



# Citizens' Forums, and Attitudes to Agriculture, Environment and Rural Priorities



**AGRICULTURE, ENVIRONMENT AND MARINE**

# **CITIZENS' FORUMS, AND ATTITUDES TO AGRICULTURE, ENVIRONMENT AND RURAL PRIORITIES**

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# **Citizens' Forums and Attitudes to Agriculture, Environment and Rural Priorities**

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## Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b> .....	5
Background and methodology .....	5
Key findings and points of consideration .....	5
<b>List of Acronyms</b> .....	11
<b>Introduction</b> .....	12
Background and aims .....	12
Methodology .....	14
Quantitative data.....	16
Qualitative data.....	16
<b>Principles</b> .....	18
<b>High quality food production</b> .....	19
Perceptions of the value of agriculture .....	19
Priorities for food consumption .....	22
<b>Protecting animal welfare</b> .....	36
<b>Advancing environmental protection</b> .....	40
Perceptions of environmental issues.....	40
Priorities for future environmental policy .....	47
<b>Land management: keeping the land healthy and productive</b> .....	51
<b>Supporting the rural economy and rural communities</b> .....	53
Perceptions of rural community issues .....	53
Priorities for the future of rural communities .....	55
<b>Raising the profile of the sector</b> .....	60
Current profile of the sector .....	60
<b>Financial Assistance to the sector</b> .....	63
Criteria for funding support to farmers.....	63
Preferred Criteria .....	65
Preferences for funding split within the CAP .....	69
<b>Key conclusions from the research</b> .....	76
<b>Appendix A: Literature and Evidence Review</b> .....	77
Introduction .....	77
Agriculture.....	77
Environment.....	88
What does the public attitudes data tell us? .....	90

Rural development.....	92
What does the public attitudes data tell us? .....	97
<b>Appendix B: Qualitative interview findings .....</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Qualitative research findings .....</b>	<b>100</b>
Views on food consumption.....	100
Perceptions of agriculture, environment, and rural priorities .....	104
Priorities for future policy .....	109
<b>Appendix C: Survey research findings .....</b>	<b>112</b>
<b>Quantitative research findings .....</b>	<b>113</b>
Food consumption factors .....	114
Perceptions and priorities for Scottish Agriculture .....	117
Perceptions and priorities for the environment .....	121
Perceptions and priorities for rural communities .....	124
Common Agricultural Policy.....	127
<b>Appendix D: Findings from Citizens' Forums .....</b>	<b>132</b>
Methodology .....	132
Participants .....	134
Demographic spread of attendees .....	135
Does Scottish farming provide a vital public service to the people of Scotland?.....	136
Food, diet and consumption habits.....	137
Farming and the environment.....	145
Agriculture and the Landscape .....	147
Key principles that should be at the core of the agricultural sector in Scotland	149
How future funding allocations to agriculture, environment and rural development might be balanced differently .....	160

# Executive Summary

## Background and methodology

The Scottish Government commissioned Mark Diffley Consultancy and Research Ltd. Involve and Newcastle University to undertake a study into Scottish public attitudes to the environment, agriculture and rural development. The research addresses the recommendation put forward by the Agricultural Champions, a steering group tasked with informing future agricultural policy, that “*policies must be guided by real evidence about what the public values*”<sup>1</sup>. The research aims to gather evidence on public priorities, particularly given the opportunity to develop replacements to current policy - Common Agricultural Policy (hereafter CAP) - as the UK prepares to leave the European Union.

To ensure the research both informs and listens to public opinion, the study methodology was four-fold, encompassing:

- a literature and evidence review covering national and international research studies;
- 15 in-depth qualitative interviews among those with special diets who may otherwise be underrepresented in the research study;
- a nationally representative online survey of 2,345 Scottish adults;
- 2 citizens’ forums to deliberate on the issues in scope, one forum was convened in Motherwell which is a primarily urban location, and the other in Montrose which is a primarily rural location.

## Key findings and points of consideration

Participants at the Citizens’ Forums were asked to identify key principles that should underpin the agricultural sector in Scotland. In Motherwell, participants developed 10 different principles, and similarly in Montrose participants developed 13 different principles.

There were a number of common and consistent themes identified from the principles at each Citizens’ Forum which have been grouped together. These grouped principles have informed the shape of the report as they point to key aspects of consideration when thinking about the development of future agricultural policy in Scotland.

Key principles include maintaining a healthy and productive use of land; protecting animal welfare; ensuring high quality food production; advancing environmental protection; ensuring financial assistance is based on greatest need; and raising the profile of the sector through education and increasing public awareness.

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<sup>1</sup> Scottish Government 2018: A future strategy for Scottish agriculture: final report  
<https://beta.gov.scot/publications/future-strategy-scottish-agriculture-final-report-scottish-governments-agriculture-champions/>

## **High quality food production**

There was widespread agreement (86%) that Scottish farming is vital for the success of the Scottish economy. A similar proportion (83%) agreed that Scottish farming provides a vital public service to the people in Scotland.

Animal welfare (21%), impact on health (20%), and cost (19%), were the most commonly cited “essential” factors that inform decisions about food consumption.

Through the process of deliberation, there was higher levels of importance attributed to locally sourced food – the post-deliberation survey found just under half (49%) of participants at the Citizen’s Forums preferred food to be produced in Scotland.

Moreover, the research identified the view that consumers need more support to balance the priorities of cost, quality and local food production.

There was a recognition that Brexit may have a negative impact on a range of food consumption factors. Importantly, 68% think that Brexit will have a negative impact on cost which is one of the most essential factors driving food consumption choices.

- Framing agriculture as a public good will be useful in ensuring public support for the sector, however the manner in which public goods are conferred from farming need to be demonstrable to the public;
- There is appetite for more information on the origins of food, so the public is more conscious of the priorities of animal welfare and the environment when considering food consumption and production;
- Awareness and interest in the origins and production of food is coupled with a desire to see more food grown and produced in Scotland, though consumers want to see that balanced with reasonable process and guarantees of quality,

## **Protecting animal welfare**

There was a recognition of the wider social responsibility of the agricultural sector, in particular with regard to protecting animal welfare.

Animal welfare was the top factor determining public choices about food consumption. Moreover, 39% cited improving animal welfare standards as an important priority for the future funding of agriculture policy in Scotland.

The research identified concern among consumers about a potential decrease in animal welfare standards in the transition period between repealing European policy and implementing Scottish policy on the issue.

Considering the importance of protecting animal welfare found in the research, it is perhaps unsurprising that when thinking of the future funding of farms in Scotland, there was a higher level of preference to prioritise funding for vegetable farms as opposed to meat producing farms.

- While there is little awareness of current animal welfare standards, consumers view the issue as very important and are keen to see evidence of standards being implemented,
- The UK's departure from the EU gives cause to concern for consumers on the issues of food quality, costs and animal welfare, with a preference that quality/welfare standards are at least maintained while costs kept as low as possible,

### **Advancing environmental protection**

Support for advancing environmental protection as part of future agri-policy was strengthened through the provision of information on the issue: there was higher levels of agreement that the farming sector should do more to protect and conserve the environment, post-deliberation.

The research found slightly higher levels of knowledge and awareness of the relationship between agriculture and the environment in rural areas, comparative to urban areas. Moreover, there was consistently higher levels of support among younger people (those aged 35 and under) on the issue of advancing environmental protection throughout the research.

Almost all (90%) agreed that without a wide variety of plants and animals, the environment would worsen; and a majority (83%) agreed that the quality of drinking water in Scotland is greater than in other parts of the UK.

The top three priorities for future environmental policy include investing in better flood prevention and management of flood water at times of flooding (59%); increasing the variety of plant and animal life (56%); and setting stricter targets for improving air quality (55%).

- There is little spontaneous link among the public between agriculture and broader environmental issues, providing an opportunity for those linkages to be addressed through the provision for more and better information,
- Consumers view the responsibility for environmental protection as a joint one between farmers, consumers and the wider food processing and manufacturing industry.



## **Keeping the land healthy and productive**

The research identified effective land management and keeping the land healthy and productive as a key guiding principle for future agri-policy. This is pertinent given that 73% of Scotland's land is designated as agricultural.

The research found that the public recognise that there are competing demands on land use. Therefore, there is the view that there should be better cooperation among landowners on land management; to ensure that there is a balance between productive and unproductive use of land; and that land is nurtured, and ecosystems are preserved.

There was a recognition that farming can have benefits in nurturing the land; in particular mixed farming was cited as yielding benefits in terms of increasing biodiversity, and the aesthetics of landscapes.

On the issue of land management and food production there was the suggestion that a food map should be compiled to locate "*where can we get certain types of goods and where is its optimal value to grow them*", but also recognising areas where preservation is required to avoid environmental harm.

- Future agri-policy should prioritise farming practices that ensure that the land is healthy, such as mixed-farming which helps to encourage biodiversity.
- There is a view that there should be a diversification of land use to include both productive and non-productive uses of the land. Moreover, underpinning all land use, there should be the commitment to preserve and enhance soil quality, biodiversity, water quality and ecosystems.

## **Supporting the rural economy and rural communities**

The research identified supporting the rural economy and rural communities as a guiding principle for future agri-policy

In particular, there was a preference for economic support for rural communities given the prevalence of rural poverty and outward migration of working age adults in rural communities; moreover, there was also support for service provision to be strengthened in rural areas particularly transport and digital infrastructure and connectivity.

Reflecting perceptions of rural community issues, priorities for the future of rural communities included improving public transport links (65%); improving broadband connectivity (61%); and ensuring there are more jobs and opportunities for those who live in rural areas (52%).

Those in rural areas were more aware of the issues encountered by rural communities. Considering this finding, there was a view that future agricultural policy can hold the key to connecting urban and rural populations.

- The public, regardless of whether they live in urban or rural areas of Scotland, want to see more jobs, opportunities and support for rural areas, particularly among those in remote small towns and remote rural locations,
- One avenue for supporting rural areas which would attract public support is more community ownership of land and buildings. This could provide opportunities for rural communities to use land ownership to identify independent revenue streams and use these for local re-investment,
- There is widespread support for improving digital connectivity in rural communities and an acknowledgement that there is a need to improve the extent to which rural communities can access services online.

### **Raising the profile of the sector**

The research identified a need to raise the profile of the agricultural sector among the public as well as increase awareness of the scope of the sector.

Considering the relative importance of a range of government portfolios in terms of public spending, 5% prioritised agriculture relative to a range of government portfolios, a fifth (20%) prioritised the environment, and a small proportion (3%) prioritised rural development (3%). In particular, the findings related to rural development are pertinent when considering government proposals to mainstream rural community policy into all aspects of policymaking.

Qualitative research identified the issue of workforce sustainability for Scottish agriculture, which is another important consideration given the low profile of the sector among other government portfolios.

Reflecting the discussions about workforce, there was also mention of education provision in farming and agriculture to encourage new entrants to the sector but also to develop the skills of the existing workforce.

- Unsurprisingly, there is little widespread knowledge of the agriculture sector, but there is significant public interest, particularly in linking the future of agriculture with the ongoing debate about the environment,
- Consumers support the necessity to grow the agricultural workforce and recognise the potential benefits in driving improvements and modernisation.
- A concerted drive to inform and educate the public about the future of the sector can build confidence among consumers and help ensure that consumers are effective advocates for the industry.

### **Financial assistance to the sector**

The research identified support for the reallocation of financial assistance to the agricultural sector, both in terms of the allocation of funding to farmers but also in

terms of the funding split among the three key priority areas of the Common Agricultural Policy.

Support for the current system of funding allocation to farmers remained low throughout the various data points of the research, suggesting that participants were generally interested in seeing change. Post-deliberation, however, there was an increase in preference for funding to be allocated based on advancing environmental goals.

Overall, more than half (55%) preferred funding within the Common Agricultural Policy to be re-proportioned, seeing a greater share of funding going to support the natural environment and to help protect rural communities.

- Results on the financial assistance to the agricultural sector most strongly indicate a change in views by virtue of the deliberative process;
- Considering both the national survey and the outcome of the deliberative process there is support for the reallocation of financial support to the agricultural sector than is currently applied under the Common Agricultural Policy
- There is support for funding to farmers to be based on advancing environmental goals, and supporting smaller farms;
- However, the issue of support criteria being based on land quality with poorer quality land being prioritised was also cited, particularly among those residing in rural communities as there was a recognition of the wider socio-economic functions of farmers working on poorer quality land e.g. as anchor employers within rural areas;
- In terms of funding allocations within the CAP, there was a clear preference (55%) for a greater allocation of support to the natural environment and rural communities.

# List of Acronyms

CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
EEA	European Economic Area
EU	European Union
EAFRD	European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development
GVA	Gross Value Added
LEADER	Liaisons Entre Actions de Développement de l'Economie Rurale
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
RSPCA	Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
SEPA	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
SG	Scottish Government
SRUC	Scotland's Rural College
WTO	World Trade Organisation

# Introduction

## Background and aims

The Scottish Government commissioned Mark Diffley Consultancy and Research Ltd. Involve and Newcastle University to undertake a study into Scottish public attitudes to the environment, agriculture and rural development.

In 2017, the Scottish Government appointed four Agricultural Champions to develop an agriculture strategy to guide the long-term sustainable future for Scottish agriculture.

The research study stemmed from the following recommendation from the interim report delivered by the Agricultural Champions<sup>2</sup>:

*“The public must be better informed about Scottish farming and what it delivers, and policies must be guided by real evidence about what the public values. A civic conversation, both informing and listening to the public, must start now.”*

It is important to note at the outset that a key driver for undertaking public consultation in this area is the UK’s decision to leave the European Union; currently, Scottish agriculture is governed by the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Therefore, there is scope for developing replacements to the CAP, post-Brexit.

Even if Scotland were to remain within the European Union, the CAP is subject to far-reaching reforms, to simplify and modernise the policy, and limit its financing from the overall EU budget – the agricultural champions cite that *“no change is not an option”*. Therefore, there is the opportunity and scope to rethink future policy for agriculture in Scotland.

At present, the UK Government has set out plans for an Agriculture Bill that will provide a replacement to the CAP and deliver a range of reforms. It lays the foundations for a future system based on public money for public goods. The proposed Bill places a priority on protecting and conserving the environment, in line with the Government’s 25 Year Environment Plan. Importantly, it involves a transition period which will phase out income support provided to farmers.

While agriculture is a devolved matter, the Bill sets out plans for a common framework to be implemented which will enable the functioning of the UK internal market, meet international compliance standards and permit the negotiation of new trade agreements and international treaties.

Therefore, there is scope to shape the future direction of Scottish agricultural policy, though public consultation and engagement.

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

The Scottish Government's consultation "*Stability and Simplicity proposals for a rural funding transition period*"<sup>3</sup> is important in this respect: the paper details suggestions for a transition period of 3-5 years in which the policies of the CAP would be retained to enable consistency for farmers. It is suggested that during this time, where possible, simplifications will be made to deliver improved outcomes. Once a withdrawal agreement is reached between the UK government and the EU, the transition period would be aligned with the terms of the agreement. After the transition period, a new rural policy framework would be implemented that covers supporting farmers and food production as well as ensuring public investments are aligned with Scotland's ambitions for sustainable and inclusive growth.

A Scottish Bill is currently in the process of being developed to deliver the proposals set out in the Scottish Government's "Stability and Simplicity" consultation.

In conceiving of future agricultural policy, there is the view that the aims should be to deliver maximum social value by placing an emphasis on environmental matters but also on wider rural development objectives, in line with the sustainable and inclusive growth agenda.

The National Council of Rural Advisers set out that supporting the rural economy and rural communities should be mainstreamed within all policymaking<sup>4</sup>; and that indicators for rural development should be integrated within the National Performance Framework.

In line with this thinking, an important perspective is that advanced by the UN Environment Programme report on the "*Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity*" which describes using a "*whole system thinking*" approach to address the challenges of future agriculture and food systems. The report takes the view that the system of subsidies which supports per hectare productivity may gloss over the other goals of equity and environmental sustainability which is key to a whole system approach. These are important points of consideration for future policy, post-CAP, and are grounded in the data collected on public attitudes towards future policy.

The public attitudes research, therefore, has been conducted on the backdrop of this live policy issue, and seeks to solicit public opinion on priorities for food production, consumption and agriculture, support for the rural economy and rural communities and environmental issues such as biodiversity, soil protection, climate change, air and water quality which are impacted by agricultural policy.

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<sup>3</sup> Scottish Government 2018: Stability and simplicity: proposals for a rural funding transition period <https://www.gov.scot/publications/stability-simplicity-proposals-rural-funding-transition-period/>

<sup>4</sup> National Council for Rural Advisers 2018: A blueprint for Scotland's rural economy: recommendations to Scottish Ministers <https://www.gov.scot/publications/new-blueprint-scotlands-rural-economy-recommendations-scottish-ministers/>

As the Agricultural Champions set out, continuous engagement with the public is required to ensure that the public interest is advanced in future agri-policy.

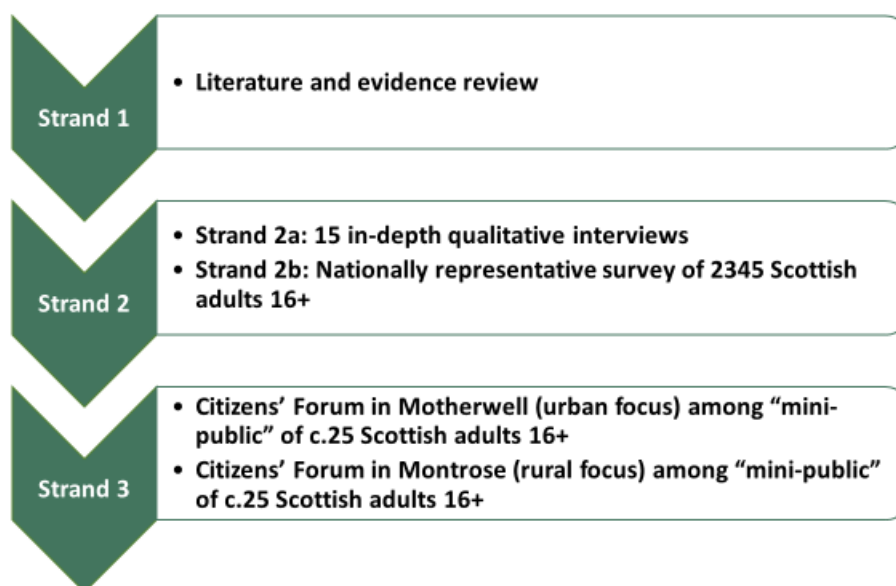
The aims of the study are threefold:

- to explore public priorities, values, and attitudes of food consumption, diets, agriculture, environment and rural development priorities.
- to explore knowledge and awareness of the Common Agricultural Policy and views on the three areas of CAP (agriculture, environment, and rural development).
- to deliberate on priorities for future agri-policy, considering the extent to which the three areas of CAP should feature and be weighted within future policy.

Given the deliberative methods used within the research, the study also explored the extent to which attitudes change as a result of being exposed to new information.

## Methodology

The methodology comprises the following key strands:



**Strand 1:** A literature and evidence review of existing research on attitudes towards agriculture, food, environment and rural policies; as well as considerations for future Scottish agricultural policy, post-CAP. The document review was carried out by the research team using desk research methods.

**Strand 2 (a):** 15 in-depth qualitative interviews. The interviews explored issues of cost, authenticity, health, quality, and environment when considering food consumption and production in Scotland; and considered priorities for future agricultural policy reviewing the three areas of CAP.

The interviews were designed to explore the perspectives of groups who are typically under-represented within existing data sources on the issue of food production and consumption, and whose perspectives may not otherwise come through in the nationally representative survey. This includes those with specific dietary requirements (covering halal, kosher, vegan, vegetarian, gluten free, dairy free and sugar free diets), those on low incomes, a range of age groups and urbanity/rurality.

**Strand 2 (b):** A nationally representative online survey of 2,345 Scottish adults (16+) to gather baseline data on attitudes towards a range of environmental, agricultural and rural community issues. The survey questions were informed by the literature and evidence review, and the in-depth interviews and covered perceptions and priorities towards agriculture and food production, the environment and rural communities as well as priorities for the future funding of agricultural policy.

**Strand 3:** Two Citizens' Forums, each lasting two days, in a rural (Montrose) and mainly urban (Motherwell) location to deliberate on the topics in scope; to present expert information and views on agricultural, environment and rural community issues in Scotland.

Overall, 49 participants took part in the Forums, at Motherwell and Montrose. The participants were recruited to match the Scottish population profile; thus, constituted a representative "mini-public".

Each Citizens' Forum was a 2-day intensive, residential process dedicating 14.5 hours on discussing and deliberating on the issues. The Citizens' Forums were designed to take participants through a process of learning, developing dialogue and deliberation. To this end:

- Participants spent most of the time working in small facilitated groups.
- There was a balance of hearing from and questioning 'experts' and group discussions.
- Work in plenary throughout the day was used to build the sense of a 'whole room' task and highlight differences and commonalities in the discussions at each table.
- Each exercise built on the other (both in terms of the learning and the depth of deliberation asked of the participants).



## **Interpreting the findings**

### **Quantitative data**

Quantitative data identifies the prevalence of particular views among the population group and identifies differences in opinion by key demographic variables.

Throughout the report, differences between variables are commented upon only where we are sure these are statistically significant i.e. where we can be 95% certain that they have not occurred by chance.

Where percentages do not sum to 100%, this may be due to rounding, the exclusion of 'don't know' categories, or multiple answers.

Aggregate percentages (e.g. "satisfied/not satisfied") are calculated from the absolute values. Therefore, aggregate percentages may differ from the sum of the individual scores due to rounding of percentage totals. Throughout the report, an asterisk (\*) denotes any value of less than half a percent and a dash (-) denotes zero.

Results from online polling conducted at the Citizens' Forums are shown as % and are compared with the survey results to indicate the direction of travel between pre- and post-deliberation preferences on the issues, these results are indicative, and we cannot attribute statistical significance to the values given.

### **Qualitative data**

When considering the findings from the qualitative elements of the research it should be borne in mind that qualitative samples are designed to ensure that a range of different views and experiences is captured. It is not appropriate to draw conclusions from qualitative data about the prevalence of views or experiences among the population group. As such, quantifying language, such as 'all', 'most' or 'a few' is avoided as far as possible when discussing qualitative findings throughout the report.

### **Report structure**

The findings from the various strands of the public attitudes research, including the literature review, qualitative interviews, nationally representative survey and Citizens' Forums, have been thematically grouped using a set of guiding principles that were spontaneously identified by participants at the Citizens' Forums. The principles correspond with the findings from the other strands of the public attitudes research and convey what the public think should underpin future agricultural policy.

Findings from the methodologies employed in the research, including the literature review, qualitative interviews, nationally representative survey, and Citizens' Forums are detailed separately in the annex of the report.

Each methodology report contained in the annex includes a technical note on the methodological approach.

## **Acknowledgements**

First and foremost, we would like to thank all research participants who have taken part in the interviews, survey, and Citizens' Forums.

We would like to thank Eva Kleinert and Graeme Beale and their colleagues from Scottish Government for their support and guidance throughout the project.

We would also like to thank the Research Advisory Group for their invaluable input to the research:

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- Eleanor Kay (Scottish Land and Estates)
- Sandra Marks (Scientific Adviser, Environment, SG)
- John Brownlee (Policy Adviser, Brexit, SG)
- Kirsten Beddows (Policy Adviser, Agriculture, SG)
- Pamela Berry (Rural Economy Policy, SG)

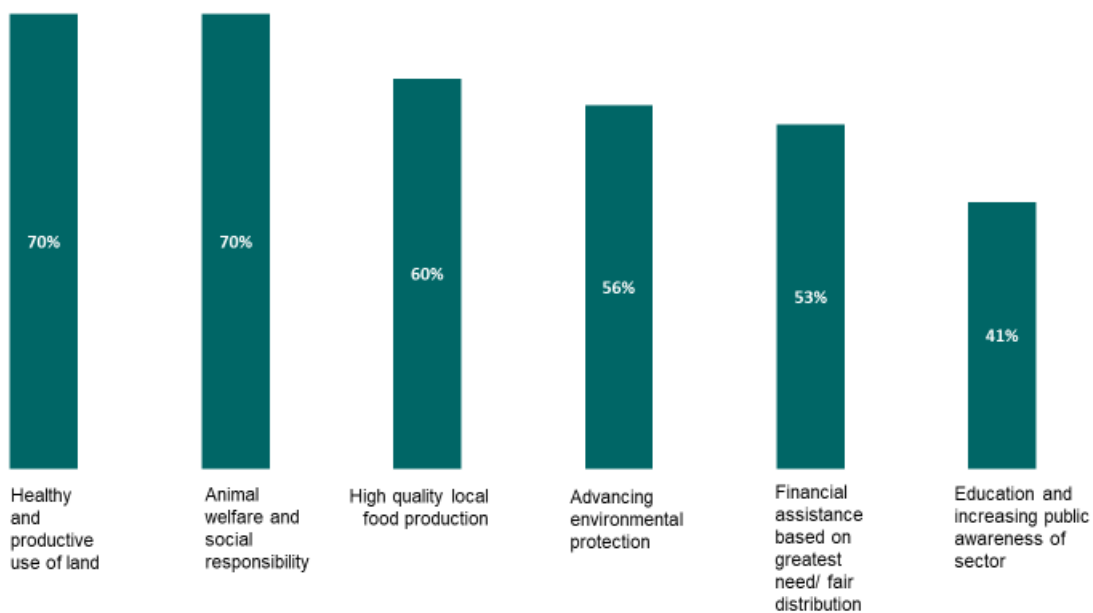
Finally, we would like to thank expert witnesses who contributed to the Citizens' Forums: Davy McCracken (SRUC), Katrin Prager (University of Aberdeen/James Hutton Institute), and David Hopkins (SRUC).

# Principles

Participants at the Citizens' Forums were asked to identify key principles that should underpin the agricultural sector in Scotland. In Motherwell, participants developed 10 different principles, and similarly in Montrose participants developed 13 different principles, which are detailed in full in the methodological findings from the Citizens' Forums in the annex of the report.

There were a number of common and consistent themes identified from the principles at each Citizens' Forum which have been grouped together. These grouped principles have informed the shape of the report as they point to key aspects of consideration when thinking about the development of future agricultural policy in Scotland. Findings from each of the methodological elements of the research are interspersed in the remainder of the report.

Figure 1.1: Key Principles that should underpin future agricultural policy



Base: All citizen forum participants (49)

## High quality food production

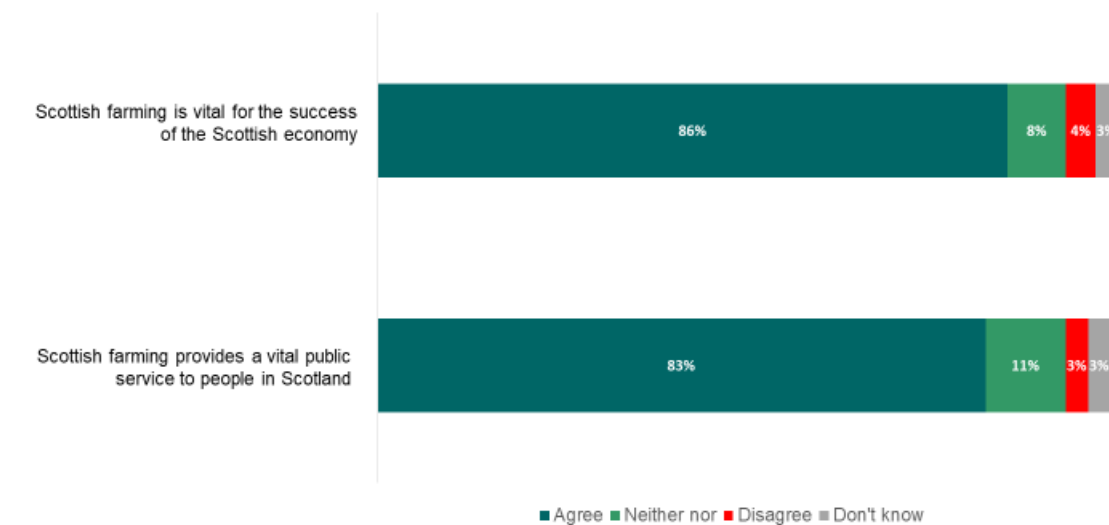
A key guiding principle for future agri-policy is the focus on ensuring high quality food production is at the heart of Scottish agriculture. Underpinning this view are perceptions of the value of agriculture, and also considerations of a range of factors which inform choices about food consumption and production.

As shown later in this chapter, local food production and quality of food are seen interchangeably and Scottish consumers want to ensure that they are supported to balance between cost, quality, and local food produce, when making choices about food consumption.

## Perceptions of the value of agriculture

Exploring perceptions of Scottish agriculture there was widespread agreement (86%) that Scottish farming is vital for the success of the Scottish economy. A similar proportion (83%) agreed that Scottish farming provides a vital public service to the people in Scotland.

Figure 2.1: Perceptions of the value of agriculture



Base: All respondents (2,345)

Women were more likely than men to value the contribution of agriculture to the Scottish economy (89% compared with 82%); and conceive of agricultural as a vital public service (84% compared with 81%).

The concept of Scottish farming as a vital public service was further explored at the Citizens' Forums, not least given the common framing of agriculture as a "public service" or "public good" in public policy discourse. An initial discussion to obtain first reactions to the concept was followed by a presentation delivered by Professor David Hopkins, Dean of the Central Faculty of Scotland's Rural College. The presentation outlined the contribution agriculture makes to the Scottish economy, and the role agriculture plays in land stewardship and protecting the environment, as well as financial support provided to the agricultural sector. Exploring views

before and after the presentation enabled an evaluation of whether views on the issue change with the provision of information.

Reflecting the survey results, participants at the Forums overwhelmingly agreed or strongly agreed that Scottish farming provides a vital public service. Having said that, this was by no means a universal view and a minority of participants (n=4) were less convinced by the concept, providing a response at the mid-point of the agreement scale. After the presentation and discussion, almost all participants more strongly agreed with the statement, a minority however lessened their expression of agreement moving from strongly agree to agree.

The direction of travel in the views from the survey to the various points of the deliberative process are shown in the table below.

The results indicate that perceptions of Scottish agriculture providing a vital public service are strengthened through deliberation on the issue; however, it should be noted that results were strong in this regard to begin with, and the deliberative process helped to reaffirm this position.

Table 2.1 Change in views on whether Scottish agriculture provides a vital public service

	Strongly agree %	Tend to agree %	Neither nor %	Tend to disagree %	Strongly disagree %
<b>Survey</b>	46%	40%	8%	3%	1%
<b>1<sup>st</sup> response Motherwell</b>	91%	5%	5%	0%	0%
<b>1<sup>st</sup> response Montrose</b>	35%	46%	15%	4%	0%
<b>After 2 days deliberation</b>	51%	39%	8%	0%	0%

Subsequent discussions at the Forums point to some of the reasons behind the high-level agreement that Scottish farming provides a vital public service. In particular, participants emphasised the “*financial benefit {of agriculture} to the economy*” reflecting the information shared with participants about the financial contribution of the sector. Importantly, participants pointed to the creation of jobs by the sector and in particular providing “*vital employment to rural communities.*” There was also a discussion that “*if it is well managed,*” farming can have a positive “*impact on the environment,*” including “*maintaining waterways,*” and “*keeping soil fertility,*” among other aspects.

Furthermore, there was a perception that Scottish agriculture helped to make Scotland self-sufficient: *“be[ing] able to produce its own food and not rely on other countries and policies”* helped to deliver a vital public service to Scotland in terms of food security. Participants attributed value to supporting local food production both in economic terms but also as participants placed an emphasis on the quality of food sourced locally as it was seen to be *“fresher, healthier and supports the ecosystems.”*

Another common theme was the linkages between Scottish farming and Scottish identity and history. Farmers were described as *“keepers of our countryside,”* and there was an emphasis on farming as part of Scotland’s *“historical landscape and identity, there to be cultivated,”* and that there was a responsibility among farmers to *“retain historic skills/crofts that would otherwise be lost to future generations.”*

There was also some discussion among those who were not entirely convinced that agriculture provides a vital public service. A range of reasons were cited including the view that *“income / expenditure in today's climate does not contribute enough to the economy”*, and that *“most food produce is imported”*. There was also the view that there is a disparity between *“very poor and very rich farmers”* which meant that the sector did not provide a vital public service as it was unequal.

On the issue of financing and supporting agriculture, there is a significant relationship found in the survey data between the perception that Scottish farming provides a vital public service and the view that Scottish farmers do not receive a fair share of money for the food they produce. The results indicate that there is appetite for further support for farming and food production among those who view the sector as providing a public service which resonates with the framing of the current subsidies policy. The issue of spending allocations for farming and agriculture are explored in more detail later in the report.

Table 2.2. Views on whether Scottish agriculture provides a vital public service by whether Scottish farmers receive a fair share of money for the food they produce (col. %)

Scottish farmers receive a fair share of money	Scottish farming provides a vital public service			
	Agree %	Neither %	Disagree%	Don't know %
Agree	74	77	91	79
Neither nor	19	24	5	6
Disagree	6	2	2	3
Don't know	1	*	2	13

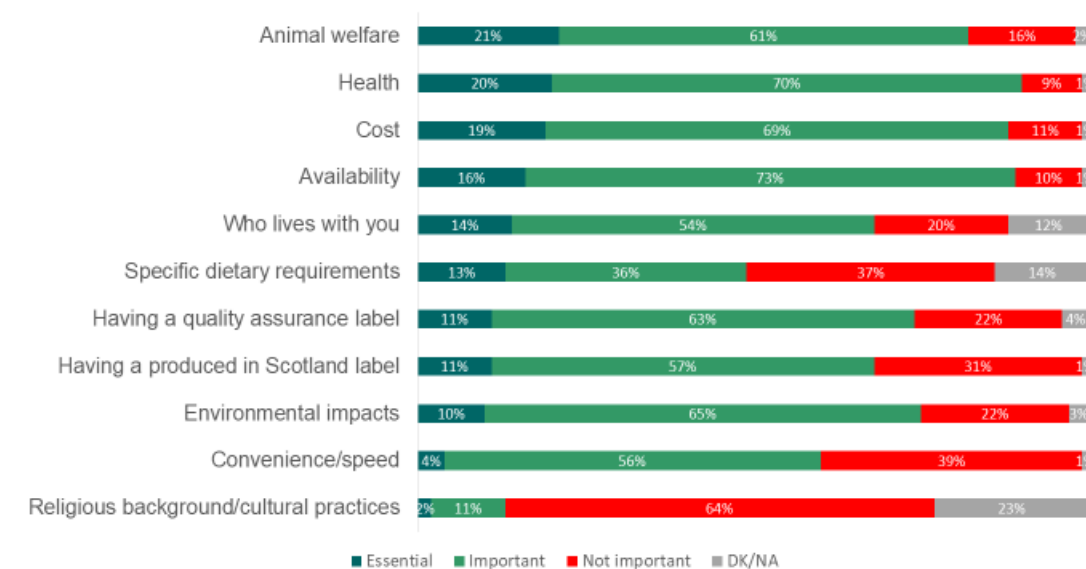
Discussion around the issue of farming as a public good is pertinent given that food production is a private enterprise<sup>5</sup>, however there is a view in the literature that farming can provide public goods if it presents value for money or confers other benefits to the public such as protecting and conserving the natural environment. However, Bateman 2017, note that the degree to which farms can deliver public goods will differ markedly by location e.g. some areas such as peatlands are conducive to carbon storage, or recreational and mental health benefits from woodland can be delivered only if they are in proximity to populations<sup>6</sup>. Therefore, there is a view that public benefits from farming should be demonstrable to the public and may differ depending on location which is markedly different from a blanket value judgement of the issue.

### Priorities for food consumption

The research identified the factors that consumers prioritise when choosing what to eat. More broadly this has implications for the preferred funding and support for agriculture, considering the range of factors that are most important in terms of food consumption/production.

Animal welfare (21%), impact on health (20%), and cost (19%), were the most commonly cited “essential” factors that inform decisions about food consumption. These results are consistent with previous research on attitudes to food and diet<sup>7</sup>.

Figure 2.2: Priorities for food consumption



Base: All respondents (2,345)

<sup>5</sup> Bateman et al. 2018: Public funding for public goods: A post-Brexit perspective on principles for agricultural policy. Land Use Policy volume 79: pp 293-300

<sup>6</sup> Bateman 2017. Recommendations for a post-Brexit agricultural policy: a fair deal for farming and forestry. Putting Down New Roots: Woods, Trees and the Post-CAP Landscape, Woodland Trust

<sup>7</sup> Food Standards Scotland 2018 Consumer Tracker Survey

<https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/publications-and-research/publications/food-in-scotland-consumer-tracking-survey-wave-6>

There is a correlation among these factors and social grade, with cost being more of an essential or important factor for those in the C2DE social grade<sup>8</sup> category comparative to those in the ABC1 social grade category; and conversely health and animal welfare being more of an essential or important factor for those in the ABC1 social grade category than C2DE social grade. Notably, previous research has identified that cost is seen as one of the main barriers to healthy eating<sup>9</sup>.

In addition, there was some notable variation by a range of different demographic factors:

- The availability of food items in the shops near you, was more likely to be an essential factor for those residing in remote rural locations than overall (27% compared with 16%).
- The impact on health, was more important for older age groups than overall (45% of 65+ said it was very important compared with 35% overall).
- Animal welfare was more likely to be cited as an essential factor among women than men (24% compared with 17% among men).

Qualitative in-depth interviews provide insight into some of the most commonly cited food consumption factors. There was a perception that cost, and availability go hand in hand. In essence, there was a view that cost was a limiting factor in purchasing fresher foods; and there was a limited availability of fresher foods within specific neighbourhoods.

*“I want to make a fresh salad for lunch, but the variety of ingredients needed make it expensive to put together”* (Interview participant)

*“If you are in a deprived postcode then the local shops are stocked with alcohol and crisps”* (Interview participant)

*“Readymade food is cheaper and then you don’t have the added fuel costs in preparing the food”* (Interview participant)

The availability of certain types of food was exacerbated for those living in rural communities. For those from small commuter towns there was a perception of a lack of shops in the area as residents typically travel to nearby urban areas where they do most of their shopping. On the other hand, for those living in island communities, there was mention of the impact of changes to the ferry schedules (which is frequent in bad weather) on the supply of food from the mainland. This led to “panic-buying” and shops often running out of stock for basic supplies.

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<sup>8</sup> Social grade is a classification system based on occupation and it enables a household and all its members to be classified according to the occupation of the Chief Income Earner (CIE). ABC1 corresponds with CIE who is in a higher, managerial administrative and professional occupation or supervisory, clerical, junior managerial occupation. C2DE corresponds with the CIE who is in a skilled manual occupation, semi-skilled or unskilled occupation, or is unemployed.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.



*“There are changes being made to the bus schedules which will mean that it will take 1 hour to get to the nearest supermarket and a slow service on Sundays”*  
(Interview participant)

*“Last year the ferry didn’t sail for three days and we didn’t have any milk. We normally stock up on food in the chest freezer but sometimes the shops run out”*  
(Interview participant)

While the most common factors for the population as a whole related to animal welfare, health and cost; dietary requirements were a primary concern for those with special diets.

Specific diets encompassed those on gluten-free diets who were restricted to the gluten-free options available in supermarkets; taste, option and cost of food were also seen to be affected by the gluten-free diet factor.

*“There is one shelf which stocks gluten free options and the bread doesn’t taste that good either”* (Interview participant)

*“I’m severely gluten intolerant so I have to be careful with what I’m eating...I always check the labels”* (Interview participant)

In a similar vein, those with specific food allergies and intolerances described the difficulties of checking food items for certain ingredients and cited a reliance on eating fresher food options as they contained less additives and gave them more control in terms of what they were consuming. While this was seen to be the “healthier option”, there was the view that these food items tend to be more expensive than frozen and canned foods which are more cost-effective for larger families.

In contrast to those who described having to adopt specific diets because of their allergies or intolerances, there were also those who willingly adopted specific diets, such as dairy free, or sugar free, as a measure to improve their health. Those on such diets were consuming alternatives such as sugar free options, and almond or coconut milk. Indeed, those in this category described their diet more in terms of choice; this was in part related to income, as those who willingly made changes to their diet this way were typically of the ABC1 social grade category.

There were also those who adopted specific diets based on their cultural, religious and environmental views.

For instance, vegan and vegetarian dietary preferences stemmed from attitudes towards animal welfare and environmental concerns regarding the impact of food production on the environment.

*“I wouldn’t eat anything that I wouldn’t kill myself”* (Interview participant)

*“The whole mass production system is unsustainable; we are feeding animals to kill them to feed us”* (Interview participant)

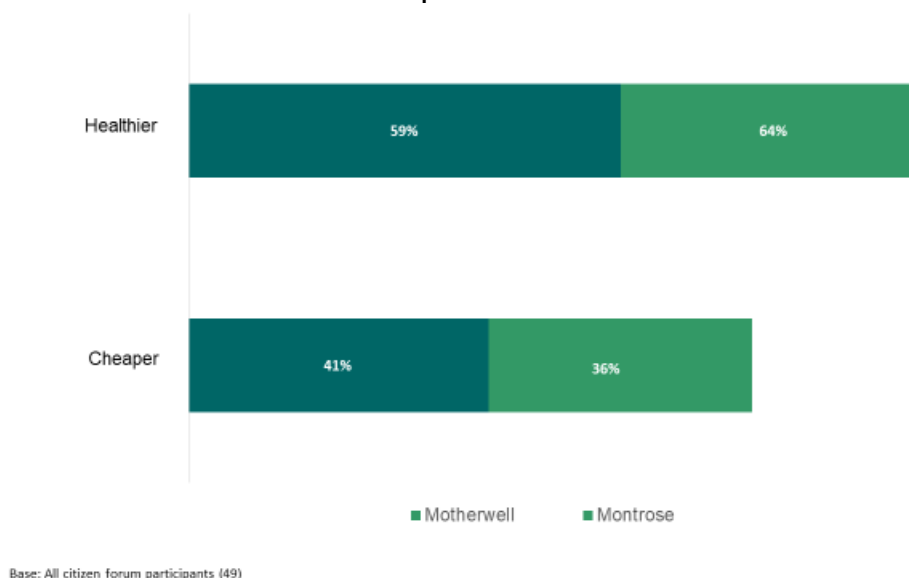
Considering the range of different factors that inform choices about food consumption, the Citizens’ Forums drilled into the decision-making in more detail by presenting participants with a series of binary choices to explore the choices, and trade-offs made by consumers when making decisions about the food they consume. In designing this exercise, the binary choices involved a combination of factors that impact the individual and factors that affect society.

### Healthier Food vs Cheaper Food

Participants were presented with the binary choice of healthier *or* cheaper food and were asked to consider what was the most important factor for them. Overall, participants from both Citizens’ Forums prioritised healthier food over cheaper food. In Motherwell, 59% cited healthier food as having a greater impact on their choice and in Montrose this figure increased to 64% of participants.

When discussing the results in groups, participants recognised that *“it depends on income”* and that people might choose cheaper food because the *“costs are high, and the living wage is not enough”*. Other participants noted that *“people have different ways of shopping,”* and *“it depends who lives with you”*. One participant noted that *“healthier is not always expensive”*, pointing out that the two factors are not mutually exclusive.

