CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

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

FOOD is a political, economic, cultural and human rights issue, and the development of integrated policies which recognise rights and responsibilities within the social contract - an obligation and issue of good governance. Furthermore, the concentric relationship of food to ‘health’ in its broadest terms inc. life chances, intelligence, economic status, through to national productivity and a nation’s human capital, makes a national food policy which positions food within those terms a matter of national security.

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

SUCCESS in progressing our national food policy, needs to be calculated as the achievement of an holistic outcome, where ‘a good food nation’ is understood as social development - an investment, a process and a dynamic experience; the attainment of this can be measured as sufficient, nutritional, sustainably produced, locally sourced food - for all citizens.

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

EDUCATION, EDUCATION, EDUCATION needs to be the mantra, choice is only of real or enduring value, when it is informed. We need to pursue education on three fronts, schools (directed learning); societal, ( peer and multi media); and institutional, both culinary and agricultural (culinary schools where there is a gastronomy based approach ) & (agricultural and agronomy colleges / courses ensuring our future farmers are taught the skills of farming rather than the process of agricultural production).
4. How would your life be better? What does being a Good Food Nation mean in your locality?

A NATIONAL FOOD POLICY has enormous potential to support alternative food systems (AFS), local food production; community supported agriculture; and argo-ecological practices (low/no input food production model), thereby building in resilience, and putting communities at the heart of food, fuel and fibre production. This opportunity must be fully appreciated within the food policies mandate.

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

VISIONING THE OUTCOME: A national food policy is almost a revolutionary action, given the power of the global food market system, however this assumes that the policy adopts a ‘people centred’ approach, where priorities are dictated by and on behalf of citizens and not directed by corporations in the interests of profit. Resources are finite and belong to all citizens current and future, only by considering a long term strategic approach are we guaranteeing true food security - with sufficient food for everyone, for always.

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

A FOOD COMMISSION/AIRE, has the potential to enable coordination across sectors, and importantly seek to aligning department agendas to take advantage of synergistic / multiplier effects. A major stumbling block for Alternative Food System (AFS) initiatives is the segmented sectorial approach, where local initiatives are not supported within the national strategy. The full realisation of the commission would be to strengthen and encourage active participation of actors in the food system; allow for dialogue (participatory forums) between civil society, food sector representatives, and local and national government, with a view to negotiating the power relationships in food chains.

7. In what areas should indicators be set to check we are on track towards our goals?
KEY INDICATORS, of progress in principle and practice of the ‘good food nation’, strategic goals, should include, health outcomes; fresh food sales; local food initiatives; public procurement contracts; and educational achievement; reinforced by a resurgence of social engagement with food issues and a sense of entitlement to engage with the debate. A culture where food is seen as an exciting topic for conversation and a shared value.

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

FOOD an extremely complex, multi faceted and emotive subject, it is an essential aspect of life, at a fundamental level it underpins our right to life, and access to sufficient, nutritious and culturally appropriate foods recognized as a right under international law. As praiseworthy as Scotland’s first food policy was circa. 2009, in terms of helping to raise the status of food, with an emphasis on quality and provenance; this public consultation process, above all else, is envisaged as a participatory mechanism, a platform for debate and contribution, with people as co-producers of the policy. It is envisaged that peoples from all strata of society, contribute ... the full realisation of democracy is only achieved through participation, when all voices are heard; the policy therefore should be heralded as reflective of our collective local food cultures, character and challenges. The MESSAGE should be ... We all have a part to play, whether individually or collectively, basically, if you live in Scotland and eat food - then both the process and outcome will effect you; furthermore, that the proposed food policy has far reaching implications for how our government allocates resources, right down to the content of our school curriculum.

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?
INITIAL FOCUS: It is appreciated that this approach is necessarily strategic, and the recognition of duty to address food provision within the public sector, laudable ...setting the national standard through this sector, leading by example while opening up of a substantial guaranteed market/s for local and small scale producers, enormously prudent. I am greatly supportive of the Scottish Governments attempts to address food poverty in all its forms inc. the degrading of food culture to the pre packed, mass produced, processed product of industrial agriculture. The good news is that the premise for 'Good Food Nation' takes us much further towards the goal of healthy, local and sustainable food and the proposition for true food security with ‘sufficient food for everyone, always’; the doc. outlines the potential and describes the vision for the kind of ‘food culture’ aspired to for Scotland - It is inspiring in its desire, ambition and commitment to the future of food in this country; a good food nation where “it is second nature to serve, sell and eat fresh, healthy food”.

