the broad nature of the topic and the open questions posed, the responses inevitably covered a diverse range of issues; individual questions were answered in a range of ways; and there was significant overlap in responses across questions.

Approach to the analysis

1.9   The aim of this report is to present an analysis of the comments received, representing the totality of the material submitted. The approach to the analysis took account of the range of responses received, and the varied material submitted, and provided a robust thematic framework for the analysis based on, but not constrained by, the discussion questions themselves.

1.10   All responses were entered into a database structured around the consultation questions. Comments from responses that did not follow the format of the consultation questionnaire were entered against relevant questions as appropriate. Comments not relating to any of the set questions were also entered into the database.[5] Analysis was then carried out using a qualitative thematic approach. Quantitative analysis was carried out in relation to the numbers and types of respondents and responses.

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[4] One stakeholder organisation held a series of regional events and another organisation ran a 'youth discussion'. The feedback from these activities formed the basis of consultation submissions. More details of response types and stakeholder activities are contained in Chapter 2.
[5] Initial data input was carried out by Scottish Government staff; the research team carried out quality assurance checks which involved reassignment of some material between questions.

1.11   The discussion paper and questions set can be characterised as moving from the general to the specific, from the vision and priorities, through to implementation and actions, and this narrative flow provided the overarching framework for the analysis. Questions were grouped to reflect this, and material from the responses was considered in relation to relevant groupings of questions. Within the groups of questions, themes and sub-themes were identified. The framework and related key questions were as follows:

- The Good Food Nation vision (Question 1, 3)
- Priorities for future work (Question 9, 10)
- Defining success and measuring progress (Question 2, 4, 7)
- Implementation and delivery (Question 5, 6, 8)
- Helping Scotland to become a Good Food Nation (Question 13)
- Other issues (Question 11,12)
- Contributing to the consultation (Question 14)

1.12   Throughout this report the main focus is on exploring the qualitative views submitted by respondents. However, in considering the findings of the analysis, it is important to bear in mind that views gathered through an open consultation exercise cannot be regarded as representative of the views of the population as a whole. Rather they are the views of people who were aware of the consultation, have an interest in the subject under discussion, and have the time, opportunity and capacity to take part.

1.13   The report presents the views as submitted by respondents. No attempt has been made to assess or verify the arguments and evidence received.

The report

1.14   Details of the structure of the report are presented below with the key consultation questions for the analysis in different chapters noted in brackets:

- Chapter 2: Overview of respondents and responses
- Chapter 3: Becoming a Good Food Nation – The vision (Question 1, 3)
- Chapter 4: Setting priorities (Question 9, 10)
- Chapter 5: Defining and measuring progress and success (Question 2, 4, 7)
- Chapter 6: Implementation and delivery (Question 5, 6, 8)
- Chapter 7: Helping Scotland become a Good Food Nation (Question 4, 13)
- Chapter 8: Views on contributing to the consultation (Question 14)
- Chapter 9: Conclusions

1.15   As noted above, the chapters draw on all relevant material from responses in analysing the views relevant to individual questions posed. In particular the issues raised in response to Questions 11 and 12 have been integrated into the main substantive chapters as appropriate.

1.16   A list of organisational respondents and a list of the consultation questions are included as annexes to the report.

2   OVERVIEW OF RESPONSES AND RESPONDENTS

2.1   This chapter provides details of the number and types of respondents to the consultation and the types of responses received. A total of 229 submissions were received comprising written responses, submissions in the form of survey responses, and feedback from consultation activities run by stakeholder organisations. The breakdown of response types is shown in Table 2.1 below.

Table 2.1: Overview of consultation submissions

Type of submission	Number of submissions	%
Written responses	186	81%
Survey responses	33	14%
Feedback from consultation activities	10	4%
Total	**229**	**100%***

*Figures do not sum to 100% because of rounding.

2.2   Each type of submission is described in more detail below.

Written responses

2.3   A total of 186 written responses was received to the consultation (one duplicate response was removed from the database). Two-thirds of these were from organisations with the remaining third coming from individuals. See below:

Table 2.2: Breakdown of individual and organisational respondents

Type of respondent	Number	%
Organisations / groups	125	67%
Individuals	61	33%
Total	**186**	**100%**

2.4   Respondents were classified as organisations or individuals on the basis of information contained in their response and, where available, the accompanying respondent information form. In a small number of cases (four) it was not clear if the respondent was submitting views in an individual capacity or on behalf of an organisation; such respondents have been classified as individuals and are included as such in the table above. Further, it was apparent from the responses that a number of individuals had a professional interest in the topic under consideration (e.g., they were employed or operated a business in the food or health sectors) and that this experience was informing their response.

2.5   The organisational responses included one joint response from two organisations. The individual responses included one joint response from two individuals.

2.6   Two organisations submitted multiple different responses from different sections / departments, and five responses were received from individual projects linked to a third sector organisation. These have all been treated as separate responses.

Types of organisational respondent

2.7   Organisational respondents represented a wide range of interests and perspectives, reflecting the cross-cutting nature of the topic under discussion. Respondents came from the public, private and third sectors and included local authorities; health and environment bodies (national and local); national third sector organisations and community groups with an interest in food, health and / or sustainability; commercial food producers, manufacturers and retailers. Fuller details are shown in the table below:

Table 2.3: Type of organisational respondents

Type of organisational respondent	Number	%
Public sector		
• Academia / research	7	6
• Cross-cutting (includes local authorities)	9	7
• Economic / business development	2	2
• Environment	3	2
• Food groups, projects etc.	3	2
• Health	7	6
• Regulation	3	2
• Tourism and leisure	1	1
• Other	1	1
Partnership bodies		
• Academia / research	1	1
• Cross-cutting	4	3
• Health	1	1
Third sector / not for profit		
• Cross-cutting	5	4
• Economic / business development	5	4
• Environment	10	8
• Food groups, projects etc.	21	17
• Food producers, manufacturers, retailers etc.	2	2
• Health	5	4
• Regulation	2	2
• Social justice	8	6
• Other	8	6
Private sector		
• Food producers, manufacturers, retailers etc.	11	9
• Tourism and leisure	4	3
• Other	2	2
Total	**125**	**100%***

*Figures do not sum to 100% because of rounding.

2.8   Annex 1 provides full details of all organisational respondents, and the approach used in allocating organisations to categories.

Geographic location of respondents

2.9   For those respondents providing an address, postcode or other geographic identifiers, it was possible to determine that all but eight (all organisations) were based in Scotland.[6] These eight were all based in England and included a range of organisations with a remit which covered Scotland.

Standard and non-standard responses

2.10   Just over two-thirds of the written responses received (70%) followed the format of the consultation questionnaire, although a number of these respondents also provided additional comment, often providing background information about their organisation and its perspective on the issue, or emphasising the key points from their submission. The remaining third of respondents (30%) submitted non-standard responses (letters or emails) which did not directly address the consultation questions.

2.11   Amongst those providing written submissions to the consultation, not all provided a response to each question. Questions on the overall vision, the related priorities and the proposed Food Commission attracted most comment. However, given the very varied way in which people responded to the questions, with the same issues being covered by different respondents in their comments on different questions, no quantitative breakdown of the number of responses to individual questions is presented.

Development of responses

2.12   Information provided by respondents indicated that a variety of approaches had been used in developing responses. This included the use of internal consultation of various types, and consultation within wider stakeholder networks which then informed the responses submitted.

2.13   Consultations often attract 'campaign' responses, i.e., responses from multiple individuals / organisations based wholly (or almost wholly) on standard text provided by a campaign organiser. No such campaign responses were received in this consultation; however, it was apparent that a number of organisational responses contained sections of common text suggesting varying degrees of discussion and collaboration in developing responses. In some cases those submitting such responses had formal links or shared staff; in other cases they were part of existing networks and groups. This type of response development can be seen as very much in line with the document's aim 'to open up a platform for conversations across the country'.

2.14   Several organisations indicated explicitly that their submission was informed by consultation activity which they had undertaken. For example, Keep Scotland Beautiful ran a stakeholder discussion involving email debate and an afternoon workshop which then informed their response; the response from

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[6] Four individual respondents provided an email address but did not provide a postal address or any other information to allow their geographic location to be confirmed.

Broomhouse Health Strategy Group was based on discussion sessions with staff, volunteers and service users.

2.15 Further, a small number of organisations were particularly proactive in facilitating debate and encouraging others to participate in the *Becoming a Good Food Nation* consultation. Nourish Scotland encouraged people to submit their own personal or organisational responses. They provided a summary of the consultation paper on their website, highlighting key issues, offering prompt questions, and giving a series of tips for drafting consultation responses. They also provided suggested points for inclusion in responses, while making it clear that people were free to develop their own response. Nourish Scotland also provided an online survey and organised regional consultation events; these are both described below.

2.16 Another organisation, the Food and Health Alliance, held an event in Glasgow attended by around 25 people. Discussion focused on the vision, priorities, and indicators for success. The aim of the event was to facilitate debate, with participants encouraged to submit their own responses to the consultation either in a personal capacity or on behalf of their organisation. Feedback from the event itself was shared with Scottish Government officials and made available on the Food and Health Alliance website, although it was not formally put forward as a submission to the consultation, and as such was not considered in the analysis presented in this report.

Survey responses

2.17 In addition to providing guidance to encourage written responses (see above) Nourish Scotland also offered the opportunity for people to complete an online survey which was made available on their website. Thirty-three people completed the survey and these survey responses were then passed to the Scottish Government and have been treated as individual consultation responses. The online survey was based on the consultation questionnaire, and thus the responses are, to all intents and purposes, 'standard' consultation responses. However, the following points should be noted:

- The responses received via this route were relatively brief compared to other types of response.
- The survey did not seek respondent information in the same way as the standard consultation questionnaire, and the information provided was variable. Twelve out of the 33 survey responses were anonymous; further, for those providing their details, it was not possible to determine in a definitive way whether they were responding in a personal capacity or on behalf of an organisation. All the survey responses have therefore been classified as 'individual responses'.

Feedback from consultation activities

2.18 Two stakeholder organisations made submissions based on feedback gathered in the course of consultation activities they organised. Such activity very much reflected the Scottish Government's aspiration that the Good Food Nation discussion document should stimulate debate.

2.19 Nourish Scotland held eight open events in different parts of the country, hosted in association with locally based organisations. Each event followed a similar format and involved plenary sessions, 'springboard' presentations given by invited speakers, and group discussions focusing on key consultation questions, namely the Good Food Nation vision, the Food Commission, and priorities for action. The events attracted more than 230 people, ranging from 16 in Inverness to around 40 at the events held in Edinburgh and Falkland (Fife). Feedback from each individual event was submitted to the consultation, along with an overall summary of key common points from across the events. Each of these nine reports was treated as a separate submission to the consultation (see Table 2.1; feedback from consultation activities). This feedback has been considered alongside the comments submitted through other routes and is represented as appropriate in the analysis presented in the following chapters. More information about the Nourish Scotland events and summaries of the discussions held are available on the Nourish Scotland website.[7]

2.20 Keep Scotland Beautiful ran a stakeholder discussion and a Good Food Nation Youth Discussion. The youth discussion involved providing a resource pack for use in schools with ideas for structuring classroom discussion, and inviting schools to take part in an online vote on: the importance of being a Good Food Nation; aspects of being a Good Food Nation; priorities for action; the Food Commission; and other steps. A total of 156 secondary schools and 18 higher education establishments across all 32 Scottish local authorities (involving a total of 1089 young people) took part. The results of the online voting were collated by Keep Scotland Beautiful and submitted to the consultation. The collated results are accounted for as a single submission (see Table 2.1; feedback from consultation activities) and views represented are considered alongside other responses received in the following chapters.