Figure 2.3: Healthier Food vs Cheaper Food



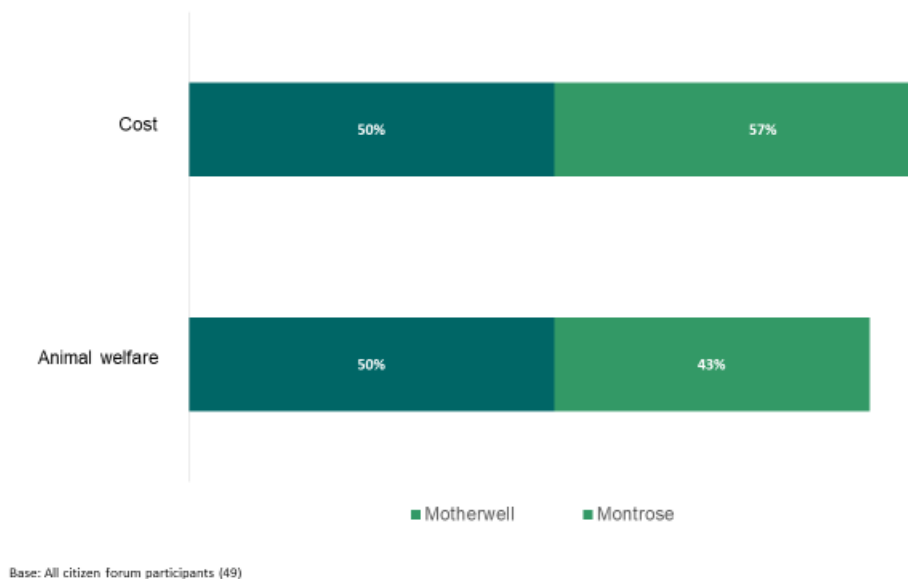
### Cost vs Animal Welfare

Participants were then asked if the cost of food or animal welfare is the more important factor in terms of their food choices. There was mixed opinion on both of the issues. While participants in Motherwell were split 50-50, slightly more than half

of the participants in Montrose (57%) said that the cost of food had a greater impact.

In discussions, participants pointed to “*supermarket deals*” and their “*habit to pick up the cheaper one of two options*” being why cost has an impact on their food choices. Participants said that “*people don’t know/switch off to what animal welfare means*” although this might “*depend where you come from - rural/urban*”.

Figure 2.4: Cost vs Animal Welfare



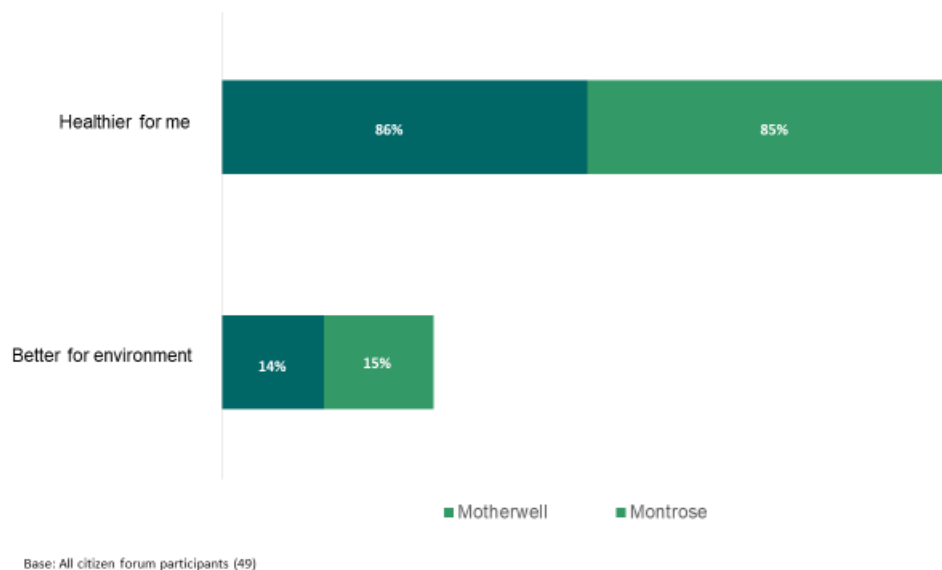
The foregoing results go beyond the headline survey results which identify animal welfare, cost, and impact on health as the most important factors underpinning choices about food consumption. When trade-offs need to be made, cost trumps animal welfare, and health trumps cost which shows that when presented with a binary choice there is a tendency to prioritise factors that affect the individual as opposed to factors that affect society.

### Healthier Food vs Food that is Better for the Environment

Reflecting the pattern of findings whereby participants were more likely to select factors that affect them individually, there was a clear preference for choosing healthier food compared with food that is better for the environment. Results are almost identical in both locations, where the vast majority of participants (85% and 86% respectively) voted in favour of healthier food, and only a small subset of the sample preferred food that was better for the environment (14 and 15% respectively).

In conversations around this choice, participants highlighted that when buying food “*you think of yourself first*” and that considerations about the “*environmental aspect is much broader*” and “*more removed*” for people e.g. most “*people are not as linked to the land and don’t consider how food gets to their plate.*”

Figure 2.5: Healthier Food vs Food That is Better for the Environment



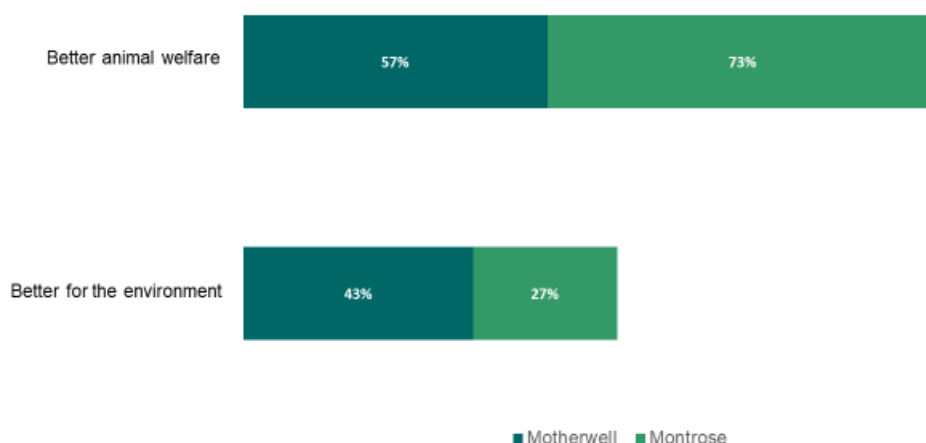
### Food that is Better for the Environment vs Better Animal Welfare

When considering animal welfare and the environment in juxtaposition, there was a clear preference for the former over the latter. In 'urban' Motherwell, 57% of participants felt animal welfare had a greater impact on their choices while in 'rural' Montrose, almost three quarters (73%) of participants said animal welfare was a greater consideration than the environment in determining their choices about food.

Participants reflected that often the two aspects went hand-in-hand and that *“good environmental protection equals good animal welfare, but bad environmental protection equals bad animal welfare”*. Participants also noted that in their minds, *“high animal welfare equals better quality food”* which may help to explain why animal welfare is a clear preference for participants given the value attributed to the quality of food.

Some participants, particularly from Montrose felt that the results of the question might be different if more people in general were actually more exposed to the slaughter of animals because *“people are not as linked to the land and don't consider how food gets to their plate.”*

Figure 2.6: Food That is Better for the Environment vs Better Animal Welfare



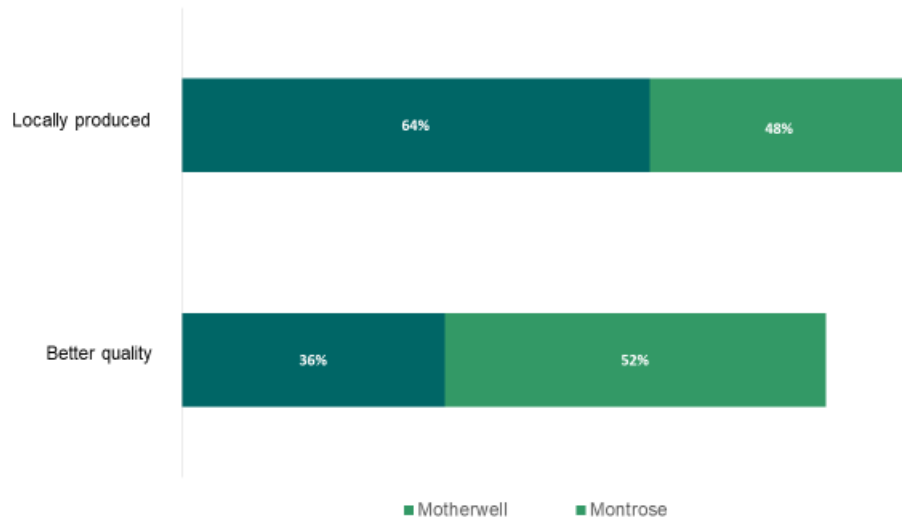
Base: All citizen forum participants (49)

### Locally Produced Food vs Better Quality Food

When considering locally produced food or better quality food, there was a slight variance in the results by location. In Motherwell, almost two-thirds (64%) of participants chose locally produced food as having the most influence on their food choices. In contrast, participants in Montrose were split between the two options: 52% choosing better-quality food and 48% choosing locally produced food.

Discussions from both locations revealed that for participants, their choice for locally produced food was because it is “*important for local business*”. They said “*locally-sourced implies high quality*” and that “*Scotland equals quality*” even if visually that means buying “*wonky veg.*” One caveat from participants was that they “*want to support local producers, but not if it is not as good*”. Therefore, there is a view that locally sourced food is of better quality.

Figure 2.7: Locally Produced Food vs Better Quality Food



Base: All citizen forum participants (49)

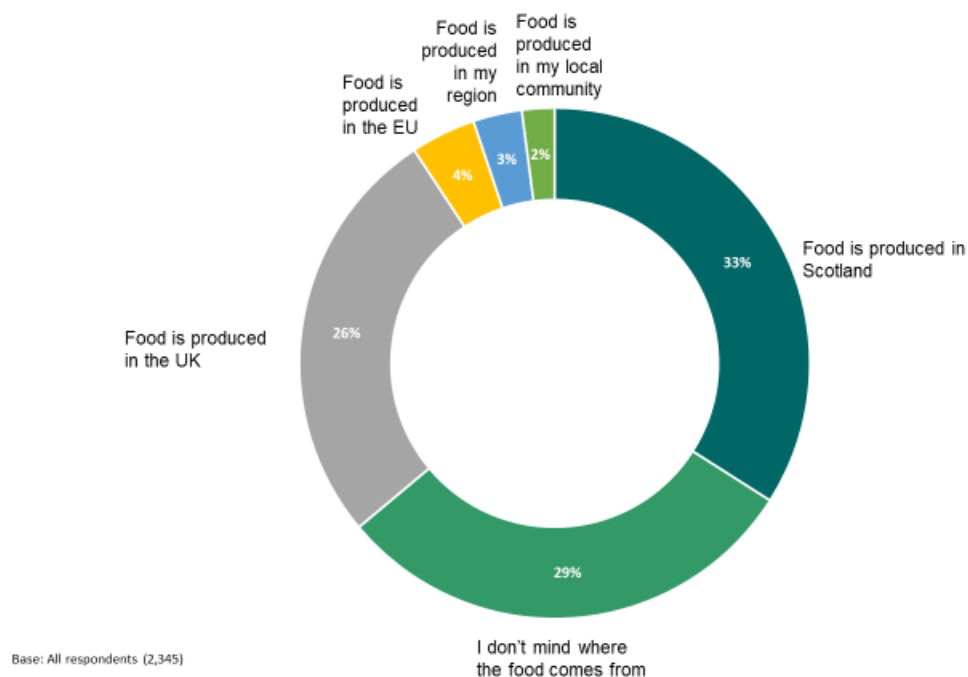
In subsequent discussions there was a view that consumers need more support to balance the priorities of cost, quality and local food production because these factors are not mutually exclusive. While some of the other factors trumped cost in the binary choices, there was a recognition that for some participants cost will always be the most pertinent factor, therefore producers should focus on a balanced ratio of cost-quality-locally sourced food production.

This is pertinent in terms of the type of support provided to the agricultural sector; indeed, there is a desirability of consuming more locally sourced food however consumers also need the food they purchase to be cost-effective.

The desirability of locally sourced food was expressed more strongly at the Citizens' Forums comparative to the survey results. This may be down to the time taken to explore the value and contribution of agriculture to the Scottish economy and its role in supporting local jobs.

Indeed, a relatively small proportion of the survey sample said that it was important their food produced in their region of Scotland (3%), or that food is produced in their local community (2%).

Figure 2.8: National Survey - The importance of where food is produced

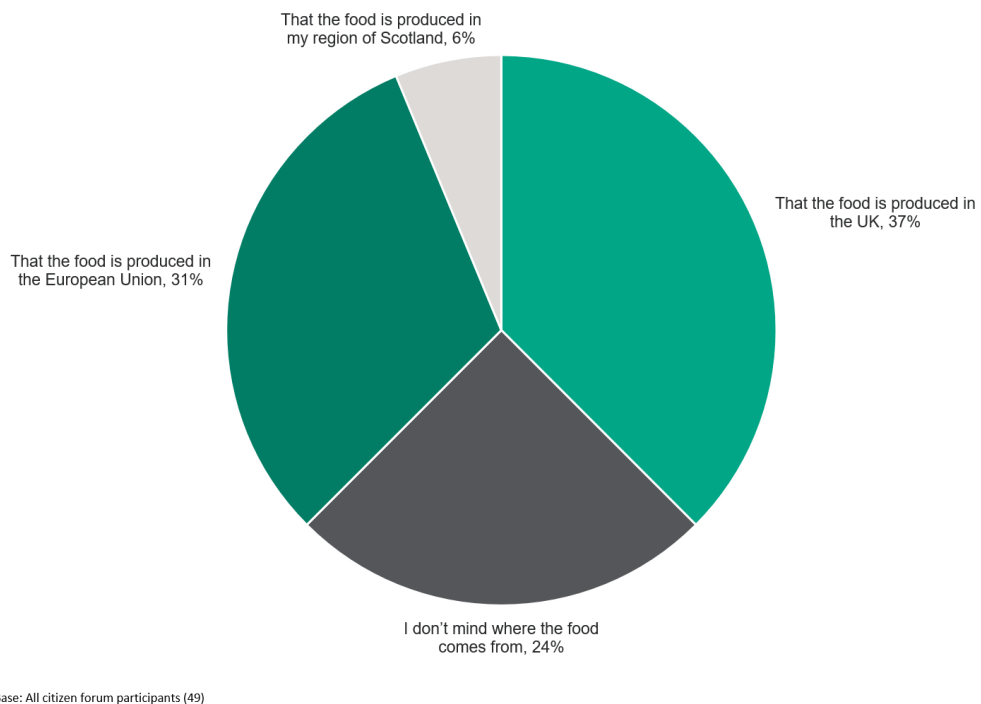


However, those in remote rural locations were more likely than overall to say that it was important that food is produced in their local area (8% compared with 2% overall).

The location of food production was also explored at the Citizens' Forums and the issue showed significant movement in attitudes pre-and-post deliberation.

In the pre-deliberation survey almost a quarter (24%) of participants indicated that they didn't mind where food comes from.

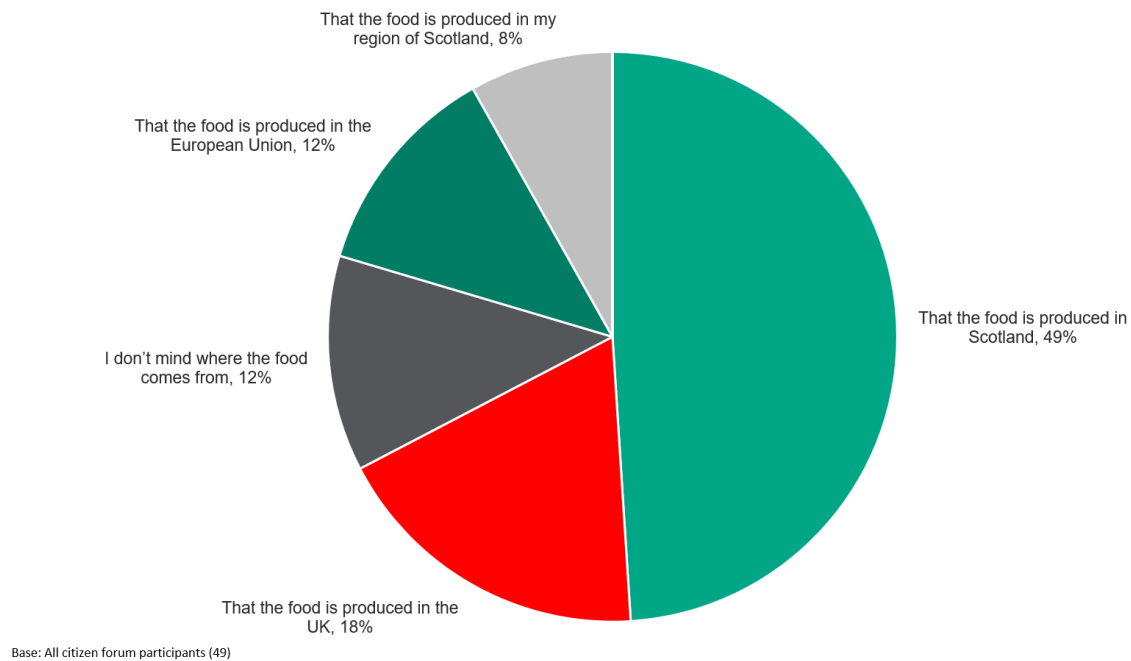
Figure 2.9: Citizens' Forums pre-deliberation - The importance of where food is produced



However, when the same question was asked at the end of the deliberative process, the results were quite different. At the post-deliberation point almost half (49%) of participants stated that it was important to them that the food they consume was produced in Scotland, with a further 18% stating that it was important to them that their food was produced in the UK.

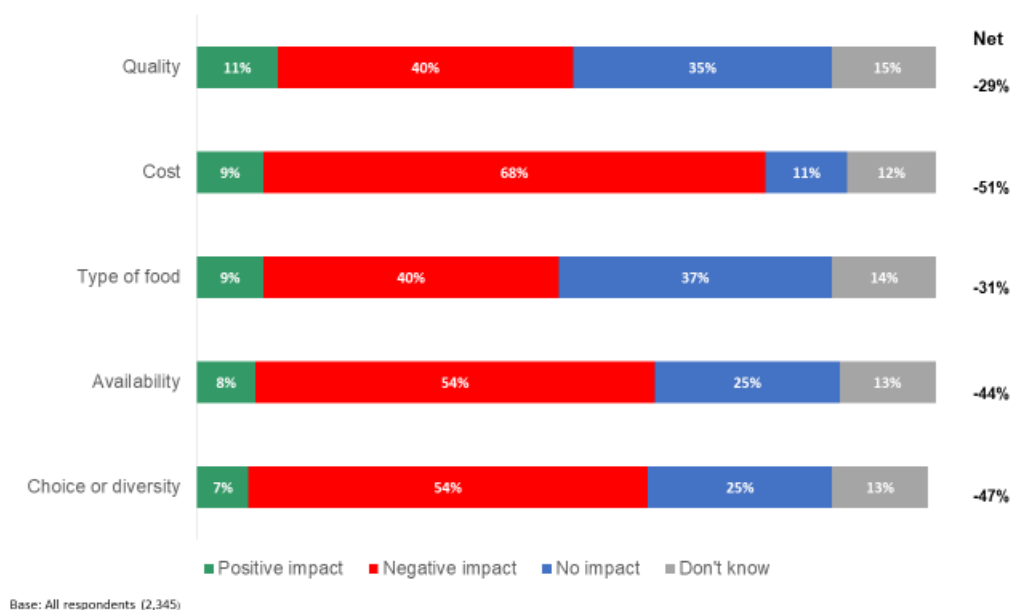


Figure 2.10: Citizens' Forums Post deliberation - The importance of where food is produced



Further to the prioritisation of the various factors that affect consumer choices about food consumption, there was a recognition that Brexit may have a negative impact on a range of factors. Importantly, 68% think that Brexit will have a negative impact on cost which is one of the most essential factors driving food consumption choices.

Figure 2.11: Views of the effect that Brexit might have on food consumption issues



For all factors, those in the ABC1 social grade category were more likely than those in the C2DE social grade category to think that Brexit will have a negative impact.

Table 2:3. Impact of Brexit on food consumption issues by social grade

	Overall %	ABC1 %	C2DE %
<b>Quality</b>	40	43	36
<b>Cost</b>	68	71	64
<b>Type of food</b>	40	44	36
<b>Availability</b>	54	59	49
<b>Choice or diversity</b>	54	58	50

Another important variation is age whereby younger age groups were more likely than older age groups to think that Brexit will have a negative impact on a range of food consumption factors.

Table 2.4. Impact of Brexit on food consumption issues by age (% negative impact)

Negative impact %	Overall %	Under35 %	35-44 %	45-54 %	55-64 %	65+ %
<b>Quality</b>	40	46	41	41	38	30
<b>Cost</b>	68	76	71	70	65	55
<b>Type of food</b>	40	44	44	41	39	33
<b>Availability</b>	54	61	57	55	50	45
<b>Choice or diversity</b>	54	62	57	55	51	45

In the qualitative in-depth interviews, concerns arising from Brexit were spontaneously mentioned. Food security, and the availability of certain types of imported foods was commonly mentioned as a priority for the sector. There was recognition that Scottish agriculture in and of itself is not sustainable and there is a reliance on food commodities from the Continent; the free flow of which would be affected by the withdrawal from the Common Market.

*“It is imperative that Scotland has some sort of European Free Trade Agreement to create a good environment for the trade of food products because we can’t grow everything here” (Interview participant)*

*“Exports that took minutes will take longer which makes it impossible for perishable foods” (Interview participant)*

There was also the issue of food quality standards and a concern that these would decrease after Brexit as the EU has stringent conditions on quality and labelling. In addition to this, there was a perception that the available funding for research and innovation in the agricultural sector and grant funding to subsidise farmers would decline – particularly given the period of economic austerity experienced in the UK.

Considering the foregoing results, priorities for the future of food production and consumption in Scotland included ensuring that food is healthy and safe (58%); ensuring affordable prices for consumers (49%); ensuring fair prices for producers (42%); ensuring sustainable food production and that food is good quality (39% respectively).

Figure 2.12: Priorities for the future of farming and food production



Base: All respondents (2,345)

**Points of consideration:**

- Messaging around agriculture as a “public good”/ “public service” resonates with the public and is useful in framing future agri-policy however it is noted that the degree to which farms can deliver public goods will differ markedly by location, therefore the public good needs to be demonstrable for this framing to hold true;
- The public want more support for producers to sell locally and for consumers to purchase locally – however local food produce needs to be balanced with the priorities of cost and quality of food production;
- There is appetite for more information on the origins of food, so the public is more conscious of the priorities of animal welfare and the environment when considering food consumption and production;
- There is an acknowledgment that if future agriculture policy advances environmental and animal welfare principles, then consumers need to be prepared to accept imperfections in the aesthetics of food;
- There are concerns arising from Brexit around the sustainability of food production as well as quality standards and cost which need to be addressed in future policy. This may require future policy to harmonise or exceed EU quality standards, but also ensure support is in place to maintain the costs of production and the costs of food to the consumer.

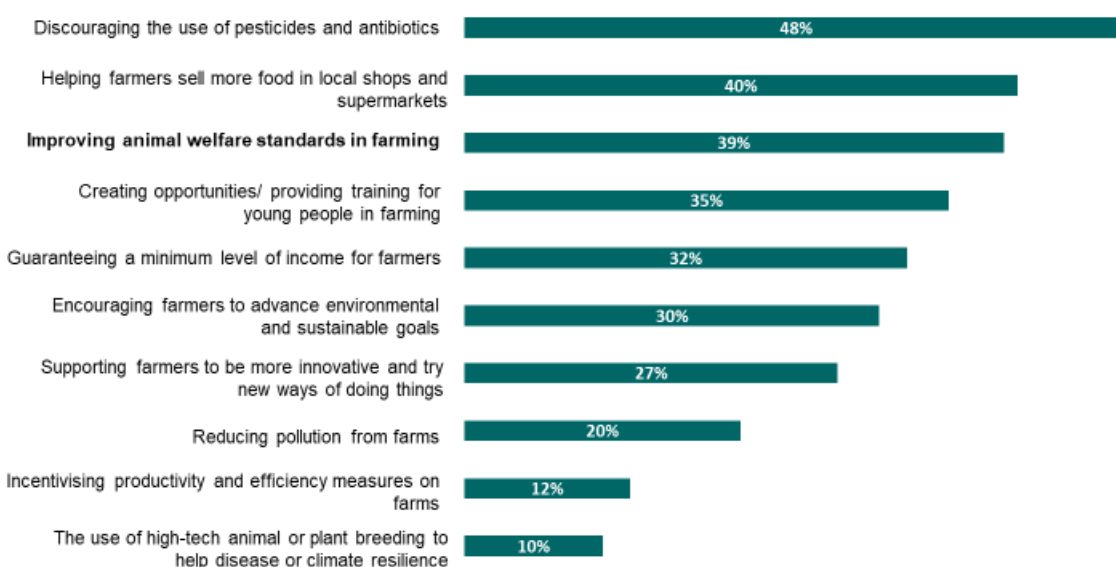
## Protecting animal welfare

There was a recognition of the wider social responsibility of the agricultural sector, and, within this, protecting animal welfare was seen to be a key element. Participants at both Citizens' Forums spontaneously identified protecting animal welfare as a key principle that should underpin future agri-policy; notwithstanding the current standards that are in place.

These findings are supported in the survey research which highlighted the issue of animal welfare in a number of key respects:

- Animal welfare was the top factor determining public choices about food consumption as shown in the previous chapter.
- 39% cited improving animal welfare standards as an important priority for the future funding of agriculture policy in Scotland.

Figure 3.1: Animal Welfare Concerns among agricultural priorities



Base: All respondents (2,345)

Qualitative interview participants spontaneously discussed the issue of animal welfare. Among those who consumed meat, eggs, fish, there was a preference to learn more information about the treatment of the animal, specifically, there was appetite to learn where the animal had been reared, what it had been fed, and how it was treated on the farm. In terms of eggs, there was a preference to consume “free-range”.

*“I feel guilty about killing wee lambs for eating”* (Interview participant)

*“There are farms where they massage animals, play music for them, and feed them hay, this makes the meat better quality as there are less toxins and fat”*  
(Interview participant)

Among those who were concerned about animal welfare there was a preference for locally sourced “Scottish” meat as there was a view that this would be better quality and you could more readily obtain information about the treatment of the animal.

Those on Halal and Kosher diets also discussed animal welfare but in terms specific to their religious beliefs. Among those on both Halal and Kosher diets, there was mention of the restrictions on the consumption of pork as pigs were seen to be an “unclean animal”. Halal and Kosher meat signified health, cleanliness and certain welfare conditions being met for people on these diets. Moreover, there was the view that the slaughtering process specific to the Islamic belief system was more humane as it was quicker and caused less pain for the animal.

Animal welfare was also mentioned as a priority for future agriculture policy in the qualitative interviews. There were various degrees of concern around this, whereas some cited RSPCA labelling as an important reassurance regarding the treatment of animals, others wholly expressed disapproval of animal farming because of cruelty to animals. A lesser mentioned view was that the standards for animal slaughtering are protected in European law and the period of uncertainty related to new legislation coming into place may result in a decrease in standards.

*“As a vegan I don’t support animal farming because of the whole animal cruelty aspect, and the costs to the planet... I think farming should concentrate on growing a variety of different fruit and veg”* (Interview participant)

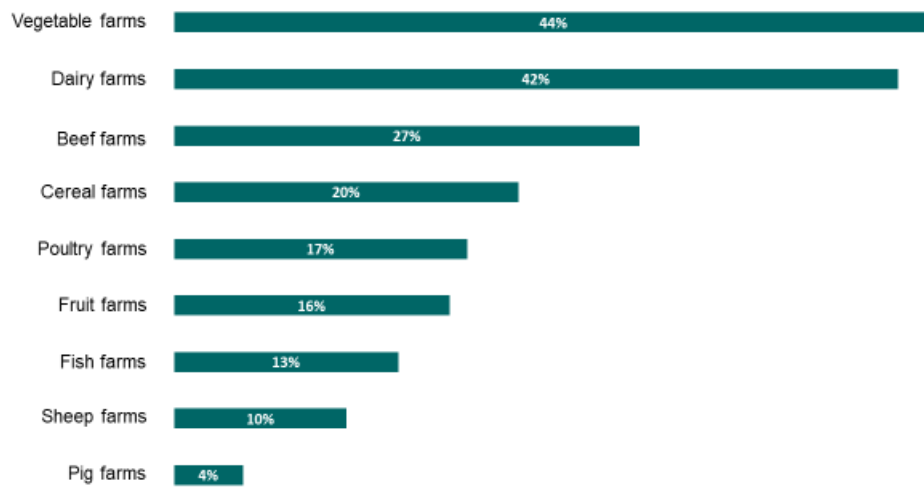
The issue of animal welfare standards is pertinent in the literature, particularly when considering the future trade relationships of the UK. On the one hand standards related to animal welfare may need to be harmonised with the European Union to enable compliance with legislation and standards, conversely newer trade relationships could mean that products with poorer quality standards may flood the UK markets affecting the competitiveness of local produce<sup>10</sup>.

Considering the foregoing discussion regarding animal welfare, it is perhaps unsurprising that when thinking of the future funding of farms in Scotland, there was a higher level of preference to prioritise funding for vegetable farms as opposed to meat producing farms.

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<sup>10</sup> House of Lords, European Union Committee 2017 Brexit: agriculture  
<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201617/ldselect/ldcom/169/169.pdf>

Figure 3.2: Future priorities for the funding of farms



Base: All respondents (2,345)

**Points of consideration:**

- Animal welfare is seen as a social responsibility of the agricultural sector and standards should be demonstrable to the public. However, there was little acknowledgement of current welfare standards – so there needs to be an increased awareness of current standards and the steps taken by farmers to advance animal welfare;
- The issue of Brexit arose spontaneously, and the concern that standards may decrease as a result of the transition period between the CAP and the implementation of Scottish policy was mentioned, therefore there needs to be reassurances about the consistent application of animal welfare standards and the sector's commitment to maintaining standards



## Advancing environmental protection

Support for advancing environmental protection as part of future agri-policy was strengthened through the provision of information on the issue and was identified as a principle which should guide the design of future policy.

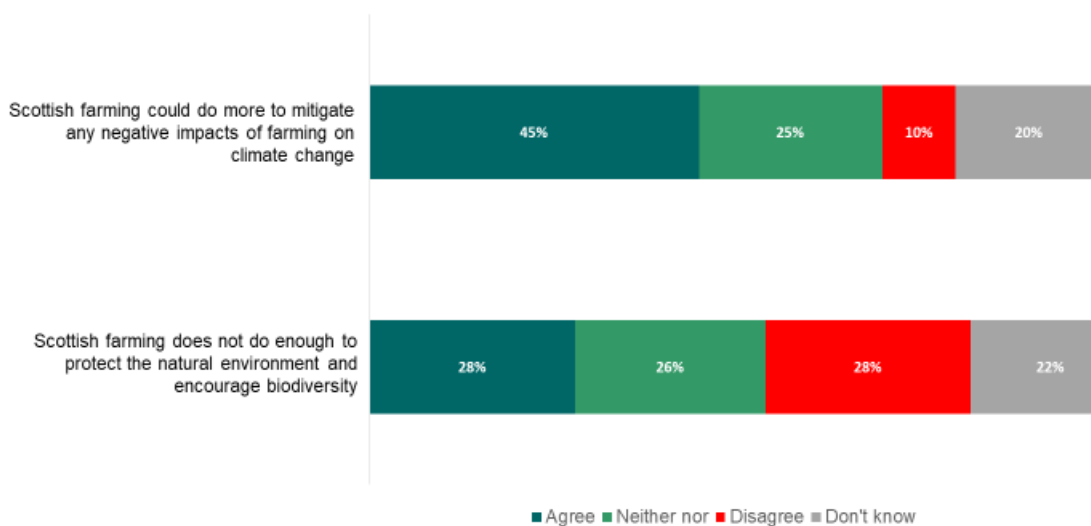
The research found slightly higher levels of knowledge and awareness of the relationship between agriculture and the environment in rural areas, comparative to urban areas. Moreover, there was consistently higher levels of support among younger people (those aged 35 and under) on the issue of advancing environmental protection throughout the research.

## Perceptions of environmental issues

Overall there were mixed results in relation to the relationship between farming and the environment.

- 45% agreed that Scottish farming could do more to mitigate any negative impacts of farming on climate change
- 28% agreed that Scottish farming does not do enough to protect the natural environment and encourage biodiversity; an equal proportion (28%) disagreed with this statement

Figure 4.1: Perceptions of environmental issues



Base: All respondents (2,345)

These results indicate that the linkages between agriculture and the environment are not prima facie clear to respondents to the survey. It should be noted at the outset that the agricultural sector contributes to protecting and conserving the environment through greening provisions which are a prerequisite of the basic support payment. Furthermore, the sector has decreased emissions by 25.8%

between 1990 and 2015<sup>11</sup>; and contributes to the decarbonisation of Scotland's energy sector through the production of renewable energy.

The linkages between farming and the natural environment were sharper for those in rural areas compared with overall: those in remote rural areas were more likely than overall to strongly agree that Scottish farming could do more to mitigate any negative impacts of farming on climate change (19% compared with 13%); moreover, those in remote rural areas were more likely than overall to strongly agree that Scottish farming does not do enough to protect the natural environment and encourage biodiversity (11% compared with 7%).

The lack of initial awareness of the environment was also found in the qualitative in-depth interviews, and among the three areas of the CAP, the environment was less commonly discussed in the research.

Among those who mentioned environmental issues, there was specific discussion of the issue of methane gases released by animals in the air, which was seen to be a contributing factor to climate change, but also the vast use of land assets, and water and air pollution caused by animal farming. There was the view that the vast consumer demand for meat, particularly red meat by fast food chains, had resulted in vast arrays of farmland being used to rear cows instead of growing crops and had also led to deforestation by placing competing demands on Scottish green land. However, with 86% of Scotland deemed as a Less Favoured Area, vast parts of Scotland only allow for rearing sheep and cattle on rough grazing as the quality of land is not sufficient to grow crops.

For those for whom the environment was important there was a deep knowledge of the subject and a view that it should be higher on the agenda particularly as it is intertwined with both agriculture and rural development.

*“Environmental issues should be the top concern for agriculture”*  
(Interview participant)

To illustrate the relationship between these elements, participants described a number of processes. For instance, there was mention of how animals release methane gases in the air affecting air quality, and climate change; there is also the issue of farming waste and chemicals running into fresh water supplies affecting water quality. Climate change is in turn having an impact on the weather conditions which are affecting food harvests. There was also specific mention of species like bees and bats that are important as pollinators that fertilise plants.

Spontaneous discussion of the issue of climate change in the research is pertinent given that the Scottish Government is proposing net zero greenhouse gas emission zone by 2045 in the Climate Change Bill.

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<sup>11</sup> Scottish Government 2018: Climate Change Plan - The Third Report on Proposals and Policies 2018-2032 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-governments-climate-change-plan-third-report-proposals-policies-2018/>

When thinking about the responsibility for protecting the environment, the issue of pollution from farms was commonly discussed. There were mixed attitudes regarding this issue, while some felt that farmers should take measures to minimise pollution, others argued that pollution was inevitable from farms, and that the focus should be oriented towards supermarkets and the industrial processes used by food manufacturers.

*“Farming has been done for thousands of years, global warming is an issue of the last 100-150 years, to blame farming is to scapegoat the issue”*

(Interview participant)

*“Climate change is a global problem and will drastically change agriculture, but who makes policy on that, who regulates that?”* (Interview participant)

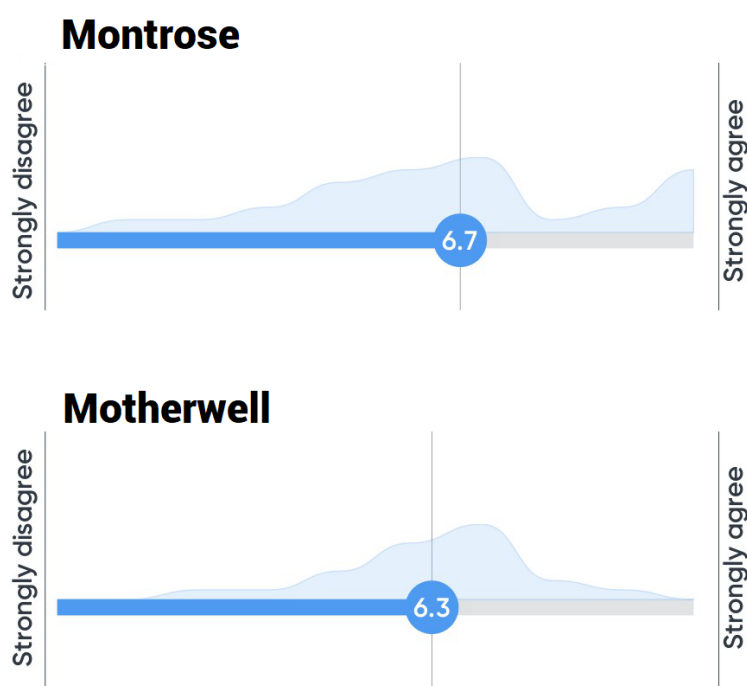
Plastic packaging of food produce was also spontaneously raised by participants as an environmental concern. It was felt that supermarkets and food manufacturers package almost all items in plastics, and that they should be encouraged to adopt alternatives such as paper bags and reinforced cardboard for packaging fruit and vegetables.

*“I try to buy loose vegetables, but a bag of three peppers is cheaper than the loose single peppers”* (Interview participant)

While participants who were environmentally conscious cited measures that they were personally adopting to protect the environment such as reducing their meat intake, purchasing loose unpackaged food and recycling, overall, there was a perception that supermarkets, food manufacturers and farmers were responsible for taking steps to protect the environment.

The issue of responsibility was further explored at the Citizens’ Forums, more specifically participants were invited to consider on a scale of 1 to 10 (where 1 indicates strongly disagree and 10 indicates strongly agree) whether or not it is the responsibility of the farming sector to do more to protect and conserve the environment. The survey on the issue was preceded by a presentation covering the impact of farming on the environment by Davy McCracken, Professor of Agricultural Ecology at Scotland’s Rural College. The presentation addressed the impact of farming on biodiversity, landscape, the bird population and water quality. The average results in urban Motherwell and rural Montrose both showed a slight leaning towards

Figure 4.2: Is it the responsibility of the farming sector to do more to protect and conserve the environment.



agreeing with the statement. In Motherwell, the results concentrating around the average result of 6.3. In Montrose however, despite a similar overall result of 6.7, there was a larger spread of votes across the scale with a significant amassing of participants saying they strongly agree that the farming sector needs to do more to protect and conserve the environment.

Participants agreed that farmers needed to do more to protect the environment because it is "*in their own interests*", its their "*bread and butter*", but also because "*farmers are custodians of the countryside*," "they work the land therefore it is their responsibility" and they have a "*responsibility not to be reckless*".

On the other hand, some participants suggested farmers "need returns first" and "need to be cost effective - operating like a business." Environmental protection therefore is "costing farmers because Scottish government policy has higher climate targets," and that "many demands of farmers means it is complicated." They also said that, "the market dictates practices" especially if there is "wider peer pressure from the sector and consumers" in favour of environmentally friendly products.

Participants said that a reason farmers should not be required to do more to protect the environment because it is "*everyone's responsibility*" which requires "*collective change (e.g. industry)*."

The Citizens' Forum was then asked about the extent to which the farming sector needs to do more to protect and conserve individual elements of the environment including soil quality, air quality, water quality, biodiversity and reductions in carbon dioxide. This line of questioning was to measure if there was variance in the different aspects of the environment that the farming sector was perceived to be more responsible for protecting and conserving.

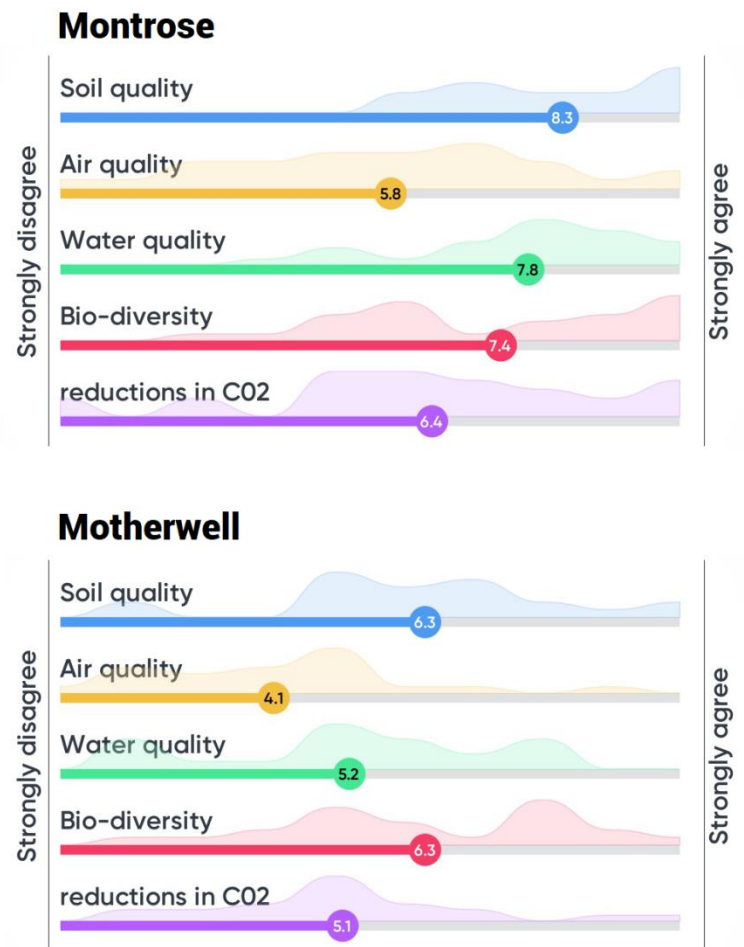
The participants in Montrose consistently agreed or strongly agreed more than those in Motherwell with the need for farmers to do more to protect and conserve soil, air and water quality, biodiversity and reductions in carbon dioxide. While participants from both locations agreed with the statement that “the farming sector should do more to protect and conserve soil quality”, Montrose participants more strongly agreed (8.3) than in Motherwell (6.3) where there was a wider spread of votes. The main reasons given here related to the fact that maintaining the quality of the land itself is fundamentally the responsibility of those who are using it for their business and thus a specific responsibility of the farming sector.

With regards to air quality, Montrose participants agreed with the statement that “the farming sector needs to do more to protect and conserve air quality” (5.8), while those in Motherwell disagreed (4.1). In this case, Montrose participants were more widely spread across the spectrum whereas Motherwell participants clustered around disagreeing. The key reasons given for disagreeing were that this was a wider societal problem and that the farming sector did not have a specific responsibility for it, given that the impacts on air quality from this sector were not particularly related to specific farming practices. While there was a perception that the relationship between farming and air quality was not strong, the wider literature suggests that there are localised impacts of farming on air quality such as greenhouse gases, odours from slurry and ammonia emissions.

Montrose participants strongly agreed (7.8) that the farming sector needs to do more to protect and conserve water quality, whereas in Motherwell participants were more evenly split (5.2). Key reasons given in Montrose for prioritising this aspect of environmental protection related to potential for the run-off of fertilizer and other chemicals and soil from fields to damage the quality of local water courses. This may have been prioritised more highly in Montrose as, being a relatively rural environment, participants had seen more directly the impacts when environmental protection measures on farms had not maintained high standards.

Both locations agreed that farming sector should do more to protect and conserve biodiversity, although Montrose (7.4) was far stronger in agreement than in Motherwell (6.3) where the spread of votes was more even. Again the priority given

Figure 4.3: Is it the responsibility of the farming sector to do more to protect and conserve the environment.



to this related to the ability of the farming sector to make a direct contribution because of their direct control of how the land they farmed was used. As noted in many of the discussions, the growth of more intensive farming practices has had a direct impact on biodiversity by reducing the range of habitats as more land was cultivated. As the impacts of this are becoming more widely understood there is a corresponding responsibility on the sector to ensure that their land management practices adapt to rectify this.

Montrose participants agreed that the farming sector should do more towards reductions in CO<sub>2</sub> (6.4) while participants in Motherwell were more undecided (5.1). Again this was generally seen as a wider societal issue that all people and industries had a responsibility to address. Where people did give a specific responsibility to the farming sector reasons tended to focus on the impacts created by transporting produce (ie food miles) and the methane produced by livestock farming (although participants' acknowledged that there was little that could be done to reduce this other than stop rearing animals for food).

This view is similar to that advanced by the Scottish Government's "*farming for a better climate*" policy which recognises that greenhouse gas emissions are inherent in food production but seeks to work with farmers to find practical ways to adapt farming practices in line with actions to mitigate the effects of climate change.

