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
Becoming a Good Food Nation: QMS response 17/10/14

Q1. How important do you think it is that we aim to be a Good Food Nation?

A1. Quality Meat Scotland (QMS) wholeheartedly supports the aim for Scotland to become a “Good Food Nation”. The work QMS undertakes across the whole of the Scottish red meat sector is very much in line with the proposal’s key concept areas. *(Health and wellbeing; environmental sustainability; local economic prosperity; resilient communities; fairness in the food chain).*

We have a health and education team (a dietitian and a nutritionist) whose work has a particular focus on young people and a target audience of Scottish families. We undertake around 160 demonstrations to school children each year and also undertake a number of sports/healthy-living linked activities. Our key messages are around the importance of a healthy diet and the role red meat plays in achieving that. Our Industry development team works with farmers, processors and others in the Scottish red meat industry to help them improve efficiency and sustainability, and reduce waste.

The QMS whole chain (ie from farm to processor) assurance scheme provides consumers with reassurance of provenance, highest standards of production, animal welfare and wellbeing – all contributing to the delivery of a quality product and eating experience.

Q2. How would you know when we had got there? What would success look like?

A2. Success can be difficult to measure. It is much more possible to achieve when clear targets and objectives are set. The proposed vision gives a desired impact and effect on the nation, but not specific rates of, for example, disease reduction.

However, aiming to ensure everyone knows what constitutes good food and why, is something QMS, particularly our marketing team, are constantly working on when communicating about the Scotch Beef PGI, Scotch Lamb PGI and Specially Selected Pork brands. Current recognition of the Scotch Beef brand alone is already at 93% in Scotland and 45% in London. However, this is only *one* measure of success - success truly is multi-faceted.

Success can also be measured by improved engagement and awareness by consumers of the supply chain and its challenges and by producers (of consumer attitude and preferences).

Q3. Do you agree with the proposed vision? How would you improve it?

A3. The proposed vision really describes people in Scotland having a good relationship with food and in particular foods we have produced. This would surely lead to better health and improved economic status. Ensuring every person in Scotland comes on board is a challenge, however through working with the key players and target groups, hopefully everyone can benefit.

Q4. How would your life be better? What does being a Good Food Nation mean in your locality?

A4. N/A – this question is aimed at individuals, not organisations.
Q5. Are there any other essential steps we need to take before setting out on this journey?

A5. Pending the feedback to this discussion, it would be good to know what the “average Scot” really thinks and how this may potentially highlight steps that need to be taken.

Alerting those working in food industry organisations and others to the feedback you receive would be useful and may help in their specific journeys to support “Good Food Nation” aims.

Q6. How do you think a Food Commission could best help?

A6. As stated in the document, having a focus and drive is paramount to making any necessary change. A Food Commission would hopefully be able to lead in this area, and the responsibilities they will be given will help to do this. Continued liaison with Scotland Food and Drink, and other food industry organisations including the new food body, Food Standards Scotland, makes absolute sense.

Q7. In what areas should indicators be set to check we are on track towards our goals?

A7. QMS agrees with the areas outlined in the document:

- Diet
- The environment
- Communities – however seems more difficult to impact nationally and when such a diverse group exists
- Turnover and exports – very important not to lose track of these.

Q8. What are your views on the different approaches that could be taken to help us become a Good Food Nation?

A8. QMS agrees with the suggested approaches, remaining positive and celebrating the good things relating to food and drink will always work well and a consistent message around this will keep it in people’s thoughts.

Countering the perception of the so-called food inequality that exists is a very important strategy. With regard to the red meat industry, many people believe meat is expensive, but providing simple cost effective ways of including red meat in the diet and making people aware of how to make food go further e.g. through use of leftovers, is already top of the agenda for QMS. It is perplexing therefore, that the Scottish Government’s food document – Supporting Healthy Choices - fails to include the promotion of lean red meat as part of a healthy meal.

Q9. Do you agree with the proposed initial focus on:

- **Food in the public sector** – This is an important area and it deserves attention. QMS are aware from SMEs within the Industry that increased opportunities to tender for larger contracts and assistance in doing so would be warmly welcomed.
- **A children’s food policy** – This is a complex and difficult area. QMS have focussed much work in schools, but we are increasingly extending this to parents. Although children are the consumers of the future, if they cannot then make an impact on what they are eating now, it
becomes ever more difficult to make the necessary dietary changes when older. Hence, ensuing these messages are not only driven through in the school environment is very important.

- **Local food** – supporting local producers and making people aware of the benefits (individually and nationally) of eating locally-produced foods is a valuable area to focus on. However we agree that this needs to extend beyond the middle classes. QMS currently works with a range of organisations – including Street Soccer Scotland and Champions in Schools – to ensure a wide reach of message. We would also be keen to avoid too parochial a definition of local as this could be counter-productive in many situations. Scottish is local!

- **Good food choices** – The importance of cooking from scratch is one of the key messages driven forward by our health and education and marketing teams. Including red meat as part of healthy balanced diet unfortunately doesn’t feature positively within “Supporting Healthy Choices”. QMS hopes that focussing on “Good food choices” will adopt a commonsense approach and include all food groups in their correct proportions.

- **Continued economic growth** – QMS values this as an initial focus as part of this vision and we welcome, for example, the implementation of the beef improvement scheme and the new market opportunities for Scotch Beef.

**Q10. Which other areas would you prioritise?**

A10. – It is important that food producers are also engaged with the Good Food Nation aims and goals. It will also be important for the initial focus to achieve its early objectives. We would caution against widening this focus as this will dilute resource and effort.

**Q11. What other steps toward achieving a Good Food Nation would you recommend?**

A11. - The value that can be derived from organisations – in the public and private sector – working together to collaborate on activities and messages in support of the Good Food Nation objectives. Steps to encourage such collaboration would be helpful.

**Q12. What else should be considered?**

A12. See above.

**Q13. 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 12months?**

A13. QMS is working closely with a number of organisations, including VisitScotland and Scotland Food & Drink, to develop plans and shared activities in support of Scotland’s Year of Food and Drink 2015. We hope the increased interest in food during the year ahead – from field to fork – will help to drive awareness of many of the key messages contained in this document. We continue to increasingly focus on social media to drive home messages eg our Good Family Food Facebook page and we are looking at a number of other exciting healthy eating projects for the year ahead.
Q14. How did you hear about this discussion document?

A14. Direct invitation to respond.