Multiple responses representing the views of the same individual

2.21 The level of stakeholder activity undertaken in response to the consultation meant that it was possible for people to have contributed legitimately through more than one route without this being identified. For example, those present at a Nourish Scotland regional event may have had their views represented in the feedback submitted from the events; they may, however, also have completed the online survey or submitted their own written response. Alternatively, an organisation may have submitted a response and contributed to discussion which informed the drafting of the response from another organisation. Further, some individuals may have drafted or contributed to an organisational response while also submitting a personal response in their

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[7] http://www.nourishscotland.org/

own name. Of, course, this type of activity is not unique to this consultation; and, given that the prime aim of the analysis is to provide an overview of the range of views expressed (and not to quantify those views), it is not seen as having any significant impact on the findings presented in this report.

Levels of engagement in the Good Food Nation debate

2.22   While it is not possible to be definitive about the exact number who took part in the Good Food Nation debate, the information presented in this chapter provides an overall sense of the level of participation. The 229 submissions received incorporated contributions from substantial numbers of people who participated in consultation activities,[8] and a further unknown number of people who contributed to organisational responses.

2.23   However, regardless of the levels of engagement achieved and the spread of that engagement, it is worth emphasising that the value of an exercise such as this is in generating debate and identifying views on an issue, rather than in quantifying the extent to which those views are held. As such, the findings are not meant to be representative of the population as a whole but rather to represent the range of views of those who participated in the discussion.

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[8] More than 1000 young people took part in the Keep Scotland Beautiful Youth Discussion, and over 230 people attended Nourish Scotland events.

3   BECOMING A GOOD FOOD NATION – THE VISION

3.1   The discussion paper *Becoming a Good Food Nation* presented a vision for Scotland in 2025 as follows:

By 2025, people from every walk of life, will take pride and pleasure in the food served day by day in Scotland. An increase in Scottish food exports will attract overseas visitors and the quality of the food we serve will become one of the key reasons to travel to Scotland. Everyone will know what constitutes good food and why. All players in Scottish life – from schools to hospitals, retailers, restaurants and food manufacturers – will be committed to serving such food. Its ready availability will have contributed to improvements in children's wellbeing and hence outcomes. Scottish suppliers will have developed their offering so that local increasingly equals fresh, healthy and environmentally sound. The most intractable dietary-related diseases will have begun to decline as will the environmental impact locally and worldwide, of our food consumption. The food industry will be a thriving well-known feature of local and national economies, with each part of Scotland rightly proud of its culinary heritage, past and present.

3.2   Two questions asked about respondents' views on the vision, namely:

> **Q1: How important do you think it is that we aim to be a Good Food Nation?**
>
> **Q3: Do you agree with the proposed vision? How would you improve it?**

3.3   However, as already noted, respondents' views on the policy aim and the vision set out were offered throughout their responses, and not only in direct response to these two specific questions. The analysis is therefore based on all the material gathered during the consultation process which responds to the vision set out in the discussion document.

3.4   The remainder of this chapter discusses the responses in relation to six main themes: general views on the vision, policy aims, and 'direction of travel'; opportunities in pursuing the vision; challenges to achieving the vision; balance and emphasis; elements missing from the vision; and specific comments on the vision.

General views on the vision, policy aims and 'direction of travel'

3.5   Overall, respondents were generally supportive of, and indeed enthusiastic about, the vision and the general 'direction of travel' articulated in the discussion document. There was widespread agreement that 'becoming a Good Food Nation' was an important topic, which merited significant policy focus and attention. Moreover, there was general agreement that broadening the focus beyond the approach set out in *Recipe for Success* (which focused

more specifically on the economic growth of the food and drink industry) was important and necessary. Respondents recognised and welcomed the potential benefits for the environment, the economy, population health, and social justice and community cohesion more generally, which the successful implementation of such a broadly based policy approach might achieve. There was a real 'appetite' for this agenda, and respondents identified many ways in which they could contribute to its achievement.

3.6   In their comments, respondents often reiterated the arguments which were presented in the discussion document, affirming both the achievements to date under the banner of *Recipe for Success* and the aspirations for the future as set out in *Becoming a Good Food Nation*. Moreover, some responses, especially those from partnership bodies and those working on cross-cutting agendas which include (elements of) food and drink policy, emphasised how much is already in progress on a broad basis which will help with the achievement of this vision.

3.7   Alongside this general support, however, respondents expressed a range of caveats and qualifications. In some cases respondents were simply sounding cautionary notes that the vision was ambitious, difficult to achieve, and would require significant effort over a long period of time. However, in other cases the caveats were expressed more forcefully and indicated that some respondents regarded the vision as unrealistic and unachievable. In particular, given the current very high levels of obesity and other diet-related health conditions in Scotland, some respondents questioned whether it would be possible to address this through a policy focused on the broad topic of food and drink. Other caveats are discussed further in paras 3.12 to 3.18 below.

3.8   Furthermore, there was a concern expressed by a small number of respondents that there was a mismatch between the vision and the discussion document itself, with a loss of focus on the food and drink sector and instead a focus on public health policy. It was suggested that the shift of focus risked creating confusion in the food and drink sector, and slowing delivery of the aspiration for a sustainable food and drink industry.

3.9   As indicated in para 3.7 above, respondents from all sectors and interests thought that this was an extremely ambitious agenda, which presented enormous challenges, many of which related to changing deep-seated cultural attitudes and behaviours towards food and diet. It was seen as a very long-term agenda, which would require substantial change in the way food is viewed and in the knowledge, education and skills which people bring to the growing, selling, cooking and consumption of food. The vision was sometimes described as 'idealistic' or 'utopian', and some respondents explicitly said that it was a journey, the destination of which would never be reached. Issues relating to diet, food consumption and obesity were often singled out, with addressing the complex challenge of changing public attitudes towards food being seen as particularly difficult and requiring radical approaches.

Opportunities in pursuing the vision

3.10   The opportunities presented by the discussion document and by the prospect of Scotland becoming a Good Food Nation were welcomed by respondents. It was suggested that the multi-sectoral nature of food and drink, and its all-encompassing reach, meant that there was a great potential opportunity to transform the cultural landscape, to bring people together, to empower communities, to create employment opportunities and a skilled workforce, and to improve the health and wellbeing of the whole population. If it were possible to achieve change in the way food and drink is perceived, produced and consumed, then this could act as a catalyst for positive cultural and social change more generally.

3.11   Organisational respondents across all sectors saw the Good Food Nation initiative as providing a potential springboard for a range of activities and for achieving a range of social policy and commercial policy objectives. In particular, it was thought that the Good Food Nation 'banner' would help raise the profile of food and drink policy in the widest sense, and help increase understanding of the agenda. It would provide a platform for organisations to come together to discuss appropriate actions and collaborate in developing common objectives and delivering shared projects.

Challenges to achieving the vision

3.12   Scotland's poor diet and relationship with food were seen as deep-seated cultural issues which would be difficult to change and which therefore represented a major challenge to achieving the vision. Some highlighted how this situation was further compounded by the pressures of 'modern life'. Respondents referred to long working hours, the busy and irregular lives of families, the lack of a daily routine incorporating eating together, the difficulties of getting to local shops etc., all of which would need to be addressed. Respondents frequently drew comparisons with other European countries (e.g. France, Italy, Germany, Denmark) which were thought to have a better relationship with food, and a more positive 'food culture'.

3.13   A second major challenge to achieving the Good Food Nation vision identified by respondents related to the vast range of sectors, organisations, individuals, policy areas, interests and networks which would have to be involved in order for the vision to be realised. The complexity of the policy landscape was referred to repeatedly, especially in the context of the requirement this complexity created for holistic, whole-systems and integrated policy approaches that cover all aspects of the Good Food Nation landscape.

3.14   More specifically, the wide array of policy interests in this area gives rise to tensions and conflicts which respondents thought should be honestly acknowledged and transparently addressed. This would involve setting priorities, striking a balance between competing interests, and making trade-offs. The tensions which were mentioned most frequently in this regard were:

- The tension between (reducing) environmental impacts and (increasing) economic growth: It was frequently mentioned that the overarching framework

for the vision needed to be couched in terms of 'sustainable economic growth' rather than 'economic growth' per se. Adopting a framework of *sustainable* economic growth was viewed by many respondents as the way to resolve the conflicts between these competing priorities.

- The tension between encouraging and supporting local food initiatives / local food growing on the one hand and developing exports and export markets on the other: Whilst on balance, respondents from business, commercial and enterprise sectors focused on the importance of exports, those from other backgrounds were more likely to express the view that developing exports was of lesser importance / value than supporting local food projects and initiatives. This prioritising of local approaches was often linked to issues such as food security and the aim of Scotland becoming more self-sufficient in food production and consumption; food miles; food culture; and the importance of growing the local food economy.

3.15   Given the complex nature of stakeholder interests, respondents also raised some questions about the vision and its meaning, namely 'What is a Good Food Nation?' 'How can we define good food?' 'What is local food?' and 'What is environmentally sustainable food production?' It was thought that these were not easy terms to define but that, without definitions, it would not be possible to measure the progress of the strategy in a meaningful way.

3.16   One suggestion for the definition of a 'Good Food Nation' offered by the Royal Society of Edinburgh, which also contains within it a suggestion for a definition of 'good food', was:

A nation in which food of high quality in terms of taste, safety and especially nutritional value (leading to optimal health, including appropriate body weight) is consumed across all sections of society, the food being produced and sourced locally (wherever practical) with the minimum possible environmental impact, while enhancing regional economic structures.

3.17   It was thought that achieving the vision would require the commitment of substantial financial resources particularly in relation to investment in local initiatives (e.g. extending access to and supply of allotments). This was acknowledged to be difficult given current financial constraints.

3.18   Finally, respondents from all sectors emphasised that the vision on its own was insufficient. The vision needed to be properly underpinned by a comprehensive plan which identified aims and specific objectives, and set out clear targets, indicators, and short, medium and long-term outcomes with associated timetables and lead responsibilities. These aspects are discussed further in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 below.