The issue of whether the farming sector needs to do more to protect and conserve the environment was explored at various stages of the research, including initially at the national survey, and then twice over the course of the deliberative Forums. The results indicate that over the course of the research there is a higher level of agreement that the farming sector should do more on the issue of the environment.

While the comparisons are not statistically significant, the results at the two stages of the Forums do indicate a strengthened opinion on the issue as a result of the deliberative engagement.

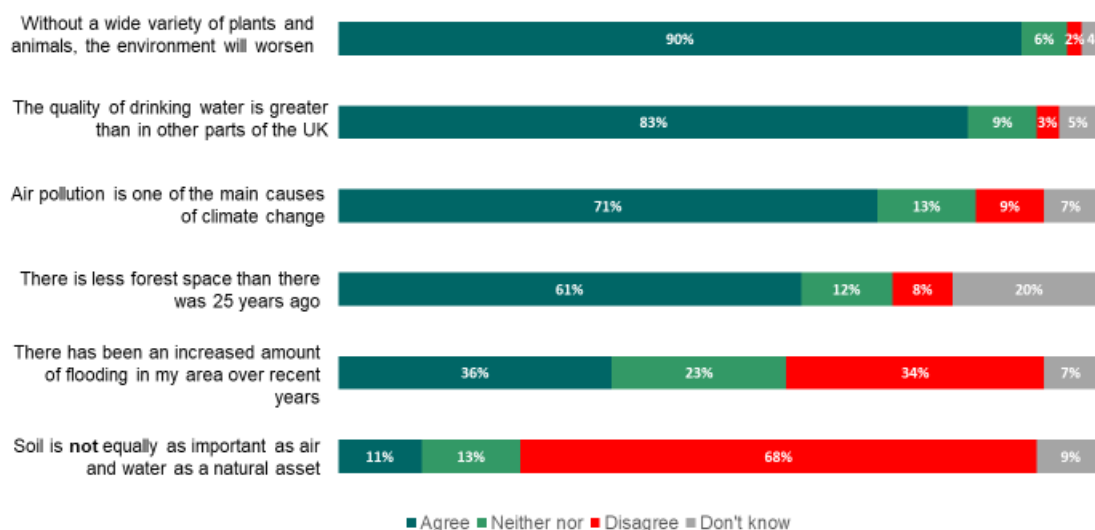
Table 4.1 . Change in views on whether the farming sector should do more to protect and conserve the environment

	Strongly agree %	Tend to agree %	Tend to disagree %	Strongly disagree %	Don't know %
Survey	7	19	19	7	22
1 <sup>st</sup> survey at Forums	4	18	29	2	24
After 2 days deliberation	8	31	14	8	12

While the research focused on the relationship of farming and the environment, data from the Scottish Household Survey shows that the public recognise that they have a role to play in terms of environmental issues. Pertinently, the household survey identifies that around two-thirds<sup>12</sup> (67%) disagree with the statement that *“It’s not worth me doing things to protect the environment if others don’t do the same”*.

The survey research explored public perceptions on a number of different environmental issues. Almost all (90%) agreed that without a wide variety of plants and animals, the environment would worsen; and a majority agreed that the quality of drinking water in Scotland is greater than in other parts of the UK.

Figure 4.4: Public perceptions on different environmental issues



Base: All respondents (2,345)

<sup>12</sup> Scottish Government 2016: Key Scottish Environment Statistics <https://www.gov.scot/publications/key-scottish-environment-statistics-2016-9781786525505/>

Agreement on the statement regarding forest space is pertinent given the increase in forest space in the last 25 years – Scotland’s Forestry Strategy indicates that in the past 100 years forest space has increased from 5% to 18.5%<sup>13</sup>. Those aged 65 and over were more likely than overall to disagree with the statement (13% compared with 8%). These results show that the concerted efforts to sustainably manage forest space and expand forest space have not resonated in public knowledge of the issue. A draft strategy is being prepared on the issue of forestry and land management which seeks to increase the contribution of forests and woodlands to Scotland’s sustainable and inclusive growth ambitions, protect and enhance Scotland’s natural assets and help to improve the health and wellbeing of the Scottish public.

A similar pattern is observed on the issue of air pollution and climate change, whereby high levels of agreement with the statement indicate that the issue of air pollution may be conflated with greenhouse gases among the public.

There were a number of notable variations in public perceptions of environmental issues.

Those in accessible rural locations were more likely than those in large urban areas to strongly agree that without a wide variety of plants and animals, the environment will worsen (63% compared with 54%). These findings are consistent with the earlier section on agriculture and the environment and the higher levels of agreement found on the issue of climate change and biodiversity among those in rural areas.

There were higher levels of agreement that the quality of drinking water in Scotland is greater than in other parts of the UK in urban areas comparative to rural areas, which may be related to the higher prevalence of private water supplies in rural locations (56% in large urban areas strongly agree; 57% in other urban areas; 66% in accessible small towns; 55% in remote small towns compared with 47% in accessible rural; and 39% in remote rural).

### **Priorities for future environmental policy**

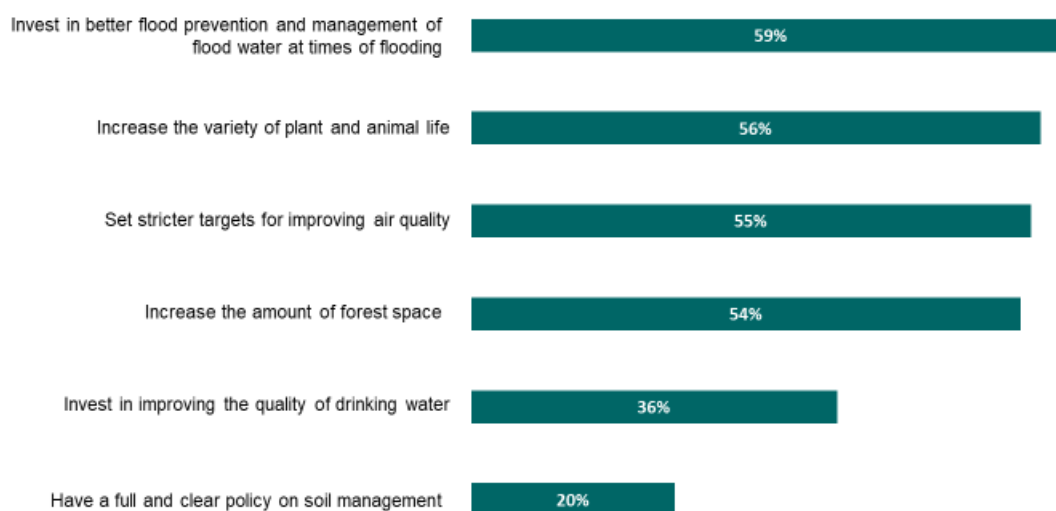
The top three priorities for environmental policy should include investing in better flood prevention and management of flood water at times of flooding (59%); increasing the variety of plant and animal life (56%); and setting stricter targets for improving air quality (55%).

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<sup>13</sup> Scottish Government 2019: Scotland’s Forestry Strategy 2019-2029  
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-forestry-strategy-20192029/pages/4/>



Figure 4.5: Priorities for future environmental policy



Base: All respondents (2,345)

There were differences by age in terms of the issues that respondents wanted the government to focus on.

Those aged 65+ were more likely than younger age groups to want government to prioritise investing in better flood prevention and management, as well as having a full and clear policy on soil management. In contrast, those aged 35 and under, were more likely than older age groups to want government to focus on increasing the variety of plant and animal life, and the amount of forest space, which is consistent with the environmental priorities found among young people throughout the survey.

While only a third of the sample (36%) prioritised having a full and clear policy on soil management, the issue of soil governance has been raised in the literature on the issue. Soil quality is important for the environment, biodiversity, agriculture and forestry<sup>14</sup>. However, at present soil protection policy is fragmented to individual aspects of policy, and there is a suggestion that these elements need to be consolidated through a comprehensive policy on soil protection particularly given the cross-cutting nature of the issues.

<sup>14</sup> James Hutton Institute 2018: Soil Governance in Scotland – Mapping the Institutional Architecture [https://www.hutton.ac.uk/sites/default/files/files/soils/183151002\\_Mapping\\_Scotlands\\_Soil\\_Resources.pdf](https://www.hutton.ac.uk/sites/default/files/files/soils/183151002_Mapping_Scotlands_Soil_Resources.pdf)

Table 4.2: Priorities for the future of the environment by age.

	Overall %	Under 35 %	35-44 %	45-54 %	55-64 %	65+ %
<b>Invest in better flood prevention and management</b>	59	52	56	58	63	68
<b>Increase the variety of plant and animal life</b>	56	61	61	53	52	49
<b>Set stricter targets for improving air quality</b>	55	61	54	53	52	52
<b>Increase the amount of forest space</b>	54	59	55	53	52	49
<b>Have a full and clear policy on soil management</b>	36	33	34	34	39	43
<b>Invest in improving the quality of drinking water</b>	20	17	21	24	20	17

Among qualitative interview participants there was a view that environmental protections should underpin future agriculture and rural development policy by protecting biodiversity, reducing pollution, using alternative energy resources in the manufacturing of food, and protecting green spaces, rural landscapes and rivers.

Participants expressed the view that food production will have to change to adapt to climate change – therefore, a commitment to protect the environment should underpin future policy. This would encompass reducing overall meat production, but also placing an emphasis on the wider industrial food manufacturing processes and reducing plastic packaging of food items. It was felt that future policy should be informed by some long-term forecasting of trends in climate change.

*“The Scottish Government should encourage environmental policies and look at recyclable materials to pack food”* (Interview participant)

*“We need to think about endangered species, and the staples of food production and if these are sustainable or not and if we need to adapt our diets”* (Interview participant)

**Points of consideration:**

- The linkages between agriculture and the environment, and more generally environmental consciousness can be increased through the provision of information on potential positive and negative links between farming and the environment; future policy should recognise and promote the interrelationship between agriculture and the environment;
- Future policy can be guided by environmental targets set by the Government e.g. in terms of climate change, and reducing emissions, as part of the integration of environmental policy. The research shows that there is support for advancing environmental protection, and for this to have a key role in future agriculture and rural development policy;
- While there is an acknowledgment that farmers as land managers have a responsibility to increase the resilience of the environment and enhance the function of ecosystems, there is a recognition among participants that there is a collective responsibility among consumers, and the wider food processing and manufacturing industry in terms of advancing environmental goals;
- There should also be wider public recognition of how much environmental protections farmers already do, and where improvements can be made.

## Land management: keeping the land healthy and productive

The research identified effective land management and keeping the land healthy and productive as a key guiding principle for future agri-policy. This is pertinent given that 73% of Scotland's land is designated as agricultural.

At the Citizens' Forums there was discussion of the value attributed to Scottish landscapes and scenery, in terms of the health and wellbeing of the local population but also in terms of attracting tourism to Scotland.

However, there was also discussion of the competing demands placed on land and a view that there should be a diversification of land usage beyond food production by "*embracing niche markets*" such as investing in alternative energy resources including wind, solar or hydro power or "*making our landscape attractive*" to further stimulate tourism. Such discussions were couched in considerations of the value in using land productively.

While some participants talked about encouraging the use of crop rotation and maximising the potential of the land, particularly considering the high prevalence of rough grazing in Scotland, there was also the view that land as a natural asset should be preserved - "*not all land needs to be productive*" - particularly considering the organisms, nutrients, and minerals within the land and soil which are key to sustaining ecosystems, and the potential risk of harm to these through over-working the land. Indeed, there was discussion of poor farming practices such as the overuse of chemicals which can damage the land. However, there was a view that the use of chemicals was also precipitated through a "*race-to-the-bottom*" in which consumers want the largest quantity for the lowest prices which has an impact on farming practices.

Balancing competing demands for land use is explored in the literature on the issue. Importantly, the literature highlights that the Common Agricultural Policy creates competing outcomes in relation to agriculture and forestry:<sup>15</sup> by funding farmers for agricultural produce it provides little incentive to farmers to create woodland on land which is suitable for agriculture.

Considering these differing views on land use and management, the research identified agreement that there should be better cooperation among landowners around land management; to ensure that there is a balance between productive and unproductive use of land; and that land is nurtured, and ecosystems are preserved. There was a recognition that farming can have benefits in nurturing the land; in particular mixed farming was cited as yielding benefits in terms of increasing biodiversity, and the aesthetics of landscapes.

Reflecting on the issue of land management there was the view that future agri-policy needs to recognise the wide range of assets – including scenic landscapes, rivers and canals, which are impacted by agricultural practices.

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<sup>15</sup> SPICE Briefing 2016: Implications of Leaving the EU on Forestry  
[http://www.parliament.scot/ResearchBriefingsAndFactsheets/S5/SB\\_16-102\\_Implications\\_of\\_Leaving\\_the\\_EU\\_Forestry.pdf](http://www.parliament.scot/ResearchBriefingsAndFactsheets/S5/SB_16-102_Implications_of_Leaving_the_EU_Forestry.pdf)

*“Optimal food production is dependent on a multitude of factors such as habitat, ecological environment and the nature of the farmland” (Interview participant)*

*“Bumble bees are dying out in Lewis and Harris; we need them as pollinators for the next generation of plants” (Interview participant)*

There was the view that the previous policies such as the CAP had created a “*broad brush approach*” which led to poor quality farming for large quantities of commercial produce which inhibited variety in farming. Therefore, future agri-policy should organise and manage food production in Scotland but also land management to ensure that the land is healthy and productive. This would involve creating a food map to locate “*where can we get certain types of goods and where is its optimal value to grow them*”, but also recognising areas where preservation is required to avoid environmental harm.

**Points of consideration:**

- Participants’ expressed the view that consideration should be given on how to facilitate cooperation among landowners about land-management to ensure that land is healthy and productive – this will include landowners taking ownership of a range of environmental and social responsibilities, and taking decisions on what is the best use of land recognising competing demands and priorities;
- Future agri-policy should prioritise farming practices that ensure that the land is healthy, such as mixed-farming which helps to encourage biodiversity; consideration should also be given to incentivising land managers to use practices that ensure sustainable soil management;
- Future agri-policy should place an emphasis on priorities for land management, particularly as there is a view that there should be a diversification of land use to include both productive and non-productive uses of the land. Moreover, underpinning all land use, there should be the commitment to preserve and enhance soil quality, biodiversity, water quality and ecosystems.

## Supporting the rural economy and rural communities

The research identified supporting the rural economy and rural communities as a guiding principle for future agri-policy, particularly considering the significance of agriculture to rural communities. In particular, there was a preference for economic support for rural communities given the prevalence of rural poverty and outward migration of working age adults in rural communities; moreover, there was also support for service provision to be strengthened in rural areas particularly transport and digital infrastructure and connectivity.

These results emphasise the importance of economic development in terms of future support to rural communities. This is important in terms of balancing social and civic goals as well as economic goals in terms of future support. Having said that it should be borne in mind that the economic impact of rural community support is often difficult to quantify and measure<sup>16</sup>.

### Perceptions of rural community issues

A majority (70%) agreed with the statement that there is a lack of jobs and opportunities in rural areas, and reflecting this view, 64% agree with the statement that rural areas need more support than they currently receive. In relation to services, 62% disagree with the statement that broadband availability is good in rural areas.

These results reflect data from the Scottish Household Survey<sup>17</sup> which show that there are lower levels of broadband connectivity in rural areas, and higher levels of fuel poverty comparative to urban areas. Furthermore, while economic data shows that unemployment rates are lower in rural areas, this may stem from the outward migration of working age people to urban Scotland in search of jobs and opportunities which may be concealed by the baseline employment figures<sup>18</sup>.

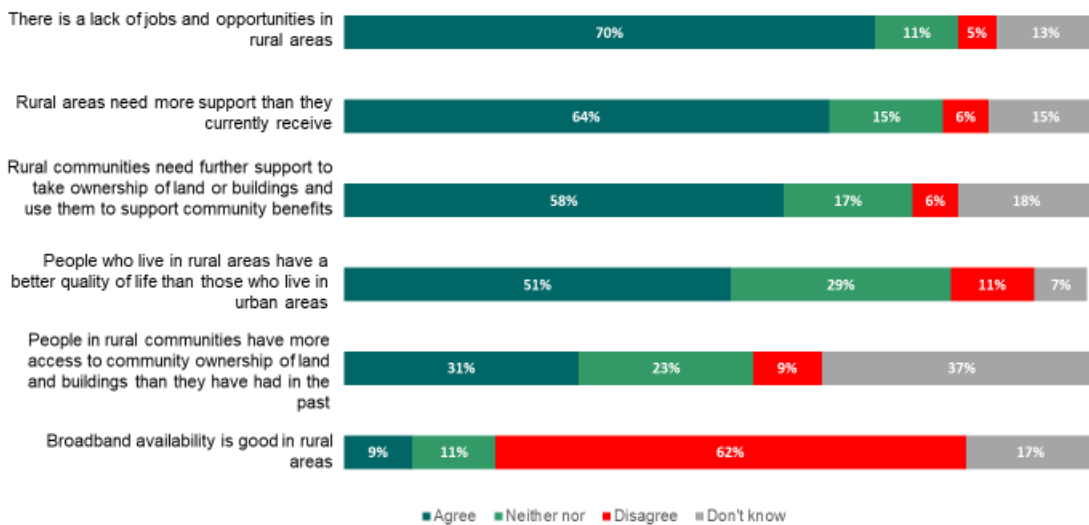
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<sup>16</sup> Scottish Government 2018: Process Evaluation of Leader 2014-2020  
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/process-evaluation-leader-2014-2020/>

<sup>17</sup> Scottish Government 2015: Scottish Household Survey

<sup>18</sup> Scottish Government 2018: Understanding the Scottish Rural Economy  
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/understanding-scottish-rural-economy/>

Figure 6.1. Perceptions of rural community issues



Base: All respondents (2,345)

There were key variances in perceptions of rural community issues by urbanity and rurality.

- Those in rural locations – particularly remote small towns – were more likely than those residing in urban locations to agree that there is a lack of jobs and opportunities in rural areas and that rural areas need more support than they currently receive.
- The issue of broadband availability was particularly pronounced for those residing in remote small towns.
- Those in remote rural locations, were more likely than all other location breaks by the six-fold urban-rural classification to strongly agree that those living in rural areas have a better quality of life than those who live in urban areas.

On the issue of community ownership of land and buildings, there was a higher level of agreement among those in rural locations that rural communities have more access to community ownership than in the past. In contrast, there was a higher proportion of “Don’t Know” responses among those residing in urban locations. Reflecting these results, those in rural locations were more likely than those in urban locations to agree that people in rural communities need more support to take ownership of lands and buildings and use them to support community benefits.

Table 6.1: Attitudes towards rural communities by 6-fold urban-rural classification<sup>19</sup> (agree %)

	Overall%	Remote rural %	Accessible rural %	Remote small towns%	Accessible small towns %	Other urban areas %	Large urban areas %
<b>Lack of jobs and opportunities in rural areas</b>	70	72	73	86	74	68	69
<b>Rural areas need more support than current</b>	64	76	75	78	56	63	58
<b>Rural communities need support to take community ownership of land and buildings</b>	58	67	57	62	64	59	54
<b>People who live in rural areas have a better quality of life than urban</b>	51	60	63	59	42	53	46
<b>Rural communities have better access to community ownership than in the past</b>	31	55	33	37	26	28	30
<b>Broadband availability is good in rural areas</b>	61	62	58	61	49	64	73

### Priorities for the future of rural communities

Reflecting perceptions of rural community issues, priorities for the future of rural communities included improving public transport links (65%); improving broadband connectivity (61%); and ensuring there are more jobs and opportunities for those who live in rural areas (52%).

<sup>19</sup> The Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification provides a standard definition of rural areas in Scotland. The definitions of each of these categories are as follows: Large urban areas - Settlements of 125,000 or more people; Other urban areas - Settlements of 10,000 to 124,999 people; Accessible small towns - Settlements of 3,000 to 9,999 people and within 30 minutes' drive of a settlement of 10,000 or more; Remote small towns - Settlements of 3,000 to 9,999 people and with a drive time of over 30 minutes to a settlement of 10,000 or more; Accessible rural - Areas with a population of less than 3,000 people, and within a 30 minute drive time of a settlement of 10,000 or more; Remote rural - Areas with a population of less than 3,000 people, and with a drive time of over 30 minutes to a settlement of 10,000 or more.



Figure 6.2 Priorities for the future of rural communities



Base: All respondents (2,345)

While there was a consistent focus on services and jobs within the research, the literature emphasises the gains of encouraging businesses to set up or move to rural areas – selected by 31% of respondents to the research survey. Bosworth and Atterton 2012<sup>20</sup> cite in-migrant business owners as an important source of rural economic development arguing that a mix of locally embedded and extra-local sources are needed to enable access to wider opportunities and knowledge exchange within rural networks.

There were some variations in terms of the priorities identified in the survey research for the future funding of rural communities by those in rural and urban locations.

- There was a higher level of importance attributed to improving broadband connectivity in remote rural locations than overall (73% compared with 61%).
- Furthermore, the issue of ensuring there are more jobs and opportunities for those who live in rural areas was stressed more strongly among those in remote small towns compared with overall (62% compared with 52%).

In addition to the variance by urbanity and rurality, there was also variance in the data by age. Those aged 35 and under were more likely than the rest of the sample to want government to focus on improving access to and offer of services in rural areas (42% compared with 36%), which is pertinent when considering the out-migration of young people in rural areas.

The common priorities identified in the quantitative research relating to transport provision, broadband, and jobs were also reflected in the qualitative elements of the study.

<sup>20</sup> Bosworth and Atterton 2012: Entrepreneurial In-migration and Neo-endogenous Rural Development, Journal of Rural Sociology

Transport provision was commonly seen to be limited in rural areas, and there were specific issues related to infrequent bus and train services, and disruptions to ferry services. For those in remote rural locations there was a view that the limited availability of public transport creates a reliance on cars which in turn affects the environment.

*“The system relies on old buses which don’t service all of the routes and break down quite a bit”* (Interview participant)

In addition to transport services, there was mention of service closure such as banks, post offices, out of hours hospitals, and schools. There was a perception that limited service provision stemmed from the low population density in these areas as population numbers are needed to justify service provision.

*“The RBS bank has closed down, which means there are less ATMs which are needed by tourists”* (Interview participant)

*“Rural areas need to have people living there at the right age (young people) so they need schools, internet, roads, and a transportation system”*  
(Interview participant)

One participant discussed the development of Euro Park in Calderbank Village as an example of a housing development being built on green belt. There was the view that, a hospital and school is being built alongside the development as it is bringing affordable housing for many people. Indeed, there was an implicit assumption that these services would not be available if the development was not being constructed.

With respect to schools, however, the University of Highlands and Islands campuses were cited as a positive development, including the distance learning courses offered by the institution.

There was also specific mention of a lack of health and social care services in rural areas – one participant discussed moving from a rural to an urban location to be able to receive the care package she required. There was a perception that homes for disabled people were few in rural areas, and therefore “*stuck out*”, and likely to become centres for anti-social behaviour”.

In addition to service provision, there was the issue of electricity shortages and poor communication infrastructure such as mobile connectivity and broadband. One participant mentioned, that there is only 2G network coverage in some parts of Skye.

*“The electric cables run from Ullapool to the Island and the electricity goes off more often than when we had our own electricity plant... sometimes the whole island has no electricity”* (Interview participant)

In particular, improving digital infrastructure was seen to be important in terms of supporting service provision, such as online learning, and e-health. It was felt that an emphasis should be placed on developing rural broadband “*as we live in a technological age, rural communities will get left behind*”. These findings are consistent with the literature on the issue, Atterton et al. 2018 point out that improving digital connectivity in rural areas is imperative to ensure equity between urban and rural areas<sup>21</sup>.

Moreover, while participants in rural areas did not self-identify as being in poverty, there was a perception that there were high levels of unemployment in rural areas and thus a reliance on the welfare system. Conversely, those in urban areas recognised that there is often a difference in wages between those living in urban and rural areas; however, there was a caveat that the cost of living might be lower in rural areas, thus in part justifying the differences.

There was the view that high levels of unemployment in rural areas stemmed from a lack of jobs in these areas. One participant discussed having to show 35 hours of job searches related to claiming universal credit, which was not feasible as there was a limited availability of jobs. Discussions around the lack of jobs was couched in descriptions in the decline in industry jobs, and a lack of consequent regeneration of the local economy. Having said that, there was a recognition of tourism as a means to stimulate rural economies, although this was seen to have both positive and negative impacts on communities.

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<sup>21</sup> Atterton et al. 2018 After Brexit 10 Key Questions for Rural Policy in Scotland

**Points of consideration:**

- The issue of place is becoming increasingly significant in the adoption of inclusive growth in Scotland, and agri-policy which has conventionally included rural development priorities can be key in addressing some of the issues related to stimulating the rural economy – in particular, the research identified the view that there is a need for more jobs, opportunities and support for rural areas, particularly among those in remote small towns and remote rural locations. Importantly, 31% said that government should prioritise encouraging businesses to set up or move to rural locations;
- Community ownership of land and buildings provide opportunities for rural communities to use land ownership to identify independent revenue streams and use these for local re-investment, 58% think that rural areas need more support in capitalising on opportunities for community ownership which is an area that future policy could focus on;
- A consistent theme in the research is a lack of service provision, and given digital by default, there are gains to be made by improving digital infrastructure so that those residing in rural locations can access services online;
- The research shows that there is a more acute understanding of rural community issues among those residing in rural areas than those residing in urban areas. At the Motherwell forum there was a view that future agriculture policy can help to connect urban and rural populations as a way to bridge this gap.

## Raising the profile of the sector

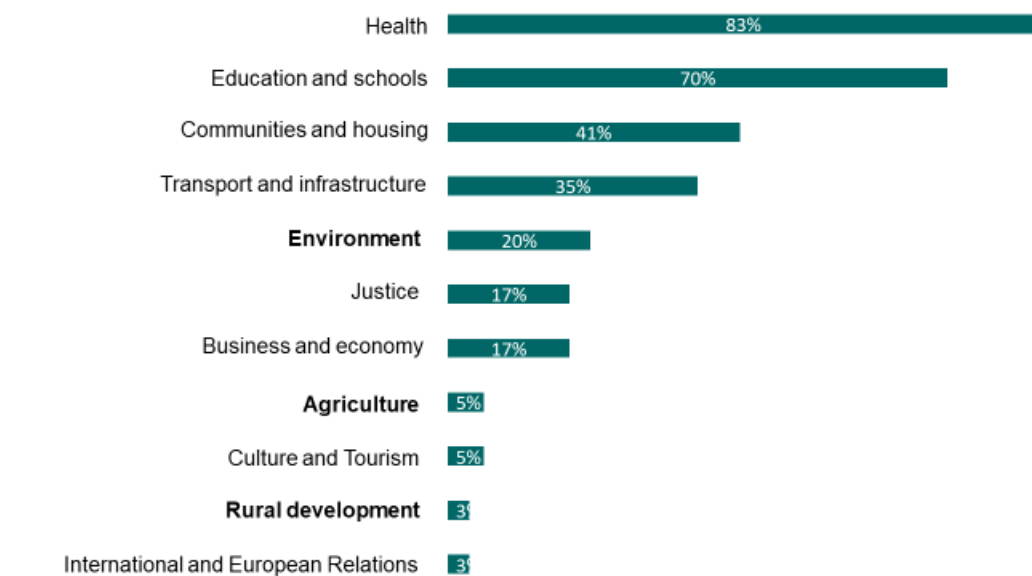
There was a view that a guiding principle of future policy should be to raise the profile of the agricultural sector among the public as well as increase awareness of the scope of the sector covering food production, environmental protection, land management and supporting rural communities. Indeed the research shows that prima facie the linkages and relationships between these various aspects of the policy are not clear so there is scope for public awareness of the role of the agricultural sector and the wider issues affecting those living in rural communities.

## Current profile of the sector

To help situate the relative importance of each of the three key aspects of the CAP including agriculture, environment and rural development, respondents to the survey were invited to indicate the top three government portfolios that should be prioritised in terms of government spending.

Pertinently, 5% prioritised agriculture relative to a range of government portfolios, a fifth (20%) prioritised the environment, and a small proportion (3%) of the sample prioritised rural development (3%).

Figure 7.1. Relative importance of a range of government portfolios



Base: All respondents (2345)

Younger people were more likely than those in older age groups to cite the environment as a priority for government spending (29% among those aged 16-34 comparative to 16% among 45-54; 17% among 55-64; and 15% among 65+).

Agriculture and rural development were attributed higher importance among those in accessible rural and remote rural locations than those in urban areas and small towns.

Table 7.1: Agriculture and rural development priority for government spending by 6-fold urban-rural classification

	Overall%	Remote rural %	Accessible rural %	Remote small towns%	Accessible small towns %	Other urban areas %	Large urban areas %
<b>Agriculture</b>	5	14	8	8	4	3	4
<b>Rural development</b>	3	12	7	6	6	1	2

Another important variation in the results is in relation to the priority attributed to business and economy in terms of government spending among those in remote rural locations comparative to all other location breakdowns by the six-fold classification (32% in remote rural compared to 15% accessible rural; 17% remote small towns; 9% accessible small towns; 15% other urban areas; and 18% large urban areas).

Qualitative research identified the issue of workforce sustainability for Scottish agriculture, which is another important consideration given the low profile of the sector among other government portfolios. There was a recognition that young people do not consider farming as a desirable profession which will in turn affect new entrants to the industry and will lead to labour issues.

*“The newer generation don’t want to get up at 5am and get their hands dirty working the land; they are frightened of hard work”* (Interview participant)

Reflecting the discussions about workforce, there was also mention of education provision in farming and agriculture to encourage new entrants but also to develop the skills of the existing workforce. Research undertaken by the James Hutton Institute<sup>22</sup> for the Scottish Land Commission has identified that women and new entrants to the agricultural sector may be key to modernising and driving improvements to the sector as they offer entrepreneurialism, and a different knowledge and skill set from their previous education and employment backgrounds. This is pertinent as the 2018 agricultural census has shown that only 17% of farm and croft occupiers are female<sup>23</sup>; and Scottish Government’s research into women in agriculture has highlighted that the cultural practice of passing on large farms intact to farmers’ sons inhibits new entrants to the sector<sup>24</sup>.

<sup>22</sup> McKee et al. 2018 Increasing the Availability of Farmland for New Entrants to Agriculture in Scotland, report prepared by the James Hutton Institute for Scottish Land Commission <https://landcommission.gov.scot/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/McKee-et-al.-Final-report-to-SLC-Increasing-land-availability-for-new-entrants-2.5.2018.pdf>

<sup>23</sup> Scottish Government 2018: Scottish Agricultural Census <https://www.gov.scot/publications/results-june-2018-scottish-agricultural-census/>

<sup>24</sup> Scottish Government 2018: Women in Farming and the Agricultural Sector <https://www.gov.scot/publications/women-farming-agriculture-sector/>

Furthermore, while there is an acknowledgement that those with real knowledge of the sector should make decisions about the future shape of agriculture policy, there is appetite for more information provision which is possible through a deliberative engagement model to ensure that the public are informed about the policy and have an opportunity to feed into decision-making.

**Points of consideration:**

- There is a need to raise the profile of the sector and make the public aware of the scope of agriculture policy – particularly in relation to protecting and conserving the environment which is prioritised 4 times over agriculture in terms of the funding of government portfolios (20% compared with 5%).
- Raising the profile of the sector can be done with the aim of attracting new entrants to the sector, particularly as new entrants can help support the future sustainability of the workforce but also drive improvements and help to modernise the sector;
- While, there is a view that those with knowledge and expertise of the sector should be responsible for making decisions about the direction of future policy, widening public knowledge and awareness of the sector can help build confidence in feeding into decision-making processes.

## Financial Assistance to the sector

The research identified support for the reallocation of financial assistance to the agricultural sector, both in terms of the allocation of funding to farmers but also in terms of the funding split among the three key priority areas of the Common Agricultural Policy (farmers and food production, environment and rural communities).

To this end, a key guiding principle for the design of future policy should be ensuring that financial assistance to the sector was based on greatest need, and also ensuring a fairer distribution of support. There was a view that the current system of support to farmers which prioritises the potential productivity of land may gloss over the goals of equity, and other social responsibilities such as protecting the natural environment and supporting rural communities. Furthermore, in terms of the funding split within the Common Agricultural Policy, there is the view that the current policy which prioritises food production was designed to overcome issues of unstable food supplies, which no longer apply, thus paving the way for different thinking about how future funding is allocated within the policy.

While the research identifies that there is support for financial assistance to the sector, there is an underlying issue around the levels of spending reserved to agricultural policy. According to the Treasury's Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses, expenditure on agriculture and related functions in Scotland is 17.6%<sup>25</sup> of the UK total spend in this area, more than double Scotland's population share. The implications of this surround the fiscal arrangements with the rest of the UK – given that Scotland has proportionately more spending on agriculture and related functions, if the Barnett formula were applied to calculate future agricultural spending allocations to Scotland (which enables asymmetry in spending with England and adjusts the amount with the population share in other parts of the UK) Scotland would see the relative spending share decline from current levels.

## Criteria for funding support to farmers

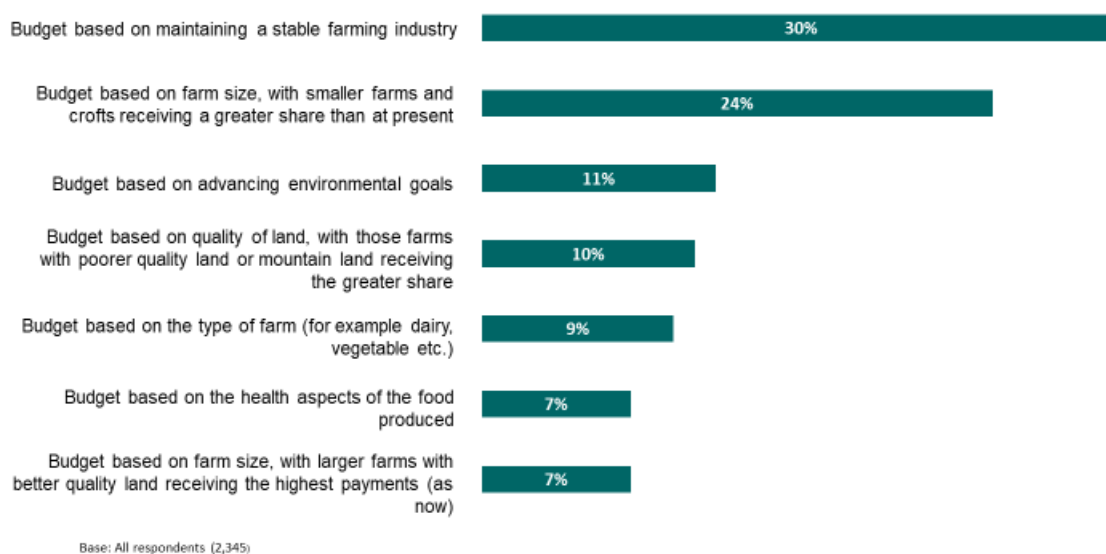
The survey identified support for different criteria for the allocation of support for farmers than are presently applied under the Common Agricultural Policy. 30% preferred support to farms to be based on maintaining a stable farming industry, and 24% preferred the budget to be based on farm size, with smaller farms and crofts receiving a greater share than at present. A relatively small proportion of the sample (7%) preferred the budget to be distributed based on farm size, with larger farms with better quality land receiving the highest payments, as is currently applied.

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<sup>25</sup> House of Lords, European Union Committee 2017 Brexit: agriculture  
<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201617/ldselect/ldcom/169/169.pdf>



Figure 8.1. Priorities for funding allocation to farms



Those in remote rural and accessible rural locations were more likely than those in large urban areas to prefer funding to farms to be allocated based on the quality of land, with those farms with poorer quality land receiving the greatest share of funding (18% and 12% respectively compared with 7% among large urban areas). These results may in part be related to the higher prevalence of rough grazing or less favoured areas in these parts of Scotland.

There were also differences in the result by age: those aged 65+ were more likely than those under 35 to prefer funding for farms to be based on maintaining a stable farming industry (37% compared with 24%). Furthermore, those aged under 35 were almost twice as likely as those aged 65+ to prefer funding to be based on advancing environmental goals (15% compared with 8%).

The issue of the criteria for providing funding to farmers was further explored at the Citizens' Forums. The question posed to Forum participants was drawn from the national survey to enable comparative analysis with the national survey research findings and identify movement in attitudes post-deliberation.

In the national survey 30% of respondents had selected '*budget based on maintaining a stable farming industry*' as their preferred option, making it the highest ranked option for funding allocations. There was some concern in the review of these results that this may simply have been the safe and/or easy option to choose, so for the Citizens' Forums this option was not included in order to dig deeper into the reasons people gave for either wanting change or maintaining the status quo.

This meant that the options presented to participants were as follows:

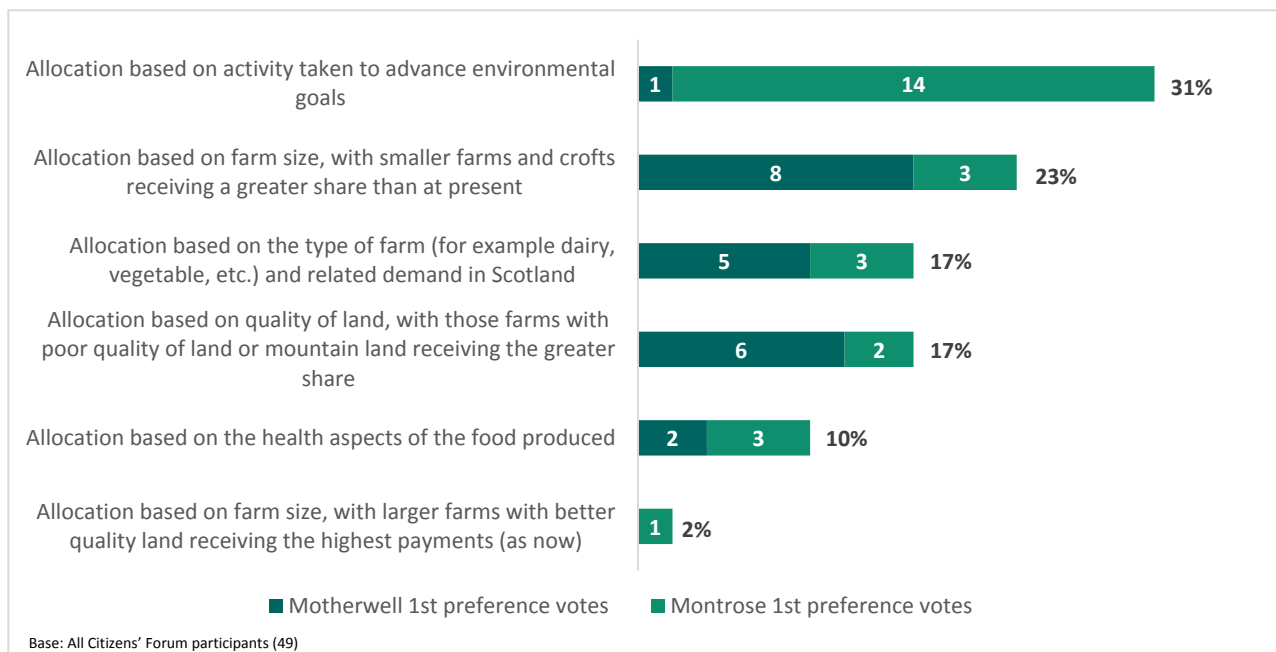
1. Allocation based on farm size, with smaller farms and crofts receiving a greater share than at present
2. Allocation based on activity taken to advance environmental goals
3. Allocation based on quality of land, with those farms with poor quality of land or mountain land receiving the greater share
4. Allocation based on the type of farm (for example dairy, vegetable, etc.) and related demand in Scotland
5. Allocation based on the health aspects of the food produced
6. Allocation based on farm size, with larger farms with better quality land receiving the highest payments (as now)

While some of the participants were critical that there was not an option to advocate for no funding to be given to subsidise farms, most participants agreed that the sector is currently so reliant on this type of support that farmers would struggle to maintain a viable business if funding was suddenly withdrawn. Removing any future equivalent of the types of support farmers received via CAP was therefore seen as something that could cripple the sector in the short term. Furthermore, participants tended to agree that this would remain the case unless there were significant changes made to the price's farmers receive for their produce and the attitude of the public (and the export market) as to what are seen as acceptable food prices.

### **Preferred Criteria**

After spending time evaluating each of the criteria in turn within their discussion groups participants in the Citizens' Forums completed a private ballot, indicating their top three preferences for funding support to farmers.

Figure 8.2: 1<sup>st</sup> preference votes from member of the Citizens' Forum on their preferred criteria for support to farmers



Overall, funding allocations based on advancing environmental goals was the most highly ranked criterion for future support to farmers. It should be noted that this outcome is largely driven by the high proportion of participants in the Montrose Citizens' Forum selecting this criterion as their first option. Only one participant in the Motherwell Citizens' Forum identified this as their preferred option, highlighting the different emphasis given to environmental issues in these discussions.

Key reasons for prioritising this criterion for funding were that it integrates food production with environmental concerns, *“looks after the quality of the environment”* and *“increases knowledge of environmental goals”*. There were however some concerns expressed that this option could favour bigger landowners who had more options for what to do on their land to mitigate their environmental impacts and therefore *“may put smaller lands at a disadvantage”*. Some participants also felt that a policy based on this criteria would discriminate against certain types of farms, e.g. cattle farming, where it is intrinsically harder to minimise the environmental impacts of their farming activities.

Allocations based on farm size ‘with smaller farms and crofts receiving a greater share than at present’ was the most consistent preference from participants in the Motherwell Citizens' Forum.

Many of the arguments in favour of this approach focused on the need to maintain a place within the sector for small, independent farms and crofts as *“just now they are struggling, and we are losing smaller farms / crofts creating more unemployment and poverty”*. It was also noted that *“bigger farms have more opportunity for diversification (and to do things differently), camping, more variety of crops and livestock, farm shops, petting zoos, farm stays etc.”* as a reason why there should be more support for smaller landholdings. Related comments included *“small farms are important (not want to be like banks and focus on the big ones*

only)” and that the current allocation policy reflected the “*same old story, we don’t look after the wee man.*”

For those who prioritised the type of farm, and its relevance to food demands in Scotland, as their preferred criterion the main reasons were that then production “*would be needs driven*” and have the flexibility to respond to “*changing consumer need*”. For some this was a vital focus because the foods that are part of our staple diet would be those receiving the subsidies (if needed) and as a result of this, “*self-sufficiency should follow – if it is managed correctly based on product demand*”.

Concerns, however, were also raised that this model could be “*counter indicative*” to some of the wider priorities expressed as “*bigger farms may focus on staple outputs*” and as such create “*less diversity as more profitable farms are preferred*”. Participants also noted the risk of “*overproduction if quotas are not set*” and recognised that, given the low proportion of quality arable land in Scotland, that there were practical limitations on how the land could be used by farmers for different types of “*in-demand products*”.

Allocation of funding based on land quality, with those farms with poorer quality land receiving the greatest support (i.e. the opposite of the current situation) was prioritised by 17% of participants. This was largely on the basis that it seemed a fairer allocation of funding towards those farmers who would struggle most to make their land profitable: “*Scotland has poorer land and should get a greater allocation of the subsidy*”. Arguments in favour of this criterion also recognised that farmers working poorer quality land, particularly in highland and island communities, may also serve other wider socio-economic functions, for example as anchor employers within rural areas and that subsidy therefore could have wider, positive knock-on impacts. This is consistent with the higher levels of support for this option found in the national survey among those residing in rural locations.

