CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

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

It’s vital. We have an emerging obesity ‘time bomb’ and actions need to be taken by all organisations/government bodies and individuals to address this. This requires education, availability and affordability of locally sourced healthy produce. We need to sustain a ‘healthy’ economy which will provide employment and development opportunities for all people, who live locally in our communities.

Scotland’s health is getting better but it’s still worse than our European neighbours. Also, what is of huge concern are the inequalities in health within our populations which are a result of socioeconomic issues. It’s on this note that we must utilise opportunities and assets within our communities, especially those vulnerable groups with poor health outcomes to provide local employment opportunities/voluntary work schemes with the local/national food and drink business sector and local schools/public and 3rd sector agencies

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

That we have at our reach a wealth and variety of fresh, healthy local produce which will be accessible to everyone in our communities. We will be educating the population, especially our children, about our fresh produce and what it looks and tastes like, but importantly that it is accessible and affordable – especially to vulnerable groups eg looked after children, homeless, elderly and many families in the population who have little experience of fresh, healthy, accessible and affordable produce.

Participation of all public/private organisations with a responsibility for education, health and social work services, workforce to provide locally healthy food to the population that they serve via range of initiatives eg vegetable allotments, buying and selling and provision of local of freshly sourced products, increased number of farmer markets.

Scotland’s health would improve against our European neighbours, which at present is much poorer, and inequalities in health within our populations would reduce. Obesity rates would decrease. The gaps in health inequalities would narrow between those most and least vulnerable eg health would improve for those living in the most deprived areas.

Progressing work that will prevent health inequalities by addressing socioeconomic determinants of health eg increased local employment, especially for vulnerable groups, with local food and drinks industry which are mutually reinforcing towards a healthier and economically sustainable outcomes. Providing universal support but targeting initiatives to those with most need.
3. Do you agree with the proposed vision? How would you improve it?

Yes mostly. I would highlight the issues of making healthy fresh produce accessible and affordable.

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

This policy I would hope would place a focus on healthier, locally produced food for our communities, and aiding and sustaining the local economy through ongoing support of local industries and organisations resulting in employment and benefits to communities.

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

Engagement and buy-in from major retailers to support this cause. Supermarkets have the ability to bring their prices down and be competitive against pricing of locally sourced food. They have available a range of globally imported food that can be healthy, but also processed food, and some products will contain additive’s to enable a longer shelf life which may not be as nutritious as local produce. Global transport of produce will have a negative impact on sustainability.

Therefore ‘principles over profits’ is something to address with our key players. Our local food and drinks industries need support eg subsidies/incentives to provide healthy fresh food which can be available locally via supermarket/local retailers.

We also need to champion local retailers. They are diminishing over the monopoly of major supermarkets in our local communities. They need support too.

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

By bringing together key players and promote the issues that need to be addressed, especially I believe around accessibility and affordability, health inequalities, obesity, sustainability and the economy. The Commission could utilise Local Community Planning Structures that exist throughout Scotland. These structures are the key vehicle to work with a range of key partners in local communities eg NHS, councils, 3rd sector agencies from strategic to local level, using community engagement mechanisms.

7. In what areas should indicators be set to check we are on track towards our goals?
- Long term outcomes - Improved healthy life expectancy; decreased diseases eg cancers/CHD; reduced gap in healthy life expectancy/diseases between population groups (reduce health inequalities); fewer children and adults living in poverty
- Medium term outcomes: Improved healthy weight amongst children and adults; improved oral health; increased number of local cooking skills courses that advocate local healthy produce – universal but that is also targeted at vulnerable groups; increased number of organisations procuring and providing locally sourced food; increased provision of employment/apprenticeship opportunities, especially for vulnerable groups/those living in areas of deprivation/school leavers, by the local food and drink industry;

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

There needs alignment between all the organisations involved in the food commission. Need to all ’sing from the same song sheet’ about what needs to be done and essentially buy in from all those taking forward this work.

There needs to be a concerted effort to address what is in the food that we eat. Highly processed and unhealthy fat content in our food is in part a cause of the obesity endemic that we are now experiencing in Scotland. Food Standards Scotland could be the opportunity to address this and oversee/regulate what is in our food and ensure that it is fresh and healthier.

Affordable, accessible local fresh healthy food is key, together with initiatives that target and aid vulnerable groups to improve poorer health outcomes

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?

Yes

10. Which other areas would you prioritise?

To alleviate social and health issues suffered by those most vulnerable in communities eg employment opportunities/apprenticeships through local food and drinks industries supporting the unemployed, socially deprived, vulnerable young people.
11. What other steps toward achieving a Good Food Nation would you recommend?

As mentioned in Q6 to involve Local Community Planning Partnerships as a vehicle to progress this from a strategic to a local level. This will allow for local needs to be incorporated into the process.

12. What else should be considered?

Using models/tools, such as health inequality impact assessment that seeks to improve at a policy level the health, social, physical and environmental impacts on people in communities, and mitigate any negative impacts at this early stage. This process meets legal duties on equality, sustainability and the environment and creates ways to address wider social determinants of ill health and poverty.

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?

With colleagues in Aberdeenshire council continue to support initiatives such as Food for Life Catering Mark Award which the council recently gained a bronze award for providing locally sourced fresh healthy food to 154 primary school across Aberdeenshire. In partnership with other services support local garden allotment initiatives. Develop a Grow It Cook It Eat It initiative that will support schools to grow fruit and veg which can then be used in schools meals. Continue to provide local community kitchen projects that provide support to local communities, especially vulnerable groups, to learn and gain healthy cooking skills. Progress initiative’s to address employability, financial inclusion, and youth unemployment and information and advice services.

14. How did you hear about this Discussion Document?

Through NHS Grampian and Aberdeenshire Council