Balance and emphasis

3.19   There was a range of issues and topics which respondents thought should receive more attention in the overall vision. The topics highlighted often (but not always) reflected the aims of the organisation from which they were submitted, or the personal agendas of the individuals. For example:

- Food producers and food manufacturers wanted to see more emphasis on the food production and manufacturing, including more on the links between farming and food, better incentives and higher returns for primary producers, and the need for farming to be fully valued.
- Public health organisations wanted a greater emphasis on diet, alcohol, obesity, health, health inequalities and the wider social determinants of health.
- Third sector and community groups involved in food growing wanted more emphasis on access to allotments and opportunities for individuals and community groups to grow their own food.
- The business and enterprise sector wanted more emphasis on encouraging small businesses and expanding the opportunities for product placement and exporting.
- Environmental organisations wanted to see more focus on protecting wildlife and habitats, and reducing the environmental impacts of food production (including carbon emissions, soil degradation, biodiversity etc.).
- Vegetarians, vegans, and those concerned with alternative diets called for more emphasis on increasing fruit and vegetable production and consumption, decreasing meat production and consumption, and ensuring that such diets were properly recognised in the retail and hospitality sectors.
- Respondents including individuals with young children wanted more emphasis on food education and healthy eating options at school.
- Consumer groups wanted more focus on consumer interests including health warnings and improvements to labelling of 'unhealthy foods'.

3.20   In addition, some cross-cutting issues were highlighted, not only by sectoral interest groups but on a wider basis. So, for example, improved health of the population, environmentally sound production methods, encouragement and support for local food economies, empowering communities, reducing food waste and food surplus, improving education knowledge and skills for all including cooking from scratch, changing attitudes, and improving food security were mentioned by all groups. These are discussed further in Chapter 4.

3.21   The range of issues mentioned illustrates the point made above about the wide range of potentially conflicting stakeholder interests in this area.

Elements missing from the vision

3.22   There was substantial comment that, ambitious as the vision was, it did not encompass the issue of food poverty and the importance of ensuring that good quality food is accessible and affordable for all people. It was argued strongly that any vision for a Good Food Nation would have to address the issue of food poverty directly, and this was seen as a major omission from the discussion paper.

3.23   Respondents felt that it was very important to include mention of access to food, food poverty, affordability, and the widespread use of food banks in any policy aimed at transforming Scotland into a Good Food Nation. This was the central point made in responses from organisations focusing on poverty and social justice issues, but was also raised widely by public sector and third

sector organisations, as well as by many individual respondents. An aspiration that Scotland should be a place where 'no-one goes hungry' was identified; it was thought that a statement to this effect should be included in the vision.

3.24 Other issues which were mentioned by a range of respondents as not having been included but meriting explicit reference in any vision statement included:

- agriculture, farming and primary food production in general
- a discussion of alternative farming methods (e.g., organic farming, permaculture and the use of GM crops)
- (an increase in opportunities for) crofting
- appropriate land use (especially in relation to farming and planning for small-scale food production)
- the contribution *Becoming a Good Food Nation* would make to the low-carbon ambition for Scotland
- reducing inequality (not just in relation to health)
- older people (as well as children and young people)
- (a recognition that Scotland has a status as a) Fair Trade nation
- physical activity
- reducing alcohol consumption in Scotland
- animal welfare
- giving more priority to innovation (and research and development)

Specific comments on the vision

3.25 There was a range of specific comments offered on the vision, but no consistent themes about how the stated vision statement (as reproduced at the beginning of this chapter) could be improved. Indeed, in discussing the vision, it was rare for respondents to actually focus on the specific statement. The following quotes illustrate the range of more specific comments offered:

- 'The vision puts too much emphasis on "served food". More emphasis should be placed on encouraging growers to grow and produce at a more local level.' (Forth Environment Link – Grow Forth Link)
- 'There needs to be more clarity about what is good food.' (The Rowett Institute of Nutrition and Health)
- 'It will take longer than till 2025 for everybody to change food buying and consumption patterns.' (Individual)
- 'You cannot have an idealistic "vision" in this document for 2025 of "people from every walk of life" taking pride and pleasure in the food served day by day in Scotland, separated entirely from the current reality of a 400% increase in the use of food banks.' (Unison Scotland)

3.26 Four organisations[9] suggested that the sentence 'All players in Scottish life – from schools to hospitals, retailers, restaurants and food manufacturers – will be committed to serving such food' offered in the current version should be substituted by the following sentence:

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[9] Edinburgh Food for Life Partnership, Fife School Food Project, Stirling Council, University of Edinburgh Department of Social Responsibility and Sustainability.

All players in Scottish life – from our food producers, suppliers and manufacturers to places that serve food including our nurseries, schools, colleges, universities, hospitals, care homes, large and small retailers, cafés, restaurants, staff canteens and all other food providers in Scotland – will commit to procuring and providing sustainable, healthy and local food and be supported to do so through clear, effective national and local policies and related activities.

3.27   These four organisations thought that this re-formulation was more inclusive and more in the spirit of the vision which has been set out in *Becoming a Good Food Nation*.

4   SETTING PRIORITIES

4.1   This chapter examines the priorities which respondents identified in relation to becoming a Good Food Nation. The discussion document explained that, whilst it would be for the planned Food Commission (see Chapter 6 below) to recommend priorities, the Scottish Government intends to propose early action in relation to five areas namely: food in the public sector; a children's food policy; local food; good food choices; and continued economic growth.

4.2   The discussion document sought views from respondents on Good Food Nation priorities as follows:

> **Q9: Do you agree with the proposed initial focus on:**
> - Food in the public sector
> - A children's food policy
> - Local food
> - Good food choices and
> - Continued economic growth?
>
> **Q10: Which other areas would you prioritise?**

4.3   A small number of respondents offered comments on the overall thrust of the five priority areas. These respondents divided into two main groupings: those who thought the identified areas seemed a sensible and helpful place to begin, and those who felt that the areas were not appropriate because they lacked a focus in an area of particular importance to the respondent, usually food poverty or overall environmental sustainability.

4.4   At the more detailed level, in commenting on the individual priorities, responses focused both on the broad policy areas which were identified, and also contained a wide variety of specific ideas for elements which would require consideration or development. The priorities for 'food in the public sector' and 'local food' were affirmed on a very broad basis, whilst the responses for the other priorities were more mixed. The dimensions raised in relation to each of the five priority areas identified in Question 9 are discussed in turn below.

Food in the public sector

4.5   There was a fairly broad consensus that 'food in the public sector' was an appropriate priority for early work. Respondents emphasised the importance of the public sector showing leadership, given its important role in shaping attitudes and modelling desirable approaches. The standards and quality of the food offered in schools, hospitals and the care sector was thought to be particularly important. These views were expressed by individuals and by organisations from across all sectors.

4.6　The importance of improving public sector procurement practice, and in particular the need to create an environment in which SMEs could compete alongside larger suppliers for significant public sector contracts, was highlighted. A few organisations specifically discussed the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014. Although this legislation was in general welcomed, local authority respondents expressed a degree of uncertainty about whether the Act would deliver the means to achieve its intended outcome of sustainable purchasing.

4.7　However, alongside this broad consensus, there were some more cautionary notes sounded. There was, it was argued, a requirement to be realistic about what could be achieved within the public sector, especially given the influence of the large private sector suppliers – who provide much of the food in the public sector – and the current climate of austerity; there were issues of definitions and trade-offs in defining best value and how this would balance cost, quality, health and sustainability; and there was a recognition that making progress would require existing interests to be challenged.

4.8　Many specific points were made about what this leadership role for the public sector should encompass. Those most commonly mentioned included:

- the need to consider a policy for the public sector which incorporates the use of public land (including NHS land) for growing food
- the need to recognise that food in the public sector is often provided by the private sector so that any public sector policy would necessarily impact on the private sector too
- the importance of thinking creatively and innovatively – for example, having a dietician work with community groups
- ensuring that what is done in the public sector will result in sustainable food production
- removing all processed foods from the public sector
- preventing hospitals and schools from using cook-chill methods
- installing full kitchen facilities in all public buildings involved in food production, staffed by a suitably trained and motivated workforce
- reducing the number of fast food outlets – in particular near schools – and using planning legislation and regulatory powers to achieve this

4.9　Respondents described exemplar projects already in existence which could be used as models for development elsewhere (e.g. the 'community gardening project with the NHS' run by Edinburgh Cyrenians, 'The Concrete Garden' in Glasgow which works with local GP surgeries and hospitals to involve patients in food growing).

A children's food policy

4.10　Respondents from all sectors and from all groups affirmed the importance of ensuring children of all ages (babies through to teenagers) had good diets. In particular, they saw it as vital that children were educated about food (at home and in formal educational settings), had a good understanding about where food came from, and were offered good food at home, school and elsewhere.

It was thought that these elements were key in achieving long-term change in culture, attitudes and behaviour. Indeed, many respondents highlighted the importance of incorporating food into the school curriculum at all stages in a range of different ways, with some suggesting this should be a compulsory component of the curriculum (as was the case with physical education).

4.11   However, views on the appropriateness of a specific food policy focusing on children were mixed. Whilst some respondents took a positive view about the introduction of such a food policy, others thought this would not be the best way to deliver good outcomes (for children). On balance, respondents who commented on this priority were not in favour of a food policy aimed specifically at children.

4.12   The main reasons that respondents gave for believing that a children's food policy was not the best route to pursue are noted below. The reasons are closely related to each other, but were brought forward with slightly different emphases:

- A policy for children's food should not be considered in isolation from other broader issues which affect children's lives.
- It is not possible to separate out the needs of children in relation to food from the needs of young people, (young) mothers, parents, families, adults or communities.
- Children are not in a position to make many food choices by themselves; most often these choices are made on behalf of children by others. It is therefore not appropriate to focus on children only; rather the focus should be on those responsible for providing food for children.
- Any food policy should cover all people; perhaps with separate targets by age group; older people were often highlighted by respondents.
- Everyone needs to be educated about food and to develop skills in relation to food – not just children.
- There are already a range of initiatives being pursued in this area; another policy is unnecessary.

4.13   Overall, then, there was a preference for a policy approach which included everyone, and did not attempt to isolate children as a target for policy action. The small number of respondents who said they were in favour of a food policy for children raised some specific issues that such a policy should address. Most often these related to ensuring that education and skills training relating to food was provided at schools. In addition, it was suggested that advertising aimed at children should be banned.

Local food

4.14   The large majority of respondents who offered comments in relation to 'local food' were generally in favour of this as a priority area for early action. Respondents who favoured this kind of approach and respondents who were against it framed their responses in terms of the importance of ensuring that this should be within an overall framework of sustainability which recognised that local food was not always the most sustainable option.

4.15   Moreover, both groups of respondents (those in favour of 'local food' as a priority for early action and those against) raised the issue of the definition of 'local food'. What, specifically is meant by 'local food'? This is relevant, not least because there was doubt about whether the food that supermarkets badge as 'local produce' is actually produced locally.

4.16   Those who were supportive of this being a priority area for early action emphasised the importance of a focus within the policy on small-scale local growing, underpinned by appropriate land use strategies which supported small-scale enterprises. The need for adequate funding and capacity building was also noted. Other points made in support of local food as a priority included the following:

- It would require a full range of services and skills to be in place locally (e.g., a local abattoir was specifically noted) to ensure that food produced in an area could be made ready for sale without leaving the area.
- Investing in existing projects – rather than starting new ones – was the best approach.
- It did not mean that global supply chains would have to be eschewed.
- This would be a way to deal with the issue of imported food competing with high quality local produce, with the sale of New Zealand lamb being offered as an example.

