CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

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

Dairy UK is the trade association representing the dairy industry supply chain in Scotland and elsewhere in the UK. We agree the outcomes associated with becoming a Good Food Nation are vitally important, although a fuller statement from Government on what is precisely meant by a Good Food Nation would be welcome. The food and drink sector is a success story and is strategically important to the Scottish economy. Dairy is a vital component of that success, with a highly efficient and progressive farming sector, underpinning a large scale processing industry which delivers nutritious, good value and accessible dairy products to Scottish consumers. We would recommend that Scotland as a Good Food Nation attaches due importance to milk and dairy as nutritious foods integral to the Scottish diet.

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

For dairy, success would look like a growing and profitable milk production and processing sector, responsive to and satisfying consumer needs. Greater penetration of export and domestic markets. Encouraging industry players that Scotland was an attractive location for future investment.

More generally, greater accessibility of quality, nutritious and safe foods to a well informed consumer population with an understanding, based on solid scientific evidence, of what is good food. This should translate into a reduction in diet related illnesses.

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

Broadly, we would support the proposed vision. However, a ten year timescale to achieve the fundamental cultural shifts proposed very ambitious. There are a number of tensions between some of the objectives in the new Policy and it is not clear how these conflicts will be resolved. For example, the aspirations for local food against the need for economic growth for the food and drink industry which is driven by scale, efficiency and engagement with global markets.

4. How would your life be better? What does being a Good Food Nation mean in your locality?
5. Are there any other essential steps we need to take before setting out on this journey?

A greater understanding of and engagement with the work already being carried out elsewhere in the UK, some of which impacts on Scotland and abroad. For example, The Dairy Council, in collaboration with DairyCo and Dairy UK, is supporting research from the University of Reading on environmental impact of dairy in a healthy and nutritious diet for the UK. This work will be published in peer-reviewed journals in coming months and Scottish policy makers are referred to that research.

Recognition of the implications of international food standards and codes of practice – Codex, for product reformulation.

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

As currently drafted there are a number of issues with the Food Commission concept require clarification. These are:
- The new Food Standards Scotland Bill currently going through Parliament, gives that new body a major role in healthy diet issues. In view of this where does the foot print lie of the proposed Food Commission? The new Food Standards body, as the successor to the Food Standards Agency, will enjoy from the outset great industry and consumer credibility. It would be unfortunate if the creation of a Food Commission undermined that credibility through confusion about roles.
- More details are required about the role of the Commission in terms of its relationship with other public sector bodies active in national food policy issues.
- To whom and how will the Commission be held accountable.
- In terms of responsibility for food grants, how would the Commission obtain the expertise to give advice on spending priorities?
- We have already referred to the tensions between the various elements in the National Food Policy. The membership of the Commission must be sufficiently wide ranging to have credibility with the various stakeholders. Its work must be transparent and accessible. Industry should be entitled to play a full role in representation on the Commission.

Subject to addressing the issues above the Commission could be a useful vehicle for diving change provided it bases its activity on sound scientific evidence.

7. In what areas should indicators be set to check we are on track towards our goals?
8. What are your views on the different approaches that could be taken to help us become a Good Food Nation?

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?

We agree these are an appropriate range of starting points. We would hope that the momentum built up by placing economic growth at the centre of the national food policy will be sustained under the new policy. In particular the Government's strong support for delivering Ambition 2025, the dairy industry's development strategy and the work of the Scottish Dairy Growth Board should be maintained.

We would refer you to the following extract from the evidence submitted by The Dairy Council, “At each stage of an individual's life-cycle milk and dairy foods contribute to macronutrient and key micronutrient intakes for health. The National Diet and Nutrition Survey (NDNS) Rolling Programme shows that, in Scotland, milk and dairy foods contribute 8-15% of energy, 13-23% of protein, 12-20% of fat, 34-48% of calcium, 33-55% of iodine, 29-44% of riboflavin and 33-52% of vitamin B12, among other nutrients, to the diets of children from 4 years of age and adults. Milk and dairy foods support growth and development of young children and adolescents, add nutrition quality to the diets of older people at risk of under nutrition, and are currently of interest in research for potential benefits in non-communicable chronic diseases such as obesity, cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes.”

10. Which other areas would you prioritise?

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

12. What else should be considered?
The issue of food security requires detailed consideration.

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?

Continued engagement with economic development work of Scotland Food and Drink, SDI’s export initiative and the work of the Scottish Dairy Growth Board. A range of industry initiatives on diet and nutrition and the benefits of milk and dairy products consumption throughout the UK. A range of issues relating to the dairy industry and environmental and sustainability matters. Engagement with Scottish Government on the Good Food Nation proposals as appropriate and consulting and informing Dairy UK members.

14. How did you hear about this Discussion Document?

Direct email.