Good Food Nation Consultation

Broomhouse Health Strategy Group is a community-led health initiative in SW Edinburgh. We promote healthy lifestyles within the local community, a recognised area of deprivation, by providing access to affordable food at our volunteer-run fruit and veg shop, open every weekday morning and through our other free services including; cooking and exercise sessions, a walking group, a timebank and health drop ins.

We are giving responses to the Good Food Nation Consultation Document from three perspectives:
1. The views from our paid workers (Community Development Workers, Cooking Tutor).
2. Views collected at one of our cookery sessions from participants who are all local residents in SW Edinburgh.
3. Views collected from our fruit and veg shop volunteers, who were asked for their opinions, and asked to reflect what they felt would be the views of our fruit and veg shop customers.

1. Response from Paid Workers:

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?
10. Which other areas would you prioritise?

In response to Q.9 and Q.10 Broomhouse Health Strategy Group believes:

Good Food choices needs to have a far bigger priority. In areas where incomes are lowest it is no surprise that health outcomes are poor when you see the food choices people are making. Whilst low nutrient, high fat/salt/sugar processed products are so cheap it will always be extremely hard to get people to make the right food choices.

Producers and supermarkets need to be more responsible with not creating these poor nutritional value products. We try very hard to enable people in a low income area (SW Edinburgh) to make heathly choices very simply by creating recipe bags, not just for soup or smoothies, but for whole meals. See attached for our latest meal recipe bag prices. It is not hard to create low cost nutritional meals that are simple to cook from scratch (we include a simple recipe for the dish in every bag). This is something all the supermarkets should be changing too. Whilst there is still a culture of aisle ends being full of “bargains” and “treats” people will not be encouraged to make these choices naturally. These aisle ends need to be full of new ways of looking at food – the joy and pleasure of creating meals from scratch.

Until the main supermarkets change how they look at marketing their products, it will be an uphill battle to realise your 2025 target of “the most intractable dietary-related diseases will have begun to decline”
This includes the simplest and most obvious ploy of sweets at checkouts. This needs to be where the most healthy snacks are all positioned.

The issue of local food in an area of low income is not a high priority. What there needs to be is more emphasis on helping parents and young adults to learn lifelong cooking skills, that have been lost in the last generation, with the ever increasing temptation of cheap ready made meals. The trade off for people struggling to make ends meet is to find value for money, not local produce, and we, as providers are more aware of that than ever.

To illustrate - in the last 9 months since we started supplying the Broomhouse foodbank based next door to us with fresh produce for their emergency food bags (bread, milk, eggs, fruit & soup bag), our volunteers have made up and handed over 450 bags.

2. Views collected from cookery participants:

What do you think a Good Food Nation is?

- A sustainable country, who grow and sell their own food. They should also benefit fully/totally from the sale of Scottish produce.
- People that grown their own fruit and veg and they know where it’s coming from
- Food every day for everyone
- Everyone has the food
- Good food for everyone
- Make it important that every greenery can produce food, eg plots as used today. Big gardens left to waste can be utilised to produce fresh foods.

Is it important that Scotland is a Good Food Nation?

- Yes, definitely
- Yeah people benefit from it
- Yes as long as the Scottish people get the benefits and local resources are replenished to replace those used
- Yes as long as people are benefiting from it

How would we know when we had got there?

- Feedback, questionnaires
- Scottish people would have the local fresh produce on their doorstep and could effectively trace their meal back to the source
- When there is no wastage of food
- When there is a rise in food resources and feedback from the people
- People would be proud to buy made in Scotland foods, by good labelling in supermarkets. The more of it there is, the more it is ours
What would success look like?

- Healthy, happy people who know where their food comes from
- Being successful is contented and happy
- A happy community

Do you agree with the proposed vision?

- Yes
- Yes if put into practice efficiently and effectively. Profits should be put back into Scotland/place where produce came from
- Yes, a healthy government needs a healthy population
- Yes, it is an initiative for a healthy generation

How would you change it?

- Things for kids
- Adult learning programmes
- More activities
- Kid involvement in growing produce so the future generations can see exactly how their food gets to their plate
- Through: kids by educating them, adults – make them understand the benefits
- Meetings to get people’s perspectives
- Training sessions on hands on on selected plots
- Education in schools

Which areas would you prioritise?

- I have a big garden. I want to know what to do with it, eg what will grow, what do I need. How do I harvest compost and when do I use it.
- My family’s lifestyle choice and the community. Local communities need allotments to enable them to get involved to a certain extent.
- More things for children
- The priority list would be: kids, adults, teenagers

How would your life be better?

- Kids would be aware of the right food to eat
- Healthier options available to my family at every meal at lower costs than currently available
- Diseases associated with bad food will diminish. More healthy and more output in all we do
- Food is mediocre. If we take in right amounts we needn’t visit hospitals often
What does being a good food nation mean in your locality?

- That more people would come to our community and enjoy what they have to offer
- More healthy options available to the community at healthy prices
- Our community will be known to be providers of local food, bringing people here
- Cooking session and events, learning about cooking, having fun with food
- Have a healthy living

3. Views collected from BHSG local volunteers

What do you think a Good Food Nation is?

- Cheaper fruit
- A nation of awareness of healthy food availability and meals cooked from scratch with healthy eating
- Every community having a variety of healthy foods to access on their doorstep
- Looks good, tastes good and is affordable, not just because it is from the farm up the road

Is it important that Scotland is a Good Food Nation?

- It is important that all nations are good food nations as the massive rise in obesity proves the nations knowledge of healthy food is not great
- Yes it would be better as a good food nation

How would we know when we had got there?

- Everyone has access to affordable and healthy food
- No ‘food deserts’
- We could say goodbye to diet related diseases

Do you agree with the proposed vision?

- Yes if they would stick to it
- Take it all back to basics

How would you change it?

- Sell misshapen veg at cheaper prices. Less waste, cheap veg
- Which areas would you prioritise?
- Unpasteurised milk available
- Stricter rules on number of fast food places per head
- Help to get back to basics in cooking from scratch
- Bring back milk in schools. Blue milk!
- To give people the best of food, which is fresh
• Back to basics!
• Recipe cards in supermarkets. Simple recipes
• No deals on biscuits and junk food (aisle ends)
• Instructions on how to cook veg at supermarkets
• Community chicken keeping – fresh eggs!

How would your life be better?

• Health.
• Making healthy life choices.
• Lower obesity rates.
• With healthy food is beneficial in all aspects of health, fitness and family life

What does being a good food nation mean in your locality?

• Affordable healthy food
• Local shops