4.17   The arguments which were made against this as a priority area for early action included that:

- this is a niche area, which is unlikely to achieve huge changes
- this is only useful when it connects producers with consumers
- a lot of good food is not local
- many local companies export good food
- local food is not always affordable
- local food is not inherently 'good food'

Good food choices

4.18   The comments offered in relation to this priority area revealed that respondents had interpreted what action in this area might look like in highly divergent ways. There was no clear pattern to the responses and no shared view of what a policy relating to 'good food choices' might cover. Respondents focused on issues relating to the following:

- information, education, and the development of skills
- knowledge and evidence relating to behaviour and the drivers of behaviour change
- issues relating to poverty, affordability, and the wider social determinants of food choices (including empowerment)
- taking steps to ensure that healthy choices become easier to make
- how food choices could be affected by (changes in) regulation

4.19 As far as information, education and the development of skills was concerned, there was support for improving people's understanding of food through an appropriate mix of public information and health education campaigns, and of building skills and capacity in relation to food preparation and cooking. However there was also comment to the effect that whilst informed choice is important, information and education were not enough on their own; empowerment was required. One route to empowerment identified was extending access to facilities for growing food more widely.

4.20 Respondents echoed the views expressed in the discussion document that behaviour change is difficult, will take a long time, and needs to start with a review of the evidence on how this can be achieved. The aim was to make 'good food' the easy option.

4.21 It was thought that any consideration of food choices needed to take into account issues relating to inequality, affordability and poverty. These were seen to be significant barriers in relation to food choices.

4.22 Respondents believed that at present, healthy choices were not always available and / or easy to make, especially for those who were not well off. Respondents favoured greater use of the Supporting Healthy Choices framework[10] and greater encouragement of healthy dietary patterns which did not focus on single nutrients but on a broader concept of a healthy diet. It was thought that it was the government's role to make it easier to access healthy food, and that this might require legislation against 'bad food' containing excessive amounts of sugar and fats.

4.23 As far as regulation was concerned, there was comment that the amount of choice which was available was substantial; that it was difficult to remove (by regulation or other legislative change) 'bad' food choices; that food labelling needed to be improved; and that legislation was required to change the displays in food outlets.

Continued economic growth

4.24 Amongst those who commented about continued economic growth as a priority, on balance, opinion was against this being an initial focus for early action. Overwhelmingly, this was because respondents thought the framework should be *sustainable* economic growth, which they supported. However, respondents did not interpret the discussion document as referring to sustainable economic growth. Thus respondents across public, partnership and third sector groups commented that economic growth should not be at the expense of other more long-term ambitions in relation to environmental and economic sustainability and resilience, economic stability (especially in relation to the food economy and in particular local food economies) and sustainable development.

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[10] http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2014/06/8253

4.25 Respondents also focused in their responses on the tensions between economic growth and other conflicting priorities, highlighting the following points:

- Any growth should be predicated on the growth in the production, sale and consumption of *healthy* foods only.
- A focus on developing local food options might not contribute to economic growth.
- Developing fair pricing mechanisms throughout the supply chain may not align with economic growth.
- There may be a tension between economic growth and the aim of shortening supply chains.

4.26 Some respondents, and particularly those in the private sector, took a more positive view of the importance of focusing on economic growth. They reflected on success to date and saw potential for future growth in home and export markets. Further, it was argued that innovation was vital (and was largely missing from the discussion document) and that it was possible to achieve sustainable economic growth through innovation.

Other priorities

4.27 When asked what other priorities they had, beyond the five set out in the discussion document, respondents offered a very wide range of answers. These related to individuals' own personal interests, or to the interests and aims of the organisational respondents. The most commonly mentioned priorities, which were raised by respondents across all sectors and all topic areas were:

- Sustainability and reducing environmental impacts: This covered sustainability of the food production process, approaches which used sustainable development principles, the reduction of Scotland's carbon footprint and greenhouse gas emissions, conserving water and soil quality, minimising habitat loss, reducing food miles etc. This was seen as a priority that should underlie the vision as a whole, rather than as a specific priority for early action.
- Improving health: This covered many aspects of health improvement including improving diet, nutrition and wellbeing, reducing health inequalities and obesity, improving understanding of what 'good food' is, and making healthier choices the 'norm'.
- Reducing (or eliminating) food poverty: This topic concerned making sure that good food was available to everyone at an affordable price, with some advocating tackling structural issues like poverty and inequality. There was also discussion of eradicating food hunger, reducing food waste, and improving food recycling.
- Improving education and skills in relation to food and nutrition: These comments were sometimes directed at a specific target group (e.g. children, families) but more often were raised in a more generic context. There was a focus on improving education and knowledge in relation to the provenance of

food, as well as a focus on improving food growing, preparation and cooking skills.

- Empowering communities: This priority was identified as requiring investment in communities to allow infrastructure (such as access to growing spaces, the development of retail and other networks, and the provision of community kitchens) to be built which could enable communities to become more resilient and empowered. This was seen as additional to the 'local food' priority as set out in the discussion document. This would require land to be used appropriately and investment in local networks which could provide advice and support.
- Legislation and regulation: This was identified as a priority particularly in relation to curbing the power of large retailers who were thought to sometimes act against the best interests of consumers (for example by producing foods with high fat and sugar content), and controlling more local issues around, for example, fast food outlets near schools.
- Increasing employment and education opportunities: This priority was raised by individuals and organisations from all sectors. It was thought that a Good Food Nation offered the possibility for developing new and enhanced employment opportunities and for extending and improving education in relation to diet and nutrition, including the development of practical skills.

4.28 Other priorities which were identified (albeit by fewer respondents than those listed above) included: developing the research and evidence base; supporting small and medium enterprises; ensuring all food was of a high quality; increasing the understanding of the link between farming and food; changing attitudes and culture; increasing the amount of fruit and vegetables consumed; regenerating local high streets; enhancing food and safety standards; promotion of particular types of farming (e.g., increasing organic production, reducing livestock rearing); ensuring that GM crops were not supported; building on local food traditions; increasing the uptake of specific food groups (e.g., fruit and vegetables, dairy produce, meat); and increasing breastfeeding rates.

5   DEFINING AND MEASURING PROGRESS AND SUCCESS

5.1   This chapter presents the views of respondents on defining success and measuring progress in relation to becoming a Good Food Nation. The discussion document included two questions which addressed this issue – albeit in different ways – as follows:

> **Q2: How would we know when we had got there? What would success look like?**
>
> **Q7: In what areas should indicators be set to check we are on track towards our goals?**

5.2   While Question 2 encouraged a descriptive, narrative response, Question 7 focused more specifically on objective measures. There was, nevertheless, a great deal of overlap in the way respondents answered the questions; in particular, many respondents offered suggestions of approaches to assessing progress as well as specific indicators at Question 2. In addition, Question 4 asked respondents to reflect on what being a Good Food Nation would mean for them and their locality:

> **Q4: How would your life be better? What does being a Good Food Nation mean in your locality?**

5.3   Here, respondents discussed very similar issues, using this question to further explore their perception of success.

5.4   Responses across these three questions have thus been analysed together; and, as with the analysis as a whole, relevant material from across the consultation has also been considered. The analysis is presented under four headings: what would success look like; what would being a Good Food Nation mean for you and your locality; approaches to measuring progress; and suggested indicators for measuring success.

What would success look like?

5.5   In considering what success would look like, many of the comments offered further reflection on the vision and the vision statement (as discussed in Chapter 3). However, respondents also made a number of general points about defining success. They emphasised that: defining success was necessary in order to measure progress; success would be multi-faceted; and that success should be seen within a context of an ongoing process of continuous improvement.

5.6   Many respondents picked up on themes in the vision statement such as improved health and wellbeing; thriving national and local food economies;

reduced environmental impact; improved food quality; and an enhanced domestic and international reputation for Scotland's food and drink. However, central to the descriptions of success offered by many respondents were:

- the availability of fresh, local, affordable, seasonal and healthy food for all, produced using sustainable methods, characterised by some as 'food that is good for people, places and the planet'
- the eradication of food poverty and food deserts, and a reduction in health inequalities
- a healthy population with high levels of knowledge and awareness about food and good food choices
- a culture in which good food is valued and enjoyed, and plays a central role in family life and communities
- an increased role for home-grown and community-grown foods, facilitated by appropriate land use and planning policies
- environmentally and financially sustainable farming and food production systems, prioritising good quality healthy food options, ethical considerations, and environmental sustainability at all points in the supply chain
- a public sector (nationally and locally) which leads by example through joined-up policy making, fair procurement, and quality food offerings
- a thriving food and drink sector – based on high quality, healthy food as standard – playing a key part in the Scottish economy
- strong local food economies with short supply chains – incorporating production, processing, retail and hospitality – and a corresponding reduction in the importance and power of big business, supermarkets, and advertising
- an increased emphasis on food security and rebalanced priorities in relation to imports and exports

5.7   By and large, these themes were apparent in the discussion and comments from respondents across all sectors; there was particularly strong consensus around the importance of good quality food as the norm, healthy diets and improved health outcomes, 'sustainability' in a broad sense, and a changed culture in relation to the role of food in society to defining success. However, public sector, partnership bodies and third sector organisations (food groups and social justice groups in particular) were most likely to take a wide perspective and see success as encompassing issues of food poverty, inequality, land use and community resilience. Those involved in food production and retailing, tourism and leisure and general economic development were more likely to take a narrower view in defining success, with a greater – although rarely exclusive – focus on economic success and sector growth.

What would being a Good Food Nation mean for you and your locality

5.8   Complementing the themes discussed above, respondents offered some more personal or localised perspectives on becoming a Good Food Nation. The views of individuals and organisations are presented separately below.

5.9   For individuals, becoming a Good Food Nation meant having a better, healthier lifestyle in a broad sense. It meant growing more of their own food;

having access to a diverse range of shops and food outlets selling good quality, affordable, local produce on the high street; being able to buy direct from suppliers; preparing meals from scratch; and eating with family and friends. Good food was often seen as part of a wider healthier lifestyle encompassing more physical exercise, more time spent outdoors and more time spent with friends, family and the community.

5.10 In their wider communities people envisaged: a healthier population enjoying improved diets (as well as reduced alcohol consumption, lower smoking rates and increased levels of physical activity); well-developed local food economies; good quality public sector food including school meals; more community growing; a range of activities based around food; less food poverty; less food waste; an enhanced environment encompassing diverse landscapes and farming methods. Respondents spoke of food and eating being seen as something to 'enjoy', and living in a 'fairer, happier and healthier society'.

5.11 Organisational respondents also picked up on many of the points above. Public sector and cross-cutting third sector organisations saw whole-community benefits in terms of strong local economies (food production, retail, hospitality and tourism), vibrant communities, good quality public sector food, local growing and home and community cooking, enhanced environments and heathy populations.