10. Which other areas would you prioritise?

OTHER AREAS OF PRIORITY: Education; agro-ecology; sustainable diets; waste reduction; NUTRITIONAL value prioritisation; ‘organics’ as the national standard; a moratorium on GMOs; sugar use - reduction strategy; transforming agricultural college courses to reflect the global move to sustainable production models; subsidising fresh produce; community supported agriculture; community allotment projects; health ‘prescriptions’ of fresh foods for vulnerable groups; taxing energy dense foods; and the development of local food champions to promote ‘food’ to centre place in our culture.

11. What other steps toward achieving a Good Food Nation would you recommend?
JOINING THE DOTS: Notwithstanding, the paradox, that our country has the double burden of malnutrition (deficiencies of essential nutrients) and food insecurity, along with obesity, in the midst of a cornucopia of foods; access to education; health care systems; and relative national security, I see that a real knowledge and understanding of the essential role of food as the vehicle of nutrition - underpinning the nations health and potential, is absent, severely disadvantaging its citizens with far reaching implications for our children. Fortunately, we are blessed with outstanding natural resources, productive land and seas, and a bounty of foods; while the issue of poor nutrition, is not an incurable disease - ‘knowledge and access’ (the former through inquiry-based learning / education), addressed within an holistic national food strategy, are the cure.

12. What else should be considered?

CONSIDERING THE FUTURE: The primary role of agricultural colleges and courses, and the fact that they do not teach the skills of farming but the process of agriculture, within the industrial farming model; agro-ecology is central, in fact it is fundamental to the future of food production - globally, and yet it is not taught in our agri-colleges. Stakeholders, anyone involved in the food sector and responsible for influencing the future of food production in this country must have an understanding of the immeasurable role of agro-ecology on climate, soil health, nutrition and diversity. There is no 'future of food' without agro-ecology. - Food production practices and the current industrial agricultural model, account for greater impacts on: climate change; greenhouse gas emissions; carbon; methane; and nitrogen; land use; and disposition of peoples; water resources; drains on deep level aquifers; nutrition; and malnutrition; loss of diversity; and resilience; loss of argo-cultural heritage; health; and disease; environmental degradation, than any other single aspect of life on the planet. We need to recognise the imperative to produce food responsibly.

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?
MY PLEDGE: I work in the area of Food Justice, I am a Food Sovereignty Advocate, with a special interest in agro-ecology and global food security. I am a member of the SCF; Nourish; La via Campesina; Hungry for Rights, Food Sovereignty UK and the Green Party, respectively; obviously and discernibly I see the amazing opportunity presented by a national Food Policy, I am very excited to be part of the process and take the journey with ‘Scotland’ towards becoming a ‘Good Food Nation’. It is my ardent desire to continue working with local groups, organisations, local government and support the Scottish Government - to further the cause of food justice while promoting the links between diet, health and the environment; plus, our need to assume a ‘whole system’ approach to the care of ourselves and our stewardship of the planet; I will continue to promote local sustainable food systems; waste reduction. low input agricultural production, organic practices and empowering people with knowledge.

14. How did you hear about this Discussion Document?

THE INTRODUCTION OF A CONSULTATION DOC to enable a truly representative and inclusive policy on food, was greeted with applause by many within the food justice movement. Our food systems are at best dysfunctional, with the greatest deficit in the 'food economy' being a democratic one; with dominant corporations exercising veto power in national and international trade policies. The move away from agribusiness and supermarket domination of the food sector, and their consolidation of control towards a people centred approach, recognized the rights of people to agency, to be participatory and not objectified; enabling AFS challenges the neoliberal paradigm of global food markets, to achieve the human right to life through equitable and sustainable food practices. Furthermore, such an approach signifies a governments commitment to represent the best interests of its citizens and its requirement to be answerable to them.

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: