CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

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

Forth Environment Link (FEL) works with communities across the Forth Valley on a range of issues including local food, orchards, zero waste and cycling.

Providing support to our local communities to help them become healthy, active and more connected to their environment is integral to our work. Our Grow Forth Project is one key method of doing this through supporting communities to grow their own food, to help people source local food and to encourage more people to cook and eat local food.

FEL feels strongly that becoming a Good Food Nation is the minimum we should be aspiring to.

We feel a good food nation should be fair, healthy, financially sound and responsible so we welcome the Scottish Government’s move towards that.

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

How would we know when we had got there?
- Local farmers and consumers would be reconnected
- Cities and the countryside would be reconnected
- There would be improved access to local/food markets
- Urban and rural consumers would have better access to local food.
- We would have a democratic food system – i.e. greater participation in how food decisions were made.
- Local food advertising would be prioritised over non-local.

Success would look like
- Everyone in our nation would sit down to dinner that was healthy, fresh, local, tasty, environmentally friendly, and affordable.
- Everyone, adult, young person and child would know what equals a healthy, and environmentally sound diet. They would also have a good understanding of farm to fork, where food comes from, and how to cook. That in turn supports our local food industry.
- Every child would have a school lunch that was provided by a local authority who had reached gold food for life. Those that can afford to pay would and those that couldn’t would be subsidised.
- Health practitioners as well as delivering medical help via traditional methods would also provide medical help via food & nutrition.
- Hospital food & homes and institutions will provide food that is

- At work (in all work) people no longer sit at their desks or eat and run, meal times are respected and become part of working life.
- People’s first choice will be to only buy local/regional/Scottish produce over the same produce from out with, so much so trying to export quality local Scottish food becomes difficult, because Scottish people demand Scottish...leaving less for export.
- Everywhere and every organisation knows that Scotland is a Good Food Nation, it’s part of who we are.
- Food retailers, restaurants stock, sell, cook, make prepare food that is local, healthy and environmentally sound, because that’s what everyone expects.
- All young people by the age of 16 are able to contribute to family food, eg they can grow their own fruit and vegetables, cook a meal, make a pot of soup, cook in a way that creates less food waste, cook with leftovers, and can budget a weekly food shop.
- Children when they go to their local shop at lunchtime, do so to buy healthy local food, not chips and cheese for example.
- Sugar has been taxed, and regulated this has reduced food related illness, and helped redistribute funds to progress Scotland as a Good Food Nation.
- Sugar advertising and junk food/drink advertising to children is banned.

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

- The vision feels like it is ordered by importance. It comes across that Food exports for example is more important that intractable dietary related diseases or local, fresh, healthy and sustainably-produced food. Whether this is the case or not, we would recommend some way of ensuring all part of the vision are of equal importance.
- The inherent link between food, place, health and self gets lost in the economic drivers.
- There perhaps need to be more distinction between, manufacturers, to ensure that the agricultural and horticultural community is included and represented as well as manufacturers.
- The vision doesn’t talk about affordability, those who do not get good nutrition, being able to afford to eat food that is healthy, environmentally sound etc. So we would include the importance of
equity/fairness in food affordability. And more humility to reflect those seldom heard from the furthest removed/poverty/health. Health and well-being, education and behaviour change must be included.

- The vision talks broadly about environment and sustainability it needs more clarity, and must include Climate Change/Carbon and resilience. Sustainability as a named priority across all sectors.

- The vision should include integration with other government policy and legislation, for example land reform and community empowerment as well as those already mentioned such as zero waste and health and public procurement.

- The vision puts too much emphasis on ‘served’ food. More emphasis should be placed on encouraging growers to grow and produce at a more local level.

- We need to put more emphasis on creating a strategy that will break the stranglehold of the MNCs who control the food industry, and shorten the length of the food chain. The food system needs to be firmly and fairly rooted at a local level.

- Education for all, more emphasis on learning by doing – across all age groups and within business too.

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

Thinking what life will be like in 2025 as we have become a Good Food Nation in the Forth Valley Area

- Community growers associations – grow co-operatively provide fresh fruit and vegetables into the local food chain. Providing quality local organic food, that also provides and income and profession to our community. (eg: Manchester Veg people growing cooperative) [http://vegpeople.org.uk/](http://vegpeople.org.uk/)

- Back in 2008-2015 there were several projects funded by Climate Challenge Fund, these projects have formed the basis of community growing co-operatives and championed food growing and market gardens, supplying local community food chains with fresh local seasonal veg and fruit.

- CSGN – back in 2010-15 funded the Forth Valley Orchards Initiative, we now have sizeable community orchard asset, which is annually picked and harvest is shared across our communities, but they also
invested in local businesses, Forth Valley now produces 50% of the apple juice consumed in the area, and it’s supplied to local outlets.