5.12 Organisations in other sectors tended to emphasise benefits for their own areas of interest with, for example, environmental and nature groups stressing the opportunity to 'conserve and enhance the environment', while those in the commercial sector saw opportunities for business growth, workforce development, connecting with their customers and diversifying their offerings.

5.13 A number of additional themes were apparent in the comments from respondents:

- Geography and 'place': Respondents were clear that the benefits of a Good Food Nation should be available to all, regardless of where they lived, or the types of community they lived in. Urban / rural distinctions and levels of social deprivation were highlighted.
- A 'virtuous circle': Respondents picked up on the concept of a virtuous circle that could result from pursuing the Good Food Nation agenda. This was identified in a number of different ways including: (i) increased demand for local produce, leading to business growth and increased employment with more money being retained and spent in local economies; (ii) better quality food for children (at home and in schools) leading to better outcomes (education, health, etc.); and (iii) the positive impact on health services and health expenditure.

Approaches to measuring progress

5.14 Across all sectors there was a consensus that having clear indicators in place from the outset in order to measure progress was vital. Respondents, particularly those representing organisations, commented on the broad

approach and underlying principles which should be adopted in measuring progress. Here, there was a high level of consistency in the views put forward, with respondents highlighting the importance of having a robust evaluation framework in place at an early stage which took a holistic or cross-cutting approach to assessing success and measuring progress.

5.15 Respondents identified a range of features which should be incorporated into the approach:

- An overall framework incorporating a range of theme-based work-strands.
- Targets and objectives for different work-strands which take account of the potentially complex – and sometimes conflicting relationships between – different measures of success (e.g. desired growth in the food and drink sector and reductions in environmental impacts). The use of a 'balanced scorecard' which could take account of positive and negative indicators and the relationship between them was suggested.
- Linkages to existing legislative targets and requirements and, in particular, alignment with the Government's National Performance Framework; and use of existing indicators and data sources where possible – the use of existing health and environment measures were particularly noted, as was the continued use of indicators linked to *Recipe for Success.*
- Clearly defined objectives, targets and measures for different elements of the Good Food Nation vision as well as for different levels of society (national government, local authorities, individual institutions and organisations, communities and individuals). The establishment of local indicators was seen as important in allowing local bodies (local authorities, community planning partnerships, etc.) to monitor progress and take action in their own area.
- Clear and realistic timescales for monitoring and evaluation, incorporating short, medium and long-term outcomes, and with an agreed timetable and process for review; the issue of accountability was also raised, with an annual report to Parliament suggested as one way of achieving this.
- An appropriate mix of process, output and outcome measures, and the inclusion of both quantitative and qualitative elements to any evaluative work.

5.16 Respondents also identified a range of concerns and challenges in measuring success:

- While some elements of success could be assessed using objective measures (e.g., improvements in population health; economic output in the food and drink sector), it was argued that others (e.g., changes in culture; increased resilience in communities) would be less easy to quantify.
- It was suggested it might be difficult to prove cause and effect in relation to policy interventions and observed changes.
- There was some concern that any approach to evaluation which focused on specific targets would not take full account of the complexities of the issues being addressed, including society's relationship with food and the difficulties in bringing about change (as demonstrated by international evidence). Such a target-focused approach was described as a 'blunt instrument' which was, in effect, 'setting the policy up for failure'.

- There was concern that the introduction of new indicators and reporting requirements represented an increase in bureaucracy.

5.17 While respondents were clear that agreeing indicators was an essential step,[11] they generally saw this as part of a wider need to undertake early strategic planning activities. This initial groundwork might involve: a policy audit; development of logic models; mapping work (of evidence, policies and initiatives, organisations and activities); reviews of existing evidence and indicators; the establishment of a baseline against which to assess progress on different measures; carrying out needs assessments and impact assessments (health and environmental). Respondents were also keen to see appropriate use of international evidence and comparative data. It was felt that such early work was important in order to fully understand the context and starting point for the Good Food Nation journey, and to move forward in an informed way.

5.18 Respondents also commented on roles and responsibilities in relation to monitoring and evaluation. The planned Food Commission (see Chapter 6 below) was identified by some as having a central role in establishing a framework for monitoring and evaluation. The requirement for funding for research and evaluation activities from central government and other sources was also highlighted. However, several respondents also stressed the need for a range of stakeholders (experts, professionals, relevant organisations and interest groups, as well as communities and individuals) across all sectors to be involved in this process, and a number of organisations indicated their wish to contribute to such a process.

Suggested indicators

5.19 Respondents put forward a range of areas in which indicators should be set, and also offered a large number of suggestions for specific indicators. Although some focused on their own sectoral interests in offering their suggestions, respondents more often advocated a broad cross-policy approach to setting indicators, reinforcing the view that respondents saw this as a cross-cutting issue which required a holistic approach in assessing success.

5.20 Common themes in the indicators put forward (broad areas and individual suggestions) included the following:

- Health and wellbeing / health inequalities: Levels of diet-related conditions (e.g., obesity (child and whole population), type-2 diabetes, heart disease); oral health; diet-related hospital admissions; consumption of different food types; consumption of alcohol; breastfeeding.
- Social justice: Access to / availability of affordable healthy food for all; numbers of / use of food cooperatives and other local food projects; numbers of / use of food banks; poverty levels; levels of food waste at every point in the food chain.

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[11] See Chapter 6 for discussion of other 'essential steps'.

- The environment: Land use; water use; soil health; quality of marine habitats; emission levels; biodiversity; food miles; packaging.
- Education and training: Food-related courses; apprenticeships; employability.
- Farming and aquaculture: Adoption of different food production and farming practices (e.g., organic farming; crofting; diversification; non-GM crops); new entrants to farming.
- Economic growth: Growth of the food and drink sector; imports / exports and the balance between them; research and development expenditure; product range and diversity; growth of tourism and hospitality.
- Local food sector: Economic growth; start-ups; employment; number / type of food outlets (retail and catering / hospitality); retail and purchase patterns relating to local produce; production, use and consumption of local food.
- Role of public sector: Quality and uptake of public sector food (hospitals, schools, leisure centres, etc.); procurement practices.
- Food culture / relationship with food: Levels of knowledge and awareness; attitudes to food; pride; cooking skills; purchasing / cooking / mealtime behaviours; individual / community involvement in food production; scale of home and community-grown food in allotments / gardens; participation in / attendance at food initiatives and events.
- Food quality: Food quality (as assessed by award schemes, customer – including tourist – feedback); compliance with food safety and standards.

5.21   Some more detailed suggestions were made for new measures to be developed. These included:

- developing a methodology to measure the 'true accounting cost' for food which would take account of the costs of any environmental impacts and / or waste
- developing a new retail index which would allow the quality of a retailer – taking account of sustainability issues – to be assessed
- monitoring the costs of both healthy and unhealthy foods as part of a system for incentivising the production and consumption healthy food

6 IMPLEMENTATION AND DELIVERY

6.1 This chapter presents respondents' views on issues relating to the implementation and delivery of the Good Food Nation vision. The chapter focuses on structural, organisational and operational issues, and includes views on the proposed Food Commission. Key questions for the analysis were as follows:

> **Q5: Are there any other essential steps we need to take before setting out on this journey?**
>
> **Q6: How do you think a Food Commission could best help?**
>
> **Q8: What are your views on the different approaches that could be taken to help us become a Good Food Nation?**

6.2 There was a lot of commonality in the themes discussed in response to these three questions. Thus, the reporting looks across the questions in covering the following: essential preliminary steps; approaches to becoming a Good Food Nation; and the Food Commission. Many respondents also took the opportunity to discuss what they thought needed to be done in terms of substantive and specific policy activity to become a Good Food Nation. This material is largely covered in Chapter 4 of the report.

Essential preliminary steps

6.3 The consultation document outlined essential requirements and preparations for the Good Food Nation 'journey' which included the following: the need to get everyone involved; the need for coordination and alignment between the activities of different bodies with an interest in food; the need for world class food safety and standards; and the agreement of high level indicators to assess progress. This chapter discusses the first three of these 'essential steps', while agreement of high level indicators is covered in Chapter 5 within the context of defining and measuring success.

6.4 The document also highlighted the creation of the Food Commission as part of the discussion relating to essential steps. Respondents provided a significant amount of comment on the Food Commission. In many respects this reinforced the more general remarks about ways of working and different approaches to becoming a Good Food Nation and, as such, is reflected in the first sections of this chapter. However, the final section of the chapter picks up on specific points relevant to the operation of the Food Commission.

6.5 Across all respondent types there was broad support for the essential steps outlined in the discussion document. Alongside this general support, however, a small number of respondents argued for immediate action to be prioritised, with some making the point that the Good Food Nation journey had already begun; this point was made with reference to the previous *Recipe for*

Success policy work or with reference to ongoing grass-roots activity at local level.

6.6   Although the question posed in the discussion document invited views on *other* steps, most respondents offered comments which linked to or expanded on the preliminary steps as proposed. Comments are thus presented under the headings of the proposed steps as noted below.

Getting everyone involved

6.7   There was a general consensus that involving the right people and organisations would be essential to becoming a Good Food Nation. While those involved in food production, retailing and the hospitality sectors were more likely to emphasise the need for proper representation from different sectors and levels of seniority within the food and drink industry, other respondents adopted a wider interpretation and argued for the involvement of third sector organisations, community groups, and individuals with different perspectives and backgrounds. There was a clear appetite for making sure involvement went beyond the 'usual suspects'. Others called for the involvement of appropriate professionals and experts; this was highlighted in relation to the Commission's role in advising on grants and research.

6.8   Involvement could take a variety of forms including: Commission membership, having the opportunity to make submissions to the Commission, taking part in public and stakeholder consultation, getting involved in local projects, enthusing people about good food. Respondents emphasised, however, that wide community involvement would require appropriate funding and support for capacity building.

Coordination and alignment across policy areas and organisations

6.9   Respondents of all types stressed the need for the government to take a coordinated and joined-up cross-cutting approach to food policy, and to involve appropriate organisations in doing this. Early work was thus required to review and establish policy and organisational linkages, and ensure alignment of objectives and partnership approaches. Respondents highlighted a wide range of specific policy areas which needed to be taken account of, or which could make a contribution to, becoming a Good Food Nation

6.10   A number of respondents commented on the need to review the current organisational landscape across the food and drink sector. Most commonly respondents suggested a rationalisation of current organisations with a remit in this area, with some also expressing concern about how the proposed Food Commission would fit into the existing landscape (see para 6.17). There were, however, also suggestions for new bodies such as food policy 'councils' and a research centre to support the development of the Good Food Nation vision.

6.11   Getting buy-in from all relevant organisations and sectors was also seen as vital to success. The importance of buy-in from supermarkets and other big players in the food and drink industry, from the farming community, and from

a wide range of public sector staff with roles in procurement and catering was particularly noted. There were, however, some tensions in the approaches favoured by respondents: while many stressed the need to achieve buy-in and support from 'big business' and to work constructively with them, other groups favoured a more combative approach, advocating that the power of the supermarkets and the big food producers should be challenged.