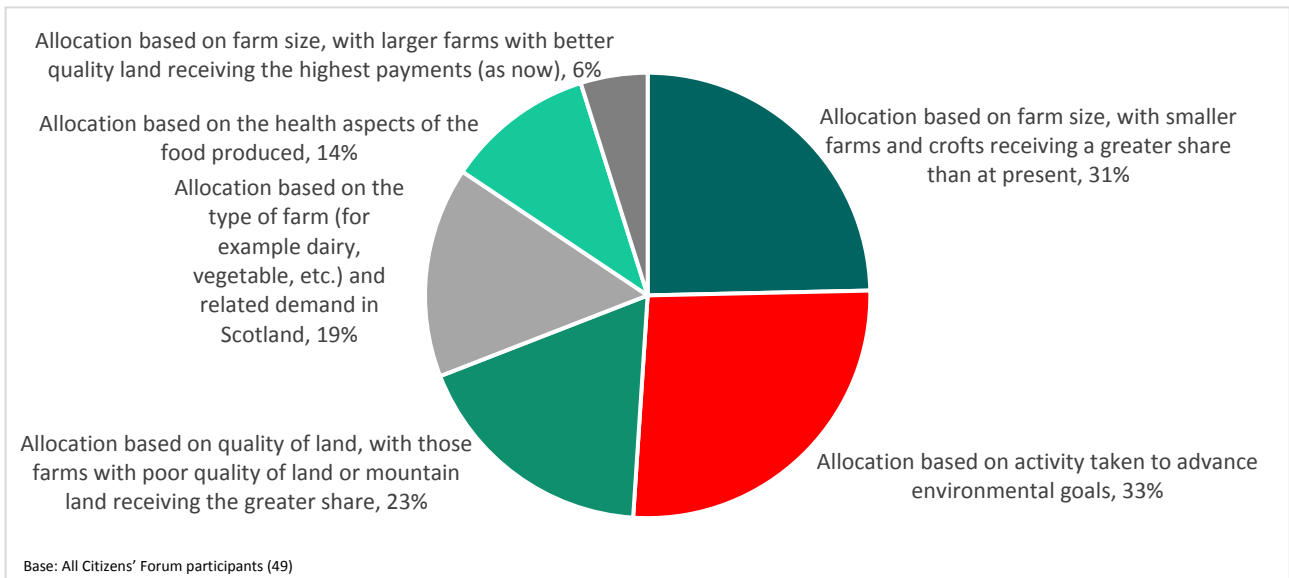
There was, however, also a counter argument presented that suggested land quality itself was not enough to demonstrate entitlement. Rather, in this case, it was argued that a demonstrable commitment to maximising the value of land was required before any further entitlements were offered: “*farmers on poor quality land should not get greater support unless they can show that they are undertaking activities to diversify the productivity of their land.*”

Finally, the current system of funding which rewarded the size and quality of the land farmers held, was generally not supported by participants in the Citizens’ Forums, receiving only 1 first preference vote. This was largely based on the sense that this model of funding supported those who “*should be able to help themselves*”, although there was also a sense of security in retaining a tried-and-tested model: “*better the devil you know*”.

When preferential votes were considered there was little change in the overall ranking of the options, although the weight of opinion balanced out between the first and second preference, as can be seen in the graph below. Support for the current system of funding allocation however remained low, suggesting that participants

were generally interested in seeing change, despite the lack of consensus regarding what that change should be.

Figure 8.3: Preferential votes on preferred criteria for support for the farming sector



Finally, the table below demonstrates the impact that the deliberative process, i.e. two days of learning and considering the issues, had on the participants' final preferences.

Table 8.1: Comparative look at how first preferences for how the balance of funding should be distributed between CAP priorities<sup>26</sup>

	Allocation based on farm size (as now)	Allocation based on farm size, with smaller farms receiving a greater share	Allocation based on activity taken to advance environmental goals	Allocation based on quality of land, with poorer quality of land prioritised	Allocation based on the type of farm produce - related demand in Scotland	Allocation based on the health aspects of the food being produced
<b>Survey</b>	6%	26%	10%	9%	8%	8%
<b>Pre-deliberation</b>	8%	37%	22%	8%	10%	14%
<b>Post-deliberation</b>	2%	23%	31%	17%	17%	10%

Here it can be seen that, following the deliberative process, providing support for those able to demonstrate environmental improvements grew notably. Further there was a doubling in support given to providing funding to farmers with lower quality land in order to help sustain the diversity of the sector and, by default, support rural communities.

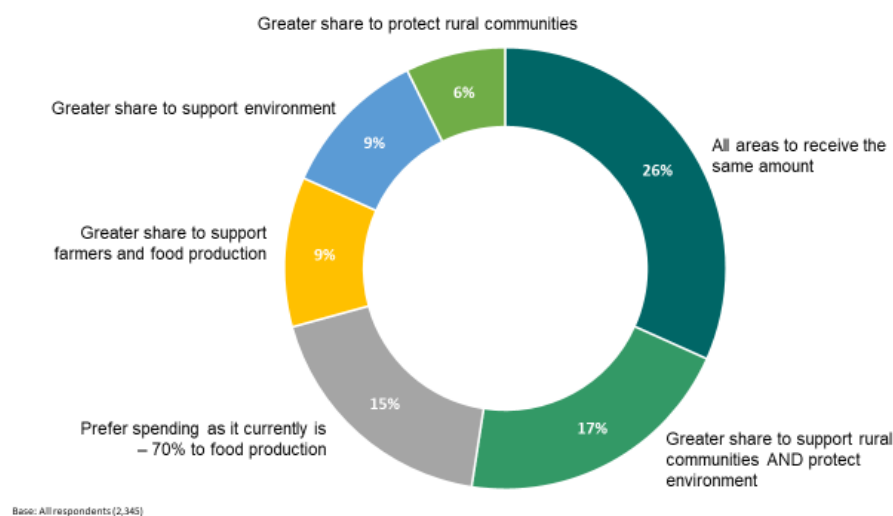
### Preferences for funding split within the CAP

Unlike the current policy formulation of the Common Agricultural Policy, a quarter (26%) of survey respondents prefer all three areas of the policy (farmers and food production, environment and rural communities) to receive the same amount of the policy budget.

17% prefer a greater share of the policy budget being spent on supporting rural communities and protecting the natural environment; and a smaller proportion (15%) prefer to retain spending as it currently is with the vast proportion of the budget being spent on farmers and food production.

<sup>26</sup> Given that one option, the option of supporting a 'stable sector', was removed before Citizens' Forum participants voted, it appears that the votes in the national survey cast for this option have been spread across options 2 and 3, as the rest of the vote spread is quite consistent with the results from the national survey.

Figure 8.4. Preferences for funding allocations within the CAP



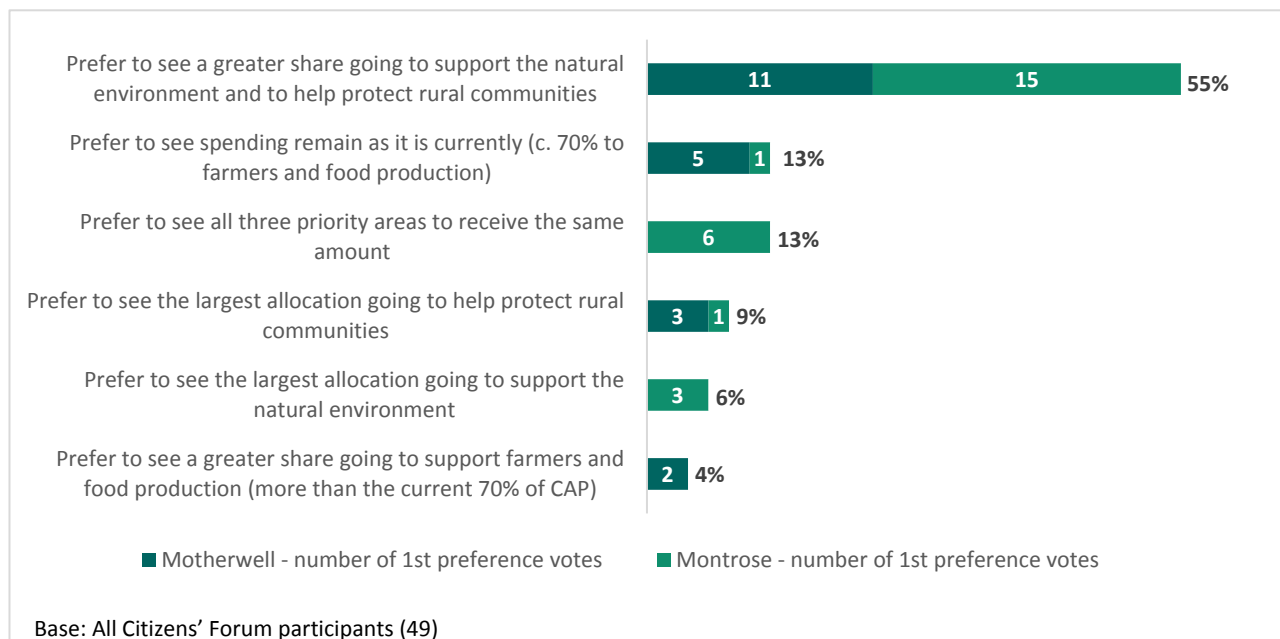
There were a number of key variations in the results:

- Urbanity and rurality is the most significant predictor of views on the allocation of spending for the CAP budget. Those residing in accessible rural locations were more likely than those in large urban areas and other urban areas to prefer to retain spending as it currently is, with the vast majority of the policy budget allocated to farming and food production (21% compared with 14% and 15% respectively).
- Women were more likely than men to prefer all three areas of the policy to receive the same amount (30% compared with 23%). By comparison, men were more likely than women to prefer a greater share of the budget going to support farmers and food production than present (12% compared with 9%).
- Those aged 35 and under were more likely than all other age categories to prefer a greater share of support to be allocated to support the natural environment (14% among under 35's compared with 7% among 35-44; 8% among 45-54; 8% among 55-64; and 6% among 65+).

The question of how the future balance of funding allocations might be differently apportioned between the three broad CAP priority areas, was explored further at the Citizens' Forums. The framing of the question posed to Forum participants was consistent with the national survey to enable comparison of the results.

When participants were asked to vote individually on these options following their discussion there was an overall consistency on how the votes were distributed between the two Citizens' Forum locations (Motherwell/Montrose). The graph below shows the distribution of 1st preference votes across the two Citizens' Forums.

Figure 8.5: 1<sup>st</sup> preference votes from member of the Citizens' Forum on their preferred balance of funding allocations to farming and food production, environmental management and supporting rural communities – post deliberation.



Overall, more than half (55%) of the first preference votes went to seeing a greater share of funding going to ‘support the natural environment and to help protect rural communities. During discussions, participants pointed out that a greater proportion of support given to rural communities more broadly *“would encourage tourism”*, help *“diversify business”* and support *“other business development”* in rural communities. It was also seen as a way to *“repopulate/sustain countryside population.”*

Caution to this preference included a possible *“negative perception by other communities (e.g. urban/fishing industries)”* and that, given what they had learnt about the important role that subsidies have played in maintaining an active farming sector in Scotland, it *“should not be at a disadvantage for farmers.”*

Following on, 13% of first preference votes went to seeing ‘all three priority areas to receive the same amount of funding’. This was noticeably only voted for by participants in Montrose. This may, in part, be because these participants, by the very nature of living in a much more rural environment, have a greater innate understanding of the interplay between the agricultural sector and the other economic and business demands of rural communities. This option was described as being a ‘fair’ way to balance out the competing needs of the farming sector, the environment and rural communities more broadly.

Participants across both of the groups however identified impacts and reasons both in favour and against this policy. While some participants stated that maybe this would result in a *“wishy-washy”* compromised policy, others argued that *“the same amount is fairer (no preferential treatment).”* One of the key objections was that, while there was no question this balance of funding would be good for sustaining



rural communities, there are *“other ways to support rural communities”* (including that they *“should get funding from local authorities”*) and that the funding currently distributed through CAP should focus specifically on agricultural lands. Comments relating to this emphasis on farming and food production emphasised that *“food has to be a priority”* and that there is a *“risk to farming if the overall budget [available to them] becomes too small”*.

Seeing ‘spending remain as it is currently (70% to farmers and food production)’ received 13% of the first preference votes overall. This also seems to reflect the growing recognition participants had gained throughout the weekend of the role subsidies have played in supporting Scottish farming and the potential impacts on the agricultural sector if this was removed. Comments from participants on these options tended to argue that, while keeping the current system may seem *“unfair”* and *“not fit for purpose”*, it would provide *“stability”* and is *“needed to keep high standards.”* While 13% did support this option, this was mainly selected by participants in Motherwell, which suggests that there is a preference for the status quo where there is less experiential knowledge of the interdependence of rural, economic and environmental issues.

Only 4% overall supported the idea of increasing the proportion of funding directly allocated to farming and food production. When talking about this, participants tended to focus on the ability of funding to lead to *“more jobs in farming”*, *“cheaper food,”* *“more variety of food,”* and *“could increase quality standards.”* Participants also felt that it could help with *“diversification of the land use”* or *“help make the land more profitable”* for example through *“an emphasis on local produce for local people or for high quality export markets”*.

On the other hand, opponents to these models expressed the view that such continued spending *“could emphasise/enable sub optimal production patterns”* and *“rewards people just for having land, not for what they do with it.”* One table in Montrose disagreed with the idea of increasing the percentage of CAP funding available for farmers and food production, saying it was simply *“not up for discussion”* as the industry was already far too reliant on public money and needed to either develop sustainable business models or cease to operate.

In particular, there was discussion in Montrose about the New Zealand model in which farming subsidies have been phased out since 1984. While the model has seen increased levels of productivity, and growth in other parts of the economy through the reallocation of support, there has been population decline and loss of service provision in rural communities which has historically been reliant on the farming sector<sup>27</sup>. Therefore, any changes to the agricultural sector should be offset with a redirection of support to rural communities.

Only 6% of participants’ first preference went to seeing ‘the largest allocation going to support the natural environment.’ While there had been an almost universal interest in reducing the environmental impacts of the farming sector the majority of

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<sup>27</sup> Johnson 2001: Reforming EU Farm Policy: Lessons from New Zealand:  
<https://iea.org.uk/publications/research/reforming-eu-farm-policy-lessons-from-new-zealand>

participants seem to have balanced this demand, when it came to the proportional allocation of funding, with an acknowledgement that food production was at the heart of farming and without an emphasis on supporting this, other priorities became less relevant. In the discussions participants therefore tended to acknowledge that, while a significant increase in funding for environmental protections would *“be great for the natural environment”* and that it is an area that *“needs more investment”*, too much emphasis placed here would mean that overall *“farmers would struggle”*, it could *“kill off farming”* and that *“no focus on food production is a negative.”*

The table below demonstrates the impact that the deliberative process had on the participants’ final preferences. At the beginning of the process their initial response to the question about the balance of funding was predominantly consistent with the national survey results. However, there was a higher preference for a greater share to be spent on supporting the natural environment and protecting rural communities, comparative to the national survey results. This difference was particularly driven by the higher priority attributed to these two aspects of policy among participants in Montrose.

However, post-deliberation the results significantly changed. 55% recorded that their first preference was to see ‘a greater share going to support the natural environment and to help protect rural communities’ (for the reasons given above). It is also worth noting that support for an equal distribution of funding between the three areas, the top priority identified in the national survey, had dropped by half (although initially given significant support). The option of the balance of a greater share being given to support farming and food production was also broadly rejected by participants, with only 2 people giving it their vote in the final ballot.

Table 8.3: First preferences for how the balance of funding should be distributed between CAP priorities

	Prefer all three priority areas to receive the same amount	A greater share going to support the natural environment and to help protect rural communities	Prefer spending to remain as it is currently	A greater share going to support farmers and food production	The largest allocation going to support the natural environment	The largest allocation going to help protect rural communities
<b>Survey</b>	26%	17%	15%	9%	9%	6%
<b>Pre-deliberation</b>	31%	31%	16%	12%	6%	4%
<b>Post-deliberation</b>	13%	55%	13%	4%	6%	9%

The finding that post-deliberation, just over half (55%) preferred a greater share of support to be allocated to the natural environment and rural communities is aligned with the view that future policy should not simply focus on agriculture, but be a wider ecosystem services policy which supports the environment and rural communities. Ian Hodge, Professor of Rural Economy at the University of Cambridge, argues that

*“We do not really need an agricultural policy; we need an ecosystem services policy. We need to set out thinking that our aim should be to deliver the maximum social value from rural land rather than to recreate an agricultural policy”<sup>28</sup>.*

This suggests that a potential option would be to shift away from the current focus on agriculture and take a holistic view of the totality of ecosystem services encapsulating services that protect the natural environment, biodiversity, soil, landscape, cultural heritage, and provide food, sustainable energy, and water.

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<sup>28</sup> Oral evidence submitted to the House of Lords European Union Committee 2018 for Agriculture after Brexit <http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/eu-energy-and-environment-subcommittee/brexit-agriculture/oral/48001.html>

### **Points of consideration:**

- Results on the financial assistance to the agricultural sector most strongly indicate a change in views by virtue of the deliberative process;
- Considering both the national survey and the outcome of the deliberative process there is support for the reallocation of financial support to the agricultural sector than is currently applied under the Common Agricultural Policy, covering the three main priority areas of the policy – agriculture, environment and rural development. The post-deliberation results show that over half (55%) prefer a greater share of support to be given to the natural environment and to support rural communities.
- There is support for funding to farmers to be based on advancing environmental goals, and supporting smaller farms;
- However, the issue of support criteria being based on land quality with poorer quality land being prioritised was also cited, particularly among those residing in rural communities as there was a recognition of the wider socio-economic functions of farmers working on poorer quality land e.g. as anchor employers within rural areas. The findings suggest that there is some support for some assistance to be reserved to farmers working on poorer quality land;
- In terms of funding allocations within the CAP, there was a clear preference (55%) for a greater allocation of support to the natural environment and rural communities; however, this was under the proviso that there would remain a focus on food production to avoid watering down the policy, recognising that there are other sources of support for rural communities and the environment.

## Key conclusions from the research

The research has identified a number of key priorities for future agricultural policy in Scotland. In particular, there is widespread support for a change in course from the legacy of the Common Agricultural Policy which placed a priority on the quality and size of land. In contrast, the research has shown that there is support for placing a greater emphasis on protecting and conserving the natural environment and protecting rural communities, as part of future policy. More generally, there is support for more socially responsible policy which ensures that financial assistance is based on greatest need and enables a fairer distribution of support.

Having said that, the research also reflects strong levels of support for the agricultural sector: there are high levels of agreement that Scottish agriculture provides a vital public service to the people in Scotland and is vital to the success of the Scottish economy. While, the research indicates support for the reprioritisation of funding within the agricultural sector towards some of the other priority areas e.g. environmental protection, and supporting rural communities, there is a view that high quality food production should be at the heart of agricultural policy.

The research has shown that the process of deliberation can increase knowledge and awareness about the scope of the agricultural sector, and also the linkages between agriculture, environment, land management, and rural community issues. Particularly in relation to agriculture and the environment, there is an emphasis on a broader whole system thinking in terms of cooperation on land management; observing trends on climate change and adapting food production accordingly; and ensuring that farming advances environmental goals in terms of soil protection, water quality, and increasing biodiversity.

Considering the gains from increasing knowledge and awareness of issues through deliberative processes, there is a view that future policy should help to raise public awareness of the contributions and scope of the agricultural sector. Meanwhile, there is a view that those with knowledge and expertise of the sector should be responsible for making decisions about the direction of future policy, widening public knowledge and awareness of the sector can help build confidence in feeding into decision-making processes. This is important in terms of building support and understanding around the financial assistance provided to the sector, but also in terms of attracting new entrants to the sector which can be an important source of innovation and modernisation of agriculture in Scotland.

# Appendix A: Literature and Evidence Review

## Introduction

The Common Agricultural Policy (hereafter CAP) is the core agricultural policy in Scotland, covering three broad areas: *agriculture, the environment, and rural development*. Primarily the policy is designed to supplement the incomes of farmers to ensure that there is a safe, affordable and consistent supply of high-quality food throughout the European Union<sup>29</sup>. To this effect the policy is organised into two "Pillars"; the first Pillar receives the vast proportion of spending and involves a payment to farmers for every hectare of land they farm. The amount of money individual farmers receive is based on the size of their farm and the productivity of its land. The remainder of the spending falls under Pillar 2 and is spent to meet wider rural development goals such as improving innovation, public services, and supporting local development projects, and a small share of spending is also allocated to agri-environment policies covering organic farming, tree-planting, and forestry.

Currently, the CAP is subject to far-reaching reforms, including those scheduled for 2021-27 which will simplify and modernise the policy, in part through technological and digital innovation, but also by limiting its financing from the overall EU budget. Imminent withdrawal from the European Union, and by extension CAP, means that agricultural, environmental and rural development policies will need to be redesigned at a UK and Scotland level. Implications of withdrawal from CAP in terms of the potential impact on the income of farmers has been raised in research carried out by members of our team in the Highlands of Scotland since June 2016<sup>30</sup>. However, there are important implications to consider with respect to environmental and rural development policies which are also covered in the pan-European policy.

This literature and evidence review will explore each of these aspects in turn, reviewing academic and grey literature in the areas of agriculture, the environment and rural development complemented with public attitudes data where this is available in each of these contexts. In setting out these three broad areas, the review considers the implications of Brexit in informing priorities for future agriculture policy in Scotland.

## Agriculture

Agricultural policy in Scotland is covered under the CAP, as outlined in the introductory statements, these primarily cover the basic support payments to farmers for their contribution to the production of public goods. The CAP has often been criticised in its contribution to surplus food production throughout Europe, so

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<sup>29</sup> European Commission 2017: The common agricultural policy at a glance [https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/key-policies/common-agricultural-policy/cap-glance\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/key-policies/common-agricultural-policy/cap-glance_en)

<sup>30</sup> Highlands and Islands Enterprise 2016: Business panel report <http://www.hie.co.uk/common/handlers/download-document.ashx?id=188a1590-d816-4413-b3b1-f485e412814f>

while there are key reforms scheduled to come into effect from 2021 onwards, some key changes were also implemented in the period of 2014-2020<sup>31</sup>; these were to ensure only genuinely active farmers receive Direct Payments under Pillar 1 funding, as well as implementing specific support for new entrants, and ensuring farmers implement environmental measures, such as protecting biodiversity and reducing emissions as part of the greening provisions. The argument for continuing direct payments to farmers in light of the over-production of food reinforces the concept that there is a public benefit conferred through farming and food production<sup>32</sup>. There is also the view that farmers respond to societal and consumer demands as opposed to other businesses<sup>33</sup> for example in terms of animal welfare, quality standards and environmental protection.

In withdrawing from the European Union there are key points of consideration for future Scottish agriculture policy, and indeed there are divergent views on whether CAP funding should be retained at current levels – especially considering the view that Pillar 1 funding (direct payments to farmers) is entitlement-based as opposed to Pillar 2 which is targeted, and contractual, serving a wider societal purpose. Reviewing Scottish policy documentation, the *'Agricultural Champions'*<sup>34</sup> report suggests that a cultural shift/ or mindset change is required to conceive of the agricultural sector in line with any other industry which is subject to fluctuations in supply and demand and changing consumer preferences – underscoring the need to review spending priorities in the policy.

Dieter Helm<sup>35</sup> sets out three options for future agriculture policy in the UK:

1. continuity of the current regime with an emphasis on food security;
2. maintaining the CAP, but shifting more of the subsidies away from payments for land ownership towards more spending on environmental schemes;
3. providing public money only for public goods – this would only be possible by allowing a transitional phase allowing all parties to adapt to the changed circumstances.

In recognising these three options, Helm makes the case for the third option, namely public money for public goods, using the UK Government's 25-year environmental plan as the overarching framework to guide the policy. Helm places an emphasis on prioritising Pillar 1 payments to support farmers with a low income (smaller and marginal farms) and imposing stricter requirements on the types of activities that are supported including mandatory environmental protection

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<sup>31</sup> Scottish Government 2014: The New Common Agricultural Policy in Scotland  
<https://www.gov.scot/Resource/0045/00456031.pdf>

<sup>32</sup> Bateman, et al. 2018: Public funding for public goods: A post-Brexit perspective on principles for agriculture policy, Land Use Policy volume 79 pp. 293-300

<sup>33</sup> Shortall, S 2007 Public Attitudes Towards the Countryside in Northern Ireland: Full Research Report ESRC

<sup>34</sup> Scottish Government 2017: An Interim Discussion Document from the Scottish Government's Agriculture Champions <https://www.gov.scot/Resource/0052/00527778.pdf>

<sup>35</sup> Dieter Helm 2017 Agriculture after Brexit, Oxford Review of Economic Policy

practices. It is also suggested that a wider range of players who provide public benefits e.g. those who work to protect the landscape and biodiversity, should also be supported under the policy - not just farmers.

This view is reflected in the European Union Committee, House of Lords 2016 report “*Responding to price volatility: creating a more resilient agricultural sector*”<sup>36</sup> which makes the case for continued financial support as follows:

*“Given that the agricultural sector is often expected to provide public goods, there is a case for financial support in certain circumstances. However, policy should display much more explicit links between the expected outcomes and the use of public funds.”*

This suggests that there is appetite for continued funding for the sector reinforcing the concept of “public goods”, but there is still the issue of whether this funding should be redirected in a targeted manner with a clearer explication on what the money is for.

It is conceived that the aim of future agriculture policy should be to deliver maximum social value this places an emphasis on environmental matters but also on wider rural development objectives. Ian Hodge, Professor of Rural Economy at the University of Cambridge, argues that

*“We do not really need an agricultural policy; we need an ecosystem services policy. We need to set out thinking that our aim should be to deliver the maximum social value from rural land rather than to recreate an agricultural policy”<sup>37</sup>.*

This suggests that a potential option would be to shift away from the current focus on agriculture and take a holistic view of the totality of ecosystem services encapsulating services that protect the natural environment, biodiversity, soil, landscape, cultural heritage, and provide food, sustainable energy, and water.

It must be noted that under WTO rules the support provided to farmers who deliver ecosystem services in this context only covers costs incurred so this would not help to support the underlying business or supplement farmers’ incomes. Therefore, such a policy signals a departure from the subsidies regime. Important considerations need to be made to evaluate whether subsidies should be maintained. For instance, certain payments are tied to the implementation of environmental measures as per the greening provisions; respect should also be paid to the “polluter pays principle”, and whether farmers should really need incentives to implement environmental protection measures as is under the current CAP policy in Scotland or whether this should be a baseline requirement of any

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<sup>36</sup> House of Lords, European Union Committee 2016 Responding to price volatility: creating a more resilient agricultural sector <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201516/ldselect/ldecom/146/146.pdf>

<sup>37</sup> Oral evidence submitted to the House of Lords European Union Committee 2018 for Agriculture after Brexit <http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/eu-energy-and-environment-subcommittee/brexit-agriculture/oral/48001.html>



future farming practices. Consideration should also be given to rural development in terms of social value within the wider scheme of the policy.

Nonetheless, it is important to contextualise the linkages between agriculture and the environment in Scotland; and consider how farming might help to advance environmental goals. While there is the issue of potential environmental damage from farming practices, the environment could also be strengthened by agriculture management in the following respects<sup>38</sup>:

- *Biodiversity* – certain species and habitats that are of high conservation value are reliant on the continuation of farming practices. Therefore, withdrawing agricultural production may not always be the answer to conserving biodiversity. Biodiversity may be supported through farming practices which have helped to shape the Scottish landscape, and the variety of species and habitat; maintaining this will require management of the intensity of agricultural production.
- *Water* – farming practices can help to increase water quality by reducing diffuse pollution from farming waste, and by helping to prevent floods. Agricultural management can help to ensure water is used sufficiently to photosynthesise plants and to allow animals to drink water.
- *Landscape* – 70% of Scotland’s land is managed by farmers, and farming practices have contributed to the upland and lowland landscapes of Scotland. Mixed farming practices contribute to increased biodiversity of species and habitats, and the aestheticism of the landscapes that we value.
- *Soil* – fertile carefully managed nutrient content of soil is the bedrock of good farming and crop management, but also encourages a range of plant and animal life.

## Points of consideration for future policy

Before reviewing points of consideration following the UK’s exit from the European Union, the review explores policy in an international context, drawing on examples from Canada and New Zealand. While these may provide examples of different policy options, it should be borne in mind that the domestic context of each of these countries differs from the UK/Scotland, as well as the agriculture sectors in each setting.

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<sup>38</sup> SRUC 2018, Changing land management  
[https://www.sruc.ac.uk/downloads/file/3795/changing\\_land\\_management](https://www.sruc.ac.uk/downloads/file/3795/changing_land_management)

### **Policy example from Canada**

One example of a targeted agricultural support policy is the Canadian Agricultural Policy Approach<sup>39</sup>, this incorporates a number of targeted measures including investment in funding for internships for graduates to study the environmental impacts of agriculture and providing employers with funding for internships in agriculture and veterinary medicine. Additional means of targeted support cover protections against a decline in farmers' incomes by providing cash advance payments on agricultural production; and the availability of loans to help new small farmers. Moreover, the total range of initiatives are not just directed towards farmers but include cooperatives, not-for-profit organisations and academic institutions. The design of the policy is largely in part due to the decline in the number of farms in Canada in recent years, and the demographic challenge faced by the sector as the vast proportion of farmers are aged 55 and over and many do not have someone lined up to take over their farms.

*There are key differences between the UK and Canadian agricultural system which should be considered when reviewing the Canadian policy framework.*

### **Policy example from New Zealand**

In New Zealand farming subsidies have been phased out since 1984; it is one of the few countries in the OECD to remove support payments to farmers. This has led to higher levels of productivity - total productivity level growth increased from 1.5% per annum to 2.5% between 1984 and 2001<sup>40</sup>. The removal of the subsidy has also had the effect of lowering surplus production and encouraging growth in other parts of the economy. The agricultural sectors contribution to the economy in terms of GDP has decreased from 14.6% to 5.2% between 1960 and 1999 – which is similar to UK levels while the economy industrialises and diversifies. However, production levels have remained consistent, while the contribution share has decreased. There is a minimum level of support provided to farmers in the form of “farm recovery insurance” in adverse situations such as natural disasters.

The New Zealand model shows that the agricultural markets do have the potential to adjust to different systems of payments, and that farmers do not bear the total costs of the reform – however it should be borne in mind that this policy was implemented 35 years ago, in an entirely different domestic context. While, the New Zealand example shows that there was an immediate drop in the income of farmers, there is evidence to show that income had adjusted within the next five years or so for some sectors such as sheep/dairy farmers – largely in part due to the devaluation of the New Zealand dollar boosting the competitiveness of exports. Moreover, areas that had historically been reliant on the farming sector had seen population decline which resulted in a lack of service provision in these areas – therefore, any changes to the agricultural sectors should be offset with a redirection of support to rural communities.

*There are key differences between the UK and New Zealand agricultural system which should be considered when reviewing the policy framework in New Zealand*

<sup>39</sup> Government of Canada 2016 Canadian Agricultural Outlook <http://www.agr.gc.ca/eng/about-us/publications/economic-publications/2016-canadian-agricultural-outlook/?id=1455901351212>

<sup>40</sup> Johnson 2001, Reforming EU Farm Policy: Lessons from New Zealand <https://iea.org.uk/publications/research/reforming-eu-farm-policy-lessons-from-new-zealand>

In considering the discourse around priorities for future agricultural policy, there are a number of practical challenges to consider, including, the budget available for future agricultural policy in Scotland; Scotland's ability to implement divergent policies to the rest of the UK; the matter of trade relationships outside of the UK; and importantly the agricultural sectors dependence on non-UK EU workers and the implications of this for future workforce.

In withdrawing from the European Union, the United Kingdom will take back agricultural competency as part of the Great Repeal Bill and will allow devolved governments to tailor aspects of the policy depending on their domestic context. In this context, there are grey areas with respect to the spending allocated to agriculture policy within the devolved governments. For instance, the 2016 Scottish Budget indicates that income from the European Union in relation to agriculture was approximately £490 million in 2016/17. Pertinently, agricultural payments are relatively large in Scotland as compared to rest of UK. According to the Treasury's Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses, expenditure on agriculture and related functions in Scotland is 17.6%<sup>41</sup> of the UK total spend in this area, more than double Scotland's population share. The implications of this surround the fiscal arrangements with the rest of the UK – given that Scotland has proportionately more spending on agriculture and related functions, if the Barnett formula were applied to calculate future agricultural spending allocations to Scotland (which enables asymmetry in spending with England and adjusts the amount with the population share in other parts of the UK) Scotland would see the relative spending share decline from current levels.

Indeed, there are also points to consider in terms of the level of flexibility attributed to devolved governments to tailor individual aspects of policy. Indeed, policy divergence can inhibit an overall framework which may create internal barriers to trade and affect market prices. However, the current framework allows tailoring to accommodate the circumstances, priorities and needs of devolved settings.

Another complex area is the trade of agriculture products post-Brexit. The agricultural sector is already experiencing increased costs as a result of the weakness of the pound, and if trade deals with other countries take significant time or cannot be forged, further costs would be incurred through the application of World Trade Organisation rules. To illustrate this point, farmers in Scotland might face increased costs with sheep farms facing a 30% increase tariff on exports; beef farms facing a 50% increase tariff on exports and dairy farms facing a 36% increase tariff on exports<sup>42</sup>. Further complications arise with respect to product and environmental standards which would need to be harmonised to ensure compliance with food standard and safety regulations required for trade with the EU (Scotland's second key trading partner after the Rest of the UK).

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<sup>41</sup> House of Lords, European Union Committee 2017 Brexit: agriculture  
<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201617/ldselect/ldeucom/169/169.pdf>

<sup>42</sup> Scottish Government 2017: Potential Implications for Rural Scotland of the UK leaving the EU  
<https://www.gov.scot/Publications/2017/11/6792>

In addition, trade relationships with countries outside the EU could lead to increased competition from countries with lower food standards, animal welfare standards and environmental protection regulations – as well as poorer products flooding the Scottish market. For example, concerns have been expressed around the potential impact of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership enabling the thoroughfare of lower quality agricultural produce entering the Scottish market and affecting the competitiveness of local produce.

Import quotas should also be considered when thinking about trade, the tariff rate quota on agriculture can be anywhere up to 54% for imported agricultural products to the EU. This is important to note when recognising that, for instance, 95% of lamb exports from the UK go to the EU<sup>43</sup>. An arrangement would have to be forged with the EU to ensure lower tariff rate quotas. For instance, New Zealand's import cost to the EU is at 0% up to a specific amount of produce<sup>44</sup>. Therefore, it would be important to consider the UK's future arrangement with the EU. It will also be important to bear in mind how others (countries outside the UK) regard changes to the import quotas between the UK and the EU, especially given that the UK wants to forge deals with other countries and the EU may also have separate arrangements with other countries.

The sector's dependence on non-UK EU workers should also be borne in mind. The Scottish Government's response to the Call for Evidence on the EEA Workers in the UK Labour Market, identifies horticulture as one of the main industries that will be affected by changes to the free movement of people from EEA countries. In particular, the response identifies the reliance on seasonal EEA workers; SRUC research carried out on behalf of the Scottish Government conservatively estimates around 9,250 seasonal migrant workers were being used on Scottish farms in 2017.

Regardless of any changes to the flow of non-UK EU workers to Scotland, there are pre-existing recruitment challenges which stand to be exacerbated by changes in the free movement of people. This is reflected in work that members of our team undertook for Highlands and Islands Enterprise; in 2016 two-thirds (65%) of businesses in the Highlands and Islands had found it difficult to recruit people with the skills and experience they needed. Among those who had found it difficult to recruit, key issues raised included a lack of suitably qualified people, barriers due to location in remote island communities, and dependency on non-UK EU workers who are returning home due to uncertainties concerning their residency status<sup>45</sup>. Other data sources reflect these findings, for instance, in the red meat sector,

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<sup>43</sup> Cardwell and Smith 2018: The UK Agri-food sector, Brexit and International Trade: Opportunities and Challenges: <https://yas.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/paper-3-the-agri-food-sector-brexit-and-international-trade.pdf>

<sup>44</sup> European Commission 2018: EU New Zealand Trade Agreement <http://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/in-focus/eu-new-zealand-trade-agreement/>

<sup>45</sup> Highlands and Islands Enterprise 2016: Business panel report <http://www.hie.co.uk/common/handlers/download-document.ashx?id=188a1590-d816-4413-b3b1-f485e412814f>

around 50% of staff and 95% of official vets in the processing plants are non-UK nationals<sup>46</sup>.

### **What does the public attitudes data tell us?**

The public attitudes data is split in two broad areas: food and diet; and agriculture, and attitudes to the CAP.

#### ***Food and diet***

The Food Standards Scotland Consumer tracker survey collects significant data in terms of attitudes to food, diet, and safety. The survey has shown that there is an increase in concern over unhealthy diets, and food prices, particularly among young people and C2DEs. Moreover, there is a common view that food prices will increase after Brexit and that food safety standards may decline post-Brexit – results which may feed into concerns around food security, more generally. Reflecting these findings, most think that Brexit will negatively impact on food issues – although these have been persistent at each wave of the survey, with the exception of food safety which has increased from 18% to 23% between 2016 and 2018.

Half of respondents to the survey expressed interest in the country of origin when making food purchases and a similar proportion were interested in food authenticity. Top food concerns include animal welfare (81%); use of pesticides, hormones, steroids (80%); food prices (78%); food poisoning (75%).

Just over half persistently categorise their diet as “healthy”. The groups that persistently perceive their diets to be healthy are women and those in the ABC1 social grade category. Having said that there is growing acceptance that people need to eat more healthily, and this is reflected in concern regarding the sugar content in food and a vast majority regarding obesity as a serious issue in Scotland. In terms of addressing these issues there has been a slight increase in the view that the cost of food is a barrier to healthy eating.

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<sup>46</sup> Scottish Government 2018: Understanding the Scottish rural economy  
<https://beta.gov.scot/publications/understanding-scottish-rural-economy/pages/13/>

## ***Agriculture and CAP***

Scotland's rural economy is often equated with "Agriculture, Fishing and Forestry". However, "Agriculture, Fishing and Forestry" only accounts for about 1%<sup>47</sup> of the overall Scottish economy. Even in rural Scotland, the sector is marginal compared to other sectors such as construction. Nonetheless, research carried out by Survation on behalf of the Scottish Environment Link<sup>48</sup> shows that 88% agree (strongly or somewhat) that farming is an important industry in Scotland. Given the perceived seminal importance of the farming industry in Scotland, it is perhaps unsurprising that 48% felt that farmers receive less than a fair share of money value for the food they produce.

Knowledge of the Common Agricultural Policy was split with a similar proportion stating that they have heard of the policy (52.6%) as those stating that they had not (47.4%). Among those who had heard of the policy, there was a high level of agreement (71.7%) that it was a system of support programmes for agriculture. By comparison, there was confusion around how much money we get from the CAP.

Among those who were aware of the CAP, there was broad support for payments to farmers being made on the basis of the amount and type of the land they farm: 47% support payments made to farmers comparative to 15.3% who oppose support payments. There were slightly higher levels of support for payments towards rural development, 62.6% support (strongly or somewhat) in comparison to 5.7% who oppose this form of support. Overall, there was the view that pillar 2 spending was a slightly better use of public money than pillar 1 (26.2% compared with 12.6%) although two-fifths (41.2%) did not discriminate and regarded both as equally good uses of public money. In terms of the funding split, there were mixed views with a similar proportion stating that it is fair (20.1%) as those who were neutral (23.5%) on the subject matter, although a slightly higher proportion felt that the distribution is unfair (34.3%).

In terms of control over spending on agriculture after Brexit, just over half (54.9%) felt that this should be with the Scottish Government, while just over a fifth felt that the responsibility should be shared among the UK and Scottish Governments.

There were mixed views on farmers with large areas and better-quality land receiving more support: 41% support, 26% neutral, and 26% oppose this proposal. Results concerning support for farmers with less than three hectares of land were slightly more conclusive, 63% support funding for these groups, which is not currently in place under CAP.

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<sup>47</sup> Scottish Government 2018: Understanding the Scottish rural economy <https://beta.gov.scot/publications/understanding-scottish-rural-economy/pages/13/>

<sup>48</sup> Scottish Environment Link 2018 Poll on the Common Agricultural Policy <https://survation.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/CAP-Poll-ScotLINK-Tables.pdf>

Respondents were asked to consider where spending from agriculture policy should be allocated, results are shown in the table below. The data reflects broad support for each area, however there were some messages in terms of appetite for the redirection of support towards improving services, and opportunities as well as public benefits instead of focusing on income support for farmers.

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Support (%)</b>	<b>Neutral (%)</b>	<b>Oppose (%)</b>	<b>DK (%)</b>
On helping provide more local food in schools and hospitals	79.2	13.7	2.6	4.4
On encouraging animal welfare standards and the production of high-quality animal products - including more free-range farming of pigs, chickens, dairy cows and cattle cows	78.5	13.1	3.1	5.1
On creating opportunities for young people in farming	77.9	15.6	2.0	4.4
On helping farmers sell more food in local shops and markets	77.3	14.7	3.7	4.2
On reducing pollution from farms	76.5	14.7	3.8	5.0
On helping improve the skills and knowledge of farmers and providing training	72.4	17.8	4.2	5.5
Farmers and land managers deliver wider public benefits such as protecting biodiversity, limiting farms' greenhouse gas emissions, improving water quality and enhancing opportunities for recreation	69.8	19.0	4.6	6.6
On income support - to bring farmers up to a minimum level of income	66.7	19.7	6.9	6.7
On discouraging the use of pesticides and antibiotics on farms and encouraging "organic" farming practices	66.3	22.0	6.2	5.5
Farmers with the least productive land, with farms whose land is less productive and more difficult to farm receiving higher payments	54.4	27.9	9.6	8.1
Farmers with the most productive land, with more productive farms receiving higher payments per hectare farmed	40.6	27.7	23.8	7.9

Furthermore, the Eurobarometer polling into UK-wide public attitudes towards the CAP<sup>49</sup> has a number of pertinent results to bear in mind. The survey invites respondents to reflect on the importance of the respective CAP priorities which is informative in evaluating how the public attribute weight to each of the elements of the policy.

CAP priority	(%) Important EU	(%) Important UK
Strengthening the role of farmers in the food chain	88	80
Developing research and innovation to support the agri-food sector	84	76
Encouraging young people to enter the agricultural sector	84	78

Sixty-one percent overall (across all EU Member states) think that CAP benefits all EU Citizens” not only farmers, compared to 50% in the UK. 42% in the UK want to see financial support to farmers increase over the next ten years. The majority agreed that it is justified that financial support is tied with compliance to food safety, animal welfare, and environmental standards.

Aside from quantitative research in this area, there has been qualitative research<sup>50</sup> exploring the role of women in agriculture which is worth mentioning as it cuts into findings around support for new entrants to the sector. The agriculture census 2018, shows that only 17% of farm and croft occupiers are female.

A key impetus for the research was the underrepresentation of women in farming organisations, and the limited known information on women’s roles in farms. The research evidenced that women are involved in all aspects of farming activities and consequently 90% viewed their role on farms as very important. The main barriers to advancing women’s roles on farms were lack of time (72%), the need to prioritise childcare (54%), lack of financial resources (52%), lack of opportunities (46%) and perceived lack of skills (46%). Nonetheless, the cultural practice of passing on large farms intact to farmers’ sons was seen to inhibit women’s entry into the field of agriculture. In terms of the underrepresentation of women in farming organisations, the research evidenced a number of key factors; importantly, lack of time (26%) and perceived lack of skills (23%) were mentioned. However, the qualitative research evidenced exclusionary practices and discrimination towards women

<sup>49</sup> European Commission, Eurobarometer 2018 Public opinion on the common agricultural policy <https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/key-policies/common-agricultural-policy/cap-glance/eurobarometer>

<sup>50</sup> Scottish Government 2018 Women in Farming and the Agriculture Sector <https://www.gov.scot/Resource/0052/00521489.pdf>



being involved in leadership/board level positions – which in turn made women reticent to take up these positions.

Research undertaken by the James Hutton Institute<sup>51</sup> for the Scottish Land Commission identifies that women and new entrants to the agricultural sector may be key to modernising and driving improvements to the sector as they offer entrepreneurialism, and a different knowledge and skill set from their previous education and employment backgrounds.

## Environment

Aspects of Pillar 1 and Pillar 2 of the CAP focus on environmental protection to minimise the risk of environmental degradation through agricultural practices and advance action on climate change.

