CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

See written response from greenspace scotland previously submitted (reference 060)

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

Comments

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

Comments

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

Comments

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

Comments

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

Comments

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

Comments

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

Comments

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

Comments

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?

Comments

10. Which other areas would you prioritise?

Comments

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

Comments

12. What else should be considered?

Comments

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?

Comments

14. How did you hear about this Discussion Document?

Comments

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
Recipe for Success: Scotland’s National Food & Drink Policy

Becoming a Good Food Nation

Discussion Document

Submission by greenspace scotland

Introduction

greenspace scotland welcomes the opportunity to respond to this discussion document.

greenspace scotland is an independent charitable company. Since 2003, we have provided a national lead on greenspace working towards our goal that everyone living and working in urban Scotland should have easy access to quality greenspace which meets local needs and improves quality of life. We work with a wide range of national, regional and local organisations and community groups on projects to create, manage, use, promote and evaluate greenspaces and green networks.

This submission is based on our experience of working across urban Scotland with a wide range of organisations and communities. We support a network which brings together groups and organisations involved in greenspace management. The network continues to grow with the biggest increase in applications being from community groups who are involved in managing their local greenspace.

greenspace scotland has supported a range of communities in local placemaking projects which have seen community organisations taking a lead in the process of transformation of their neighbourhoods and settlements. In recent years more and more people have become interested in utilising greenspace to grow their fruit and vegetables locally.

In April 2011, greenspace scotland published "Community Growing in Scotland - towards a framework for action". This presented the findings of national research on the scale and range of community growing in Scotland. The report proposed a framework for action across seven key areas:

- increasing land availability
- evidencing demand for community growing
- planning and legal actions
- winning 'hearts and minds'
- developing guidance, skills and support
- funding
- better coordination

The research led greenspace scotland to champion the development of the Our Growing Community model to support communities in urban scotland to take a more holistic and strategic approach to community food growing.2

2 http://www.greenspacescotland.org.uk/our-growing-community.aspx
Working with ‘grass-roots’ growing groups, greenspace scotland developed the Our Growing Community resources to help Scottish communities to explore new places and more ways to grow their own fruit and vegetables. We received financial support from Scottish Government, SNH and Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society.

In June 2014, our first pioneer growing community “Edible Twechar” launched its growing map and action plan having put the Our Growing Community resources into action.³

Greenspace scotland is an active member of the Grow Your Own working group.⁴ The terms of reference of the GYOWG are to take forward that part of the Scottish Government’s Food and Drink Policy relating to growing your own food. The Group aim to ensure that allotments and “grow your own” projects are strategically supported and produce practical advice and best practice guidance on local “grow your own” initiatives.

greenspace scotland’s vision for a Good Food Nation

Our overall goal is that everyone living and working in urban Scotland should have easy access to quality greenspace which meets local needs and improves quality of life. This includes spaces where people can grow their own food and those where local food can be grown for wider availability.

Where gardens are scarce and fresh fruit and vegetables hard to come by, community growing in local greenspaces would serve a need in the community and improve quality of life.

Community Growing, Local Food and becoming a Good Food Nation

Our focus on Good Food is most directly linked to the policy element on Local Food. We think becoming a Good Food Nation is linked with giving people the opportunity to grow their own fruit and vegetables and/or to access food grown in community supported market gardens and farms.

Beyond the nutrition and food security benefits of local food production, participating in activities related to growing contributes to a range of Scottish Government policy priorities and delivers outcomes for individuals relating to improved health and wellbeing, the acquisition of new skills, reducing inequality and enhancing social capital. Community growing is a direct and engaging way of involving people in activities which make communities more sustainable, encourage regeneration and help reduce the effects of climate change.

Allowing and enabling communities to take part in producing food for themselves is an important tool for re-establishing the connection between consumers and producers of food by increasing knowledge of what is available in Scotland and in what season.

Local people will be empowered by becoming producers of local food, not only consumers (should they wish to), and we must ensure that there is land available for “grow your own”.

³ http://www.greenspacescotland.org.uk/community-growing.aspx
⁴ We would also draw your attention to the response provided by the GYOWG
Our choice of what food we eat also impacts on our environment. A recent study by Cambridge and Aberdeen universities published in the Nature Climate Change journal found that population growth and the trend for Westerners eating more meat means that soon farmers will not be able to raise enough livestock.5

**What would success look like?**

The ‘greenspace public use and attitude survey 2011’6 provides information into Scotland’s food growing habits.

- nearly one-third (32%) of urban Scots grow their own fruit and veg
- most people are growing in their own gardens (87%) with allotments at 5% and backcourt/backgreens at 4%
- people in the most deprived areas of Scotland are significantly less likely to grow their own veg - at just 14%
- of those not currently involved in growing around a quarter (26%) would like to grow their own vegetables
- lack of a garden is the main barrier (39%), whilst issues with availability of allotments account for only 4%.

While it is encouraging that nearly one-third of urban Scots currently grow their own fruit and vegetables, we must focus on the 26% who would like to but do not.

**A Good Food Nation would offer opportunities to any citizen who wanted to grow their own food, be it through community gardens, allotments, orchards, growing activities at schools, hospitals, municipal buildings and in parks and greenspaces.**

It is also important to note that people in the most deprived areas of Scotland are significantly less likely to grow their own food. Therefore a concentrated effort is needed to ensure that people living in these areas have the same opportunity to ‘grow their own’ as in more affluent areas of urban Scotland.

**How would we measure success?**

The greenspace public use and attitude survey referenced above was discontinued after 2011 with many of the key questions being incorporated into other national surveys (particularly the new Scotland’s People and Nature Survey commissioned by SNH). However, the questions on food growing have not been picked up elsewhere.

Use of these questions within baselining, monitoring and evaluation of the Good Food Nation proposals would allow Scottish Government to track progress in creating a Good Food Nation based on meeting the aspirations for community growing.

**How could the proposed vision be improved?**

We believe that the vision should explicitly mention community food growing. The vision should recognise that giving people the option to not only consume good food, but also produce good food is an important element of becoming a Good Food Nation. It would go a long way in tackling the disengagement a lot of Scottish people have from where their food comes from and over time bring about change in our food culture.

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5 [http://www.nature.com/nclimate/journal/vaop/ncurrent/full/nclimate2353.html](http://www.nature.com/nclimate/journal/vaop/ncurrent/full/nclimate2353.html)
6 [Omnibus Survey 2011](#)
A Food Commission and its role?

We welcome the proposal for the establishment of a Food Commission but believe that, for this to support the development of community growing as a component of a Good Food Nation, such a Commission must:

- include Third Sector intermediaries and/or community organisations involved in local food production in its membership
- have a clear remit and action plan
- clearly articulate the ways in which this remit relates to other Scottish Government strategies, policies and reforms such as the Community Empowerment Bill, Land Use Reform, Scottish Planning Policy, key Public Health strategies, allotments legislation etc. - and have mechanisms in place to ensure that synergies are strengthened and potential conflicts avoided

greenspace scotland’s role in supporting this policy

greenspace scotland will continue to support a range of communities to develop growing plans and projects and to disseminate learning from these exemplars. We will also seek to integrate community growing into our other work around placemaking and climate change action.

greenspace scotland

October 2014