Food safety and standards

6.12   There was limited comment on the need to address food safety and standards as part of the preparatory stage. However, those who commented agreed that this was very important to becoming a Good Food Nation; the one concern raised was in relation to standardisation and the possible adverse impact on diversity in the food sector.

Approaches to becoming a Good Food Nation

6.13   The discussion paper emphasised the need to adopt a range of approaches to becoming a Good Food Nation, and highlighted two approaches in particular: putting as much energy into celebrating food as into education; and seeking to counter the perception that caring about food was only for those who could afford to do so. Views were invited on the different approaches that might be adopted.

6.14   Respondents were clear that a wide-ranging strategy with a multitude of objectives would need a multi-stranded approach to achieve success. Several respondents noted that the type of long-term behavioural and cultural change sought needed to recognise that individuals, organisations and communities were at very different starting points and had very different perspectives, and that a 'one-size-fits-all' approach was not appropriate. There was, however, some criticism that the document did not provide more information on the possible different approaches. Key themes in the comments on proposed approaches – many of which are overlapping – are noted below.

- An evidence-led approach: There was clear support for a robust evidence-based approach to achieving the Good Food Nation vision. This involved, variously: taking stock of the current situation through reviewing existing evidence and, where necessary, gathering new evidence in order to understand current attitudes, behaviours, impacts and outcomes for individuals, communities and organisations, society and the environment; learning from past experience and experience elsewhere about 'what works'; and identifying and sharing knowledge, expertise and good practice within and across sectors. A small number of organisations and individuals provided detailed evidence on topics such as nutrition, diet, the benefits of organic farming, affordability, health etc. as part of their response.

- A joined-up approach: This tied in very much with comment elsewhere in the consultation, with respondents from all sectors emphasising the need for an integrated approach which took full account of the range of policy areas, and linked with other agendas, strategies and initiatives such as those on community empowerment and land reform. Respondents discussed the need

to take a wide approach, while also recognising and addressing the tensions which would be inherent in such an approach.

- Bottom-up and top-down: There was a strong view that becoming a Good Food Nation would require a bottom-up as well as a top-down approach. For many this meant building on existing activities, networks and initiatives, and providing support and funding to develop additional initiatives; for others this meant ensuring that a wide range of voices were heard, and offering participative decision-making processes with appropriate resourcing; and for others this was about informing, educating and empowering people to make good choices and bring about change via consumer demand.

- Using the full range of policy levers: There were calls for strong political leadership from the government (both domestically and internationally), and appropriate use of all available mechanisms and levers in order to achieve success. These included: voluntary guidance and codes of practice; use of subsidies and taxes to incentivise behaviours (e.g., taxing unhealthy food; subsidising healthy food); use of the planning process to restrict the location of fast food outlets and ensure availability of land for food production; the use of public sector procurement to support local supply chains; restrictions on advertising unhealthy food (particularly when aimed at children); the use of legislation / regulation to improve food quality in the retail and catering sectors, control the disposal of food waste, and restrict the sale of fast food and fizzy drinks; exploration of how EU funding mechanisms including CAP (Common Agricultural Policy) funding might support the Good Food Nation.

- A global approach: Respondents emphasised the need for any work to be seen within a wider international context which took account of international trade, cultural influences (both positive and negative), and Scotland's role in the global community, in a formal and informal sense. This context was seen to bring obligations and responsibilities, while also presenting opportunities and challenges. Respondents argued that there needed to be recognition of the complexity that this introduced, and of the requirement for government action to promote Scotland's interests where necessary. More specifically, respondents referred to the impact and potential benefits of EU regulations and initiatives, and taking advantage of EU funding programmes (CAP, SRDP etc.); aligning work in Scotland with ongoing work elsewhere (e.g., UN work on climate change and food security); and learning from international evidence and best practice including, for example, the statutory ban on transfats (as introduced in Europe a decade ago). Other respondents referred to Fair Trade principles and appreciating the impact of actions taken in Scotland on the international community.

- A realistic approach: Some respondents highlighted the need to be realistic about the starting point, the impact of a range of factors (e.g., lifestyles) and the challenges faced in reconciling different positions and arriving at the scale of change required. As such, realistic targets and long-term timescales would be needed to achieve the Good Food Nation vision.

- Identifying and tackling barriers: Some advocated a 'solution-based approach' focusing on identifying and tackling barriers to becoming a Good Food Nation. This might involve, for example, addressing deficiencies in cooking skills; subsidising the sale of healthy food; addressing training and workforce issues; pump-priming innovative local projects.

- Targeted approach versus an inclusive approach: While some respondents favoured a broad-brush, inclusive society-wide approach, others wished to see the targeting of particular groups. Typically, the groups to be targeted included those experiencing food poverty and health inequalities, disadvantaged groups, children, and older people.

- A bold approach: Social justice and food groups in particular wished to see what could be described as a 'bold' approach involving, for example, tackling structural issues such as poverty, tackling the power of the supermarkets and big business, taking a rights-based approach, and advocating the need for a fundamentally different socio-economic model. Specific suggestions here included adopting a 'zero growth' model, developing local currencies to support local food economies and reinvesting profits from the food and drink industry into community based initiatives.

- Preventative spend approach: Some respondents, particularly those in the public sector, made reference to a 'preventative spend' approach as advocated by the Christie Commission, and encouraged the government and other bodies to recognise the benefits that might be reaped from investing in Good Food Nation initiatives and activities.

- Information, communication and engagement: While consistent messages were often seen as important, respondents highlighted a range of methods and media which might be used in conveying any message(s) and ensuring that people were well-informed and able to make good food choices. These included public information campaigns, healthy eating messages, a publicly available database on nutritional content of different foods, clear information on food relating to provenance and nutritional content, TV programmes (a Scottish cookery show was one suggestion), 'common good' marketing (i.e., generic promotion of healthy products). As far as healthy eating messages were concerned, it was thought to be important to use a mix of different approaches, and to promote moderation and variety. Respondents occasionally picked up on the theme of celebrating good food, and wished to see positive, creative approaches which enthused and inspired people. There was, it was argued, an opportunity to exploit the current popular interest in food. Thus events, visits and cookery demonstrations were all mentioned.

The Food Commission

6.15 The discussion document provided a brief outline of the remit of the Food Commission, and views were invited on how the Commission could best help Scotland become a Good Food Nation.

6.16 Although no specific question was included, comments indicated that respondents were broadly supportive of the principle of establishing a Food Commission and thought it could potentially play a useful role by bringing clarity and coherence to the field.

6.17 There were a small number of respondents, however, who queried the need for the Commission and the value it would bring. In particular, they voiced concerns about an already crowded organisational landscape in relation to food policy, and the risk of duplicating effort and / or creating further confusion about roles and remits. The concerns raised by those explicitly questioning the need for the Commission were also raised by many other respondents who offered a range of caveats and qualifications alongside generally supportive views.

The role and remit of the Food Commission

6.18 The specific question posed in the consultation document asked how a Food Commission could best help. Respondents offered a wide range of comments relating to the potential role and remit of the Commission.

6.19 A prominent theme in the responses was the wish to see the Commission take a strong, strategic and visible role to ensure delivery of the Good Food Nation vision. Typically, this would involve the Commission having an oversight role, and coordinating the work of other organisations, identifying gaps and making connections, working in partnership with other relevant bodies and / or facilitating collaborative working between different sectors and organisations.

6.20 Another key theme in relation to the role of the Commission related to definitions, evidence gathering, mapping work (policies, organisations, activities and initiatives), target setting, monitoring and reporting. This was linked to the desire to see the Commission take a strong strategic role. In particular it was argued that effective action would not be possible without full knowledge and understanding of the current situation. This was a common theme in relation to defining and measuring success (see Chapter 5) but was also often highlighted as a key initial task for the Food Commission.

6.21 Respondents also envisaged the Commission as having a key role in engaging with different sectors, particularly those at community level, with the Commission providing a channel for hearing the views of different groups and advocating on their behalf. In this way the Commission was seen as facilitating a 'bottom-up' approach.

6.22 One way in which it was envisaged that the Food Commission would engage with grass-roots activities was through local 'food champions', and a small

number of respondents offered comments on this proposal. Most commonly, respondents drew attention to existing local food champions and stressed the need to work constructively with them and build on existing knowledge and achievements.

6.23   Respondents recognised the cross-cutting nature of the Good Food Nation vision, and the inherent tensions within that (e.g., between economic growth and environmental sustainability), and saw two different roles for the Commission. While some argued that the Commission should take a brokering role and build consensus around priorities and objectives, others felt that the Commission should take a bold line in providing leadership, setting the agenda and identifying priorities.

6.24   Many respondents envisaged a role for the Commission in challenging and holding others to account, whether this was Ministers, 'big business', or other public bodies working in the area.

6.25   More specific roles suggested by some for the Commission included, for example: providing guidance, promoting good practice and encouraging food excellence within the food industry; raising awareness and leading public education and communication campaigns; supporting local projects and initiatives.

Governance and organisation

6.26   As well as offering comment on the role of the Food Commission, respondents also offered a range of views on the governance and organisation of the Commission. Such comments went to the heart of the credibility of the Commission and its potential to be effective in fulfilling its functions, and included the following:

- There was a strong call for clarity about the role and remit of the Food Commission. Respondents queried its relationship with other bodies, in particular, the newly created Food Standards Scotland, and Scotland Food and Drink. There was concern expressed about the possibility for duplication and confusion.

- The status of the Food Commission were commented on by some. Several respondents argued that the Commission needed appropriate powers and routes to action in order to bring about change. Respondents stressed the need for the Commission to be connected to policy makers and to have influence at appropriate levels (e.g., with government and Ministers).

- Respondents often commented on the membership of the Commission. There was a clear call for wide-ranging, inclusive membership and concern that the Commission should not be dominated by big business or vested interests. In particular respondents wished to see representatives from third sector organisations, community groups and individuals with particular perspectives or experiences (e.g., those from disadvantaged communities; 'experts' in relevant disciplines). As well as representation across sectors and interests, some also wished to see an element of geographic representation.

The importance of a transparent appointment system was also noted, with some favouring elected members.

- Those commenting on the size and structure of the Commission offered a range of views, with some favouring a small number of appointed members (e.g., six) and others favouring a larger more inclusive membership. Some envisaged working groups with specific remits operating under the auspices of the Commission.

- Independence, openness, transparency and accountability were all highlighted as key to the integrity and standing of the Food Commission.

- Responses touched on two main issues relating to resources: the need for the Commission itself to be properly resourced so it could be effective in carrying out its own activities; and the need for it to have access to a budget for supporting the work of others (e.g., local food and community growing initiatives, research and development work).