- People look and feel healthy because what they eat is healthy; it’s also fresh and local and they are invested in food.
- Doctors now prescribe food prescriptions to help combat ailments.
- People who live, work, go to school in the Forth Valley, know where their food comes from.
- Food waste has been reduced and people’s understanding of how to grow, prepare, cook, eat and store food has improved.
- Food related professions, from hospitality to farming are being viewed as highly desirable careers, and as important as other professions, eg- Health professionals, bankers etc (this is also reflected in salary). Because the demand for local, fresh, quality food has dramatically increased and the so has culture and perception of food careers. Forth Valley College has had to expand its intake and type of food courses available, there are farm schools in every area of Forth Valley area, and farmers now have yearly student’s apprenticeships, as pathways to careers and in partnership with agricultural colleges.
- Food innovation and technology is thriving in the Forth Valley area and making progressive in roads to sustainable/low carbon food future, by working in partnership across sectors.
- The High Streets in the Forth Valley Area, are vibrant, from butchers, to bakers, greengrocers and food outlets, who are supported by community and who support each other.
- Children in Forth Valley Schools, have a weekly home technology class, they all know how to cook basic meals from scratch, and once a month each class takes a turn in making the school lunch for everyone else, because each school has a kitchen, with trained kitchen teams, who are well respected professionals.
- Our hospitals have had a xx% drop in recovery time, due to excellent food and nutrition for patients. Back in 2010 often people wouldn’t eat hospital food, now they do; in fact the hospital food is so good the cafeteria’s now open to the public as restaurants out with visiting hours.
- Our Local Authority procurement teams, and food for life teams, work to constantly improve the food via public sector. A large amount of food is procured locally and regionally, by working closely with collectives of producers and growers. Every public sector food activity is supported by well trained, invested food teams, who provide nutritious food and bring the culture of food back to people who were once disconnected from it.

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

- Review the current situation, in terms of Scotland, UK and look to other countries with similar food landscapes for models, best practice.
- A communication/discussion that involves organisations that would
not normally be involved with Food Policy/delivery. It must equally represent all sectors of food in Scotland, at all levels. Is essential at the beginning, and at regular points throughout the journey.

- Engage the public, engage every sector, and bring people with you on the journey.
- Be prepared to think differently, innovatively at a macro and micro scale.

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

The Food Commission Can Best help by:

- Having Powers to actually deliver the vision, to set priorities of the Commission. Performance measures to track change and improvements.
- The Food Commission must be equally represented (By Election process), and be transparent in operation. This is the best way to ensure it can act as a conduit for communication, strategy, and implementation and ultimately deliver change.
- It must be able to get everyone on the same page, from every sector working on agreed priorities. #And have a Consistency of approach across all sectors
- Representatives from each level of the food chain...producers, growers, users, retailers, export, government, and 3rd sector, and volunteers and crucially those who most deserve a fair and equal good food nation. Must be seen as independent, respected, recognized as an effecter of change,
- Represent WHOLE nation, 32 local authorities across 10 areas, should include local and regional representation.
- It must be funded and long term, to be able to deliver GFN.
- Must effect change and be listened to by political decision makers.

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

- Health (Reduction in food related diseases, shorter recovery times, reduction in obesity)
- Environment (Biodiversity, Carbon Emissions, Food Waste, Energy, Organic)
- Economy (should focus on sustained business rather than bottom line profit –ie less about growth and more about sustained business)
- Social Welfare (look at typical indicators currently used)
- Equality (food poverty, reduction in necessity for food banks, living wages, food security)
8. What are your views on the different approaches that could be taken to help us become a Good Food Nation?

- Work collectively, consistently and to agreed targets and timeframes.
- Aim to allow greater participation in how food decisions are made.
- Allow the development of local alternatives to accepted mainstream food systems (e.g. supermarkets)

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 with some of the proposed focus but suggest the following adaptions

A children’s food policy should be within an overall People’s Food Policy. It should be compulsory for teachers to deliver Food and Health education as part of the Curriculum for Excellence rather than optional.

Economic Growth – need to look at growing local food sales rather than focussing on export. Economic Food Stability (rather than Growth). There should also be a focus on training and capacity-building among growers and producers to enable them to produce quality and safe food, and provide support for them at a local level. There should be ‘Food Champions’ in local areas to provide this support.

Food in the public sector procurement is important and there need to be competition rules over procurement to remove barriers to entry by SME’s – reducing complexity, funding support, relaxing of overly bureaucratic Health & Safety rules, and to provide them with support to help them enter the sector.

Health – is health implicit throughout? Should Food Health not be a focus?

10. Which other areas would you prioritise?

Health improvement should be listed as a priority.
Environment should be a priority given the timeframe of future impacts of climate change, biodiversity loss, resource depletion and waste.

A Food growing policy at domestic and community level, so everyone has a space to grow.

A priority should be to emphasize connections between the priority areas more, rather than Silo working.

Education, training, increasing food & farming skills and capacity building is essential.

The Issues of control of transnational corporations, multi-nationals,.

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

Long term funding for the Food Commission to deliver on the Good Food Nation, and time included for evaluation of impact.

That there is strategy and synergy for all those involved currently with food system in Scotland, avoid duplication. More joined up working and thinking, communication and shared vision and delivery plan will be essential.

12. What else should be considered?

- Balancing Work and family life and how you reconcile the needs of both in terms of food.
- More vegetables, less (better) meat (celebration of Scottish quality meat)

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?

We are currently in process of developing a project and funding proposal, currently the draft is with Climate Challenge Fund. Our aim are to work with our communities to develop Community Food Champions, (via learning/skills building etc), create food hubs (that eventually will act as delivery/pick up point), and then roll out to 3 pilot areas food- co-operative.

Next 12 months

We have recently produced the Stirling Local Food Map so have good connections with local businesses who we will also continue to engage with, network and promote.

We will also continue to work with local partners to deliver promotional, educational and networking events around topics to do with growing/buy/cook local.

We also work regularly with communities across the area on cooking food and reducing food waste through food and waste workshops and training sessions.

14. How did you hear about this Discussion Document?

Via Scottish Government and via Nourish Scotland.