CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

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

Very important. Building on our reputation for hospitality and expanding our food and drink industry for visitors is important for growth and employment, but creating a foundation of good health in our communities is crucial given the exponential rise in overweight and Type 2 diabetes. Preventative health measures to reduce the burden on our NHS need to be a priority.

2. How would we know when we had got there? What would success look like?

The latest National Diet and Nutrition Survey data shows Scotland has not improved intakes of fruit and vegetables despite public health efforts, and lags behind the UK as a whole. Meanwhile intakes of saturated fats, sugars and salt are still too high. This is especially true of lower income groups. We need to continue to monitor these parameters, as well as functional and health outcomes like CVD, T2D and cancer rates, and days lost due to ill health from preventable diseases. We also need to ensure that access to good food is consistent across all social strata and age groups. The Eatwell plate and existing guidelines could be used as a benchmark for what a healthy diet should look like. Establishing a vibrant food and drink industry with an international reputation to counter the ‘deep fried Mars bar’ stereotypes would be helpful in reversing the association with unhealthy eating Scotland has acquired. More positive press for our good habits would be a good marker of success.

3. Do you agree with the proposed vision? How would you improve it?

Broadly, yes. I think there should be an emphasis on engagement at all levels of society. A cultural shift in attitudes towards food and health needs to be effected before we have any hope of becoming a Good Food Nation. We also need to tackle the socioeconomic imbalances that lead to poorer families being less healthy.

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

Seeing less reliance on food banks (by reducing food and fuel poverty), improvements in public health and wellbeing, creation of jobs in the food and drink industry, less ‘food deserts’ and improved availability of healthy foods.
5. Are there any other essential steps we need to take before setting out on this journey?

As above, ensure social inequality is tackled alongside efforts to improve diet and health. 5-a-day advice is no use if produce is unaffordable, or fuel poverty limits ability to cook or store food. Ensuring that this consultation reaches deep into the community and engages people at a grassroots level is important to ensure that more people become stakeholders in creating a Good Food Nation. We need to create a pride in good quality, nutritious food. Food and drink industry need to be involved in improving availability of healthy options, and in rebranding Scotland as a nation of healthy eaters.

6. How do you think a Food Commission could best help?

Creating a formal framework to incorporate inputs from the diverse players in community and industry would be useful to ensure that efforts are focussed and co-ordinated effectively. Any public health interventions should be evidence-based to ensure effectiveness and establish measurable success criteria. Ensuring that those who are appointed represent the many interests involved, and have the expertise to identify and implement effective strategies to achieve goals agreed.

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

As above, monitor intakes of fruit and vegetables, saturated fat and salt, and added sugars. Link these to rates of obesity, T2D, CVD and cancer, and days lost to ill health. Monitoring attitudes towards, and access to, healthier food options could be undertaken using surveys. Monitor food and drink industry turnover and export levels, and rate products in terms of health value (perhaps using traffic light system) so that progress towards healthier product offerings is visible e.g. from reformulation of product.

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

Public health interventions are notoriously slow to effect change and little progress has been made so far. Effective, evidence based interventions and education and motivation of consumers are essential. I think food manufacturers and retailers need to be more pro-active in ensuring more healthy options are available. Legislation may need to be considered on product reformulation, and marketing of junk foods, especially to children. Setting a good example by improving food in the public sector is a start, but will only have a small effect given the proportion of food served in these settings.
9. Do you agree with the proposed initial focus on:
   - Food in the public sector
   - A children’s food policy
   - Local food
   - Good food choices and
   - Continued economic growth?

**Food in the public sector:** Yes, as there is most control here, but this needs to be widened rapidly to include retailers and fast food manufacturers, with legislative support if necessary.  
**Children’s food policy:** Yes, this is crucial to reverse the rising obesity rates in under 16s, and to ensure good health for future generations. Marketing of junk foods and access to takeaways near schools must be addressed. Maternal health must be considered as part of this – mother’s diet in pregnancy, breastfeeding and weaning foods used have a profound effect on lifelong health.  
**Local food:** Sustainability and emphasis on seasonal produce is important. The importance of plant based foods should be part of this, for health and long-term food security reasons. Oats are an excellent example of this.  
**Good food choices:** Most important, but public need to be clear what good food choices look like. Need to focus on healthy dietary patterns rather than just advice on single nutrients. Need to make sure these are available across the socioeconomic spectrum.  
**Continued economic growth:** We should build on our reputation for good food and hospitality, Scotland has been put on the map with events like the Commonwealth Games and the Ryder Cup, we should capitalise on this and make sure visitors take home a good impression.

10. Which other areas would you prioritise?

   Social justice, fuel and food poverty, the culture of unhealthy eating. Tackling the idea that good food is expensive or pretentious. Shifting our global reputation to portray a healthier image (by actually being healthier ideally!).

11. What other steps toward achieving a Good Food Nation would you recommend?

   Promotion of breastfeeding, tackling known nutritional deficiencies in girls and young women to achieve healthier pregnancies, nutritional advice as part of antenatal classes. More emphasis on preventative health in primary care setting, ensuring all health professionals are aware of importance of a good diet.

12. What else should be considered?

   Smoking cessation, exercise, stress management techniques such as mindfulness can all contribute to improvements in health and wellbeing. Encouraging better health should adopt a holistic approach rather than just focussing on diet. We could
also look at the benefits of micro-growing in allotments, community gardens, schools etc. Support for SMEs to set up online business to promote trade, and more opportunities for direct sales e.g. farmer’s markets, with favourable rates to ensure that process are kept competitive.

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

I am actively seeking to participate in research and volunteering in the field of nutrition.

14. How did you hear about this Discussion Document?

Subscribe to emails from the Food and Health Alliance

**Responding to this Consultation Paper**

We are inviting written responses to this consultation paper by 17th October 2014. Please send your response with the completed Respondent Information Form (see "Handling your Response" below) to:

goodfoodnation@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Or by post to:
Good Food Nation
Food and Drink Division
B1 Spur
Saughton House
Edinburgh
EH11 3XD

If you have any queries please contact Eugenia Christie at 0131 244 9574.

This consultation, and all other Scottish Government consultation exercises, can be viewed online on the consultation web pages of the Scottish Government website at [http://www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations).

The Scottish Government has an email alert system for consultations, [http://register.scotland.gov.uk](http://register.scotland.gov.uk). This system allows stakeholder individuals and organisations to register and receive a weekly email containing details of all new consultations (including web links). It complements, but in no way replaces Scottish Government distribution lists, and is designed to allow stakeholders to keep up to date with all Scottish Government consultation activity, and therefore be alerted at the earliest opportunity to those of most interest. We would encourage you to register.
Q1: How important do you think it is that we aim to be a Good Food Nation?

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Q2: What would success look like?

The latest National Diet and Nutrition Survey data shows Scotland has not improved intakes of fruit and vegetables despite public health efforts, and lags behind the UK as a whole. Meanwhile intakes of saturated fats, sugars and salt are still too high. This is especially true of lower income groups. We need to continue to monitor these parameters, as well as functional and health outcomes like CVD, T2D and cancer rates, and days lost due to ill health from preventable diseases. We also need to ensure that access to good food is consistent across all social strata and age groups. The Eatwell plate and existing guidelines could be used as a benchmark for what a healthy diet should look like.

Establishing a vibrant food and drink industry with an international reputation to counter the ‘deep fried Mars bar’ stereotypes would be helpful in reversing the association with unhealthy eating Scotland has acquired. More positive press for our good habits would be a good marker of success.

Q3: Do you agree with the proposed vision?

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Q4: How would your life be better?

Seeing less reliance on food banks (by reducing food and fuel poverty), improvements in public health and wellbeing, creation of jobs in the food and drink industry, less ‘food deserts’ and improved availability of healthy foods.

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

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

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Q7: In what areas should indicators be set?

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Q8: What are your views on the different approaches?

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**Q12: What else should be considered?**

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**Q13: What steps do you plan to take?**

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