7   HELPING SCOTLAND BECOME A GOOD FOOD NATION

7.1   The *Becoming a Good Food Nation* discussion paper highlighted the need for 'wholehearted participation from people in all walks of life' if the Good Food Nation vision was to be achieved. Respondents were invited to consider how they, their family, or their organisation would play their part, as follows:

> **Q13: What steps do you plan to take to help Scotland on the journey toward becoming a Good Food Nation – in the next month and the next 12 months?**

7.2   Responses from organisations and individuals were, inevitably, somewhat different, and the chapter looks separately at these two groups. It should be noted that respondents did not generally make a distinction between immediate steps (in the next month) and longer term steps (in the next year) and, indeed, often talked generally about the continuation of ongoing work.

Organisations

7.3   Organisational respondents typically answered this question by highlighting the array of relevant work already underway, which would be continuing over the short and medium term. This included individual activities with a particular focus but also included many cross-cutting strategic initiatives involving collaborative working between different organisations and sectors.

7.4   Across all sectors, respondents expressed interest in actively supporting and / or influencing the implementation of the Good Food Nation 'project'. At a local level, respondents reported intentions to use the Good Food Nation vision (or any resulting strategy) to raise awareness and stimulate debate in existing forums, to identify opportunities for policy alignment and to consider new actions to support, or capitalise on, the vision. Respondents frequently expressed a desire to work with government and other agencies in developing the agenda. For some this included noting interest in contributing to the work of the Food Commission or any work streams established to take the agenda forward.

7.5   Some of the more specific activity reported in each sector is summarised below.

Public sector

7.6   For local authorities and other public sector organisations with a cross-cutting interest, ongoing work highlighted by respondents included exploring options to include food within the school curriculum; improving the quality of school meals, NHS food and other public sector catering and working with local suppliers in doing this; working towards the achievement of catering awards (e.g., Healthy Living and Food for Life awards); supporting community food and health projects (e.g., the establishment of food hubs, and growing and

cooking projects); exploring options for providing more growing space; and the development of food champions.

7.7 Cross-cutting strategic initiatives with a food and drink focus included those at local level like the Angus Council Framework for Food and Drink and the Fife Food and Health Strategy Group. However, a number of local authorities were also involved in national projects, the most significant being Food for Life Scotland (FFLS) led by the Soil Association. For some this had meant achieving the Food for Life catering awards; others were piloting the FFLS Education Framework (e.g., Stirling and Edinburgh); while both Edinburgh and Glasgow were taking steps in following the Sustainable Food Cities model, working in partnership with other local bodies.

7.8 Local authorities and other public bodies also drew attention to more generic strategic work which was already supporting progress towards the Good Food Nation aspiration. Examples here included the Cairngorms Park Economic Development and Diversification Strategy; the Dumfries and Galloway Regional Economic Strategy; the Fife Tourism Partnership; and the Angus Council International Framework. More generally, some respondents noted the Single Outcome Agreement as an existing vehicle that would help deliver the Good Food Nation vision.

7.9 Research and academic institutions indicated that they would continue to work with partners (other public sector bodies, the food and drink industry) on developing the evidence base, supporting innovation and sharing good practice, and participating in a range of knowledge exchange opportunities.

7.10 There were also sector-specific initiatives such as the Year of Food and Drink and Taste Our Best in the tourism and hospitality sectors, and the Healthy Living Scheme and Supporting Healthy Choices framework in the public health arena which were cited as supporting the Good Food Nation vision.

Third sector

7.11 Third sector organisations were also involved in a range of ongoing projects, in collaboration with partners across all sectors, aligned to their particular interests: allotments; community gardens; cookery projects; educational projects with schools; improving food for older people etc. These would be continued or further developed over the coming year.

7.12 Continued collaborative activity was a major theme for the third sector in looking forward, whether on initiatives such as FFLS, or on individual local projects. This also included developing and disseminating evidence and sharing good practice (e.g., in relation to the Fife School Food Project). Working with local authorities, community planning partnerships and the Scottish Government were all cited; however, alongside this collaborative work, third sector groups also planned to continue campaigning and lobbying at different levels (ranging from local authority level to the EU) in order to promote their interests.

7.13 Future plans also included making use of opportunities presented by the Scotland Rural Development Fund, the Community Empowerment Bill (should it be enacted) and the Year of Food and Drink.

Private sector / food producers

7.14 Amongst those with a commercial interest in the food and drink industry, future plans included an increased focus on quality food and sustainable working methods; further diversification; developing links with communities; and participation in initiatives such as the Year of Food and Drink.

Individuals

7.15 Steps planned by individual respondents most often focused on changing their own behaviours related to food choices: i.e., the growing, buying, preparation and consumption of food. Typically, respondents said they would:

- make dietary changes (e.g., more fruit, vegetables and pulses, less red meat)
- buy more local produce
- cook more food from scratch
- buy more organic food
- grow more of their own food in gardens or allotments
- use small retailers, farmers markets etc.
- reduce food waste
- educate their family (e.g., teach their children shopping and cooking skills)
- get involved in working with local groups, or set up new groups (e.g., community gardens or cooking classes)
- get involved in promotion, campaigning and lobbying, including joining groups such as Nourish Scotland
- increase their physical activity

7.16 Some also talked about taking steps to influence the behaviours of others; for example, enthusing others about good food; trying to persuade friends to make changes in their food behaviours; helping others find land for growing; sharing information on social media; working with (or lobbying) local and national government, community planning partnerships etc.

7.17 A number of respondents provided information on things they already did which were in line with the Good Food Nation vision: growing fruit and vegetables, buying locally, buying organic or Fair Trade food, eating fresh and healthy, sustainably produced food, using vegi-box schemes and farmers markets, cooking family meals etc. Others were involved in relevant community and interest groups.

7.18 Some respondents referred to their professional roles, with the range of roles giving rise to a necessarily diverse range of 'steps', including the following:

- Creative arts and the media: One respondent had written a book about food (and was keen for this to be read by the Good Food Nation Team); another

planned to use her story-telling work as a way of conveying a 'good food' message; another was keen to spread the word through journalism.

- Health and education: Several respondents worked in health and education, and would be involved in promoting diet / physical activity advice through their roles as health visitors, nutritionists etc.; or promoting the Good Food Nation message to children / other groups via education and training.
- Food projects: Those involved in this area talked of further developing local food projects and initiatives in the short and medium term.
- Food businesses: Respondents noted plans to increase diversity in food-related business (e.g., café developments at existing farms) or to set up new food-related businesses.

7.19 Several respondents in a range of individual and professional capacities referred to keeping up to date with the debate, contributing to policy discussions and developments related to food and drink, and looking for opportunities to get more involved (including expressing interest in getting involved in the new Food Commission). A small number had an interest in, or were already pursuing, research in the broad food policy area which would contribute to the Good Food Nation debate.

Building on existing foundations

7.20 The responses from both individuals and organisations provided evidence of a wide range of activity already underway that could be seen as making a contribution to becoming a Good Food Nation; it confirms that, for many, this is not the start of a journey. Looking ahead, organisations indicated plans to continue existing work, or to start new initiatives, while individuals cited a range of lifestyle changes which they would make representing small, but important, steps in becoming a Good Food Nation.

7.21 There was substantial comment about the good practice that was thought to already exist in relation to developing a Good Food Nation. Indeed it was thought that there were many extant programmes and initiatives that could provide exemplar approaches for further development and roll out.

7.22 Respondents presented positive accounts of a wide range of initiatives, both national and local, operating in and across different sectors: Examples, indicating the wide range of current work, included:

- Local projects such as Fife Diet
- The work of national voluntary organisations such as Fareshare
- The Scottish Grocers' Federation Healthy Living Programme
- Soil Association partnership projects like the Sustainable Cities Network
- Scottish Development International's work with the food and drink sector
- The Courtauld Commitment, a voluntary agreement on packaging and waste

7.23 The information provided shows a positive level of commitment to becoming a Good Food Nation. While this is likely to reflect the self-selecting nature of the respondents, it nevertheless provides an insight into the ongoing work that will help deliver the Good Food Nation vision.

8   VIEWS ON CONTRIBUTING TO THE CONSULTATION

8.1   This chapter presents brief information about respondents' experiences of the consultation process. The consultation questionnaire included a single question which asked respondents how they had heard about the consultation document:

> **Q14: How did you find out about this consultation document?**

8.2   This question, however, was only included in the consultation questionnaire that could be downloaded from the Scottish Government website. It did not appear in the consultation document itself, nor was it included in the Nourish Scotland online survey. Thus it was only answered by a subset of consultation respondents. However, a number of other respondents offered comments which offer insights into people's experiences of the consultation process. Consideration of such comments has the potential to enhance understanding of the responses received, and to help improve consultation practice in the future.

How respondents found out about the consultation document

8.3   About a third of respondents provided information about how they had found out about the consultation document, with many citing more than one source. Sources included the following:

- Scottish Government – direct email
- Scottish Government – as a result of ongoing links
- Scottish Government – launch event
- Scottish Government – other channels (e.g. website, consultation alert)
- Other organisations – emails, newsletters, websites, events
- Professional / interest group networks
- Colleagues (internal or external)
- The media – BBC, the press, internet, social media
- Other – by accident; word of mouth

8.4   While the Scottish Government was the most commonly cited source of initial information about the consultation, the important role played by stakeholder groups such as Nourish Scotland and the Soil Association in bringing the consultation document to people's attention was also apparent. More specifically, the eight Nourish Scotland events and the 33 Nourish Scotland survey responses accounted for 41 responses (just under a fifth of the total received).

General feedback on contributing to the consultation exercise

8.5   Although there was no other direct question on the consultation process, comments were provided by a number of respondents. These comments suggested that respondents generally welcomed the consultation, viewing this

as an important topic and one on which they were encouraged to see the Government take action. They were pleased to have an opportunity to submit their views.

8.6 Several respondents indicated that they had shared the document with other colleagues or that their submission had been drawn up in consultation with others or informed by discussions with internal and external colleagues.

8.7 Three organisations (Nourish Scotland, Food and Health Alliance and Keep Scotland Beautiful) had organised more formal events or other activities based on the consultation. Feedback from these activities suggests that the opportunity to debate the issues and share ideas had been viewed as a valuable part of the process by both organisers and participants. Several responses from individuals and organisations referenced participation in the Nourish Scotland event in particular as having informed their submission.

8.8 Several comments suggested that those who had contributed to the process were keen for the consultation to be viewed as part of an ongoing engagement process. One organisational response urged the Scottish Government to 'capitalise on this interest in food-related issues at it develops the proposals set out in the document'. Respondents (both organisations and individuals) indicated that they were looking forward to hearing the outcome of the exercise, wished to stay involved in contributing to the Good Food Nation vision, and, in a few cases, noted interest in becoming involved in the Food Commission.

8.9 A small number of more negative comments were also offered. In particular, it was suggested that there was overlap between questions, and that not all the questions were well formulated. One respondent questioned the value of contributing to the consultation exercise, and another thought it should have been promoted more actively.

9 CONCLUSIONS

9.1 The findings of this consultation have shown that there is widespread support and enthusiasm for the vision, and the overall 'direction of travel', as set out in *Becoming a Good Food Nation*.

