CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

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](mailto: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.
BECOMING A GOOD FOOD NATION: CONSULTATION RESPONSE.

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

1. NFU Scotland believes it is very important that Scotland aims to be a Good Food Nation and is pleased to be responding to this consultation.

2. The Food and Drink sector is the largest manufacturing sector in Scotland supporting some 360,000 jobs and with a turnover of £13.1bn. It is therefore prudent that the Scottish Government recognises the importance of this industry and provides the support that it requires to continue on this positive journey.

3. At the same time NFU Scotland recognises that there are health issues related to over consumption of food and environmental issues surrounding food production. It is commendable that the Scottish Government is attempting to deal with these issues in a holistic manner.

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

4. From NFU Scotland’s perspective a successful Good Food Nation would be one in which the positive economic story of the Food and Drink industry which is set out in this document, continues and is improved upon.

5. There would be improved consumer awareness of the hard work undertaken by farmers and growers across Scotland to produce high quality food products. Thanks to this increased awareness, consumers would actively seek out these quality products and this additional demand would benefit the farming sector because supply chains would operate fairly with profits distributed to all members of the chain.

6. In a Good Food Nation, retailers would help to facilitate increased consumer awareness of the quality of Scottish produce by clearly displaying their support for such items in their stores.

7. The food sector’s dependence on the UK retailers would be reduced as diverse export portfolios were developed for key Scottish products.
8. While working towards economic growth, the industry would also be focused on reducing its environmental impact through the application of sound scientific research and the utilisation of new technologies like renewable energy amongst others.

9. Finally, the health of the nation would be improved as a result of an improved diet across all sectors of society.

10. Knowing when a ‘Good Food Nation’ has been arrived at will be difficult because there are aspects which are difficult to define and to measure. This includes concepts mentioned in the document like ‘pride and pleasure in food’. From our own vision the concept of fairness of supply chains is difficult to define and to measure.

11. However, other aspects like economic success, health improvements and environmental aspects are possible to quantify and thus attention should be focused on these areas. It is likely that targets for each of these areas already exist in different legislation so it will be necessary for the resulting document to take heed of this and complement it.

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

12. NFU Scotland agrees with the proposed vision. It is difficult not to agree with such a positive and far reaching vision which covers such a wide range of issues. There is however a question around whether the vision is actually too broad and as such unachievable in its entirety.

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

13. NFU Scotland has members the length and breadth of the country so it is difficult to answer this question from a locality perspective. Also, given the number of members we have it is hard to give an answer to the second question as it is very subjective.

14. However, it is reasonable to suggest that undertaking this journey towards a Good Food Nation is likely to benefit our members. As people become more aware of the hard work and care taken to produce their food then there will be a new found respect for the farming community. Consumers will have more knowledge about the standards their food is produced to and will therefore be more likely to shop for quality assured produce like Scotch Beef or Lamb, Specially Selected Pork or Red Tractor assured produce.

15. A focus on export development will impact our members positively as export opportunities can help to diversify risk and will also help to drive an increase in production.

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

16. NFU Scotland believes that the wide range of issues covered in the document might make it more difficult to achieve any tangible outcomes. Before setting out on this journey, it will be essential for the resulting document to be much clearer with regards to exactly what it hopes to achieve. The document recognises that there is a ‘case for simplifying the key messages’ and yet, it is making it quite complex by conflating health and environmental aspects of food with regards to consumer choice.
Another essential step before setting out on this journey is that there should be more specific mapping of work currently underway on the issues covered in the document and a clear understanding of where the gaps are. This discussion document lists a number of good examples of work already undertaken – there are no doubt many more. As a result of mapping any work ongoing it is possible to avoid any duplication of effort and wasting of resources.

**How do you think a Food Commission could best help?**

The Food Commission should be very clear in its remit so that it does not overlap with any other bodies currently working on issues covered in this document. For example health is covered by Food Standards Scotland and environmental issues throughout the food chain are covered by a number of bodies including the Climate Change Delivery Board and SEPA to name but two.

That said, the Food Commission could fill a very important strategic role in overseeing all of the work streams currently operating in each of the silos and identifying areas where gaps exists or where connections should be made.

The advocacy role which the Food Commission will undertake will also be an important one.

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

It will be possible for indicators to measure economic growth and also health improvements. It is important that if indicators are set, there is a base level identified first in order to track improvements.

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

NFU Scotland believes that there are many different approaches that can be taken to help Scotland become a Good Food Nation. There will be those that advocate for economic growth, while others want to focus on the community aspect of food production. Both are valid and have their own distinct benefits. Some will prefer to focus on health issues, others social justice and others still environment or the production of food. It is important that expertise is shared across the different approaches and that learning is encouraged.

NFU Scotland believes that there is room for a myriad of approaches and that each should be viewed positively.

**Do you agree with the proposed initial focus on:**

Food in the public sector:

NFU Scotland agrees with the vision that the public sector should lead by example. However it is necessary to be realistic about what can be achieved.
26. A children’s food policy:

27. NFU Scotland agrees with the focus on children’s food policy although other responding organisations are perhaps better placed to comment in more detail on this. We would again point to the plethora of excellent work in this area including work carried out by RHET to educate children about food production. It is again important that mapping to identify gaps is carried out in order to avoid duplication of effort.

28. Local food:

29. NFU Scotland believes it is important that the Scottish Government focuses its attention on promoting and encouraging the production and consumption of local food, although it is necessary not to eschew the positive attributes of global supply chains.

30. Much of the indigenous produce that we are capable of producing well in this country, is at this time imported. One particular example of this is lamb from New Zealand which was brought in typically in complementary seasons to Scottish peak production. This year however, we have seen the prevalence of New Zealand lamb throughout the peak season on retailer shelves. Issues like this and their potential solutions can be covered in more depth in the resulting document.

31. Good food choices:

32. NFU Scotland agrees that supporting consumers to make informed choices about the food that they buy is a positive thing.

33. Continued economic growth

34. NFU Scotland strongly agrees with this priority area.

**Which other areas would you prioritise?**

35. There is a small mention of the retailers in the document but these are multi-million pound businesses dealing in food and are the place most people go to purchase their food. It is important to prioritise consideration of how to engage with them on the creation of a Good Food Nation.

36. Retailers also operate at the top of what can be a very competitive and sometimes unfair supply chain. It is important to take this opportunity to consider how we might help to nurture more positive relationships throughout the supply chain and ensure more transparency and fairer distribution of margin throughout. The impacts of unfairness throughout the supply chain include less investment in innovation, thus less ‘greening’ of the supply chain etcetera.

37. The document does mention that some supply chains lack ‘resilience’ but this issue could be considered in more detail and solutions discussed. Understanding the shocks which might put supply chains under pressure and making sure plans are in place to deal with these will contribute greatly to future food security in Scotland.
Further to prioritising retailers and supply chains as an issue, the document resulting from this consultation should also give more consideration to the significant role of research and science in tackling some of the issues raised. It is important that the relevant research is collated and any gaps identified. Promoting the use of new technology and the uptake of appropriate research in relation to environmental improvements (renewable technology, precision farming amongst others) and health (reformulation of food products for example) should be prioritised.

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

What else should be considered?

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?

NFU Scotland members work towards a Good Food Nation every day growing the crops, fruit and vegetables or raising the livestock that underpin the food system in Scotland. Without farmers, a Good Food Nation simply would not exist. NFU Scotland members will continue in this quest, alongside working within environmental rules to ensure good stewardship of the land. A number of our members are investing in renewable technology or working to make their operations more efficient in an attempt to reduce their carbon footprint thus contributing to the environmental sustainability of the food supply chain in Scotland.

At a policy level NFU Scotland is working to improve supply chain relationships by developing positive relationships with retailers. Improved relationships will hopefully contribute towards more efficient and fair supply chains.