There are three priority areas for the environmental aspects of the policy:

1. protecting and enhancing biodiversity and 'natural' farming and forestry systems, and landscapes,
2. water management and use,
3. action on climate change.<sup>52</sup>

Under Pillar 1, environmental protections are advanced through greening provisions which require farmers to adopt practices that benefit the environment and the climate in return for receiving area-based direct payments. Additional payments are made for the adoption of non-compulsory measures that protect the environment as it is felt that the market prices for the agriculture produce in itself do not compensate or incentivise farmers for adopting these practices. With regard to Pillar 2, there are funds available for bespoke agri-environment schemes in each member state and forestry grant schemes. In thinking about priorities for CAP after 2020<sup>53</sup>, there is a commitment to advancing environmental protection by placing environmental conditionalities on the receipt of all direct payments encompassing preserving carbon-rich soils, using nutrient management tools, and using crop rotation practices. Furthermore, there is a commitment to reward farmers who go beyond the mandatory environmental protection measures through further support mechanisms.

In Scotland, the commitment to advancing environmental protection is expressed in the National Performance Framework, with an outcome to this effect: *We value,*

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<sup>51</sup> McKee et al. 2018 Increasing the Availability of Farmland for New Entrants to Agriculture in Scotland, report prepared by the James Hutton Institute for Scottish Land Commission <https://landcommission.gov.scot/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/McKee-et-al.-Final-report-to-SLC-Increasing-land-availability-for-new-entrants-2.5.2018.pdf>

<sup>52</sup> European Commission 2018: Agriculture and rural development [https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-funding\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-funding_en)

<sup>53</sup> European Commission 2018: The Budget, the CAP after 2020 [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/budget-may2018-modernising-cap\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/budget-may2018-modernising-cap_en.pdf)

*enjoy, protect and enhance our environment.* There is also a suggestion that the Human Rights Framework for Scotland should include a right to a healthy environment. The Scottish Government has set ambitious targets for addressing climate change and is proposing net zero greenhouse gas emission zone by 2045 in the Climate Change Bill.

In implementing these ambitious targets, the role of Scottish agriculture is paramount – around 73% of Scotland’s land area is designated as agricultural. Agriculture also contributes to the decarbonisation of Scotland’s energy sector through the production of renewable energy. The agriculture sector has decreased emissions by 25.8% between 1990 and 2015<sup>54</sup>. This decrease has resulted from efficiencies in farming, fewer sheep, a reduction in the use of nitrogen fertiliser, and a reduction in ploughed grassland. Recognising that greenhouse gas emissions are inherent in food production processes it is important to balance food security and reducing emissions, particularly in a post-Brexit Scotland. The Government is already engaging farmers through the “Farming for a better climate” policy to identify practical ways to help farmers adapt their practices in line with actions to address climate change. In so doing, the Scottish Government recognises that engagement with farmers, and the public, is critical to achieving its ambition for a low carbon society and to meet its climate change targets.

Underpinning the range of environmental policies is soil protection which is pertinent for sustainable forestry and agriculture in Scotland – these are also important for meeting the full potential of Scotland’s biodiversity and minimising the issue of poor soil quality<sup>55</sup> which impact these individual sectors. Policy with regard to soil protection is fragmented and relate to the individual sectors which are impacted by soil quality e.g. environment, agriculture, forestry. The Scottish Soil Protection Framework aims to consolidate policy on soil protection as it cuts into so many diverse sectors. Within this, there is a recognition of the role of Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA), in consolidating policy on soil protection as part of its environmental protection function. Moreover, the framework deploys a partnership approach working with a range of agencies such as SEPA, Scottish Natural Heritage, Forestry Commission of Scotland, Historic Scotland and land managers and researchers.

An aspect of the environmental protections aspect of the CAP also contributes to forestry which is important as Scotland is transitioning to complete devolution of forestry. There is a draft strategy<sup>56</sup> being prepared in line with the Forestry and Land Management Act 2018, the aims of which are threefold; to increase the contribution of forests and woodlands to Scotland’s sustainable and inclusive

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<sup>54</sup> Scottish Government 2018: Climate Change Plan - The Third Report on Proposals and Policies 2018-2032 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-governments-climate-change-plan-third-report-proposals-policies-2018/>

<sup>55</sup> James Hutton Institute 2018: Soil Governance in Scotland – Mapping the Institutional Architecture <https://www.climatechange.org.uk/media/3232/soil-governance-in-scotland.pdf>

<sup>56</sup> Scottish Government 2018: Scotland’s Forestry Strategy 2019-2029 [https://consult.gov.scot/forestry/scotlands-forestry-strategy-2019-29/supporting\\_documents/Forestry%20Strategy%20SEA%20Environment%20Report%20041018.pdf](https://consult.gov.scot/forestry/scotlands-forestry-strategy-2019-29/supporting_documents/Forestry%20Strategy%20SEA%20Environment%20Report%20041018.pdf)

growth strategy (this is important as forestry has been estimated to support around 26,000 jobs, and £954m of gross value added); protect and enhance Scotland's natural assets; and to use Scotland's forest and woodlands to improve the health and wellbeing of the populace.

The Forestry Grant Scheme which is partly covered through Pillar 2 of the CAP, will provide around £252 million<sup>57</sup> between 2014-2020 which is required to help Scotland meet its forestry targets e.g. creation of 100,00 hectares of new woodland in the next ten years. The withdrawal from the EU and by extension the CAP will have important implications for the continued funding for the sector. An area which future policy should consider is that the CAP creates competing outcomes in relation to forestry by funding farmers for agricultural produce; therefore, there is little incentive to create woodland on land which is suitable for agriculture. Future policy will need to balance priorities with regards to forestry and agriculture in terms of land use.

### What does the public attitudes data tell us?

Data on environmental attitudes in Scotland is limited given that the last comprehensive public attitudes data was Scottish Environmental Attitudes and Behaviour Survey was carried out in 2008. However, there are some measures within the Scottish Household Survey to collect public opinion data on the subject matter covering perceptions of climate change; recycling behaviours and use of greenspace. Each of these elements of the data is explored in turn. Importantly the proportion of Scottish adults that view climate change as an immediate problem has increased by a third between 2013 and 2017.

	2013 (%)	2014 (%)	2015 (%)	2016 (%)	2017 (%)
Climate change is an immediate and urgent problem	46	45	50	55	61
Climate change is more of a problem for the future	25	26	23	23	18
Climate change is not really a problem	7	8	7	6	5
I'm still not convinced that climate change is happening	13	11	11	9	8
No answer	3	3	3	2	1
Don't know	7	6	7	6	7
<i>Base</i>	9,920	9,800	3,100	3,150	3,160

<sup>57</sup> SPICE Briefing 2016: Implications of Leaving the EU on Forestry  
[http://www.parliament.scot/ResearchBriefingsAndFactsheets/S5/SB\\_16-102\\_Implications\\_of\\_Leaving\\_the\\_EU\\_Forestry.pdf](http://www.parliament.scot/ResearchBriefingsAndFactsheets/S5/SB_16-102_Implications_of_Leaving_the_EU_Forestry.pdf)

There are also various attitudinal questions covered in the 2017 survey which explore perceptions of the responsibility for tackling climate change. Pertinently, 67% disagree with the following statement: *“It’s not worth me doing things to help protect the environment if others don’t do the same”*. In a similar vein, almost six-in-ten (59%) disagree that *“I don’t believe my behaviour and lifestyle contribute to climate change”*. Reflecting these findings, three quarters (74%) agree that *“I understand what actions people like myself should take to tackle climate change”*.

In terms of waste recycling behaviours<sup>58</sup> the survey explores methods of disposing food waste: overall 55% dispose of waste using local authority provided caddy or other receptacles; 48% dispose of general waste with other rubbish; and 9% use home composting. Four-in-five households reported that they recycle materials such as paper, card, glass, food and drink cans/tins and plastic bottles/tubs. The research found that there was a relationship between deprivation and recycling behaviours with the least deprived households most likely to recycle comparative to those in the most deprived households.

The use of local greenspace is an important measure as it impacts quality of life and wellbeing: 52% had visited the Scottish outdoors at least once a week and 37% reported visiting their nearest greenspace several times a week. More generally research into the use of greenspace, and Scotland’s abundant water supply evidences the national pride attached to Scotland’s natural environment and resources.

Deliberative research into water policy in Scotland<sup>59</sup>, reinforces the sense of national pride felt by the public in terms of its view as a vital natural asset and is complementary to Scotland’s hydro-nation strategy. Nonetheless, the research also identified pesticides and fertiliser as possible sources of water contamination. Some participants felt that the risks were likely high and that farmers were not sufficiently accountable for the manner in which they used and disposed of pesticides and fertiliser, others argued that farming was in fact tightly regulated, and fertiliser was a “controlled substance”, so there was little cause to be concerned about this potential source of contamination. Having said that, there is legislation that sets out that those who uses pesticides professionally must have received adequate training in using pesticides safely and be skilled in the job they are carrying out.

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<sup>58</sup> Scottish Government 2016 Key Scottish Environment Statistics 2016  
<https://beta.gov.scot/publications/key-scottish-environment-statistics-2016-9781786525505/pages/4/>

<sup>59</sup> Consumer Futures Unit, Citizens’ Advice Scotland 2018 Untapped Potential: Consumer views on water policy <https://www.cas.org.uk/publications/untapped-potential-consumer-views-water-policy>

## Rural development

CAP funding is directed towards rural development as part of the Pillar 2 funding and incorporates EU and Scottish Government funding. The policy allows member states to deploy personalised rural development strategies.

There are a number of funding streams to advance rural development objectives such as Horizon 2020, and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). This support is implemented in Scotland through the Scottish Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 which focuses on the following key areas: enhancing the rural economy; supporting agricultural and forestry businesses; protecting and improving the natural environment; addressing the impact of climate change; and supporting rural communities. The key aim of this policy is to achieve sustainable economic growth in rural areas. There are a number of aspects to the Scottish Rural Development Programme which makes use of the European funds, including programmes such as LEADER (case studies of which are shown below), as well as the Knowledge Transfer Innovation Fund which strengthens support for research and innovation and sharing ways of improving working practices, and the Environmental Cooperation Fund which enables land managers to work collaboratively to deliver environmental projects.

These programmes support the resilience of remote and rural communities to economic, environmental and social challenges like outward migration, demographic change and reduced public service provision. This area of current policy cuts into the research papers discussed in section 1 on future policy design delivering maximum social value by focusing not just on agricultural support but also environmental and rural development projects.

The ethos of rural development is summarised in this European commission report from 1996:

*“rural development policy must follow the principle of subsidiarity. It must be as decentralised as possible and based on partnership and co-operation between all levels concerned (local, regional, national and European). The emphasis must be on participation and a ‘bottom-up’ approach which harnesses the creativity and solidarity of rural communities.”*

Taking LEADER as an example, there are key distinctive characteristics of this policy, specifically, a focus on endogenous socio-economic development, a bottom-up approach; area based local strategies; and a partnership-based approach. Ray 2000<sup>60</sup> recognises that the funding attributed to LEADER is minimal which hampers its ability to affect hard outcomes, in the period of 2014-2020, the policy accounted

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<sup>60</sup> Ray 2000: The EU Leader Programme: Rural Development Laboratory, Sociologia Ruralis Vol. 40, No 2

for 7%<sup>61</sup> of the Scottish Rural Development Programme. Therefore, there is a recognition that outcomes of the scheme are not economically substantive but contribute to a humanistic view of development – promoting the resilience, personal growth, cultural identity and confidence of communities. This is reflected in the aims of LEADER, that are to increase support to local rural communities and businesses to build knowledge and skills and encourage innovation and cooperation. These projects focus on delivering community action on climate change; enhancing rural services including transport initiatives; enhancing and preserving cultural heritage; promoting tourism and leisure; supporting food and drink initiatives; building co-operation with local organisations; and exchanging learning and knowledge across Europe.

There are a number of examples of how LEADER is being used to develop projects in Scotland. For example, in the Highlands, there is a Landscape Partnership Scheme to conserve the Applecross area<sup>62</sup> which has its own distinctive cultural heritage with many features of its heritage identified as under threat. The Applecross Landscape Partnership Scheme identified a demand for projects to conserve its heritage resources, and to develop sustainable tourism in the area as a means to stimulate the local economy. The work of the partnership scheme has helped to develop a natural heritage audit to aid conservation activity, a development plan to identify opportunities for sustainable tourism in the area, a training programme to enhance awareness of the distinct assets of the area, and a landscape strategy linking tourism to employment opportunities.

Another example is funding provided through LEADER to support Community Led Growth<sup>63</sup> through the employment of Local Development Officers across various areas in the Highlands and Islands. The local development officers, 48 in total, were employed to work on projects identified by the communities themselves. The funding to employ the local development officers was made through Highlands and Islands Enterprise which helped to simplify the process for the communities rather than making separate funding claims. Being part of a wider programme enabled communities, and the local development officers to feel part of a network, even though they were often geographically dispersed.

The approaches used through the LEADER programme, and other initiatives towards rural development raise important points about partnership approaches involving a multitude of organisations and being led by local action groups. There is a balance to be achieved in terms of delivering a “bottom-up” approach through grassroots involvement and establishing clear lines of communication/ involvement/ engagement<sup>64</sup> with local and central government. This is important as local and

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<sup>61</sup> SPICE Briefing 2016: European Union Funding in Scotland 2014-2020 [http://www.parliament.scot/ResearchBriefingsAndFactsheets/S5/SB\\_16-89\\_European\\_Union\\_Funding\\_in\\_Scotland\\_2014-2020.pdf](http://www.parliament.scot/ResearchBriefingsAndFactsheets/S5/SB_16-89_European_Union_Funding_in_Scotland_2014-2020.pdf)

<sup>62</sup> Applecross Landscape Partnership: <http://www.visit-applecross.org/pagex.asp?bioid=33613>

<sup>63</sup> Highlands and Islands Enterprise: Community Account Management <http://www.hie.co.uk/community-support/account-management/community-account-management.html>

<sup>64</sup> Ray 2000: The EU Leader Programme: Rural Development Laboratory, Sociologia Ruralis Vol. 40, No 2

central government can learn from the policies implemented through local projects and address some of the larger questions raised by some of these projects which are beyond the capacity of rural areas to address, not least with respect to the limited funds available for these initiatives.

There is also discussion of the balance between social and economic outcomes from rural development initiatives – and if social and civic goals are prioritised if there is a commitment to view them as a progression to economic development goals. This may also require additional investment for regeneration and job creation in these areas. <sup>65</sup> An evaluation of rural development projects in Scotland 1996, found that there was either a focus on job creation, and business enterprise or on health, youth, and the environment – thus there was a view that projects focussing on both of these areas should be considered in policy design. Some of the examples of recent LEADER projects focus on sustainable tourism as a means of stimulating the economy.

At a wider strategic level, the European Union Rural Review<sup>66</sup> points out that digital and social innovation is a key priority for rural development – a key challenge for this will be the issue of broadband connectivity and digital infrastructure. Atterton et al. 2018<sup>67</sup> point out that alternatives to EU funding in the area of digital connectivity is imperative to ensure equity between urban and rural areas; indeed, there are key gains to be made in terms of service provision such as e-Health developments which would benefit remote rural communities.

Moreover, there is a view that rural development should be coupled with research and innovation policy to increase the knowledge base in rural areas. There is also the concept of “smart villages” which is a purposive tool in thinking about rural development:

*“Rural areas and communities which build on their existing strengths and assets as well as new opportunities to develop added value and where traditional and new networks are enhanced by means of digital communications technologies”*

The concept recognises the local knowledge and personal resilience of local communities and seeks to enhance them through wider links to research and innovation – this is achieved through local people coming together to develop a strategy around local assets and aspirations.

After 2020, there are reforms to the CAP which will affect rural development support; importantly, in communications there is a reorientation towards sustainable

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<sup>65</sup> Shortall and Shucksmith 2001: Rural development in practice: issues arising in Scotland and Northern Ireland, Oxford University Press, Journal of Community Development

<sup>66</sup> European Network for Rural Development 2018: Smart Villages Revitalising Rural Services [https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/sites/enrd/files/enrd\\_publications/publi-enrd-rr-26-2018-en.pdf](https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/sites/enrd/files/enrd_publications/publi-enrd-rr-26-2018-en.pdf)

<sup>67</sup> Atterton et al. 2018 After Brexit: 10 Key Questions for Rural Policy in Scotland

development with priority given to programmes in areas such as clean energy, the emerging bio-economy, the circular economy and eco-tourism.

It is unclear where future funding will be redirected – however, there are key lessons from the resilience of rural communities which are informative in considering rural development. Sustainability again is a key theme. Research shows that community land estates such as the Galson Estate Trust<sup>68</sup> which came into community ownership through changes to legislation through Land Reform Act and Community Right to buy, provide opportunities for rural communities to use land ownership and alternative energy generation to identify independent revenue streams and use these for local re-investment; these schemes, and others serve wider societal and economic benefits to the local population.

There are other pertinent examples of such community ownership, for example more than half the land area of the Western Isles is now in community ownership<sup>69</sup>, through Scottish land reform, and the community is involved in discussions about plans for development in these areas. These schemes are pertinent in conceptualising sustainable communities characterised by local economic diversity; self-reliance; sustainable energy use; protection of natural resources; and commitment to social justice housing, employment, access to public services and local participation. These themes are useful in thinking about future priorities for rural development.

Future policy should also be cognisant of the changing rural economy, which is experiencing a lessening of the reliance on agriculture, which accounts for 3-4% of GVA in rural Scotland. There has been an increase in sectors such as Public Administration and Distribution, Wholesale and Retail, and Business Services, however, there are challenges related to lower wages in the sectors which dominate the rural economy e.g. public and service sectors, part-time and self-employment, and a higher prevalence of small businesses. Overall, in terms of the rural economy, there is a comparative gap in terms of labour productivity and gross domestic product per capita, than urban areas<sup>70</sup>.

Bosworth and Atterton, 2012<sup>71</sup> cite business owners, especially those who are in-migrants, as an important source of rural economic development arguing that a mix of locally embedded and extra-local sources are needed to enable access to wider opportunities and knowledge as well as to support the exchange of these resources within rural networks. The research highlights the potential to augment local initiatives and enterprises through external assets, networks, knowledge and skills. An example of this is microbusinesses which are becoming increasingly important

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<sup>68</sup> Rennie and Billing 2015, Changing community perceptions of sustainable rural development in Scotland, Journal of Rural and Community Development <https://pure.uhi.ac.uk/portal/files/1985287/GalsonEnergy.pdf>

<sup>69</sup> Shucksmith 2016: Re-imagining the rural: from rural idyll to the good countryside, Journal of Rural Studies

<sup>70</sup> OECD 2006: The New Rural Paradigm: Policies and Governance

<sup>71</sup> Bosworth and Atterton 2012: Entrepreneurial In-migration and Neo-endogenous Rural Development, Journal of Rural Sociology



in rural economies as they help to diversify business sectors and help to off-set the decline of traditional primary sectors – the research shows that these businesses could be enhanced by external connections which also help to increase the demand for these businesses.

These findings can be contextualised in research carried out by Atterton 2007<sup>72</sup>, exploring the social networks used by businesses in rural areas of Scotland. The research identified a strong reliance on local, familial networks for the supplier and consumer base for businesses, in contrast in-migrants were commonly seen to weaken these local connections. Having said that, business owners in Dingwall and Tain, covered in this research, had made connections in Inverness to make use of the economic growth in the city, however, they noted that this tended to make business relationships more formalised and contractual. These findings highlight the potential of making linkages between urban and rural sites in terms of stimulating business opportunities in both areas and point to the changes this will affect in terms of how business relationships are traditionally enacted in rural contexts.

Overall in thinking through future policy, Scotland needs to consider rural development in its own right as discussions are often dominated by the agricultural aspects of the prevailing CAP. It is important to consider ways in which rural development policy can be mainstreamed into wider growth strategies deployed by the Scottish Government, as opposed to being packaged as a subset of agricultural policy<sup>73</sup>. This is particularly important as rural development policy matters are cross-cutting and involve a number of ministerial portfolios covering health, education, the economy, in considering this wider focus attention should be paid to the potential of inclusive growth strategies which recognise the importance of developing rural infrastructure and connectivity through a place-based approach. Atterton et. al 2016 in considering key questions for the Scottish rural economy after Brexit, highlight the point that the rural economy covers a number of small businesses that risk being overlooked in future policy; and that growth strategies which help to grow these small businesses can provide a source of economic growth and employment in these areas.

The points raised about policy divergence and funding for this area of policy remain pertinent as discussed in the agriculture section of this review. An additional layer is unpacking what specific types of support are needed in the diverse context of remote rural Scotland. Support provided to these areas should be framed within the context of the array of public goods provided by rural areas covering drinking water, carbon storage, food production, renewable energy, biodiversity, climate change mitigation, forestry, and heritage and landscape.

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<sup>72</sup> Atterton 2007: The 'Strength of Weak Ties': Social Networking by Business Owners in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland

<sup>73</sup> National Council for Rural Advisers 2018: A New Blueprint for Scotland's Rural Economy: Recommendations to Scottish Ministers <https://www.gov.scot/publications/new-blueprint-scotlands-rural-economy-recommendations-scottish-ministers/>

## What does the public attitudes data tell us?

Research has been carried out exploring attitudes to rural life, poignantly there is an idyllic public perception of rural communities. Research carried out in Northern Ireland has shown that there is a view that there is less crime in the countryside (66% agree that there is less crime); that there is more community spirit in the countryside (70% agree that there is more community spirit); and that the countryside is a better place to raise children (70% agree that it is a better place to raise children). These findings reinforce the view of the rural idyll; this is reflected in research carried out by Shucksmith et al, 2012<sup>74</sup> which found that there is a widespread view of rural areas as “*idyllic places of peace, as repositories of national identity and yet also as backward areas in need of modernisation.*”

It is important to bear these results in mind when thinking about rural development in the public consciousness; and unpacking this idea of the rural idyll when considering evidence concerning rural social exclusion. Indeed, analysis of the Poverty and Social Exclusion survey 2012, has shown that while there are higher concentrations of poverty and material disadvantage in urban areas, there are some key factors of disadvantage experienced by those in remote rural areas. The analysis shows that more rural and remote areas have higher problems of access to services; higher prevalence of part-time work; and lower levels of social support<sup>75</sup>.

Evidence around disparate access to services is found in the Scottish Household Survey which shows that there is some variation in perceptions of local services in urban and rural areas, although this is mainly attributed to dissatisfaction with transport services:

	<b>Large urban areas (%)</b>	<b>Other urban areas (%)</b>	<b>Accessible small towns (%)</b>	<b>Remote small towns (%)</b>	<b>Accessible rural (%)</b>	<b>Remote rural (%)</b>
Local health services	<b>85</b>	79	81	<b>76</b>	86	83
Local Schools	<b>65</b>	72	71	<b>78</b>	67	<b>78</b>
Public Transport	<b>79</b>	70	57	66	<b>48</b>	<b>51</b>

Having said that, the Scottish Household Survey also shows that those in accessible rural and remote rural locations are more likely than those in large urban

<sup>74</sup> Shucksmith M and Schafft K (2012) Poverty and Social Exclusion in the UK and US, in Shucksmith M, Brown D, Shortall S, Vergunst J and Warner M (eds) Rural Transformations and Rural Policies in the US and UK, Routledge.

<sup>75</sup> Bailey, N. Bramley, G. and Gannon, M. (2016) Poverty and social exclusion in urban and rural areas of Scotland, Poverty and Social Exclusion UK Survey 2012 Working Paper

and other urban areas to rate the place where they live as very/fairly good (70% and 76% respectively compared to 53% respectively).

Turning to attitudes to rural Scotland, there are a number of specific issues to consider depending on the scale of rurality e.g. for accessible rural areas there is the issue of inward migration/commuter towns which means that there is a lack of services and economic generation in these areas. Conversely, remote rural areas are often characterised by out-migration of young people, which consequently reduces labour and employment opportunities and there is the separate issue of transport<sup>76</sup> in these areas, which lead to their frequent categorisation as “fragile areas”. These differences are important to bear in mind as opposed to conceptualising “rural” as a homogenous mass.

Research into a Minimum Income Standard for Remote Rural Scotland carried out by Highlands and Islands Enterprise<sup>77</sup> found that the additional costs of food in remote rural areas and the Islands of Scotland negatively impact rural communities. Higher food prices stem from the additional costs added by small-town supermarkets because of additional delivery costs and smaller volumes of purchase. The research identifies that everyday groceries cost around 10 per cent more at small-town supermarkets than in larger urban areas, and over 50 per cent more at convenience stores.

There are further issues of inequality to consider in the rural and agricultural contexts. Research shows that women living in Remote Rural Scotland have the lowest annual income of any group in Scotland, and the largest median gender pay gap, at £5,076<sup>78</sup>. In thinking about future rural development projects, consideration should be given to pre-development and capacity building to help mobilise and engage groups who may not be typically involved in community action processes, such as women, who are important in addressing some of these rural inequalities.

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<sup>76</sup> Scottish Government 2009 The Experience of Rural Poverty in Scotland: Qualitative Research with Organisations Working with People Experiencing Poverty in Rural Areas  
<https://www.gov.scot/Publications/2009/03/02144159/0>

<sup>77</sup> Highlands and Islands Enterprise 2016 A Minimum Income Standard for Remote Rural Scotland 2016  
<http://www.hie.co.uk/regional-information/economic-reports-and-research/archive/a-minimum-income-standard-for-remote-rural-scotland---a-policy-update.html>

<sup>78</sup> Scottish Government 2018: Understanding the Scottish rural economy  
<https://beta.gov.scot/publications/understanding-scottish-rural-economy/pages/13/>

The Eurobarometer study on the Common Agriculture Policy, also covers aspects of rural development. The results show some improvement towards broadband internet coverage and mobile phone service; however limited progress on some of the other indicators.

<b>Statement</b>	<b>(%) Improved EU</b>	<b>(%) Improved UK</b>
Broadband internet coverage and mobile phone service	64	56
Access to social, health and cultural services	34	31
The participation of all individuals in social and economic life (social inclusion)	30	27
The environment and landscape	30	25
Economic growth and jobs	27	25

Picking up on broadband connectivity more generally, the most recent Scottish Household Survey 2017, has found that there is no statistically significant variation in internet use by urbanity/rurality.

## Appendix B: Qualitative interview findings

The research involved in-depth interviews with 15 participants with a range of characteristics, the demographic profile of the sample is shown below.

Interview number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Special diets	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓
ABC1	✓				✓	✓				✓				✓	✓
C2DE		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		
16-34		✓				✓				✓	✓				✓
35-54	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓				✓	✓		
55+				✓					✓					✓	
Urban	✓	✓			✓	✓				✓	✓				
Rural			✓	✓			✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓

### Qualitative research findings

#### Views on food consumption

Participants spontaneously cited a range of factors when making decisions about their food consumption; among these, the most dominant factors were specific dietary requirements, attitudes towards the authenticity of food, cost and availability. Each of these aspects is discussed in turn.

Specific dietary requirements were a common factor underpinning participant's choices about their food consumption, which is perhaps unsurprising given that this was a quota variable in the selection of participants. Specific diets encompassed those on gluten-free diets who were restricted to the gluten-free options available in supermarkets; taste, option and cost of food were also seen to be affected by the gluten-free diet factor.

*"There is one shelf which stocks gluten free options and the bread doesn't taste that good either"* (Interview 2)

*"I'm severely gluten intolerant so I have to be careful with what I'm eating...I always check the labels"* (Interview 9)

In a similar vein, those with specific food allergies and intolerances described the difficulties of checking food items for certain ingredients and cited a reliance on eating fresher food options as they contained less additives and gave them more

control in terms of what they were consuming. While this was seen to be the “healthier option”, there was the view that these food items tend to be more expensive than frozen and canned foods which are more cost-effective for larger families.

In contrast to those who described having to adopt specific diets because of their allergies or intolerances, there were also those who willingly adopted specific diets, such as dairy free, or sugar free, as a measure to improve their health. Those on such diets were consuming alternatives such as sugar free options, and almond or coconut milk. Indeed, those in this category described their diet more in terms of choice; this was in part related to income, as those who willingly made changes to their diet this way were typically of the ABC1 social grade category.

There were also those who adopted specific diets based on their cultural, religious and environmental views.

For instance, vegan and vegetarian dietary preferences stemmed from attitudes towards animal welfare and environmental concerns regarding the impact of food production on the environment.

*“I wouldn’t eat anything that I wouldn’t kill myself”* (Interview 10)

*“The whole mass production system is unsustainable; we are feeding animals to kill them to feed us”* (Interview 5)

Climate change was commonly mentioned by those on vegan and vegetarian diets. There was specific mention of the methane gases released by animals in the air, which is a contributing factor to climate change, but also the vast use of land assets, and water and air pollution caused by animal farming. There was the view, that the vast consumer demand for meat, particularly red meat by fast food chains, had resulted in vast arrays of farmland being used to rear cows instead of growing crops and had also led to deforestation by placing competing demands on Scottish green land.

While environmental concerns were specific to the subset of the sample on a vegan or vegetarian diet, the issue of animal welfare was cited more generally. Recent media coverage<sup>79</sup> of the treatment of animals on Scottish farms was cited by participants and may have resulted in the heightened consciousness of animal welfare. Among those who consumed meat, eggs, fish, there was a preference to learn more information about the treatment of the animal, specifically, there was appetite to learn where the animal had been reared, what it had been fed, and how it was treated on the farm. In terms of eggs, there was a preference to consume “free-range”.

*“I feel guilty about killing wee lambs for eating”* (Interview 7)

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<sup>79</sup> <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-6286117/Sheep-shearers-caught-camera-punching-animals.html>

*“There are farms where they massage animals, play music for them, and feed them hay, this makes the meat better quality as there are less toxins and fat”*  
(Interview 1)

Among those who were concerned about animal welfare there was a preference for locally sourced “Scottish” meat as there was a view that this would be better quality and you could more readily obtain information about the treatment of the animal.

Those on Halal and Kosher diets also discussed animal welfare but in terms specific to their religious beliefs. Among those on both Halal and Kosher diets, there was mention of the restrictions on the consumption of pork as pigs were seen to be an “unclean animal”. Halal and Kosher meat signified health, cleanliness and certain animal welfare conditions being met for those on these diets. Moreover, there was the view that the slaughtering process specific to the Islamic belief system was more humane as it was quicker, leading to less pain for the animal.

Apart from the meat consumption aspect for those on these diets, there was mention of specific oils, spices, and ingredients which were frequently used in the preparation of food. These items were commonly purchased in the Halal and Kosher food shops; having said that, there was mention of supermarket chains such as Tesco and Morrisons having “world food isles” which stock some of these items.

A lesser mentioned view was in relation to social concerns around the production of food, “free trade” logos were cited by a small number of participants. Among this subset, there was a global perspective of food production which recognised farmers within developing countries as important players within the food chain. There was a reflection that while there is a preference to consume locally sourced produce, this should not be to the detriment of food sourced from developing countries who rely on selling their produce on international markets. There was also the view that the vast amount of food wasted in Scotland would be “nuggets of gold” for some people in developing countries.

Another common factor mentioned spontaneously by participants was authenticity, although it was not described specifically this way and was seen as a wider quality issue. One aspect of authenticity was a lack of trust in the labelling of food, this was particularly felt with regards to organic food which was conceived as “*just a name*”, “*just words for the farming community*” and a “marketing ploy”; there was also concern regarding the origin of produce labelling.

*“I worked in a hen rescue and from this experience I can say that organic is not real”* (Interview 5)

*“A pig can be labelled as from the UK, when it has actually been in the UK for two days, and been farmed in Romania”* (Interview 4)

When discussing authenticity, participants commonly cited the “*horsemeat scandal*” and expressed concern in the lack of knowledge of what they were eating – for

instance, one participant gave the example of questioning if there were purchasing 100% chicken breast or whether it was filled with water. In this respect, participants expressed feeling a loss of control to the supermarket and wider food manufacturing processes in terms of determining what was available to them to eat.

Another aspect of food authenticity was the enhancement of food with chemicals, hormones and antibiotics. Indeed, these chemicals were a source of worry for participants. There was a recognition that some of these enhancements to food were driven by consumer demand for aesthetically pleasing food, and longer sell by dates. There was a view that this demand had led to a decrease in the costs of some less aesthetically pleasing produce such as “wonky vegetables” and a premium cost for enhanced foods. To a lesser extent, genetic modification of food was discussed in the interviews, among those who did cite this as a concern, there was a view that this was unsafe for consumers. Overall, there was a perception that issues related to authenticity and quality standards would worsen after Brexit.

Cost and availability as a factor in food consumption tended to go hand in hand in the research. There was a view that cost was a limiting factor in purchasing fresher foods; and there was a limited availability of these fresher foods within specific neighbourhoods.

*“I want to make a fresh salad for lunch, but the variety of ingredients needed make it expensive to put together” (Interview 8)*

*“If you are in a deprived postcode then the local shops are stocked with alcohol and crisps” (Interview 3)*

*“Readymade food is cheaper and then you don’t have the added fuel costs in preparing the food” (Interview 4)*

The availability of certain types of food was exacerbated for those living in rural communities. There was mention of limited availability of shops in the area, and a reliance on public transport to reach these shops or on online shopping which can be costlier. In terms of small commuter towns there was a perception that there was a lack of shops in the area as residents typically travel to nearby urban areas where they do most of their shopping. On the other hand, for those living in island communities, there was mention of the impact of changes to the ferry schedules which is frequent in bad weather on the supply of food from the mainland. This led to “panic-buying” and shops often running out of stock for basic supplies.

*“There are changes being made to the bus schedules which will mean that it will take 1 hour to get to the nearest supermarket and a slow service on Sundays” (Interview 3)*

*“Last year the ferry didn’t sail for three days and we didn’t have any milk. We normally stock up on food in the chest freezer but sometimes the shops run out” (Interview 12)*



In terms of prioritising the range of factors mentioned, participants tended to prioritise their specific diet e.g. veganism, vegetarianism, halal, kosher or their allergy or intolerance as the paramount factor in determining their food consumption. Participants who did not self-identify in any of these categories prioritised practical considerations mostly cost and quality in their decisions. Personal factors such as knowledge, skills, household composition and time, were less frequently mentioned by participants.

## **Perceptions of agriculture, environment, and rural priorities**

Building on the conversations around food consumption, participants had already alluded to some of the key priorities for Scottish agriculture which are discussed in more detail in this section, as well as those pertaining to the environment and rural development.

### ***Agriculture Priorities***

Overall the agricultural sector was viewed positively by participants as they commonly ascribed value to “local” and “Scottish” agricultural produce.

Pertinently, however, there were several issues related to the agricultural sector raised by participants and within this context, Brexit was spontaneously mentioned. For most part, the impacts of Brexit were perceived to have a negative impact on Scottish agriculture. Food security, and the availability of certain types of imported foods was commonly mentioned as a priority for the sector. There was recognition that Scottish agriculture in and of itself is not sustainable and there is a reliance on food commodities from the Continent; the free flow of which would be affected by the withdrawal from the Common Market.

*“It is imperative that Scotland has some sort of European Free Trade Agreement to create a good environment for the trade of food products because we can’t grow everything here” (Interview 10)*

*“Exports that took minutes will take longer which makes it impossible for perishable foods” (Interview 4)*

Brexit was not only seen to affect the availability of certain food items but also the respective cost of these items.

*“Serrano and Manchego (Spanish restaurant in Edinburgh) has closed down because they get all their ingredients from Spain.... Brexit will mean that small shops that sell foreign items will have to shut down” (Interview 6)*

There was also the issue of food quality standards and a concern that these would decrease after Brexit as the EU has stringent conditions on quality and labelling. In addition to this, there was a perception that the available funding for research and innovation in the agricultural sector and grant funding to subsidise farmers would decline – particularly given the period of “austerity” facing the UK.

Related to concerns around sustainability, there was spontaneous mention of the low income of farmers which was seen as a risk for the farming profession in Scotland. Participants who resided in proximity to farmland, cited anecdotes of the decline of farms in their area or of farms having lesser staff than in previous years. There was also the view that the profession is susceptible to risks arising from poor weather, or disease, which can lead to a further decline in the income of farmers.

*“Farmers can go bankrupt if there are issues with the food stock, like foot and mouth, mad cow disease” (Interview 2)*

Moreover, participants raised concerns related to workforce sustainability for Scottish agriculture - although this did not relate to non-UK EU workers. Rather, there was a recognition that young people do not consider farming as a desirable profession which will in turn affect new entrants to the industry and will lead to labour issues.

*“The newer generation don’t want to get up at 5am and get their hands dirty working the land, they are frightened of hard work” (Interview 11)*

Having said that, it should be noted that these sympathies for the farming profession were by no means universal, and there was also the view particularly among those who are environmentally conscious, that farmers are over compensated for losses to their crops and that they could be doing much more to protect the environment and to advance animal welfare conditions.

*“I’m cynical of farmers...they are quite well-off and get sympathy in the media - “those poor farmers who have lost their crops” and folk run to help them” (Interview 5)*

*“Farmers and crofters have the skills to grow crops and rear animals, they should be encouraged to protect the environment” (Interview 3)*

Reflecting the importance of quality and authenticity for participants, there was an acute perception of the use of chemicals and pesticides in agriculture. There was a view that the overuse of chemicals was used to compensate poor farming practices which did not adequately cultivate the land. The use of chemicals was also precipitated through a “race-to-the-bottom” view that consumers want the largest quantity for the lowest prices. While farming practices were seen to affect the quality of food, there was also a recognition that supermarkets and industrial food manufacturers have a role to play. More specifically, there was a view that additional ingredients are added to food to increase the quantity and weight of the produce.

Animal welfare was also mentioned as a priority for agriculture. There were various degrees of concern around this, whereas some cited RSPCA labelling as an important reassurance regarding the treatment of animals, others wholly expressed disapproval of animal farming because of cruelty to animals. A lesser mentioned view was that the standards for animal slaughtering are protected in European law

and the period of uncertainty related to new legislation coming into place may result in a decrease in standards.

*“As a vegan I don’t support animal farming because of the whole animal cruelty aspect, and the costs to the planet... I think farming should concentrate on growing a variety of different fruit and veg”* (Interview 10)

### **Environment Priorities**

Among the three areas covered by CAP, the environment was less commonly discussed in the research. The term sustainability was conventionally used in discussions about priorities for agriculture, however participants did not make the link with environmental protections as a means to achieving sustainability. This was because sustainability was conceived in narrow terms as the ability to continue producing the food products that we consume so was seen as a food security issue.

For those for whom the environment was important there was a deep knowledge of the subject and a view that it should be higher on the agenda particularly as it is intertwined with both agriculture and rural development. To this end, there was a view that the environment should underpin the way we think about agriculture and rural development.

*“Environmental issues should be the top concern for agriculture”* (Interview 2)

To illustrate the relationship between these elements, participants described a number of processes. For instance, there was mention of how animals are often given steroids and chemicals which mean that they release gases in the air affecting air quality, and climate change; there is also the issue of farming waste and chemicals running into fresh water supplies affecting water quality. Climate change is in turn having an impact on the weather conditions which are affecting food harvests. There was also specific mention of species like bees and bats that are important as pollinators that fertilise plants.

With respect to rural development, there was a recognition of the wide range of assets – including scenic landscapes, rivers, canals. There was a recognition that there are competing demands for agricultural land, emphasising the importance of conserving the green belt to protect rural assets and using this land and water for alternative energy resources such as wind, solar and hydro power.

*“Optimal food production is dependent on a multitude of factors such as habitat, ecological environment and the nature of the farmland”* (Interview 4)

*“Bumble bees are dying out in Lewis and Harris; we need them as pollinators for the next generation of plants”* (Interview 12)

When thinking about the responsibility for protecting the environment, the issue of pollution from farms was commonly discussed. There were mixed attitudes

regarding this issue, while some felt that farmers should take measures to minimise pollution, others argued that pollution was inevitable from farms, and that the focus should be oriented towards supermarkets and the industrial processes used by food manufacturers.

*“Farming has been done for thousands of years, global warming is an issue of the last 100-150 years, to blame farming is to scapegoat the issue”* (Interview 11)

*“Climate change is a global problem and will drastically change agriculture, but who makes policy on that, who regulates that?”* (Interview 9)

Plastic packaging of food produce was also spontaneously raised by participants as an environmental concern. It was felt that supermarkets and food manufacturers package almost all items in plastics, and that they should be encouraged to adopt alternatives such as paper bags and reinforced cardboard for packaging fruit and vegetables.

*“I try to buy loose vegetables, but a bag of three peppers is cheaper than the loose single peppers”* (Interview 15)

While participants who were environmentally conscious cited measures that they were personally adopting to protect the environment such as reducing their meat intake, purchasing loose unpackaged food and recycling, overall, there was a perception that supermarkets, food manufacturers and farmers were responsible for taking steps to protect the environment.

### ***Rural development priorities***

There were several priorities for rural development raised in the research. It is worth noting that there were no differences between urban/rural in terms of considering rural development as a priority. However, there was a view among those in urban areas that some differences between urban and rural areas were inevitable and that those living in these areas were doing so out of choice.

*“people make a choice to live in the middle of nowhere, but you also want to make sure they are not disenfranchised and completely cut-off”* (Interview 10)

Provision of services was a prevalent theme in the research. Transport provision was commonly seen to be limited in rural areas, and there were specific issues related to infrequent bus and train services, and disruptions to ferry services.

*“The system relies on old buses which don’t service all of the routes and break down quite a bit”* (Interview 2)

There was a view that the limited availability of public transport creates a reliance on cars which in turn affects the environment – although there was a lesser mentioned view that four-by-four cars were a necessity to get around in remote rural locations.

In addition to transport services, there was mention of service closure such as banks, post offices, out of hours hospitals, and schools. There was a perception that limited service provision stemmed from the low population density in these areas as population numbers are needed to justify service provision.

*“The RBS bank has closed down, which means there are less ATMs which are needed by tourists” (Interview 3)*

*“Rural areas need to have people living there at the right age (young people) so they need schools, internet, roads, and a transportation system” (Interview 4)*

One participant discussed the development of Euro Park in Calder bank Village as an example of a housing development being built on green belt. There was the view that, as it is bringing affordable housing for many people, a hospital and school is being built alongside the development. Indeed, there was an implicit assumption that these services would not be available if the development was not being constructed.

With respect to schools, however, the University of Highlands and Islands campuses were seen as a positive development as well as the distance learning courses offered by the institution.

There was also specific mention of a lack of health and social care services in rural areas – one participant discussed moving from a rural to an urban location to be able to receive the care package she required. There was a perception that disabled homes were few in rural areas, and therefore “stuck out, and become centres for anti-social behaviour”.

*“I run an anti-smoking service but there is no funding to run this type of clinic for rural communities... they have health problems and issues with alcoholism” (Interview 5)*

In addition to service provision, there was the issue of electricity shortages and poor communication infrastructure such as mobile connectivity and broadband. One participant mentioned, that there is only 2G network coverage in some parts of Skye.

*“The electric cables run from Ulapool to the Island and the electricity goes off more often than when we had our own electricity plant... sometimes the whole island has no electricity” (Interview 12)*

Moreover, while participants in rural areas did not self-identify as being in poverty, there was a perception that there were high levels of unemployment in rural areas and thus a reliance on the welfare system. Conversely, those in urban areas recognised that there is often a difference in wages between those living in urban and rural areas, however there was a caveat that the cost of living might be lower in rural areas, thus in part justifying the differences.

There was the view that high levels of unemployment in rural areas stemmed from a lack of jobs in these areas, one participant discussed having to show 35 hours of job searches related to claiming universal credit, which was not feasible as there was a limited availability of jobs. Discussions around the lack of jobs was couched in descriptions in the decline in industry jobs, and a lack of consequent regeneration of the local economy. Having said that there was a recognition of tourism as a means to stimulate rural economies, although this was seen to have both positive and negative impacts on communities.

### Priorities for future policy

Overall, there were mixed views in relation to priorities for future policy, bearing in mind the legacy of CAP. The research identified broad support for continuing subsidies for farmers, but also found support for some reallocation of spending to the environmental and rural development priorities identified by participants.

There was a view that farmers should continue to be subsidised as they are important in terms of producing the food and drink that we consume, and as such are providing a vital public service. This was reinforced by the perspective that farmers have low incomes and are working hard for little return, thus there should be an incentive in place to ensure continuity of the profession.

*“If the subsidy is removed it won’t make sense for farmers to work hard to earn less than the minimum wage, they would rather sell their farmland to be used as a caravan park” (Interview 4)*

It should be noted, however, that this view was not universally accepted in the research, and those in professions such as the NHS and social care, did not accept the subsidy provided to farmers as an equivalent was not in place for their profession which also provide an important public service.

Nonetheless, some participants differentiated farming from other industries which are subject to fluctuations in their earnings as there was a view that farmers have little control in terms of their product, pricing, and marketplace. For instance, what they are able to grow is dependent on the nature of their farmland and prices are often set by supermarkets which were seen to have a “stranglehold on farmers” in terms of keeping prices low. There was also the view that if there was a minimum pricing structure in place which adequately compensated farmers for their produce, then the subsidy would not be required.

Moreover, there was a perception that Scottish farmers will become even more important after Brexit because food security will become a more pertinent issue, therefore justifying the continuation of the subsidy. There was a widespread view that Scotland/the UK should find ways to become more self-sufficient. This was important as it was felt that imported produce will become more expensive after Brexit, so there would be an increasing reliance on local produce.

*“Food security is important and it’s hard to get it back once we lose it...the writing is on the wall, normally the status quo is not a preferable option, but when it comes down to securing what we eat, then we need to maintain the subsidy”* (Interview 10)

*“Issues affecting farmers will have a domino effect on consumers”* (Interview 2)

There was a view that low productivity stemmed from underfunding and a lack of investment in services; therefore, if we want to have sustainable and efficient food production system then we need to keep the subsidy in place – this may even increase the current 1% GVA from agriculture in Scotland.

In terms of the direct payment, there were mixed views in terms of whether the payments should be based on the size of the farmland, while some felt that this was an indication of the level of production and should be kept in place, others did not see this link and felt that subsidies should be based on the type of agricultural produce and how important that was in terms of the range of food products needed for sustainability and variety. There was also a suggestion that higher payments should be made to smaller farms and those who employ a high number of staff as they are providing a source of employment in rural areas.

A lesser mentioned view was that the subsidies should be targeted and used to encourage farming practices that protect the environment, animal welfare and the highest quality, and range of agriculture produce.

*“I can’t stop animal farming altogether because people still want to consume meat, so we should look at making sure animals are treated the best possible way...we could look at getting more slaughter houses, so animals aren’t in the back of a truck for 8 hours or being shipped to France”* (Interview 15)

The point about targeting subsidies stemmed from the view that the policies of the CAP created a “broad brush approach” which led to poor quality farming for large quantities of commercial produce which inhibited variety in farming. Those who prioritised food security and sustainability commented that there should be an overarching food policy to organise and manage food production in Scotland. This would involve creating a food map to locate “where can we get certain types of goods and where is its optimal value to grow them”.

In relation to making the profession more efficient and with a view to longer-term planning, there was the suggestion that funding on agriculture should also be allocated to finding innovations to current farming practices and identifying new techniques to grow the products that we need.

*“If all the money goes to cover the farmers losses then we don’t solve anything, we could invest in growing something else”* (Interview 12)

There was specific mention of Polly-tunnels, urban gardening and vertical farming practices in this respect. Reflecting the discussions about workforce, there was also

mention of education provision in farming and agriculture to encourage new entrants but also to develop the skills of the existing workforce.

While there was broad support for subsidising farmers; there was also appetite for reallocating the funding split between the three areas of policy – agriculture, environment and rural development.

Reflecting the holistic approach to how the three aspects of policy are intertwined, it was felt that environmental protections should underpin agriculture and rural development by protecting biodiversity, reducing pollution, using alternative energy resources in the manufacturing of food, and protecting green spaces, rural landscapes and rivers.

Participants expressed the view that food production will have to change to adapt to climate change – therefore, environmental projects should underpin future policy. This would encompass reducing overall meat production, but also placing an emphasis on the wider industrial food manufacturing processes and reducing plastic packaging of food items. It was felt that future policy should be informed by some long-term forecasting of trends in climate change.

*“The Scottish Government should encourage environmental policies and look at recyclable materials to pack food” (Interview 5)*

*“We need to think about endangered species, and the staples of food production and if these are sustainable or not and if we need to adapt our diets” (Interview 15)*

Furthermore, there was the view that rural development, specifically in terms of the provision of services should be prioritised independently of its relationship with agriculture. It was felt that an emphasis should be placed on developing rural broadband “as we live in a technological age, rural communities will get left behind”. Participants also expressed the view that future policy should focus on equalising service provision in urban and rural areas, focusing on ensuring that basic services were provided to enable people to live in the remote areas of Scotland. Those who advanced this perspective felt that a 60:40, or 50:50 split in terms of spending on agriculture and rural development should be made in future policy.



## Appendix C: Survey research findings

To establish a baseline of public attitudes towards agriculture, environment and rural communities, a nationally representative survey of 2,345 Scottish adults (16+) was carried out.

The survey was conducted online between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of December 2018.

The achieved sample profile is representative of the Scottish population in terms of gender, age, social grade, and location. Where there were shortfalls in the achieved sample, weighting was applied based on Scottish mid-population estimates.

Variable	Achieved sample profile		Population profile	
	%	N	%	N
<b>Gender</b>				
Female	57%	1326	2,640,300	51%
Male	43%	1019	2,784,500	49%
<b>Age</b>				
16-34	12%	286	1,383,977	30%
35-44	10%	245	664,086	15%
45-54	21%	498	792,119	17%
55-64	31%	717	707,897	16%
65+	26%	599	1,012,567	22%
<b>Social Grade</b>				
ABC1	55%	1296	1,725,871	50%
C2DE	45%	1048	1,703,190	50%
<b>Urban-Rural 6</b>				
Large Urban Areas	35%	832	1,890,444	35%
Other Urban Areas	32%	760	1,888,164	35%
Accessible Small Towns	8%	188	503,819	9%
Remote Small Towns	3%	76	185,572	3%
Accessible Rural	13%	312	623,109	12%
Remote Rural	8%	177	313,592	6%
<b>Total</b>	100%	2,345	5,424,800	100%

The survey explored attitudes towards agriculture, environment and rural communities as well as priorities for future policy in these areas, post-CAP.

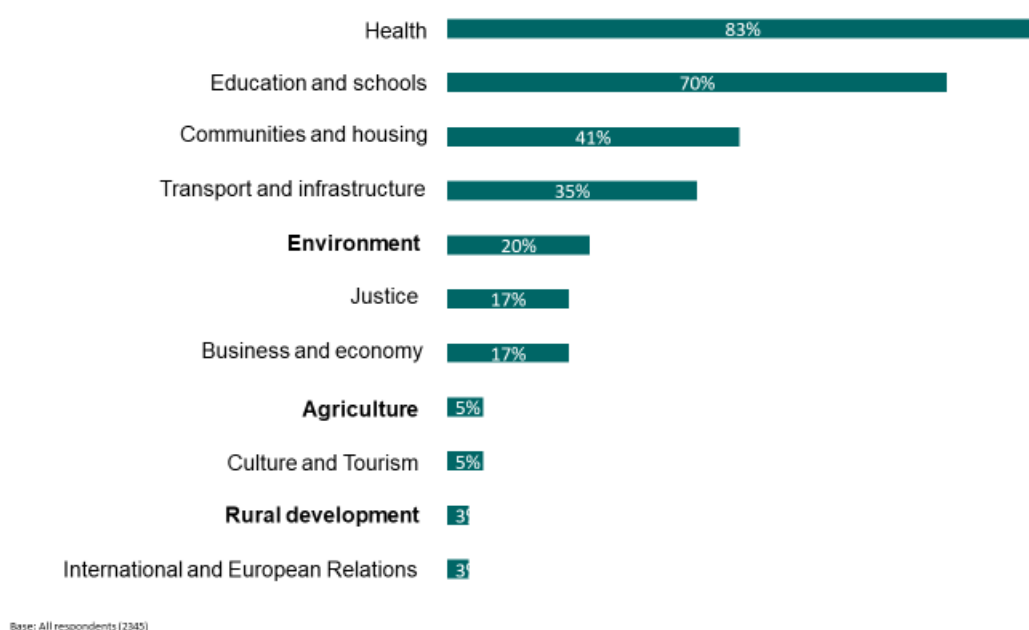
## Quantitative research findings

Before reviewing perceptions and priorities for agriculture, environment and rural communities in turn, respondents to the survey were invited to indicate the government portfolios that should be prioritised in terms of government spending.

The results are pertinent when considering the relative importance of each of the three aspects of the CAP.

Among the three policy areas of the CAP, the environment was cited by a fifth of respondents (20%), however agriculture (5%) and rural development (3%) featured less frequently in terms of priorities for government spending.

### Relative importance of a range of government portfolios



Younger people were more likely than those in older age groups to cite the environment as a priority for government spending (29% among those aged 16-34 comparative to 16% among 45-54; 17% among 55-64; and 15% among 65+).

Agriculture and rural development were attributed higher importance among those in accessible rural and remote rural locations than those in urban areas and small towns.

## Agriculture and rural development priority for government spending by 6-fold urban-rural classification

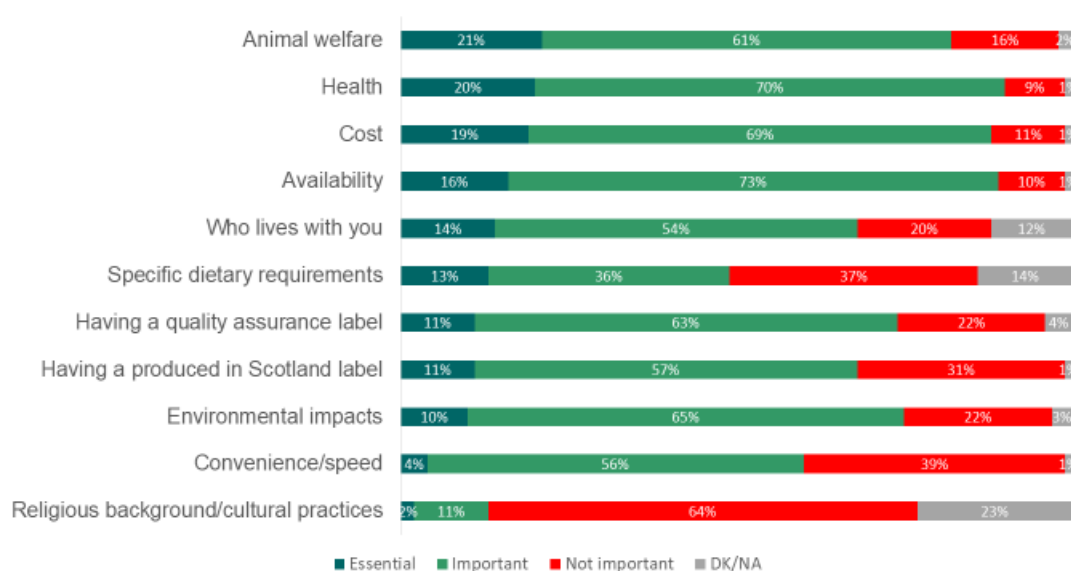
	Overall%	Remote rural %	Accessible rural %	Remote small towns%	Accessible small towns %	Other urban areas %	Large urban areas %
<b>Agriculture</b>	5	14	8	8	4	3	4
<b>Rural development</b>	3	12	7	6	6	1	2

Another important variation in the results is in relation to the priority attributed to business and economy in terms of government spending among those in remote rural locations comparative to all other location breakdowns by the six-fold classification (32% in remote rural compared to 15% accessible rural; 17% remote small towns; 9% accessible small towns; 15% other urban areas; and 18% large urban areas).

## Food consumption factors

Animal welfare (21%), impact on health (20%), and cost (19%), were the most commonly cited “essential” factors that inform decisions about food consumption.

### Importance of a range of food consumption factors



Base: All respondents (2,345)

There is a correlation among these factors and social grade, with cost being more of an essential or important factor for those in the C2DE social grade category comparative to those in the ABC1 social grade category; and conversely health and animal welfare being more of an essential or important factor for those in the ABC1 social grade category than those in the C2DE social grade category.

In addition there was some notable variation by a range of different demographic factors:

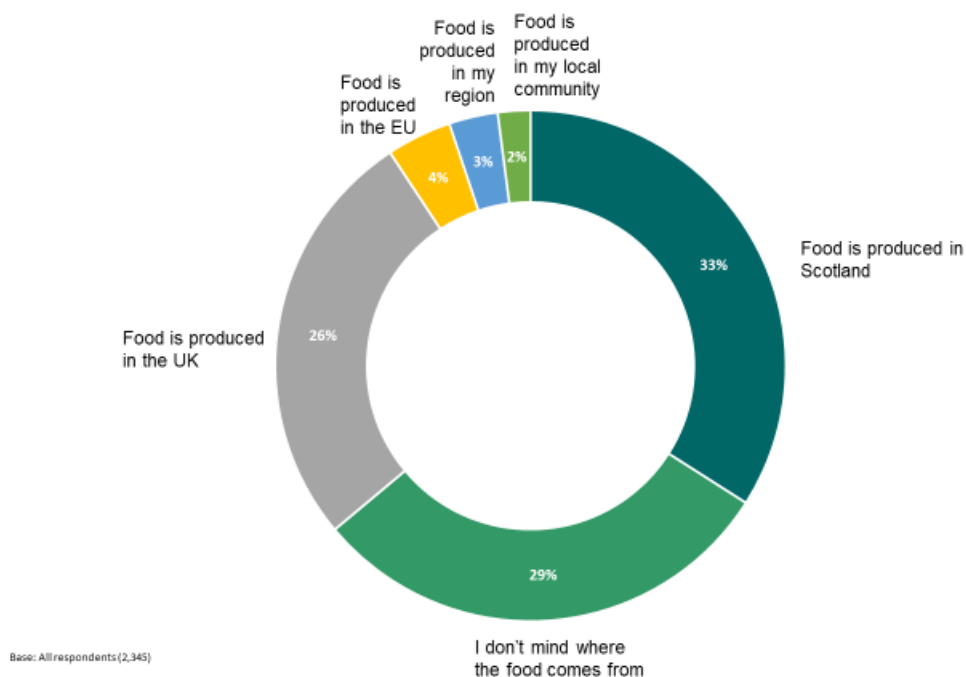
- The availability of food items in the shops near you, was more likely to be an essential factor for those residing in remote rural locations than overall (27% compared with 16%).
- The impact on health, was more important for older age groups than overall (45% of 65+ said it was very important compared with 35% overall).
- Animal welfare was more likely to be cited as an essential factor among women than men (24% compared with 17% among men).

In addition to a range of factors which may influence food consumption factors, the issue of location was explored in the survey to assess the extent to which the geography of food production matters when choosing what to eat.

A third (33%) said that food produced in Scotland was the single most important factor when choosing the food that they eat comparative to other geographic breakdowns; 29% didn't mind where the food they eat comes from, and 26% said that they preferred that their food was produced in the UK.

Relatively smaller proportions said that they preferred food produced in the European Union (4%), food produced in my region of Scotland (3%), and food produced in my local community (2%).

### Importance of the location of food production

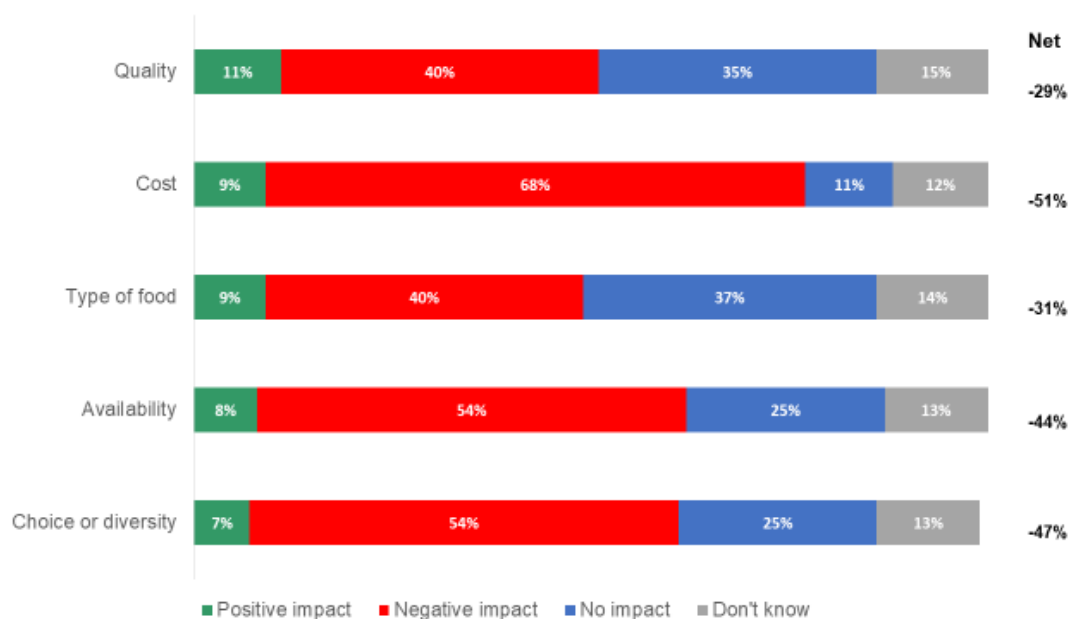


When looking at the issue of location, it can be seen that 11% said that it was essential for them that the food they consume has a produced in Scotland label compared to 38% who said that it was important for them that food was produced in Scotland (combining Scotland, region and local community values). These results indicate that while geography is an important factor underpinning choices about food consumption, this is not necessarily picked up in terms of the branding of food products.

In terms of variation in the results, those in urban areas were more likely than overall to say that they didn't mind where the food they eat comes from (33% compared with 29%). Conversely, those in remote rural locations were more likely than overall to say that it was important that food is produced in their local area (8% compared with 2% overall). These figures should be treated with caution as they are on the threshold of significance.

When considering the impact of Brexit on food consumption factors, there was a perception that Brexit would have a predominantly negative impact on factors that affect food choice. Importantly, 68% think that Brexit will have a negative impact on cost which is one of the most essential factors driving food consumption choices.

#### The impact of Brexit on a range of food consumption factors



Base: All respondents (2,345)

For all factors, those in the ABC1 social grade category were more likely than those in the C2DE social grade category to think that Brexit will have a negative impact.

## Impact of Brexit by social grade (% Negative impact)

	Overall %	ABC1 %	C2DE %
<b>Quality</b>	40	43	36
<b>Cost</b>	68	71	64
<b>Type of food</b>	40	44	36
<b>Availability</b>	54	59	49
<b>Choice or diversity</b>	54	58	50

Another important variation is age whereby younger age groups were more likely than older age groups to think that Brexit will have a negative impact on a range of food consumption factors. Conversely, older age groups were more likely than the rest of the sample to think that Brexit will have no impact on the different factors explored in the survey.

## Impact of Brexit by age (% Negative impact)

	Overall %	Under 35 %	35-44 %	45-54 %	55-64 %	65+ %
<b>Quality</b>	40	46	41	41	38	30
<b>Cost</b>	68	76	71	70	65	55
<b>Type of food</b>	40	44	44	41	39	33
<b>Availability</b>	54	61	57	55	50	45
<b>Choice or diversity</b>	54	62	57	55	51	45

## Perceptions and priorities for Scottish Agriculture

There was widespread agreement (86%) that Scottish farming is vital for the success of the Scottish economy. A similar proportion (83%) agreed that Scottish farming provides a vital public service to the people in Scotland.

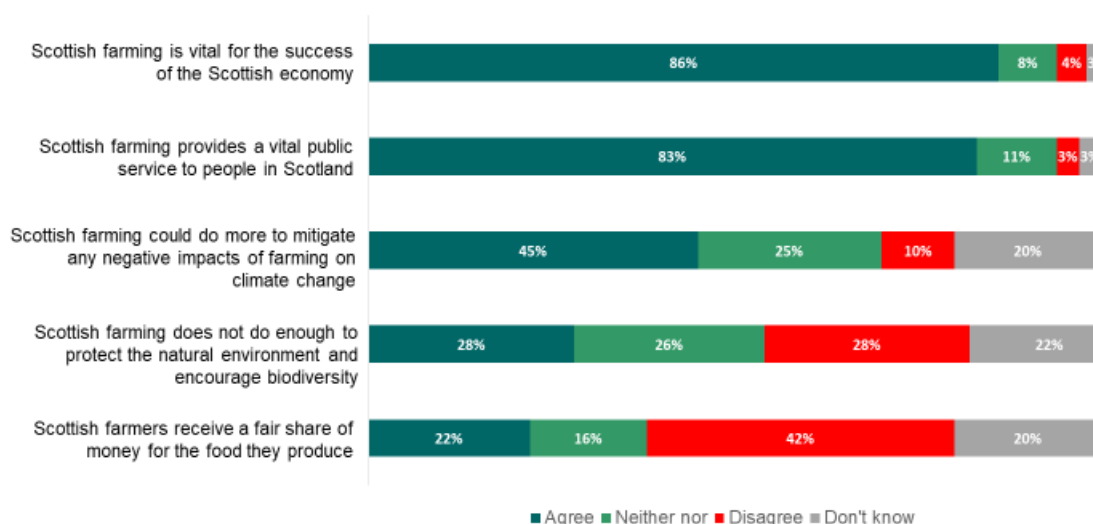
Given the value attributed to Scottish farming, it is perhaps unsurprising that two-fifths (42%) of the sample *disagreed* that Scottish farmers receive a fair share of money for the food they produce.

When looking at the relationship between farming and the environment, the results were more mixed:

- 45% agreed that Scottish farming could do more to mitigate any negative impacts of farming on climate change
- 28% agreed that Scottish farming does not do enough to protect the natural environment and encourage biodiversity; an equal proportion (28%) disagreed with this statement

These results indicate that the linkages between agriculture and the environment are not prima facie clear to respondents to the survey.

### Perceptions of Scottish agriculture



Base: All respondents (2,345)

Nonetheless, the linkages between farming and the natural environment were sharper for those in rural areas compared with overall: those in remote rural areas were more likely than overall to strongly agree that Scottish farming could do more to mitigate any negative impacts of farming on climate change (19% compared with 13%); moreover, those in remote rural areas were more likely than overall to strongly agree that Scottish farming does not do enough to protect the natural environment and encourage biodiversity (11% compared with 7%).

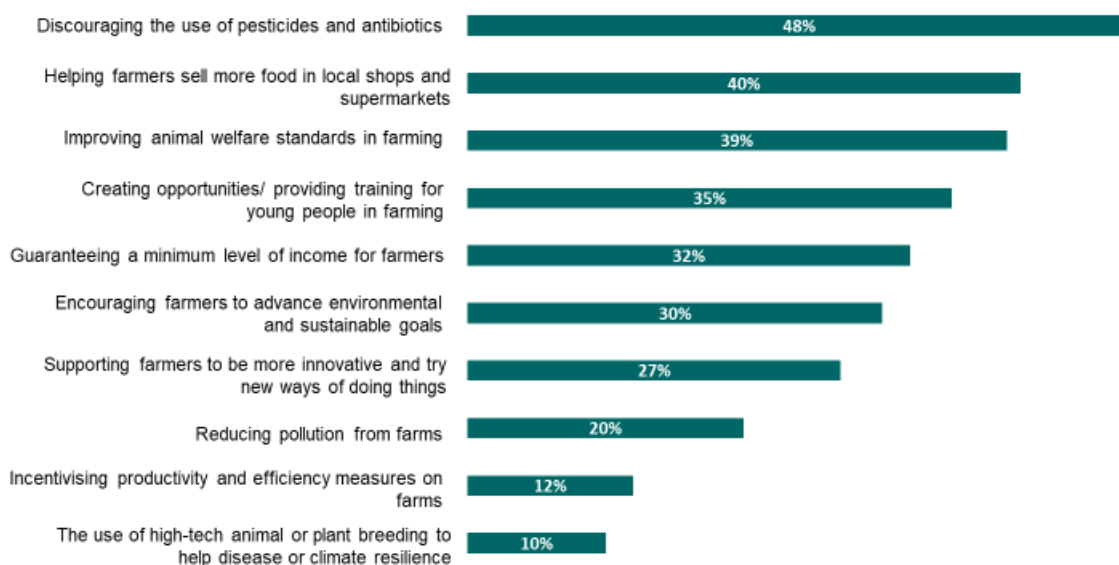
There were also gender differences in relation to attitudes towards Scottish agriculture. Women were more likely than men to strongly agree that Scottish farming is vital to the success of the Scottish economy (51% compared with 40% among men); moreover, they were also more likely to strongly agree that Scottish farming provides a vital public service to people in Scotland (46% compared with 39% among men). Given the foregoing results it is perhaps unsurprising that men were more likely than women to agree (combined strongly agree/tend to agree) that

farmers receive a fair share of money for the food they produce (26% compared with 18% among women).

There were no striking variances by urbanity/rurality in the results, however those in remote rural locations were more likely to express ambivalence e.g. a “neither agree nor disagree” response with respect to the statement that “Scottish farming provides a vital public service to Scottish people”: the figure for remote rural (26%) was significant against all other location breakdowns by the six-fold classification (26% among remote rural compared with 11% among accessible rural, 9% among remote small towns, 5% among accessible small towns, 12% among other urban areas and 9% among large urban areas).

When thinking about priorities for Scottish agriculture, just under half of the sample (48%) highlighted the issue of discouraging the use of pesticides and antibiotics; two-fifths (40%) wanted government to focus on the issue of helping farmers sell more food in local shops and supermarkets, and a similar proportion (39%) wanted future government funding to focus on the issue of animal welfare.

### Priorities for the future funding of agriculture



Base: All respondents (2,345)

There were some variation in the data by age:

- Older age groups were more likely than younger age groups to want government funding to focus on the issue of discouraging pesticides and antibiotics.
- Younger age groups were more likely than older age groups to want government to focus on issues concerning the environment e.g. reducing pollution from farms and encouraging farmers to advance environmental and sustainable goals. Moreover, younger age groups are more likely to prioritise guaranteeing a minimum level of income for farmers.



## Priorities for future spending in farming and agriculture in Scotland by age

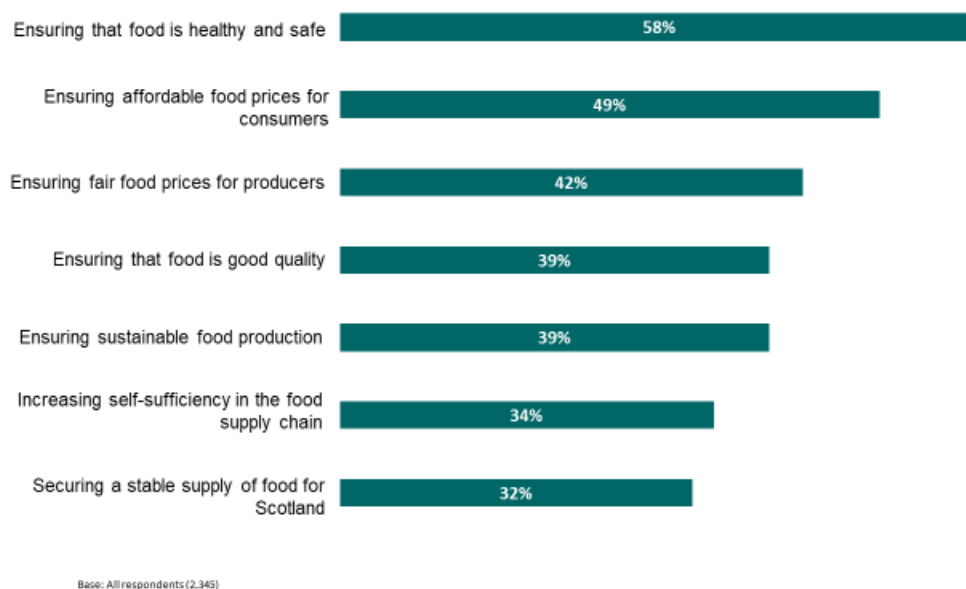
	Overall %	Under 35 %	35-44 %	45-54 %	55-64 %	65+ %
<b>Discouraging the use of pesticides and antibiotics</b>	48	42	43	46	53	55
<b>Helping farmers sell food in local shops</b>	40	39	44	42	40	38
<b>Improving animal welfare standards</b>	39	35	48	44	40	32
<b>Creating opportunities/ providing training for young people</b>	35	32	35	36	37	36
<b>Guaranteeing a minimum level of income fo farmers</b>	32	39	33	30	29	27
<b>Encouraging farmers to advance environmental and sustainable goals</b>	30	36	28	28	29	27
<b>Supporting farmers to be more innovative</b>	27	20	29	31	30	31
<b>Reducing pollution from farms</b>	20	27	15	18	16	18
<b>Incentivising productivity and efficiency measures</b>	12	11	11	11	11	17
<b>The use of high-tech animal or plant breeding to help disease or climate resilience</b>	10	12	10	6	7	11

Corresponding with the high level of importance attributed to the issue of discouraging the use of pesticides and antibiotics in farming, it is unsurprising that a

clear priority for the future funding of food production and consumption was ensuring that food is healthy and safe (58%). Following this, there was a preference for government funding to advance the dual aims of ensuring affordable prices for consumers (49%) as well as ensuring fair food prices for producers (42%).

Quality and sustainable food production (39% respectively) were lesser mentioned priorities in terms of the future funding of food production and consumption.

### Priorities for the future of farming and food production



When looking at differences in the results, those in mainly rural locations based on the RESAS classification for urban/rural were more likely than those in urban areas with substantial rural areas to place a priority on ensuring fair food prices for producers (46% compared with 38%) and securing a stable supply of food for Scotland (38% compared with 31%), therefore considering the implications of food production for the wider agricultural sector.

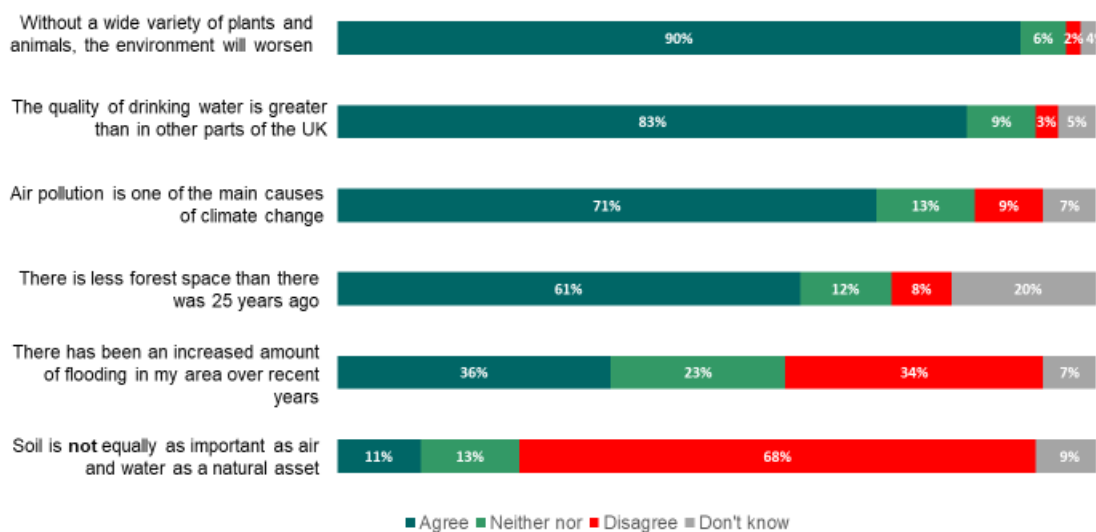
Conversely, those in urban with substantial rural areas were more likely than those in mainly rural locations to prioritise ensuring affordable food prices for consumers (53% compared with 45%).

### Perceptions and priorities for the environment

While perceptions of the link between the issue of agriculture and biodiversity were split; almost all (90%) perceived it to be an important environmental issue.

Eight-in-ten agreed that the quality of drinking water in Scotland is greater than in other parts of the UK, and seven-in-ten agreed that air pollution is one of the main causes of climate change. A similar proportion (68%) disagreed that soil is not equally as important as air and water as a natural asset.

## Perceptions of the environment



Base: All respondents (2,345)

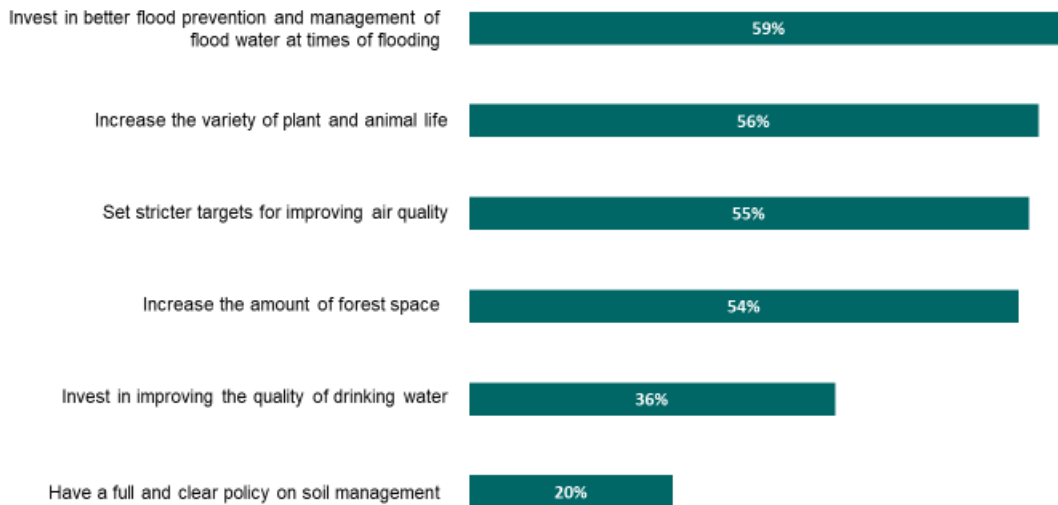
Those in accessible rural locations were more likely than those in large urban areas to strongly agree that without a wide variety of plants and animals, the environment will worsen (63% compared with 54%). These findings are consistent with the earlier section on agriculture and the environment and the higher levels of agreement found on the issue of climate change and biodiversity among those in rural areas.

There were higher levels of agreement that the quality of drinking water in Scotland is greater than in other parts of the UK in urban areas comparative to rural areas, which may in part be related to the higher prevalence of private water supplies in rural locations (56% in large urban areas strongly agree; 57% in other urban areas; 66% in accessible small towns; 55% in remote small towns compared with 47% in accessible rural; and 39% in remote rural).

Those aged 65+ were more likely than all other age categories to tend to disagree that there is less forest space than there was 25 years ago (12% among 65+ compared with 5% among under 35; 5% among 35-44; and 7% among 45-54 and 55-64 respectively).

Corresponding with attitudes towards the environment, respondents identified a range of key priorities for government spending on the environment. The top three priorities for government spending include investing in better flood prevention and management of flood water at times of flooding (59%); increasing the variety of plant and animal life (56%); and setting stricter targets for improving air quality (55%).

## Priorities for the future of the environment



Base: All respondents (2,345)

There were differences by age in terms of the issues that respondents wanted the government to focus on.

Those aged 65+ were more likely than younger age groups to want government to prioritise investing in better flood prevention and management, as well as having a full and clear policy on soil management. In contrast, those aged 35 and under, were more likely than older age groups to want government to focus on increasing the variety of plant and animal life, and the amount of forest space, which is consistent with the stronger environmental priorities found among young people throughout the survey.

## Priorities for the future of the environment by age.

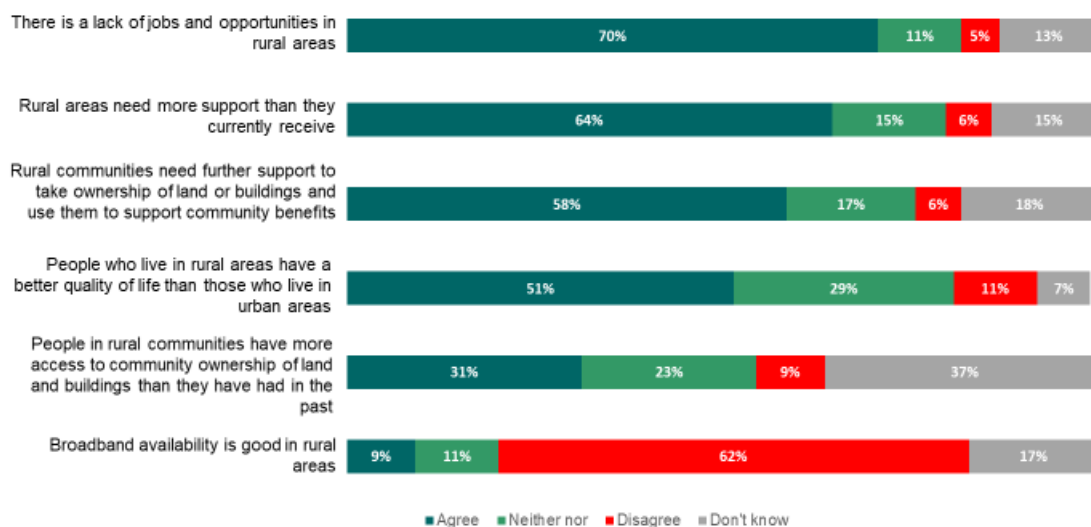
	Overall %	Under 35 %	35-44 %	45-54 %	55-64 %	65+ %
<b>Invest in better flood prevention and management</b>	59	52	56	58	63	68
<b>Increase the variety of plant and animal life</b>	56	61	61	53	52	49
<b>Set stricter targets for improving air quality</b>	55	61	54	53	52	52
<b>Increase the amount of forest space</b>	54	59	55	53	52	49
<b>Have a full and clear policy on soil management</b>	36	33	34	34	39	43
<b>Invest in improving the quality of drinking water</b>	20	17	21	24	20	17

## Perceptions and priorities for rural communities

There is majority agreement that there is a lack of jobs and opportunities in rural areas, and reflecting this view, 64% agree that rural areas need more support than they currently receive.

In relation to services, 62% disagree that broadband availability is good in rural areas.

## Perceptions of rural community issues



Base: All respondents (2,345)

There were key variances in perceptions of rural community issues by urbanity and rurality.

- Those in rural locations – particularly remote small towns – were more likely than those residing in urban locations to agree that there is a lack of jobs and opportunities in rural areas and that rural areas need more support than they currently receive.
- The issue of broadband availability was particularly pronounced for those residing in remote small towns.
- Those in remote rural locations, were more likely than all other location breaks by the six-fold urban-rural classification to strongly agree that those living in rural areas have a better quality of life than those who live in urban areas.

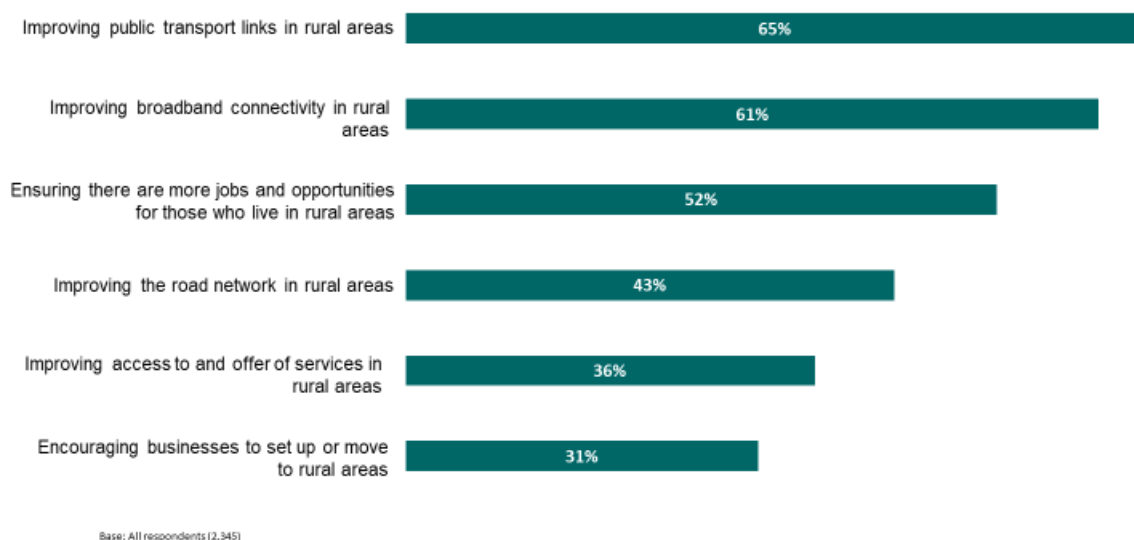
On the issue of community ownership of land and buildings, there was a higher levels of agreement among those in rural locations that rural communities have more access to community ownership than in the past. In contrast, there was a higher proportion of don't know responses among those residing in urban locations. Reflecting these results, those in rural locations were more likely than those in urban locations to agree that people in rural communities need more support to take ownership of lands and buildings and use them to support community benefits.

Attitudes towards rural communities by 6-fold urban-rural classification (agree %)

	Overall%	Remote rural %	Accessible rural %	Remote small towns%	Accessible small towns %	Other urban areas %	Large urban areas %
<b>Lack of jobs and opportunities in rural areas</b>	70	72	73	86	74	68	69
<b>Rural areas need more support than current</b>	64	76	75	78	56	63	58
<b>Rural communities need support to take community ownership of land and buildings</b>	58	67	57	62	64	59	54
<b>People who live in rural areas have a better quality of life than urban</b>	51	60	63	59	42	53	46
<b>Rural communities have better access to community ownership than in the past</b>	31	55	33	37	26	28	30
<b>Broadband availability is good in rural areas</b>	61	62	58	61	49	64	73

There were a number of priorities which respondents expressed are important for government to focus on when considering the future of rural communities. Top priorities included: improving public transport links (65%); improving broadband connectivity (61%); and ensuring there are more jobs and opportunities for those who live in rural areas (52%).

## Priorities for the future of rural communities



As can be expected, there were some variations in terms of the priorities for the future funding of rural communities by those in rural and urban locations.

- There was a higher level of importance attributed to improving broadband connectivity in remote rural locations than overall (73% compared with 61%).
- Furthermore, the issue of ensuring there are more jobs and opportunities for those who live in rural areas was stressed more strongly among those in remote small towns compared with overall (62% compared with 52%).

Notwithstanding the variance by urbanity and rurality, there was also variance in the data by age. Those aged 35 and under were more likely than the rest of the sample to want government to focus on improving access to and offer of services in rural areas (42% compared with 36%), which is pertinent when considering the out-migration of young people in rural areas.

### Common Agricultural Policy

After considering each aspect of the Common Agricultural Policy independent of each other (agriculture, environment and rural communities), the survey explored the issues in amalgam to consider priorities for the funding of future policy.

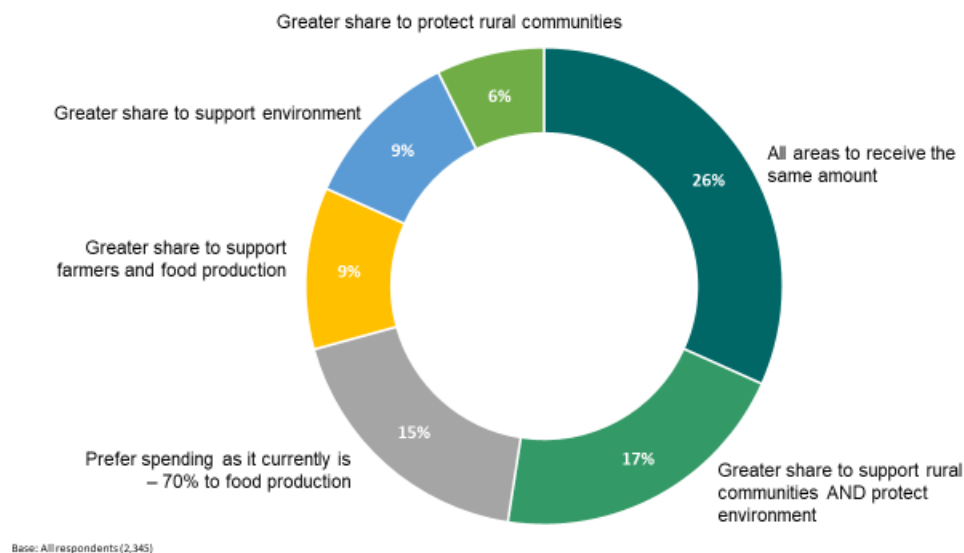
Dissimilar to the current policy formulation, a quarter (26%) of the sample prefer all three areas of the Common Agricultural Policy (farmers and food production, environment and rural communities) to receive the same amount of the policy budget.

17% prefer a greater share of the policy budget being spent on supporting rural communities and protecting the natural environment; and a smaller proportion



(15%) prefer to retain spending as it currently is with the vast proportion of the budget being spent on farmers and food production.

### Preferences for future funding allocations within the CAP



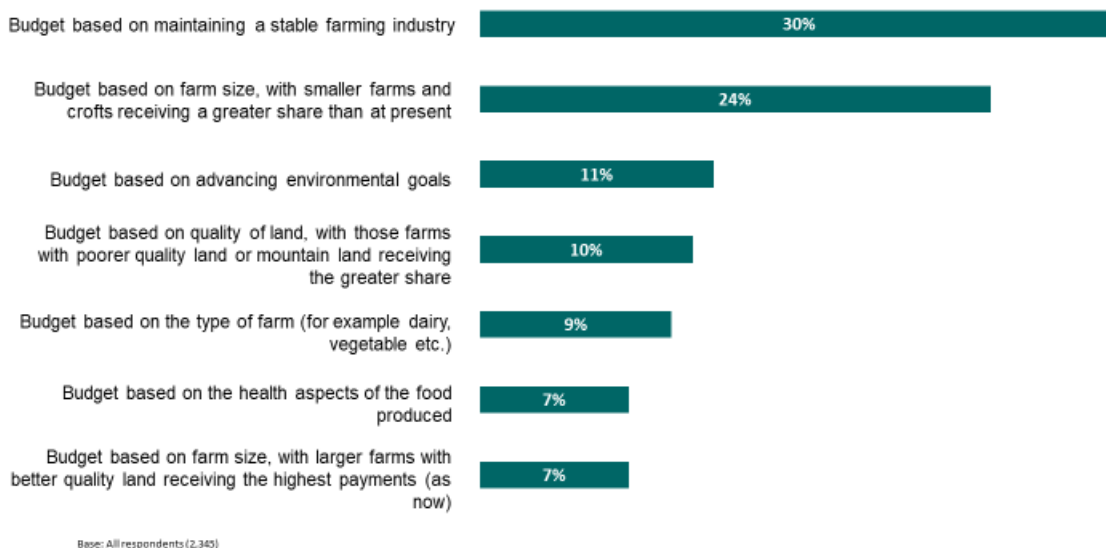
There were a number of key variations in the results:

- Urbanity and rurality is the most significant predictor of views on the allocation of spending for the CAP budget. Those residing in accessible rural locations were more likely than those in large urban areas and other urban areas to prefer to retain spending as it currently is, with the vast majority of the policy budget allocated to farming and food production (21% compared with 14% and 15% respectively).
- Women were more likely than men to prefer all three areas of the policy to receive the same amount (30% compared with 23%). By comparison, men were more likely than women to prefer a greater share of the budget going to support farmers and food production than present (12% compared with 9%).
- Those aged 35 and under were more likely than all other age categories to prefer a greater share of support to be allocated to support the natural environment (14% among under 35's compared with 7% among 35-44; 8% among 45-54; 8% among 55-64; and 6% among 65+).

While there was appetite for the reallocation of funding within the CAP budget moving away from the vast amount of spend on farming and food production towards a more equal approach with the other CAP priorities, there were also different views with respect to how the budget to farming and food production is

allocated. 30% preferred support to farms to be based on maintaining a stable farming industry, and 24% preferred the budget to be based on farm size, with smaller farms and crofts receiving a greater share than at present. A smaller proportion of the sample (7%) preferred the budget to be distributed based on farm size, with larger farms with better quality land receiving the highest payments, as is currently applied.

### Priorities for the future funding of farms

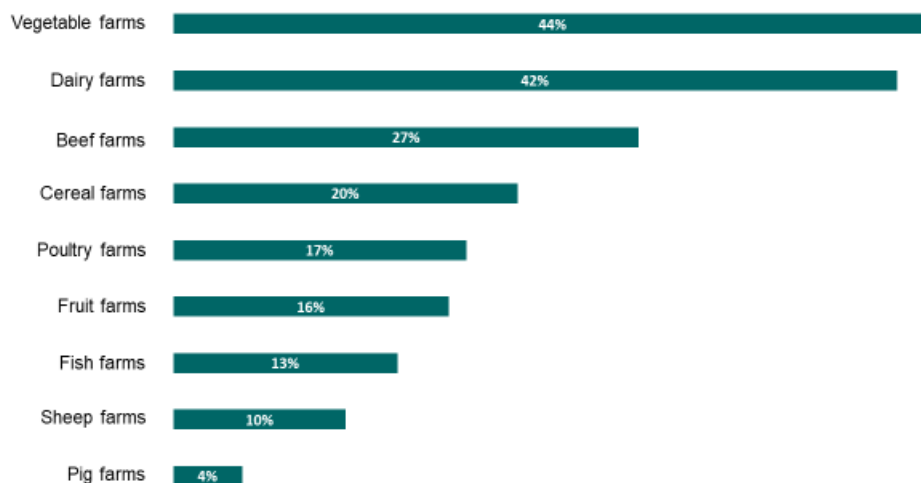


Those in remote rural and accessible rural locations were more likely than those in large urban areas to prefer funding to farms to be allocated based on the quality of land, with those farms with poorer quality land receiving the greatest share of funding (18% and 12% respectively compared with 7% among large urban areas). These results may be related to the higher prevalence of rough grazing or less favoured areas in these parts of Scotland.

There were also differences in the result by age: those aged 65+ were more likely than those under 35 to prefer funding farms to be based on maintaining a stable farming industry (37% compared with 24%). Furthermore, those aged under 35 were almost twice as likely as those aged 65+ to prefer funding to be based on advancing environmental goals (15% compared with 8%).

Looking specifically at the types of farms that should be prioritised in terms of the future funding of farms in Scotland, there was a clear preference to prioritise vegetable (44%) and dairy farms (42%). Lower proportions of the sample wanted funding to prioritise beef farms (27%), poultry farms (17%); and fish farms (13%).

## Priorities for the future funding of different types of farms



Base: All respondents (2,345)

Those in remote rural locations were more likely than all other location breakdowns to prioritise funding of sheep farms (26% among those residing in remote rural locations compared with 9% among large urban areas; 10% other urban areas; 8% accessible small towns; 6% remote small towns; and 9% accessible rural).

Moreover, those in accessible small towns were more likely than overall to prioritise funding for dairy farms (56% compared with 42% overall).

There were also key differences by age with those in younger age groups more likely than older age groups to prioritise the funding of poultry farms and fish farms; in contrast older age groups were more likely to prioritise dairy and cereal farms.

## Priorities for the funding of different types of farms by age

	Overall %	Under 35 %	35-44 %	45-54 %	55-64 %	65+ %
<b>Vegetable farms</b>	44	44	44	42	46	46
<b>Dairy farms</b>	42	38	36	49	44	44
<b>Beef farms</b>	27	26	30	28	27	25
<b>Cereal farms</b>	20	14	18	21	27	24
<b>Poultry farms</b>	17	21	21	15	12	13
<b>Fruit farms</b>	16	20	14	15	15	15
<b>Fish farms</b>	13	19	13	10	9	12
<b>Sheep farms</b>	10	8	10	11	12	12
<b>Pig farms</b>	4	5	4	3	3	2

# Appendix D: Findings from Citizens' Forums

The two Citizens' Forums convened as part of this research project were held on 16-17 February and 2-3 March 2019. One Forum was in a predominantly rural location (Montrose) and another in a predominantly urban location (Motherwell). The 49 individuals that participated in the Forum were recruited to be broadly representative of the demographics on the population.

Each Citizens' Forum took participants through a structured process of learning, dialogue and deliberation designed to produce clear, collective outputs. The rationale for this approach, the results, and a summary of the discussions that underpinned them, are presented in this report.

## Methodology

Citizens' Forums are becoming increasingly recognised as an effective and meaningful way of engaging people in policy and decision-making processes by:

- giving decision-makers a detailed understanding of informed public opinion on complex issues and/or value-laden and controversial questions; and
- opening up the political space for consensus, for trade-offs to be made and a solution to be found.

This is because it is a method that employs a distinctive deliberative approach to public engagement. As such it differs from other forms of consultation in that it is about giving participants time to learn about and discuss an issue in depth and then come to an informed and considered view.

The defining characteristic of a Citizens' Forum is that it brings together a fairly large group of Citizens', selected to be broadly representative of the demographics of the population, to deliberate on a significant public policy issue. The Forum involves a 3-stage process:

- **A dedicated learning phase:** A central feature of a Citizens' Forum process is the learning component wherein participants are able to develop an understanding of the issue based on unbiased information and/or the clear presentation of arguments from different perspectives. Information can be presented in a variety of ways including presentations from experts, written information and through facilitated discussions. Because of this focus given to learning about an issue before being asked to form an opinion, Citizens' assemblies are able to address quite complicated and technical issues.
- **Discussion focussed on developing dialogue:** Participants are then supported by facilitators to engage in dialogue about the topic (usually in small groups). This allows time for people to develop and test opinions on issues that are new to them (and on which they do not have a pre-existing opinion), explore their pre-existing opinions in light of what they have heard and encourages a wider understanding of the opinions of others. Experts will

often be on hand during this phase to provide additional information and/or clarification, but not opinions.

- **The deliberation phase:** This stage of the Forum involves participants coming to some conclusions based on what they have learnt through a process of public reasoning. While consensus based decision-making processes are the ideal, at this stage voting systems (or a combination of both) are often used to reach conclusions, prioritise options, establish collective outputs and/or make recommendations

Given the research objectives of exploring public priorities to agriculture, environment and rural community issues, the following sequence of deliberation was deployed at the Forums:

<p><b>‘Scottish farming provides a vital public service to the people of Scotland’</b></p>	<p>Quantitative and qualitative responses re level of agreement and direction of change of viewpoint after discussion</p>
<p><b>The importance of factors such as cost, quality, animal welfare and local production underpinning food consumption choices – and where the trade-offs would be made individually</b></p>	<p>Quantitative and qualitative responses re overall priorities as well as the results from forced binary choice trade-offs e.g. between environmental impacts or quality, health benefits or animal welfare</p>
<p><b>Perceptions of the impact of farming on the natural environment and biodiversity, and ‘whether it is the responsibility of farmers to do more?’</b></p>	<p>Quantitative responses to the primary question as well as re the specific responsibility to do more to protect soil quality, water quality, air quality, biodiversity and reduce CO2 emissions</p> <p>Qualitative responses re overall perceptions of impact and the impacts of different farming models on the landscape (i.e. the balance of ‘natural beauty’ vs land productivity)</p>
<p><b>What are the principles that should be at the core of the agricultural sector in Scotland?</b></p>	<p>A list of 10 negotiated and ranked principles (from each Forum), developed as baseline criteria to rank other options</p>

<p><b>Preferences for how replacement CAP funding for farmers is distributed, and the priority that should be given to different factors in the future</b></p>	<p>A qualitative assessments of the pros and cons of each option</p> <p>Ranked preferential votes (from each Forum as well as cumulatively)</p>
<p><b>Preferences for the balance of replacement CAP spending, with a particular focus on the balance between support for farmers, environmental enhancement, and support for rural communities?</b></p>	<p>A qualitative assessments of the pros and cons for various propositional weighting of funds</p> <p>Ranked preferential votes (from each Forum as well as cumulatively)</p>
<p><b>Comparative survey responses</b></p>	<p>Pre and post deliberation responses to most questions in the c.2345 people national survey undertaken before the Forums</p>

The expert input to the Forums, included presentations on the following topics:

- **The value of Agriculture in Scotland** - Professor David Hopkins (SRUC)
- **The impact of Farming on the Environment** - Professor Davy McCracken (SRUC)
- **Agriculture and the Landscape** - Katrin Prager (University of Aberdeen)
- **What is the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and how CAP funds are allocated?** - Professor David Hopkins (SRUC)
- **How could environmental management by land managers be funded differently?** - Professor Davy McCracken (SRUC)

## Participants

The goal of the Citizens' Forums was to bring together 50 people, broadly representative of Scotland's population, across 2 locations - with one focusing on a more urban constituency (in Motherwell) and one focusing on a more rural constituency (in Montrose) - that cumulatively would give a balanced representation of the demographics across the country i.e. together be a '*mini-public*'. Although, given the small numbers involved, the participants could not be considered to be statistically representative of the population, the intent was to stratify the recruitment to ensure as representative sample as possible.

Participants were primarily recruited from the people who responded to the national survey, where an option of indicating interest and availability for future research involvement was included. Given the Citizens' Forums were designed to bring in people from a reasonably small geographic area (1-1.5 hours travel time from the

location of the meeting) when the responses to the survey did not happen to provide a significantly diverse sample within the target geography, additional participants were invited to supplement the sample group using targeted 'free-find' recruitment methods.

27 participants were recruited for the Citizens' Forum in Motherwell (in the hope that, accounting for last minute cancellations, this would lead to the attendance of at least 25). Following an unusually high non-attendance rate at this first meeting (only 22 of the 27 confirmed participants attended), a larger number were recruited for the Montrose Citizens' Forum to ensure the final number of participants was as close to 50 as possible (32 were invited and 28, dropping to 27 on the 2nd day, attended).

### Demographic spread of attendees

Overall 49 participants took part in the Citizens' Forums, the demographic profile of participants.

#### *Demographic profile of Citizens' Forum participants*

	Motherwell	Montrose	Target demographics	Attendees overall <sup>80</sup>
<b>Gender</b>				
<b>Female</b>	10	13	<b>51%</b>	<b>47%</b>
<b>Male</b>	12	14	<b>49%</b>	<b>53%</b>
<b>Age</b>				
<b>16-34</b>	5	6	<b>30%</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>35-44</b>	4	4	<b>15%</b>	<b>16%</b>
<b>45-54</b>	5	5	<b>17%</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>55-64</b>	4	3	<b>16%</b>	<b>14%</b>
<b>65+</b>	4	9	<b>22%</b>	<b>27%</b>
<b>Social Grade</b>				
<b>ABC1</b>	10	12	<b>50%</b>	<b>45%</b>
<b>C2DE</b>	12	15	<b>50%</b>	<b>55%</b>
<b>Urban-rural<sup>81</sup></b>				
<b>Urban</b>	14	9	<b>70%</b>	<b>47%</b>
<b>Rural</b>	8	18	<b>30%</b>	<b>53%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>27</b>		

<sup>80</sup> It is important to note that, given the small numbers involved, a single person represents over 2% of the sample.

<sup>81</sup> Given the topic it was considered important to ensure a balance of urban and rural voices within the discussions, thus the recruitment process intentionally sought a 50/50 split, while recognising the difference between this and a completely representative sample of the entire Scottish population.



## Does Scottish farming provide a vital public service to the people of Scotland?

The learning phase of each of the Citizens' Forums began with a presentation by Professor David Hopkins, Dean of the Central Faculty of Scotland's Rural College. This presentation outlined the contribution agriculture makes to the Scottish economy and the nature of the agricultural sector in Scotland.

Following this, the first question participants were asked to focus on was whether they agreed that Scottish farming provides a vital public service to the people of Scotland, and why? This question was taken straight from the the national survey where the results showed that overall, 83% agreed with this statement. The purpose of taking this question to the Forums was to try and understand this high level of agreement further.

Initial reactions from the vast majority of participants in both locations showed high levels of agreement with the statement that 'Scottish farming provides a vital public service'. Four individuals however were decidedly less convinced, questioning why this particular sector should be considered more important than other sectors across Scotland.

In discussions, some of the reasons behind agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement were linked to the "*financial benefit to the economy.*" Participants pointed to the jobs it creates and in particular providing "*vital employment to rural communities.*" They also mentioned that "*if it is well managed,*" farming can have a positive "*impact on the environment,*" including "*maintaining waterways,*" and "*keeping soil fertility,*" among other aspects.

Food production was another theme that appeared in discussions, with a sense that Scottish farming is a vital public service towards Scotland "*be[ing] able to produce own food and not rely on other countries and policies.*" Buying Scottish food "*to support local farming*" was highlighted by participants as well as it being perceived that Scottish farming produces high quality food because food sourced from Scotland "*is fresher, healthier and it supports the ecosystems.*"

Another important aspect that came out in discussions was a sense that Scottish farming is a vital public service because it is linked to Scottish identity and has historical significance. Farmers were described as "*keepers of our countryside,*" and that farming is a part of this "*historical landscape and identity, there to be cultivated,*" with a responsibility to "*retain historic skills/crofts that would otherwise be lost to future generations.*"

Participants were also asked to think about reasons against Scottish farming being a vital public service. They identified "*income / expenditure in today's climate does not contribute enough to the economy*", that "*most food produce is imported*" and that they sense there is a disparity between "*very poor and very rich farmers,*" as being potential reasons behind disagreeing with the statement.

After the discussions, everyone was asked to indicate whether they now more strongly, or less strongly agreed with the statement:

- 29% moved towards more strongly agreeing;
- 52% stayed at the same level of agreement;
- 19% moved towards less agreement.

When this question was revisited in the research survey at the end of the weekend, after 2 days of deliberation around the topic, participants again showed very high levels of agreement (90%), notably higher than the results from the national survey as a whole.

*Scottish farming provides a vital public service to the people of Scotland*

	Strongly agree %	Tend to agree %	Neither nor %	Tend to disagree %	Strongly disagree %
<b>Survey</b>	46%	40%	8%	3%	1%
<b>1<sup>st</sup> response Motherwell</b>	91%	5%	5%	0%	0%
<b>1<sup>st</sup> response Montrose</b>	35%	46%	15%	4%	0%
<b>After 2 days deliberation</b>	51%	39%	8%	0%	0%

## Food, diet and consumption habits

### Reactions to the national survey

To stimulate discussion on this topic participants in the Citizens’ Forums were introduced to the results of the national survey relating to the factors that were considered ‘essential’ or ‘very important’ in ‘choosing what you eat’. Participants were asked whether the results *‘rang true’* with their own thoughts on what is important for them when choosing food, before exploring more directly the importance of factors such as cost, quality, and local production, environmental concerns, and special diets in underpinning choices of food.

In these early discussions, participants from Motherwell identified that *“health campaigns”* such as the *“sugar tax made us more aware”* of food’s impact on health - the factor that 59% of survey respondents had said was essential or very important. In Montrose, participants expressed surprise that animal welfare was not a higher consideration for people but concluded that this might be because people *“don’t think about animal welfare because they assume it is high welfare [in the UK].”*

Citizens’ Forum participants in Motherwell and Montrose were also particularly surprised by the low percentage identifying convenience and speed of food as an important factors. They pointed at lifestyle changes in Scottish society such as

changing “*work patterns*” affecting people’s priorities and lifestyle patterns regarding food consumption, suggesting that this has resulted in a much higher consumption of quick, easy and pre-prepared foods. The importance given to the convenience factor was also related to ease in terms of “*fussy families,*” and that for some people it’s a lack of “*knowledge about how to prepare food*” or that they “*can’t cook, won’t cook, or don’t have access*” to cooking facilities.

Both Motherwell and Montrose participants also noted their surprise that the cost of food was not identified by more people as being essential or very important when choosing food. They said that while maybe this was because “*cost is going to be more important to some people than others*” and “*depends on budget.*” Issues like “*food poverty*” and the growing prevalence of food banks in response to this were also seen as important to consider.

There was some surprise by how low down the list specific dietary requirements, and religious background and cultural practices, were in the survey responses. Citizens’ Forum participants explained that they thought “*that dietary requirements...seems a growing factor, medical or choice*”, and that in their experience many “*people are choosing more restricted diets*” for ideological or health reasons (eg veganism or gluten free diets) “*whereas in the past people ate what they ate.*”

They also expressed surprise that environmental impacts were considered essential or very important by only 35% of survey respondents “*given higher awareness*” of this issue amongst the public more generally.

### **Factors in food choices**

To explore this question further, and avoid the tendency to place importance on everything that can emerge through discussions like this, participants in the Citizens’ Forums were asked to consider what influences their food choices through a series of binary choice questions. This was designed to force participants to make a trade off between the factors in order to identify what really was most influential in their food choices.

To make the considerations less abstract, and to try to link them to real everyday choices that people make, each option was presented as a specific shopping consideration. For example:

- You are in the supermarket buying a ready-meal for your dinner. Which is going to have a greater impact on your choice - Healthier or Cheaper?
- You are buying a chicken to roast for a family dinner. Which is going to have the biggest impact on your choice - Cost or Animal Welfare?
- You are shopping for cheese. For the same price you have the choice of something locally produced or an imported one that you believe likely to be better quality?

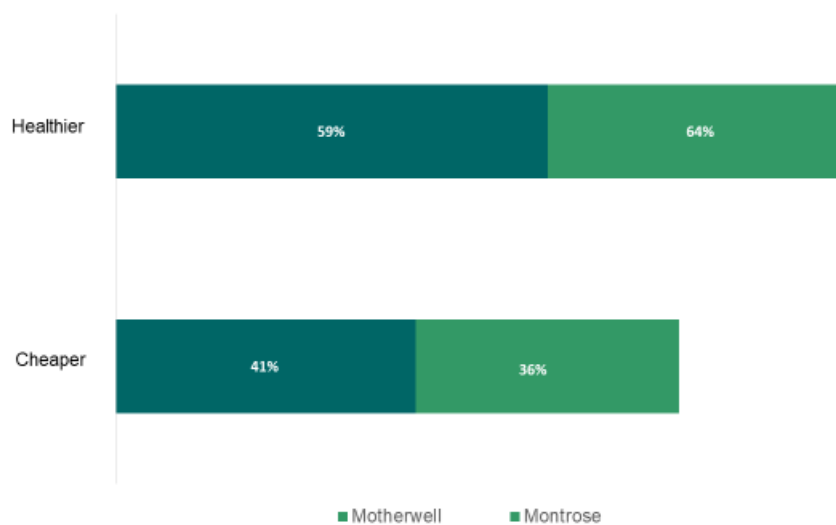
The results of these binary votes, and the reasons behind these choices are presented below.

### Healthier Food vs Cheaper Food

Participants were asked first about whether healthier food or cheaper food was more important when they make food choices.

Overall, over half the participants from both Citizens' Forums decided that health aspects had a greater impact on their choice of food than if it was cheaper. In Motherwell, 59% said that healthy food had a greater impact on their choice and in Montrose this rose to 64% of participants.

#### *Healthier vs Cheaper choices*



Base: All citizen forum participants (49)

When discussing the results in groups, participants recognised that *“it depends on income,”* and that people might have to choose cheaper food because the *“costs are high and living wage is not enough”*. There was also some acknowledgement within the groups that people (including themselves) may have been influenced in their answer to this question by the fact that ‘healthier’ is the more socially expected answer, rather than one that they may always implement in practice.

Participants noted that *“people have different ways of shopping,”* that can influence this choice (eg. big supermarket shop weekly/fortnightly compared to using local bakers, butchers, green grocers etc more regularly. Participants also noted that *“healthier is not always expensive”* despite the widely held perception that fresh food costs more.

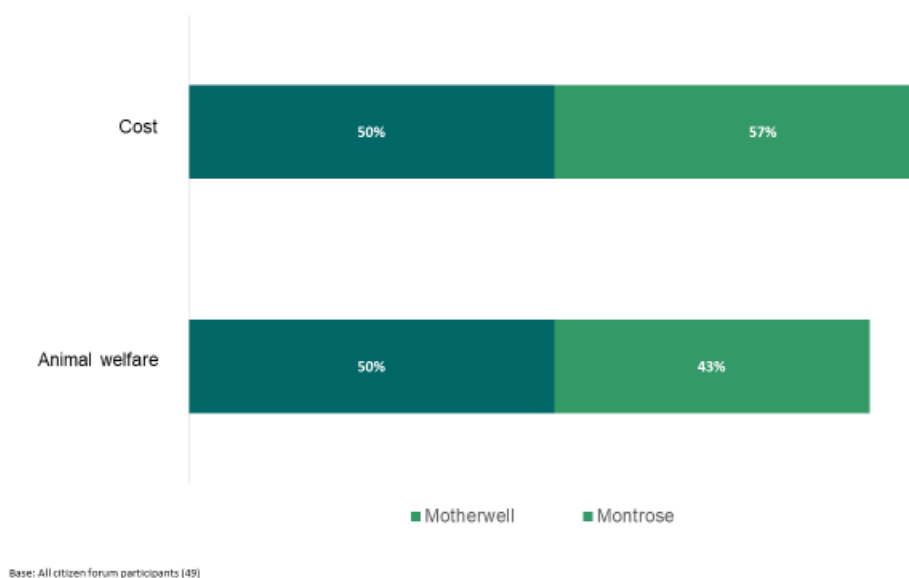
### Cost vs Animal Welfare

Participants were then asked if the cost of food or animal welfare was the more important factor in their food choices. Here Citizens' Forum participants were more or less evenly split. While participants in Motherwell split exactly 50-50, slightly

more than half of the participants in Montrose (57%) said the cost of food had a greater impact.

In discussions, participants pointed to “*supermarket deals*” and their “*habit to pick up the cheaper one of two options*” as being why cost has an impact on their food choices. Participants said that “*people don’t know/switch off to what animal welfare means*” although this might “*depend where you come from - rural/urban*” and your experience of actually seeing how farm animals are treated. One table particularly highlighted in their conversation that the variety of words to describe different animal welfare standards can lead to mistrust of such food labelling and result in it becoming less of a consideration when shopping.

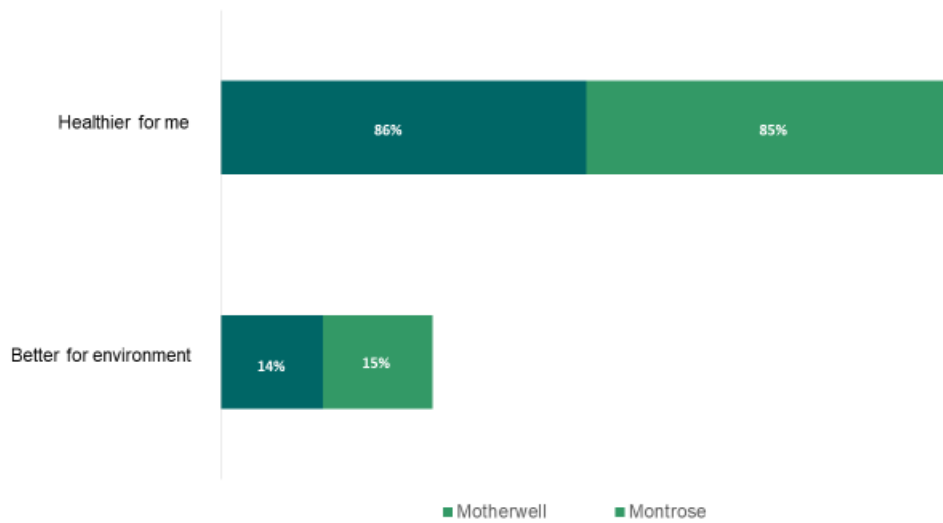
### Costs vs Animal Welfare



### Healthier Food vs Food that is better for the Environment

Citizens’ Forum participants were clear in deciding that choosing healthier food had a greater impact on their choices than whether the food was better for the environment. In both locations the vast majority (85%/86%) voted in favour of healthier food, and only 14%-15% stated that they would choose food that was better for the environment.

## Healthier vs Better for the environment



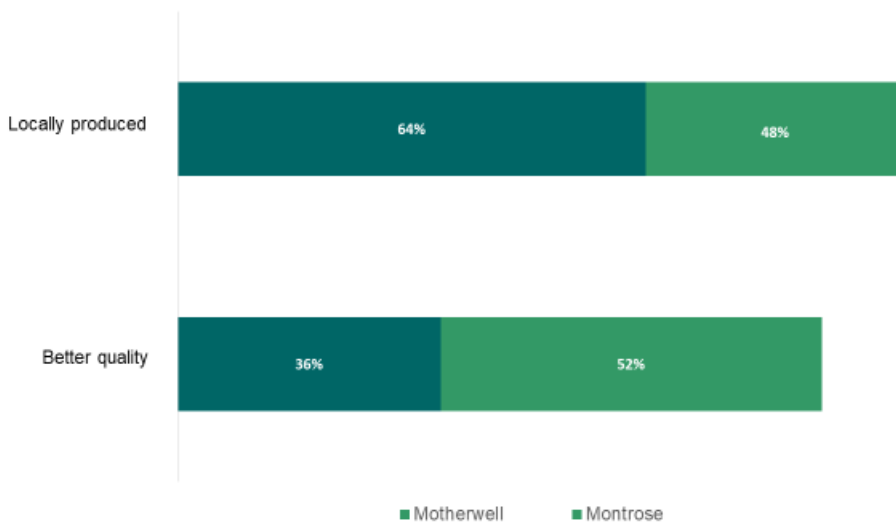
Base: All citizen forum participants (49)

In conversations around this choice, participants highlighted that when buying food “*you think of yourself first*” and that considerations about the “*environmental aspect is much broader*” and “*more removed*” for people i.e. most “*people are not as linked to the land and don't consider how food gets to their plate.*”

## Locally Produced Food vs Better Quality Food

Overall, the Citizens’ Forum chose locally produced food as having a greater impact on their choice than the quality of the food. This was more pronounced in Motherwell where 64% of the participants said locally produced food had a greater impact on their choices. In Montrose however, more participants stated they would chose food because it was better quality, although overall Montrose was more evenly split than in Motherwell.

## Locally produced food vs Better quality



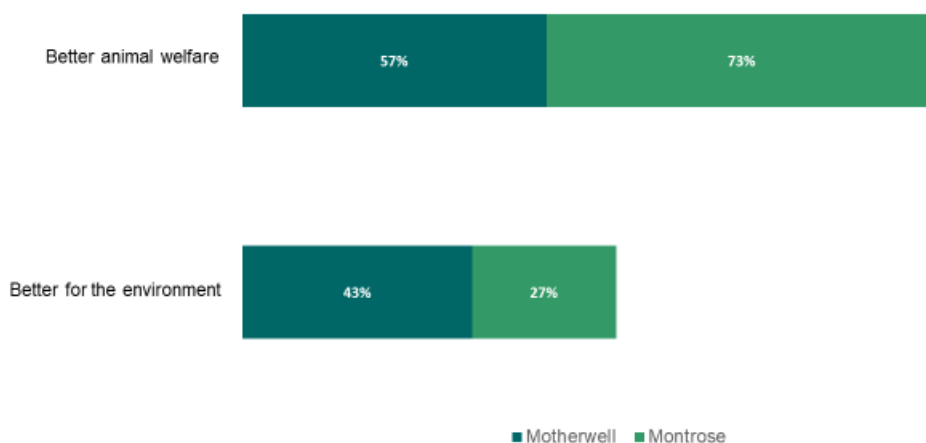
Base: All citizen forum participants (49)

Discussions from both locations revealed that for participants, their preference for locally produced food was because it is *“important for local business”*. They said that, for them, *“locally-sourced implies high quality”* and that *“Scotland equals quality”*. When discussions turned to fresh local produce there was a strong consensus that they would prefer to buy locally grown produce because it would be fresher, even if visually that means buying *“wonky veg.”* One caveat from participants was that while they *“want to support local producers, but not if it is not as good”*.

### Food that is better for the Environment vs Better Animal Welfare

Overall, the Citizens’ Forums chose better animal welfare as having a greater impact upon their choice of food than consideration for the environment. In ‘urban’ Motherwell, 57% of participants felt animal welfare had a greater impact while in ‘rural’ Montrose, almost three quarters of participants said animal welfare was greater consideration than the environment more widely on their choice of food.

#### *Better for the Environment vs Better animal welfare*



Base: All citizen forum participants (49)

Participants reflected that they felt that often the two aspects went hand-in-hand and that *“good environmental protection equals good animal welfare, but bad environmental protection equals bad animal welfare.”* Participants also noted that in their minds, *“high animal welfare equals better quality food”* which may help to explain why animal welfare wins out over the environment when presented with a binary choice.

Some participants, particularly from Montrose felt that the results of the question might be different if more people were actually more exposed to the conditions that livestock are reared in and the slaughter of animals because *“people are not as linked to the land and don't consider how food gets to their plate.”*

## Overall priorities on food choices

Given the activity undertaken it is useful to compare the relative importance given to these factors before and after participants were put in a position of having to actively consider the trade-offs they make when making choices about food consumption. The graph below shows the differences in priority given to food choice factors at the beginning and end of the weekends – i.e. between initial polling reactions and the considered opinions formed after 2 days focussing on the subject.

From this graph it is clearly evident where learning and deliberation has had an impact on participants' priorities. Following the learning and discussion phase the most significant change of opinion is in relation to greater priority being given to the environmental impacts of the agricultural sector - with 23% more participants following their deliberations now considering this to be an essential or very important aspect of their behaviour in relation to food choices. The importance given to food having a 'quality assurance label' in this second vote can also be attributed to the discussions that had taken place about animal welfare and quality (eg organic and/or free range production practices).

### Priorities when making food choices

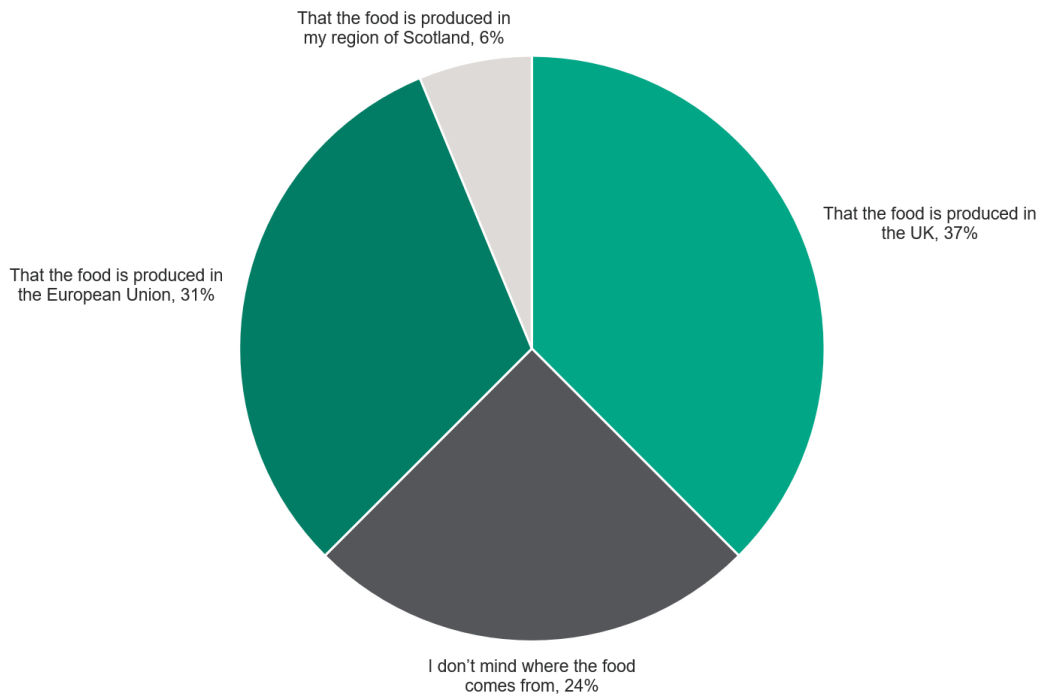


Base: All citizen forum participants (49)

Another aspect of consideration in food choices that showed considerable change over the course of the weekend deliberations is the priority given to where food is produced. In the pre-deliberation survey almost  $\frac{1}{4}$  of participants indicated that they didn't care where the food they ate was produced.



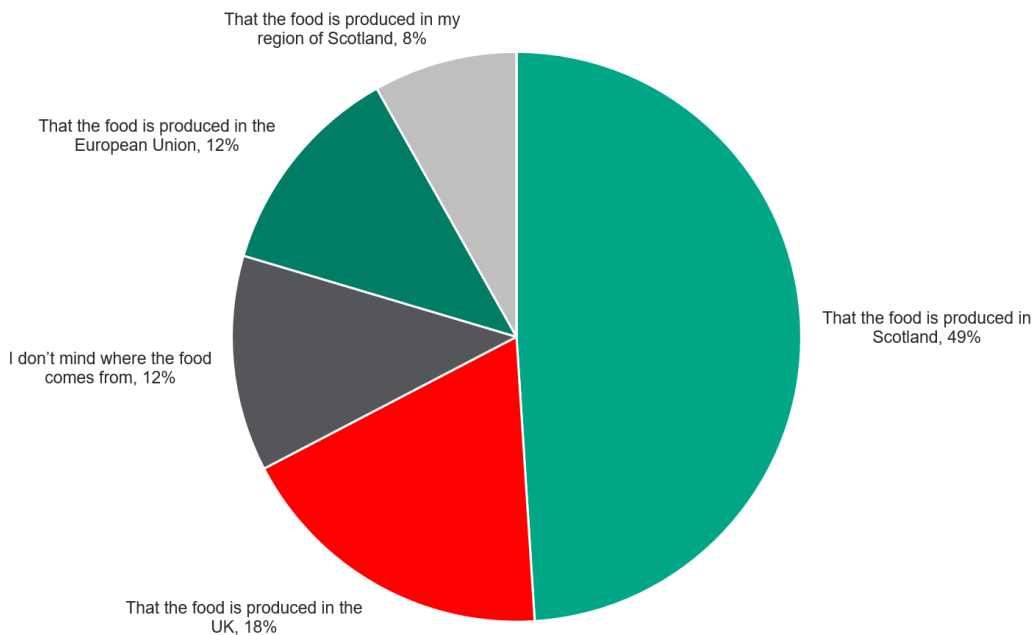
*Pre-deliberation responses to the importance of where their food is produced*



Base: All citizen forum participants (49)

When the same question was asked at the end of the weekend, after the origins of the food people chose had been the subject of much discussion and deliberation, the results were quite different. Here almost half of the participants stated that it was important to them that the food they chose was produced in Scotland, with a further 18% stating that it was important to them that their food was produced in the UK.

*Post-deliberation responses to the importance of where their food is produced*



Base: All citizen forum participants (49)

## Farming and the environment

To shift the focus away from food specifically and open up wider consideration of the agricultural sector, the participants heard from Davy McCracken, Professor of Agricultural Ecology at Scotland's Rural College about the impacts and responsibilities of farming for the environment.

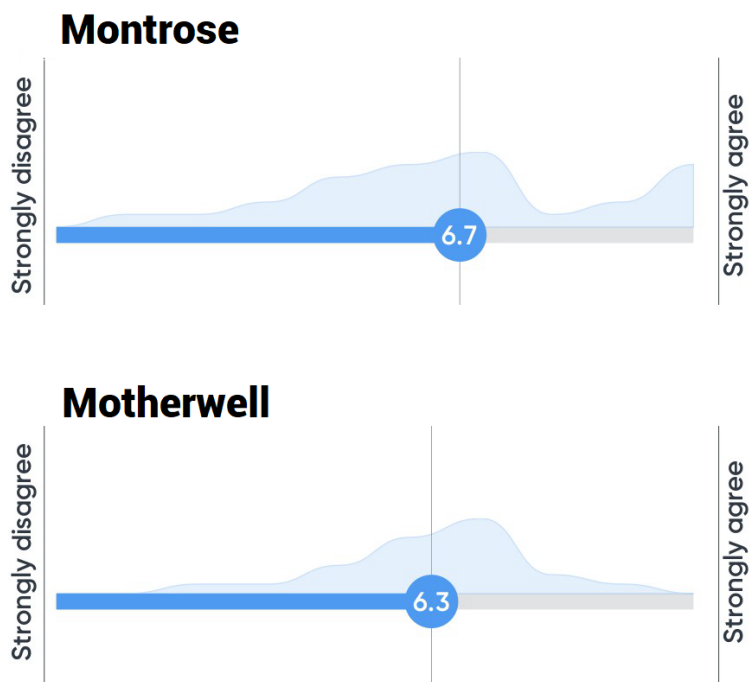
Citizens' Forum participants were then asked to assess whether or not it is the responsibility of the farming sector to do more to protect and conserve the environment including water, air quality, soil, biodiversity and carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) reductions. These discussions were followed by a series of on-line polls to capture both the average level of support and the range of positions.

### Does the farming sector needs to do more to protect and conserve the environment?

For this question, participants were asked to identify, on a scale of one to ten (1 = strongly disagree and 10 = strongly agree) whether they felt the farming sector needs to do more to protect and conserve the environment overall.

Figure 4.2: Is it the responsibility of the farming sector to do more to protect and conserve the environment.

The average results in Motherwell and Montrose both showed a slight leaning towards agreeing with the statement. In Motherwell, the results concentrating around the average result of 6.3. In Montrose however, despite a similar overall result of 6.7, there was a larger spread of votes across the scale with a significant amassing of participants saying they strongly agree that the farming sector needs to do more to protect and conserve the environment.



Participants' main reasons for agreeing that farmers needed to do more to protect the environment was because it is "*in their own interests*", its their "*bread and butter*". Another key point highlighted was that "*farmers are custodians of the countryside,*" "*they work the land therefore it is their responsibility*" and that, for the wider good they therefore have a "*responsibility not to be reckless*".

On the other hand, some participants suggested farmers also had a right to achieve "*returns first*" and "*need to be cost effective - operating like a business.*" It was recognised that in some cases expectations regarding environmental protection are

“costing farmers because Scottish Government policy has higher climate targets,” and that “many demands of farmers means it is complicated.”

It was also noted in the discussions that “the market dictates practices” In a context of growing public concern about our environmental impacts there is “wider peer pressure from the sector and consumers” in favour of environmentally friendly products. This has a natural impact on what the public would expect from the farming sector, as it has on what the public expects from other industries in terms of how they mitigate their environmental impacts. This was reflected in comments that focussed on why farmers should not be required to do more to protect the environment (as long as they were compliant with existing standards) because it is “everyone’s responsibility” which requires “collective change (e.g. industry).”

### The responsibility of the farming sector to do more for specific aspects of the environment

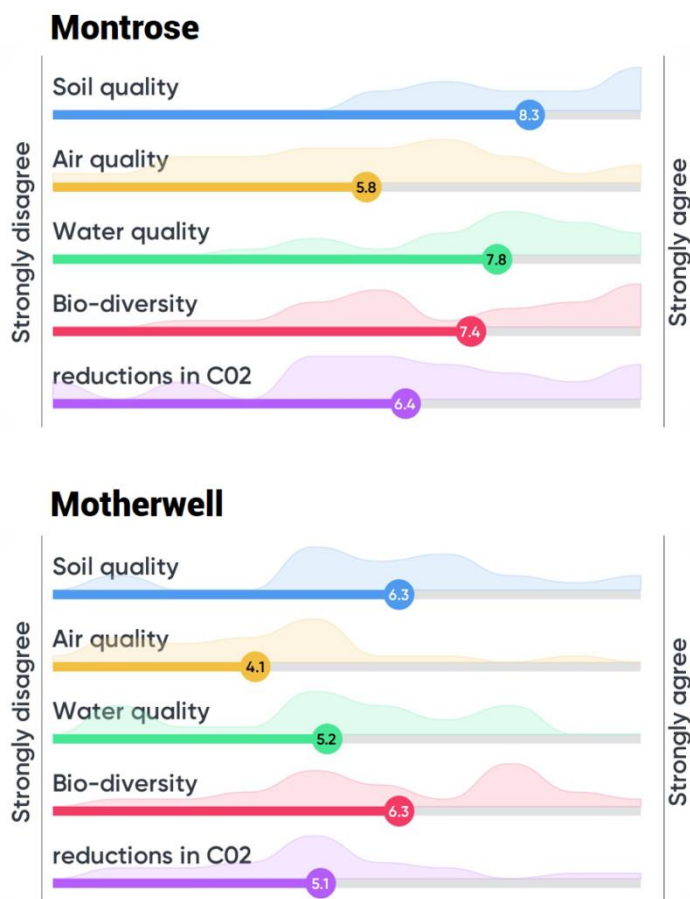
The Citizens’ Forums were also asked about the extent to which the farming sector needs to do more to protect and conserve specific aspects of the environment: soil quality; air quality; water quality; biodiversity ; and reductions in carbon dioxide.

The participants in Montrose consistently agreed or strongly agreed more than those in Motherwell with the need for farmers to do more to protect and conserve all of the aspects presented.

While both locations agreed that the farming sector should do more to protect and conserve soil quality, Montrose participants more strongly agreed (8.3) than in Motherwell (6.3) where there was a wider spread of votes. The main reasons given here related to the fact that maintaining the quality of the land itself is fundamentally the responsibility of those who are using it for their business and thus a specific responsibility of the farming sector.