9.2 Both individual and organisational respondents welcomed the broad focus of the discussion document and recognised the potential benefits for the environment, the economy, population health, and social justice and cohesion more generally which the successful implementation of such a broadly based policy approach might achieve. They were also in agreement that tackling deep-seated cultural issues and changing Scotland's relationship with food was vital. Furthermore, one of the benefits of the Good Food Nation agenda was the opportunity it provided to raise the profile of work in this area, to bring strategic direction and encourage further activity.

9.3 Alongside this broad support, there was a recognition that this is a very challenging and long-term agenda, and concern that the discussion document does not provide a blueprint for action. The policy terrain is complex, with a vast array of stakeholders and many competing interests which need to be acknowledged and resolved. The bold vision set out in *Becoming a Good Food Nation* requires to be matched by a bold and fully integrated policy stance in order to be credible. Moreover, clarity about the definitions of some basic terms and principles (e.g. 'local food', 'good food', 'sustainable economic growth') is required.

9.4 The main tensions identified were between: i) (reducing) environmental impacts and (increasing) economic growth and ii) encouraging local food growing / initiatives on the one hand and encouraging exports and developing export markets on the other. There was a widespread view that any focus on economic growth would need to be framed in terms of *sustainable* economic growth rather than economic growth per se.

9.5 Respondents emphasised the importance of including the aim to reduce and ultimately eliminate food poverty as part of the policy focus of *Becoming a Good Food Nation*. Food poverty was a major concern. The issues around ensuring access to healthy and affordable food for all were thought to be of central importance to any aspiration Scotland might have to be a Good Food Nation. This perspective dominated the responses from social justice organisations; however reducing food poverty was also central to the concerns of many individuals and organisations across all sectors.

9.6 While respondents were in favour of the general approach set out, they recognised that it was very 'high level'. Respondents therefore also focused on the importance of translating the strategic vision into a clear plan with measurable aims and objectives, and specific actions. This was necessary in order to provide a framework for implementing this ambitious agenda and for measuring progress in relation to short, medium and long-term outcomes.

9.7 As would be expected given the wide range of stakeholders, a large number of priorities were identified for early action. Of the priorities suggested in the

discussion document, 'food in the public sector', and 'local food' were affirmed on a broad basis. 'Economic growth' was a high priority for those involved in the food producer, retail, and enterprise sectors; but others thought this should take a lower priority. The other identified priorities ('a children's food policy' and 'good food choices') attracted a more mixed response. Although there was universal agreement that improving the diet and food habits of children was essential, it was questioned whether this should be tackled through an isolated food policy.

9.8   More generally, the priorities identified by respondents related to: improving the sustainability of all aspects of the food production process; reducing the environmental impacts of food production; improving health, diet and nutrition; reducing food poverty; improving education and skills in relation to food and nutrition; empowering consumers and communities; using legislation and regulation to improve food choices; and increasing employment and educational opportunities. The balance and emphasis for these priorities varied, with respondents often highlighting the issues which were at the core of their organisational or personal agendas.

9.9   Respondents endorsed the preliminary steps and broad approach to delivering the Good Food Nation agenda. There was recognition of the need for a multi-stranded approach which would cross-cut many policy areas. Respondents were keen to see an inclusive, holistic, integrated and bold approach which capitalised on the full range of levers available to the Scottish Government.

9.10   A Food Commission was generally thought to be a good idea in order to coordinate effort in this area and to provide leadership. It was vital that such a Commission should have a clear remit which articulated fully with other organisations and institutional structures within this policy landscape. Respondents wanted the membership of the Commission to be broad based, and the working methods to be clear and transparent, with all conflicts of interest fully declared.

9.11   There was a strong appetite to build on the many extant initiatives and programmes which were already up and running in Scotland, and to invest in projects and programmes which were providing a lead in this area. These included broad initiatives covering much of the territory mapped out in *Becoming a Good Food Nation*, as well as small single-focus initiatives operating in specific localities. Individual respondents described a range of ways in which they would like to contribute to Scotland becoming a Good Food Nation.

9.12   Moreover, the existence of such a wide range of ongoing work provides evidence that, for many of those responding to the consultation, this was not the 'start of a journey', but part of an ongoing process. Looking to the future, organisations provided details of plans for the coming year representing either a continuation of existing work, or the start of new initiatives, while individuals cited a range of lifestyle changes which they would make representing small, but important, steps in becoming a Good Food Nation.

9.13 There was also a desire to learn from international evidence and experience, and to link the efforts in Scotland into wider (European, international, global) perspectives. In doing this, the importance of an evidence-based approach was affirmed.

9.14 Overall, therefore, there is strong commitment amongst respondents to the concept of becoming a Good Food Nation. Respondents were, however, clear that the Good Food Nation vision on its own was not enough. Appropriate policies, underpinned by a fully developed blueprint for action, combined with adequate funding and support (both practical and political) are required if the vision is to be realised.

ANNEX 1 LIST OF ORGANISATIONAL RESPONDENTS

PUBLIC SECTOR	
Cross-cutting	Aberdeenshire Council Angus Council Falkirk Council Fife Council Glasgow City Council Midlothian Council (Environmental Health) Orkney Islands Council Stirling Council COSLA
Environment	Aberdeenshire Council Land Use Strategy Regional Pilot Cairngorms National Park Authority Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)
Food	Edible Edinburgh Edible Edinburgh Land Use Sub-Group Fife Community Food Project
Health	NHS Dumfries and Galloway NHS Health Scotland NHS Public Health Nutrition Group Public Health, NHS Borders and Scottish Borders Council Scottish Consultants in Dental Public Health/Chief Administrative Dental Officers Group Scottish Managed Sustainable Health Network (SMaSH) Tayside Nutrition Managed Clinical Network
Academia / research	Institute for Health & Wellbeing Research, Robert Gordon University James Hutton Institute QMU MSc Gastronomy Programme Rowett Institute of Nutrition and Health, University of Aberdeen Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) SRUC on behalf of DEC (Directors of RINH, JHI, and MRI) University of Edinburgh Department of Social Responsibility and Sustainability
Regulation	Food Standards Agency Scottish Food Advisory Committee Scottish Food Enforcement Liaison Committee (SFELC)
Tourism / leisure	VisitScotland
Economic and business development	Highlands and Islands Enterprise Scottish Enterprise
Other	The Crown Estate
PARTNERSHIP BODIES	
Cross-cutting	Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership Dumfries and Galloway Strategic Partnership Fife Partnership The Shetland Partnership
Health	Aberdeen City Alcohol & Drug Partnership
Academia / research	Glasgow Centre for Population Health
THIRD SECTOR / NOT FOR PROFIT	
Cross-cutting	Forward Coupar Angus Royal Society of Edinburgh Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations / Food Train (joint response) Scottish Islands Federation West End Community Centre

Environment	Changeworks
	Community Land Advisory Service
	Community Woodlands Association
	Crofting Connections
	Fife Zero Waste
	Greenspace Scotland
	Keep Scotland Beautiful
	RSPB Scotland
	Scottish Crofting Federation
	Zero Waste Scotland
Food (projects, interest groups etc)	Bread Matters
	Edinburgh Food Belt
	Edinburgh Local Food
	Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens (Scotland)
	Fife School Food Project
	Food for Thought Forum
	Forth Environment Link – Grow Forth Link
	Glasgow Food Policy Partnership
	Grow Forth Network
	Grow Your Own Working Group
	Lanarkshire Community Food and Health Partnership
	Moray Food Network
	North Glasgow Community Food Initiative
	Nourish Scotland
	Scottish Allotments and Gardens Society
	Slowfood Scotland
	Soil Association Scotland
	Soil Association – Edinburgh Food for Life Partnership
	Soil Association Scotland – Food for Life Scotland
	Sustain
	Vegetarian for Life
Health	British Dental Association
	British Heart Foundation Scotland
	Broomhouse Health Strategy Group
	The Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland
	Voluntary Health Scotland
Social justice	Carnegie UK Trust
	Edinburgh Cyrenians
	Fareshare
	Food Train
	Orkney Fair Trade Group
	The Poverty Alliance
	Scottish Fair Trade Forum
	The Trussell Trust, Scotland Office
Regulation	British Standards Institution
	United Kingdom Accreditation Service
Food producers, manufacturers, retailers	Falkland Rural Enterprises Ltd
	Transition Turriefield
Economic and business development	North Highland Initiative
	Outside the Box
	Scottish Business in the Community
	Scottish Council for Development and Industry
	Senscot

Other	ACTS Rural Committee (Action of Churches Together in Scotland) Church of Scotland Faith in Community Scotland FEAST Mission and Ministry Board, General Synod of the Scottish Episcopal Church New Literacy Unison Scotland Which?
PRIVATE SECTOR	
Food producers, manufacturers, retailers	The Dairy Council Dairy UK DG Food and Drink Ella Drinks Ltd Graham's The Family Dairy Hugh Grierson Organic NFU Scotland Quality Meat Scotland Scottish Food and Drink Federation Scottish Grocers' Federation Scottish Salmon Producers Organisation
Tourism / leisure	British Hospitality Association Food and Drink Glasgow The List Scottish Food Guide
Other	Anderson Strathern LLP Kantar World Panel

Notes:

Organisational respondents were categorised by sector (public, private etc.) and by topic of interest (environment, food, health etc.).

Respondents were initially categorised as organisations or individuals. This was done using information contained in the respondent information form, and in the body of the response itself. Where there was doubt about whether a response was submitted in a personal capacity or on behalf of an individual, respondents have been classified as individuals.

Organisational interests often cut across categories, and respondents have been allocated according to their main focus.

Multiple responses from specific departments/project teams within or operating under the umbrella of larger organisations have been accepted and treated as separate responses and allocated according to the interest of the submitting team. Single responses from organisations (regardless of the submitting department / project) are regarded as representing the views of the organisation as a whole and allocated accordingly.

A number of representative organisations have been allocated to the category aligned with their membership (e.g., membership bodies representing the interests of food producers are included in the 'Private sector - food production, manufacturers / retailers' category).

ANNEX 2 THE CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

Q1: How important do you think it is that we aim to be a Good Food Nation?

Q2: How would we know when we had got there? What would success look like?

Q3: Do you agree with the proposed vision? How would you improve it?

Q4: How would your life be better? What does being a Good Food Nation mean in your locality?

Q5: Are there any other essential steps we need to take before setting out on this journey?

Q6: How do you think a Food Commission could best help?

Q7: In what areas should indicators be set to check we are on track towards our goals?

Q8: What are your views on the different approaches that could be taken to help us become a Good Food Nation?

Q9: Do you agree with the proposed initial focus on:
- Food in the public sector
- A children's food policy
- Local food
- Good food choices, and
- Continued economic growth?

Q10: Which other areas would you prioritise?

Q11: What other steps would you recommend?

Q12: What else should be considered?

Q13: What steps do you plan to take to help Scotland on the journey toward becoming a Good Food Nation – in the next month and the next 12 months?

Q14: How did you find out about this consultation document?

GOVERNMENT SOCIAL RESEARCH

Social Science in Government