CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

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

Very important – but being a Good Food Nation is as least as much to do
with consumption (tackling Scotland’s poor diet and the related health
issues) as production.

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

Becoming a Good Food Nation is a process of continuous improvement on
a range of fronts, without a specific endpoint, but we can be sure that a
Good Food Nation would redirect £500M of direct (Pillar 1) subsidy to
generate more sustainable economic activity and would not contribute such
a significant proportion of Scotland’s GHG emissions.

A Good Food Nation would minimise food miles, unsustainable inputs and
food waste, maximise local procurement, and feature increased numbers of
agricultural units and greater diversification of farm crops.

Critically, a Good Food Nation would have greatly reduced incidence of
obesity, diabetes, cardiac disease, diet and lifestyle-related cancers.

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

We are broadly in agreement, however there is a contradiction between the
drive to increase exports and the aspiration to promote local food
consumption.

Whilst trade in food allows us to broaden our diet beyond what can be
locally produced, trade for trade’s sake contributes to global climate change,
the consumption of fossil fuels and food insecurity.

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

We see the following as amongst the characteristics of a good food nation:

- More local food production and processing for local consumption
- Local food contributing to better diet and healthy lifestyles
- Greatly reduced greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture
- Thriving, financially sustainable agricultural businesses that are not
dependent on subsidy and provide increased local employment
5. Are there any other essential steps we need to take before setting out on this journey?

Reform the subsidy regime! There was a missed opportunity to do so in the recent round of CAP negotiations; the failure to make significant progress underlines the related need to reform RPID if there is serious intent to deliver a Good Food Nation.

The current subsidy regime has (besides the overall cost to the taxpayer) a number of deleterious effects:
- Rewards land ownership not (productive) land use
- Promotes agri-business at the expense of local food production
- Stifles innovation and entrepreneurship
- Favours fossil fuel use (diesel subsidy) and investment in machinery rather than jobs

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?

Progress could be measured with a suite of indicators: reduction in food miles, unsustainable inputs and food waste, increase in local procurement, production of organic crops, and number of agricultural units, and diversification of farm crops.
Public health indicators are critical: reductions in obesity, diabetes, cardiac disease, diet and lifestyle-related cancers.
Two other key areas are reduction in direct subsidy and GHG emissions.

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

The aspiration to be a Good Food Nation should be linked with the land reform and community empowerment agendas.

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?
The focus on “continued economic growth” is at odds with other elements of a Good Food Nation. The focus on the export market, and the underlying economic imperatives to consolidate of holdings and centralise processing and distribution are at odds with the need for local production and consumption, and the long term aspirations for rural sustainability.

10. Which other areas would you prioritise?

As above: link the land reform and community empowerment agendas with this policy, and focus resources on the greater wins associated with import substitution, not the export market. Recent media attention on salmon imports and exports at the UK level has emphasised that whilst moving farmed fish around the world may make some sort of short term economic sense, it unnecessarily increases the carbon impact of our food.

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

12. What else should be considered?

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 will continue to support community groups across Scotland to acquire woodland and other assets, and to develop them to deliver a range of public benefits, including local food growing and allotment projects.

14. How did you hear about this Discussion Document?

Internet, and colleagues in the voluntary sector