With regards to air quality, Montrose participants agreed that farming sector needs to do more to protect and conserve air quality (5.8), while those in Motherwell disagreed (4.1). In this case, Montrose participants were more widely spread across the spectrum whereas Motherwell participants clustered around disagreeing. The key reasons given for disagreeing wer that this was a societal wide problem and that the

Figure 4.3: Is it the responsibility of the farming sector to do more to protect and conserve the environment.



farming sector did not have a specific responsibility for given that the impacts on air quality from this sector were not particularly related to specific farming practices.

Montrose participants strongly agreed (7.8) that the farming sector needs to do more to protect and conserve water quality, whereas in Motherwell participants were more evenly split (5.2). Key reasons given in Montrose for prioritising this aspect of environmental protection related to potential for the run-off of fertilizer and other chemicals and soil from fields to damage the quality of local water courses. This may have been prioritised more highly in Montrose as, being a relatively rural environment, participants had seen more directly the impacts when environmental protection measures on farms had not maintained high standards.

Both locations agreed that farming sector should do more to protect and conserve biodiversity , although Montrose (7.4) was far stronger in agreement than in Motherwell (6.3) where the spread of votes was more even. Again the priority given to this related to the ability of the farming sector to make a direct contribution because of their direct control of how the land they farmed was used. As noted in many of the discussions, the growth of more intensive farming practices has had a direct impact on biodiversity by reducing the range of habitats as more land was cultivated. As the impacts of this are becoming more widely understood there is a corresponding responsibility on the sector to ensure that their land management practices adapt to rectify this.

Montrose participants agreed that the farming sector should do more towards reductions in CO2 (6.4) while participants in Motherwell were more undecided (5.1). Again this was generally seen as a wider societal issue that all people and industries had a responsibility to address. Where people did give a specific responsibility to the farming sector reasons tended to focus on the impacts created by transporting produce (i.e. food miles) and the methane produced by livestock farming (although it was acknowledged there was little that could be done to reduce this other than stop rearing animals for food).

## **Agriculture and the Landscape**

On the Saturday afternoon participants had the chance to hear from Katrin Prager, from the University of Aberdeen who reminded them that what we often think of as Scotland's natural landscape is actually the result of many centuries of decisions and choices about farming and agricultural production. She highlighted the impacts on the landscape of different choices that could be made in Scotland's agricultural future and reminded participants that the countryside views that we are familiar with are made up of a multitude of elements – from fencelines, buildings, hedgerows and trees to provide shelter – that combine to be something that is culturally 'pleasing to the eye'.

This was the most abstract concept that the participants were asked to consider over the weekends and thus findings from these discussions are less clearly quantifiable. Throughout the discussions however some clear themes emerged as people considered how they related to the rural landscape and the things they valued about it.

It was clear in both of the Forums that the participants valued Scotland's rural landscape, and it was noted that, even from within our major cities, it is quite easy to access the rural countryside. The farming landscape was valued both from a scenic standpoint and for the opportunities it provides to get out into the open and enjoy the fresh air, *"the noises of nature"* and a *"sense of tranquillity"* that *"refreshes the mind and changes the mindset."* The tradition of 'rights of way' through farmland which makes this access easy was also valued, although participants' did recognise that not everyone who uses this right respects that the fields are someone's workplace and the foundation of their livelihood.

Participants highlighted that the diversity in our farmlands create *"a personality"* that means that you not only know that you are in Scotland but know where in Scotland you are. The field structures are different and that gives each part of the country an identity and, as one participant noted, *"even if you were blindfolded and dropped in a field you'd know whether you were in Fife, the Borders or on the west coast."*

The importance of our mixed farming industry to people came out quite strongly in these discussions, with many participants reflecting on how much they enjoyed the views of different fields as *"a patchwork of colours, shapes and smells"*. Some noted that this was quite distinctive to here, and that in agricultural areas of America for example, field shapes and crops were much more uniform. Maintaining this was seen as important, not just for the views we enjoy, but because it is part of our cultural heritage and a key tourist draw.

It was noted that Scotland's scenic rural landscapes attract people from across the world, which is a valuable boost to the economy, and also important for the survival of many rural communities. It was, however, also acknowledged that what attracts them might be a historic idyll that is no longer the best, most efficient or economically advantageous way to use the land. Thus while agricultural simplification into larger more uniform fields may be less pleasing to the eye, many participants questioned in the end whether this was fundamentally important. They noted that, in essence, these are working landscapes and *"farmers need to make money, it is their livelihood, which has to be more important than our aesthetics."*

It was also noted that *"some culturally valued landscapes aren't beneficial to biodiversity – the question is whether economic, aesthetic or environmental benefits take precedence"* when considering the future of agriculture land in this country.

One example of changes already taking place across farming landscapes that was discussed at a number of tables was the increased use of polytunnels - a direct economic and food production choice that has had an impact of the landscape by *"creating fields of plastic"*. Some people appreciated that this change was necessary if we wanted to extend growing seasons and grow a wider variety of fruits and vegetables to meet people's growing expectations of availability year round. The trade-off for reduced food miles and a greater range of produce was generally seen as one people were happy to make, and also *"polytunnels are not permanent"*.

Another way that land in Scotland could be used differently that was discussed by participants was the regeneration of native woodlands and/or the creation of managed woodlands planted as timber crops. Both of these were seen as having environmental benefits in relation to increasing biodiversity, trapping CO2 and helping with flood prevention and, as a long term crop investment managed woodlands can also be made profitable for land owners.

It was also proposed by some groups that we could choose to use our rural land radically differently, for example by focusing on energy generation. The creation of large scale windfarms or solar parks across Scotland would significantly change the look of the landscape. Responses to this idea were very mixed, with some participants seeing this as a logical way forward to achieve energy security for Scotland, noting that “*windfarms could become the new stone dykes*”, while others saw the changes to the countryside this would bring as simply unacceptable and a “*blight on the landscape.*”

All in all the discussions around this theme were less focussed than many other sessions within the Citizens’ Forums as participants grappled with the wide range of possibilities and concerns that future choices regarding farming could deliver. There is, however, clear evidence that these considerations informed the principles that the participants went on to develop the next day. This was particularly the case in relation to the diversification of land use and the importance of maintaining the visual traditions of farming within the landscape because of the added value that brings to Scotland’s rural areas in relation to tourism and our populations wider wellbeing i.e. the “*escape to the countryside ideal*”.

## **Key principles that should be at the core of the agricultural sector in Scotland**

On the morning of the second day of their deliberations, having learnt about and considered how the food production sector currently operates, the value to the economy, environmental impacts and mitigation options, and the effects different choices about how land was farmed has had (and could have) on the Scottish landscape, participants in the two Citizens’ Forums were asked to identify key principles that they thought should underpin the future of the agricultural sector in Scotland.

To do this they were encouraged to reflect on the ‘*key takeaways*’ from their learning so far. Cross-cutting points highlighted by participants included:

- How much the farming sector already does (and is expected / regulated to do) in relation environmental protection, and the challenge of how to balance the public's priorities regarding health and environmental improvements with what is asked of farmers;

*“Didn't realise how much a farmer has to do to protect the environment or how he did it before today”*

*“We need to protect the environment where possible but also keep quality good and production costs effective”*

- The importance that subsidies have played in maintaining agriculture as a viable industry in Scotland;

*“We already have a progressive system - farming provides a vital public service and needs support”*

*“Scotland’s agriculture should remain progressive and support should be given to those who care for the land and produce quality food”*

- The landscape and land quality in Scotland, and the balance between low yield and arable lands, and forestry i.e. that perceptions are not always the reality;

*“Having travelled widely through Scotland I thought I was clued up on this but I was quite surprised by some of the facts and figures shown - very eye opening!”*

- The need to focus on the fact that agriculture is primarily about food, and that what we expect from the sector has to reflect the choices we want to make about food consumption;

*“If you can’t feed a nation then you don’t have a nation”*

*“If we want to sustain our farming sector then we need to be prepared to buy the food they produce”*

- The need to ensure future land management is strategic, informed by knowledge and research, and led by those with real experience in the industry, in order to balance productivity with other priorities;

*“Who will be overseeing changes in the farming practices and controls in Scotland? - this requires not just one specific interest group but groupings of different, knowledgeable people”*

*“How do we balance production whilst retaining our countryside values - modern farming vs landscape traditions?”*

- Questions about whether agricultural production is the ‘best’ use of land in Scotland and consideration of other productive uses of farms and farm lands;

*“Land could maybe be better used for energy production, for example wind turbines, solar farms etc”*

*“Really surprised that Scottish farmland isn’t primarily used for arable livestock”*

- That food prices are comparatively very low compared to other points in the last 100 years, the limited profit margins most farms are operating with, and

the recognition that if we want to see farming practices change the costs of this may need to be passed on to consumers;

*“We like a lot of changes, are we prepared to pay for them?”*

*“Farmers are making a commitment to producing food but with little in return - margins squeezed”*

- The complexities of land management and the interrelationship between productivity and biodiversity and other priorities;

*“There is a need for rural education. There are high levels of ignorance of what happens out in the countryside”*

*“Interconnectedness of landscape, food production, environmental issues - need overall policies”*

- The impacts of farming practices on water quality and management more broadly, particularly in relation to the impacts on downstream flooding;

*“We need to make better use of the available land to contribute to flood protection”*

## In Motherwell

In Motherwell, this led participants to develop 10 principles which they then ranked into a prioritised list (with each participant able to choose up to 6 principles prioritise).

### *Principles for future agricultural policy developed at the Motherwell citizens’ Forum*



Base: All Motherwell Citizens’ Forum participants (22)



The highest-ranked principle was around the idea of the agricultural sector having a wider 'social' responsibility towards the welfare of people and animals (supported by 82% of participants). While only chosen by 45% of participants as a priority the importance of any targets set for the sector being 'realistic and reasonable' was also a key focus in these discussions. This related to the recognition that the sector is already heavily regulated (in relation to environmental management, food standards and animal welfare) and, although improvements might be valued farmers still needed to have the chance to operate viable businesses.

*"The biggest eye-opener for me is the many demands already being made of the farming community."*

Of Motherwell participants, 68% prioritised supporting the need for the agricultural sector to become a sustainable working industry (not reliant on funding to operate). This was envisioned by participants as being an industry that *"future-proofed,"* providing a steady food supply and meeting the needs of the population while taking into account the climate and environment. This was also linked to the priority expressed by 68% of participants that producers are paid fairly for products, ensuring that the sector is able to operate in a cost effective way and therefore *"limit subsidies."* Alongside this however, 77% prioritised the need for there being a fair distribution of any funding/grants across different agricultural sectors (although at this stage there was no consensus drawn about what would be considered 'fair').

*"Agriculture is diverse and should remain so - farmers need help to sustain the availability of foods, the viability of rural communities and protect the environment."*

68% of participants also prioritised that the the Scottish agriculture sector should be one producing high-quality food for local consumers and for export. This reinforces the further principle that agriculture policies should support and promote a global recognition of *"high quality"* Scottish products and establish Scotland as being amongst *"world leaders"* in best practices in the agriculture sector (prioritised by 45% of participants)

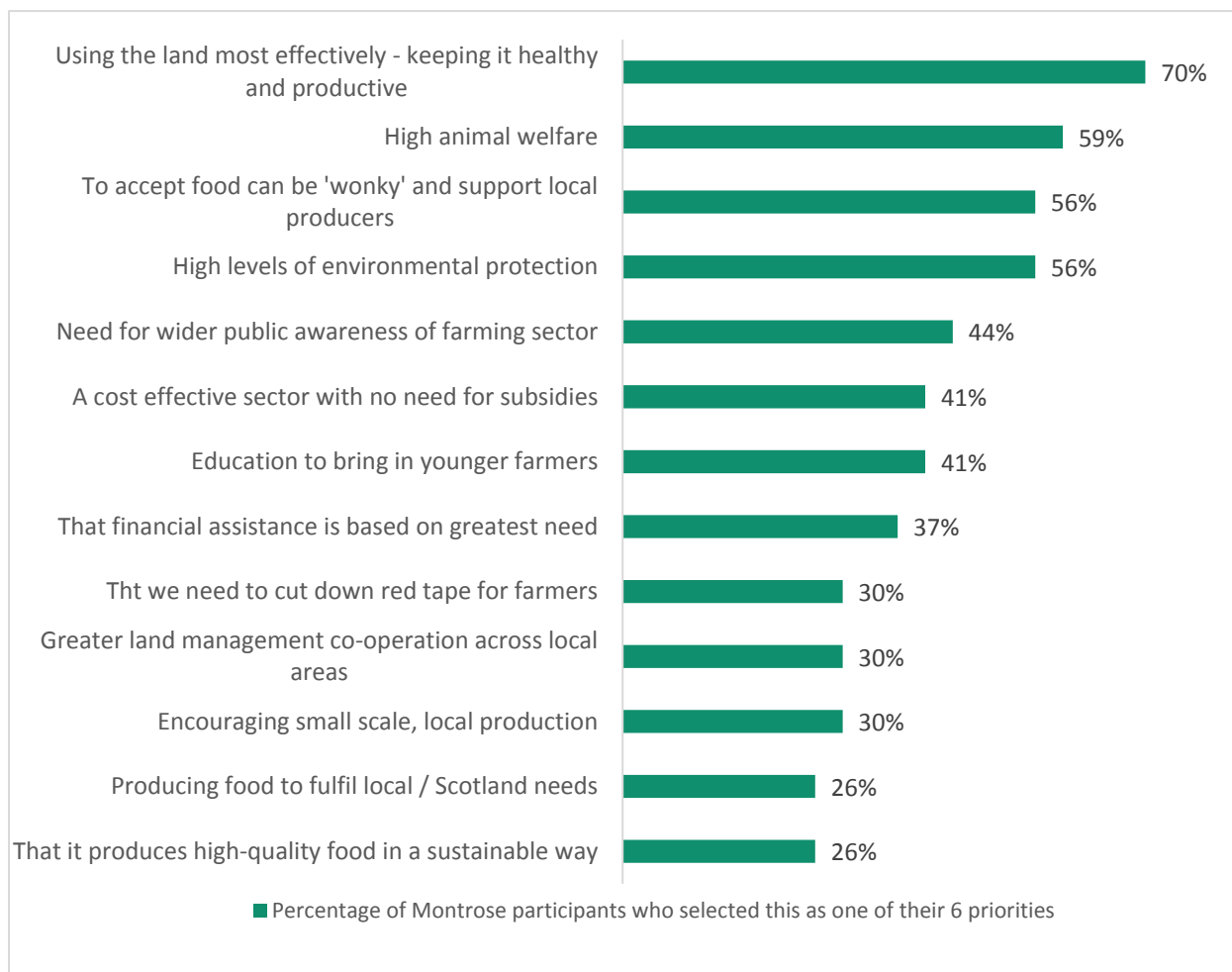
*"Need to remember that our environment provides us with food, recreation, beauty - gives us a feeling of wellbeing and helps our mental health."*

In Motherwell 41% of participants also prioritised the diversification of agricultural land usage beyond producing food, such as by *"embracing niche markets"*, developing farm shops, farm visits or home-stay offers as ways of developing additional income. Another aspect of the discussion that informed this principle was the opportunities created by investment in environmental improvements towards *"making our landscape attractive"* in ways that would encourage greater rural tourism, or using less productive land to generate energy instead of food.

## In Montrose

In predominantly rural Montrose, participants developed 13 principles which were then ranked (with each participant again able to select 6 principles to prioritise).

### *Principles for future agricultural policy developed at the Montrose citizens' Forum*



The highest ranked principle in Montrose, prioritised by 70% of the participants, was that the way farmland is used across Scotland was done in ways that were most effective for ensuring it remained healthy and productive. Participants talked about more use of crop rotation and maintaining the health of the soil to maximise the potential of the land. The need for high environmental protection standards was also prioritised by 56%. Here the discussions focussed on the idea that the agriculture industry has a key role in “*environmental stewardship*” of the land on behalf of the wider community, with 30% of participants identifying that better co-operation on land management and activities to protect and conserve the natural environment may be a way to improve impacts.

*“Learned about farmers input to biodiversity and that farming practices can actually help with the environment.”*

Of participants in Montrose, 59% prioritised the need for high animal welfare standards in Scottish farming, and explained that this should also be demonstrable to the public to help encourage responsible local purchasing. 56% of participants

also prioritised the need to accept imperfections in food appearance if that meant you could buy fresher, local produce.

*“Need better clarity on animal welfare and what different welfare labels mean e.g. organic”*

This focus on local food production, and the need for local support of the sector, was also emphasised in the prioritisation of the production of high quality food in sustainable ways and ensuring that food produced in Scotland was meeting local demands by 26% of participants, including the possibility of *“encouraging local production of locally specific foods.”* Finally the principle of encourage small scale local production was also prioritised by 30% of participants in Montrose, saying that it might help produce *“stable source of employment for people.”*

*“Important for us to consider more where our food is coming from and how we are supporting local farmers”*

Another 44% prioritised the need for the sector to be able to operate in cost effective and efficient ways, reasoning that if farmers were getting fair prices for their produce, and not losing money, that there would be an overall reduced need for subsidies. Further 37% of participants in Montrose prioritised the principle that any financial assistance given to the sector should be done so on the basis of where there was the greatest need *“rather than blanket grants.”*

*“More stability in market prices of products e.g. milk would be of lasting value to the sector more than just grants”*

Finally, of the Montrose Citizens’ Forum participants, 44% prioritised the principle of ensuring wider public awareness of the farming sector, and the complexities and challenges they face. 41% prioritised the need for education to bring in young farmers and attract new blood into the industry, something many of the participants had first hand awareness of this being a challenge in rural environments as the tradition of passing farms down within a family was breaking down. 30% of participants also identified that cutting down on the amount of red-tape for farmers would allow them to focus more on the core business of using and protecting their land.

## **Funding to support farmers and food production**

On the Sunday mornings participants had a final opportunity to hear from Professor David Hopkins, Dean of the Central Faculty at Scotland’s Rural College in order to learn about how the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) contributes to the Scottish agricultural sector. The purpose of his presentation was to:

- Outline the history and purpose of funding through the Common Agricultural Policy;
- Explain the proportion of funding currently offered to different types of activities (the pillars) and the current rationales for that;

- Explain how funding allocations are prioritised between types of farms.

Participants then heard from Professor Davy McCracken, Professor of Agricultural Ecology at Scotland's Rural College about how different choices in the allocation of this funding in the future could have an impact on the environmental, food production and economic outcomes of agricultural land management in Scotland.

After a question and answer session with these experts' participants worked in their small discussion groups to consider the criteria on which funding should be allocated to support farming and food production.

In the research survey at the beginning of the weekends participants had been asked a variety of questions to establish baseline opinions on the need for support to the farming sector. In that survey:

- 93% agreed (with 71% strongly agreeing) that Scottish farming is vital for the success of the Scottish economy
- 43% disagreed (with 8% strongly disagreeing) that Scottish farmers receive a fair share of money for the food they produce
- 16% of participants thought a key government focus in relation to future agricultural policy should be on guaranteeing a minimum level of income for farmers
- It is also worth noting that in all cases the highest levels of sentiment came from participants in the Motherwell Forum, which had the higher proportion of urban participants.

When asked to consider different criteria for providing funding to farmers to support food production the question asked in the national survey was drawn upon to allow for comparative analysis. Thus, participants were presented with the following question:

*Currently, CAP money that goes to farmers is distributed according to a range of factors, most importantly the size and potential productivity of the farmland, the highest payment rate goes to the largest farms on better quality land. What would be your preference for how any future budget should be distributed?*

In the national survey 30% of respondents had selected '*budget based on maintaining a stable farming industry*' as their preferred option, making it the preferred option overall. There was some concern in the review of these results that this may simply have been the safe and/or easy option to choose, so for the Citizens' Forums this option was not included in order to dig deeper into the reasons people gave for either wanting change or maintaining the status quo.

This meant that the options presented to participants were:

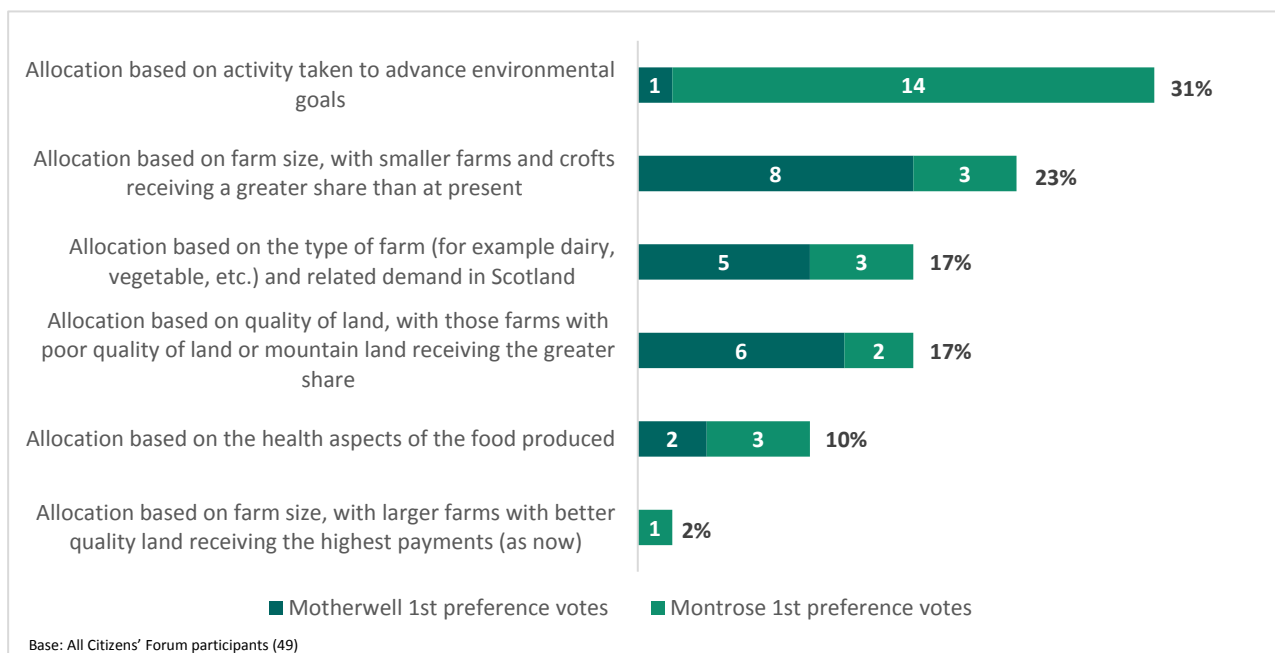
1. Allocation based on farm size, with smaller farms and crofts receiving a greater share than at present
2. Allocation based on activity taken to advance environmental goals
3. Allocation based on quality of land, with those farms with poor quality of land or mountain land receiving the greater share
4. Allocation based on the type of farm (for example dairy, vegetable, etc.) and related demand in Scotland
5. Allocation based on the health aspects of the food produced
6. Allocation based on farm size, with larger farms with better quality land receiving the highest payments (**as now**)

While some of the participants complained that there was not an option to advocate for no funding to be given to subsidise farms, most participants agreed that the sector is currently so reliant on this type of support that farmers would struggle to maintain a viable business if it suddenly was withdrawn. Removing any future equivalent of the types of support farmers received via CAP was therefore seen as something that could cripple the sector in the short term. Further participants tended to agree that this would remain the case unless there were significant changes made to the price's farmers receive for their produce and the attitude of the public (and the export market) as to what are seen as acceptable food prices.

### **Preferred Criteria**

After spending time evaluating each of the criteria in turn within their discussion groups participants in the Citizens' Forums completed a private ballot, indicating their top 3 preferences.

*1<sup>st</sup> preference votes from member of the Citizens' Forum on their preferred criteria for support to farmers*



That any future funding allocation to farmers should be based on the activity taken within their food production activities to ‘advance environmental goals’ was the favoured option across the Forums as a whole. It should be noted however that this was because almost half of the participants in the Montrose Citizens’ Forum chose this as their first option, aligning clearly with the principles they established for evaluating options which prioritised environmental performance. Only one participant in the Motherwell Citizens’ Forum identified this as their preferred option, highlighting the different emphasis given to environmental performance within food production activity in these discussions.

Key reasons given for prioritising this criteria for funding were that it integrates food production with environmental concerns, *“looks after the quality of the environment”* and *“increases knowledge of environmental goals”*. There were however some concerns expressed that this option could favour bigger landowners who had more options of what to do on their land to mitigate their environmental impacts and therefore *“may put smaller lands at a disadvantage”*. Some participants also felt that a policy based on this criteria would discriminate against certain types of farms, e.g. cattle farming, where it is intrinsically harder to minimise the environmental impacts of their farming activities.

Allocations based on farm size ‘with smaller farms and crofts receiving a greater share than at present’ was the most consistent preference from participants in the Motherwell Citizens’ Forum. This reflects much of the focus of their wider discussions and the principles they established which gave strong support to maintain a diverse farming sector.

Many of the arguments in favour of this approach focused on the need to maintain a place within the sector for small, independent farms and crofts as *“just now they are struggling, and we are losing smaller farms / crofts creating more unemployment and poverty”*. It was also noted that *“bigger farms have more opportunity for diversification (and to do things differently) camping, more variety of crops and livestock, farm shops, petting zoos, farm stays etc.”* as a reason why there should be more support for smaller landholdings. Related comments included *“small farms are important (not want to be like banks and the big ones only)”* and that the current allocation policy reflected the *“same old story, we don’t look after the wee man.”*

For those who prioritised the type of farm, and its relevance to food demands in Scotland, as their preferred criteria the main reasons were that then production *“would be needs driven”* and have the flexibility to respond to *“changing consumer need”*. For some this was a vital focus because the foods that are part of our stable diet would be those receiving the subsidies (if needed) and they argued that, as a result of this, *“self-sufficiency should follow – if it is managed correctly based on product demand”*.

Concerns, however, were also raised that this model could be *“counter indicative”* to some of the wider priorities expressed as *“bigger farms may focus on staple outputs”* and as such create *“less diversity as more profitable farms are preferred”*. Participants also noted the risk of *“overproduction if quotas not set”* and recognised that, given the low proportion of quality arable land in Scotland, that there were practical limitations on how the land could be used by farmers for different types of *“in-demand products”*.

Allocation of funding based on land quality, with those farms with poorer quality of land receiving the greatest support (i.e. the opposite to the current situation) was prioritised by 17% of participants. This was largely on the basis that it seemed a fairer allocation of funding towards those farmers who would struggle most to make their land profitable: *“Scotland has poorer land and should get a greater allocation of the subsidy”*. Arguments in favour of this criteria also recognised that farmers working poorer quality land, particularly in highland and island communities, may also serve other wider socio-economic functions, for example as anchor employers within rural areas and that subsidy therefore could have wider, positive knock-on impacts.

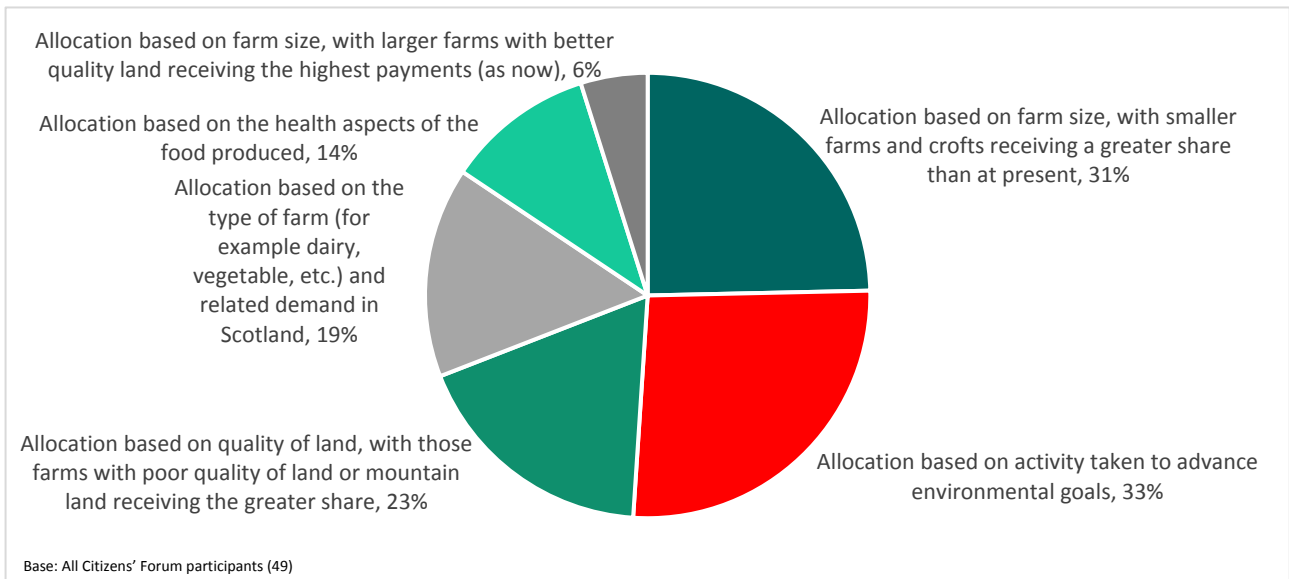
There was, however, also a counter argument presented that suggested land quality itself was not enough to demonstrate entitlement. Rather, in this case, it was argued that a demonstrable commitment to maximising the value of their land was required before any further entitlements were offered: *“farmers on poor quality land should not get greater support unless they can show that they are undertaking activities to diversify the productivity of their land.”*

Finally, the current system of funding which rewarded the size and quality of the land farmers held, was generally not supported by participants in the Citizens’ Forums, receiving only 1 first preference vote. This was largely based on the sense that this model of funding supported those who *“should be able to help*

*themselves*”, although there was also a sense of security in retaining a tried-and-tested model: *“better the devil you know”*.

When preferential votes were considered there was little change in the overall ranking of the options, although the weight of opinion balanced out between the first and second preference, as can be seen in the graph below. Support for the current system of funding allocation however remained low, suggesting that participants were generally interested in seeing change, despite the lack of consensus regarding what that change should be.

*Preferential votes on preferred criteria for support for the farming sector*



Finally, the table below demonstrates the impact that the deliberative process, i.e. 2 days of learning and considering the issues, had on the participants' final preferences.



*Comparative look at how first preferences for how the balance of funding should be distributed between CAP priorities<sup>82</sup>*

	Allocation based on farm size (as now)	Allocation based on farm size, with smaller farms receiving a greater share	Allocation based on activity taken to advance environmental goals	Allocation based on quality of land, with poorer quality of land prioritised	Allocation based on the type of farm produce - related demand in Scotland	Allocation based on the health aspects of the food being produced
<b>Survey</b>	6%	26%	10%	9%	8%	8%
<b>Pre-deliberation</b>	8%	37%	22%	8%	10%	14%
<b>Post-deliberation</b>	2%	23%	31%	17%	17%	10%

Here it can be seen that, following the deliberative process, providing support for those able to demonstrate environmental improvements grew notably. Further there was a doubling in support given to providing funding to farmers with lower quality land in order to help sustain the diversity of the sector and, by default, support rural communities.

## **How future funding allocations to agriculture, environment and rural development might be balanced differently**

In the final discussion session of the Citizens' Forums participants were asked to consider how the future balance of funding allocations might be differently apportioned between the three broad CAP priority areas. Again, drawing on the way the questions were framed in the national survey, participants were presented with the following question:

*The Common Agricultural Policy currently has three priorities:*

- 1. to support farmers and food production to help ensure safety and stability*
- 2. to support the natural environment during food production*
- 3. to help protect rural communities.*

*What would be your preference be for the balance of future spending between these priorities?*

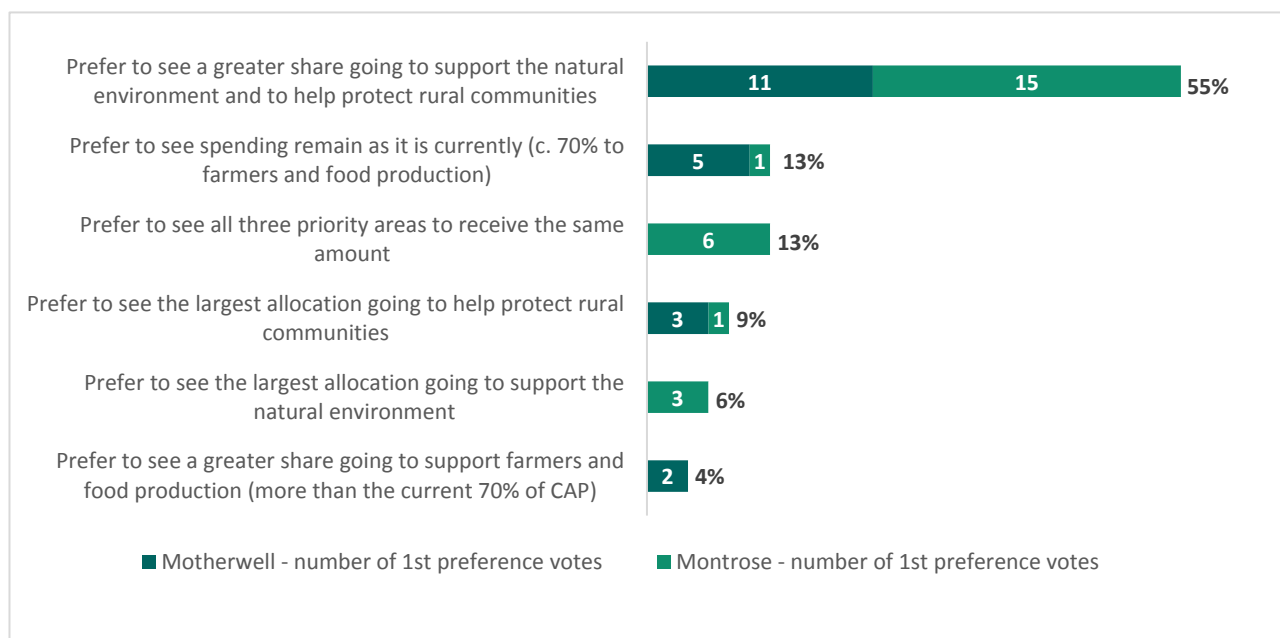
<sup>82</sup> Given that one option, the option of supporting a 'stable sector', was removed before Citizens' Forum participants voted, it appear that the votes in the national survey cast for this option have been spread across options 2 and 3, as the rest of the vote spread is quite consistent with the results from the national survey.

They were given six options to evaluate and then rank in order of preference:

1. Prefer to see all three priority areas receive the same amount
2. Prefer to see a greater share going to support the natural environment and to help protect rural communities
3. Prefer to see spending remain as it is currently (c. 70% to farmers and food production)
4. Prefer to see a greater share going to support farmers and food production (more than the current 70% of CAP)
5. Prefer to see the largest allocation going to support the natural environment
6. Prefer to see the largest allocation going to help protect rural communities

When participants were asked to vote individually on these options following their discussion there was an overall consistency on how the votes were distributed between the Citizens' Forum locations. The graph below shows the distribution of 1st preference votes across the two Citizens' Forums.

*1<sup>st</sup> preference votes from member of the Citizens' Forum on their preferred balance of funding allocations to farming and food production, environmental management and supporting rural communities.*



Overall, more than half (55%) of the first preference votes went to seeing a greater share of funding going to 'support the natural environment and to help protect rural communities. During discussions, participants pointed out that a greater proportion of support given to rural communities more broadly "would encourage tourism", help "diversify business" and support "other business development" in rural communities. It was also seen as a way to "repopulate/sustain countryside population." Caution to this preference included a possible "negative perception by

*other communities (e.g. urban/fishing industries)*” and that, given what they had learnt about the important role that subsidies has played in maintaining an active farming sector in Scotland, it *“should not be at a disadvantage for farmers.”*

Following on, 13% of first preference votes went to seeing ‘all three priority areas to receive the same amount of funding’. This was noticeably only voted for by participants in Montrose. This may, in part, be because these participants, by the very nature of living in a much more rural environment, have a greater innate understanding of the interplay between the agricultural sector and the other economic and business demands of rural communities. This option therefore sat particularly well between their wider awareness and their prioritised principles regarding relating to environmental stewardship and keeping the land both healthy and productive. Here it was described as being a ‘fair’ way to balance out the competing needs of the farming sector, the environment and rural communities more broadly.

Participants across both of the groups however identified impacts and reasons both in favour and against this policy. While some participants stated that maybe this would result in a *“wishy-washy”* compromised policy, others argued that *“the same amount is fairer (no preferential treatment).”* One of the key objections was that, while there was no question this balance of funding would be good for sustaining rural communities, there are *“other ways to support rural communities”* (including that they *“should get funding from local authorities”*) and that the funding currently distributed through CAP should focus specifically on agricultural lands. Comments relating to this emphasis on farming and food production emphasised that *“food has to be a priority”* and that there is a *“risk to farming if the overall budget [available to them] becomes too small”*.

Seeing ‘spending remain as it is currently (70% to farmers and food production)’ received 13% of the first preference votes overall. This also seems to reflect the growing recognition participants had gained throughout the weekend of the role subsidies have played in supporting Scottish farming and the potential impacts on the agricultural sector if this was removed. Comments from participants on these options tended to argue that, while keeping the current system may seem *“unfair”* and *“not fit for purpose”*, it would provide *“stability”* and is *“needed to keep high standards.”*

Only 4% overall supported the idea of increasing the proportion of funding directly allocated to farming and food production. When talking about this, participants tended to focus on the ability of funding to lead to *“more jobs in farming”*, *“cheaper food,”* more *“variety of food,”* and *“could increase quality standards.”* Participants also felt that it could help with *“diversification of the land use”* or *“help make the land more profitable”* for example through *“an emphasis on local produce for local people or for high quality export markets”*.

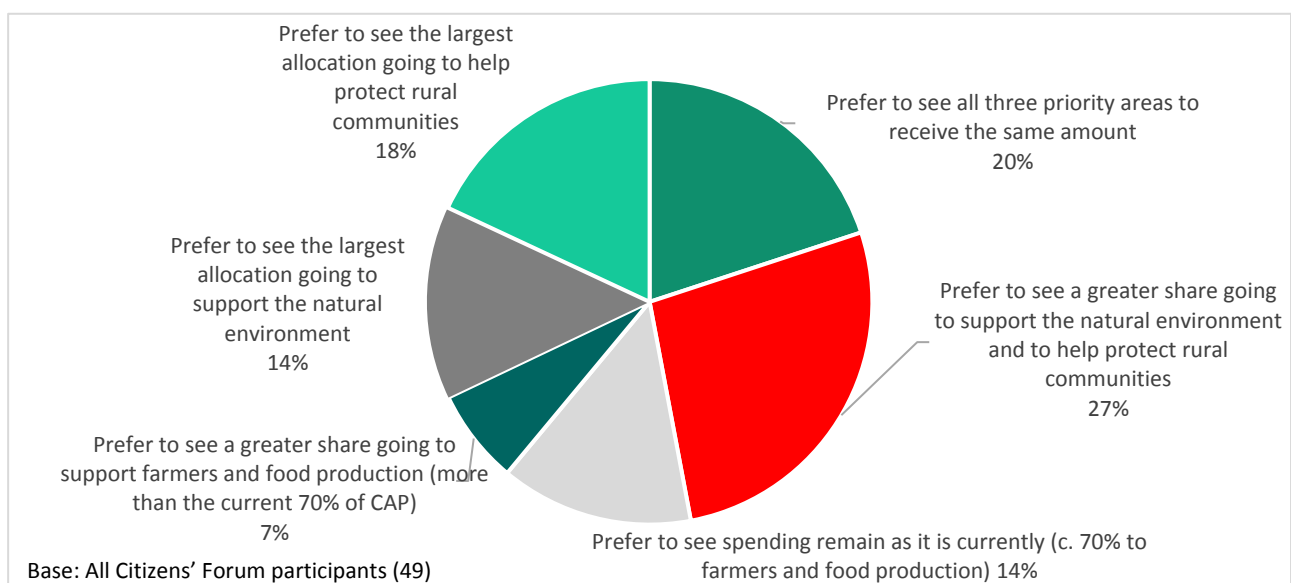
On the other hand, opponents to these models expressed the view that such continued spending *“could emphasise/enable sub optimal production patterns”* and *“rewards people just for having land, not for what they do with it.”* One table in Montrose went as far as disagreeing unanimously with the idea of increasing the

percentage of CAP funding available for farmers and food production, saying it was simply *“not up for discussion”* as the industry was already far too reliant on public money and needed to either develop sustainable business models or cease to operate.

Only 6% of participants’ first preference went to seeing ‘the largest allocation going to support the natural environment.’ While there had been an almost universal interest in reducing the environmental impacts of the farming sector the majority of participants seem to have balanced this demand, when it came to the proportional allocation of funding, with an acknowledgement that food production was at the heart of farming and without an emphasis on supporting this other priorities became less relevant. In the discussions participants therefore tended to acknowledge that, while a significant increase in funding for environmental protections would *“be great for the natural environment”* and that it is an area that *“needs more investment”*, too much emphasis placed here would mean that overall *“farmers would struggle”*, it could *“kill off farming”* and that *“no focus on food production is a negative.”*

There was very little change in the overall results when second and third preference votes are included. Preferring to see a greater share of funding going towards the environment and rural communities remains the most popular preference albeit with a smaller percentage than with just first preference votes (at 27%). This, alongside the fact that the second highest ranked option was that of splitting funding equally across the three priorities, suggests an overall consensus among participants that it was important to rebalance the allocation of funding between the different priority areas. Complementing this was the proportionally low levels of support for increasing the proportional allocation made to support farmers and food production (7%), although sustaining current spending patterns did receive 14% of the votes.

*Preferential votes on the balance of funding allocations to farming and food production, environmental management and supporting rural communities.*



Finally, the table below demonstrates the impact that the deliberative process, i.e. 2 days of learning and considering the issues, had on the participants' final preferences. At the beginning of the process their initial response to the question about the balance of funding between farms and food production, environmental support and rural communities as it appeared in the national survey was quite similar to the larger survey results. There was somewhat higher priority given to 'support the natural environment and to help protect rural communities' than in the national survey, particularly from participants in Montrose as may be expected, but aside from that the pattern of preferences was the same.

By the time they were casting their final votes on this topic however the pattern had significantly changed. 55% recorded that their first preference was to see 'a greater share going to support the natural environment and to help protect rural communities' (for the reasons given above). It is also worth noting that support for an equal distribution of funding between the three areas, the top priority identified in the national survey, had dropped by half (although initially given significant support). The option of the balance of a greater share being given to support farming and food production was also broadly rejected by participants, with only 2 people giving it their vote in the final ballot.

*First preferences for how the balance of funding should be distributed between CAP priorities*

	Prefer all three areas to receive the same amount	A greater share going to support the natural environment and to help protect rural communities	Prefer spending to remain as it is currently	A greater share going to support farmers and food production	The largest allocation going to support the natural environment	The largest allocation going to help protect rural communities
<b>Survey</b>	26%	17%	15%	9%	9%	6%
<b>Pre-deliberation</b>	31%	31%	16%	12%	6%	4%
<b>Post-deliberation</b>	13%	55%	13%	4%	6%	9%

## How to access background or source data

The data collected for this social research publication:

- are available in more detail through [statistics.gov.scot](http://statistics.gov.scot)
- are available via an alternative route <specify or delete this text>
- may be made available on request, subject to consideration of legal and ethical factors. Please contact <email address> for further information.
- cannot be made available by Scottish Government for further analysis as Scottish Government is not the data controller.



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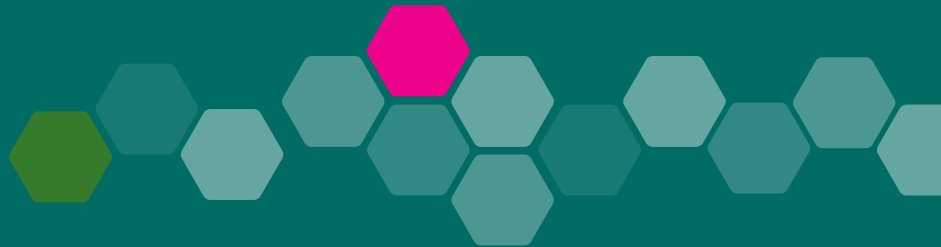
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