CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

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

It is important that the achievements of ‘Recipe for Success’ Scotland’s first national food and drink policy launched in 2009 are built upon and progressed. With poor diet being a major contributory factor to causes of poor health in Scotland and with high prevalence of obesity a renewed impetus on food and health through Good Food Nation can only be welcomed. It is also important that the significant contribution made by the food and drinks industry to the Scottish economy is highlighted and is encouraged to grow. The aim of becoming a Good Food Nation should be undertaken within the context of developing activity which is environmentally sustainable.

The dovetailing of a number of strands of work related to food e.g. tackling poverty, health, environment and the economy is vital to the success of the ambitions outlined in Good Food Nation. For the future health and prosperity of Scotland it is important that ‘we’ do aim to be a Good Food Nation.

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

At a broad level children and adults will fully understand food choices and will make informed decisions when purchasing and consuming food. Ultimately this will lead to a reduction in the prevalence of obesity, underweight malnutrition and food related illness/disease. Healthy lifestyles would be adopted from the early years (e.g. breastfeeding) through to older age (e.g. high quality food in care homes).

Specifically, success would mean different things in different sectors. In the health sector success would mean less obesity/underweight and associated illness/disease. For the wider public sector or it would mean more locally sourced and procured food and food which is of high quality and not based on cost, there would be an uptake in numbers receiving school meals. For food producers it would entail the use more healthy ingredients and food produced is more environmentally friendly. An improved contribution to the economy would result in more jobs and investment.

From an environmental perspective there would be reduced food miles and more locally produced/consumed food. Food would be an integral part and an important contributor to the health, wealth and equality ambitions of the Scottish Government.

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

The proposed vision set out in Good Food Nation is difficult to argue against. It is an impressive, detailed and ambitious vision set out to drive forward Scotland’s commitment to fostering a huge cultural change in the
way we produce, market/sell and consume our food over the next 10 years. The joined up approach and wider aspects of food policy detailed is important. As an example the economic benefits to the food industry (and Scotland as a whole) should not be considered in isolation and the health aspects, food inequalities and environmental factors should all have an equal standing within the overall vision. Underpinning the vision should be the ambition to reduce inequalities and promote positive food choices through addressing accessibility and affordability issues. Engagement with all stakeholders and particularly local communities should be at the core of the vision. The vision is detailed and it would be useful if it could be broken down into key themes e.g. health, economic and environment. This would bring clarity and would assist Community Planning Partnerships to see where local strategies/priorities link with the vision. It would also be helpful if diagrams could be used to highlight the links between the different strands of policy.

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

The overarching principles and themes set out in *Good Food Nation* would support Community Planning Partnerships in developing a common vision for food. This vision would ultimately mean the strands of health, economy and sustainability etc would work together to improve access for all to nutritional food. There would be long term gains in relation to less obesity and food related chronic illness/disease, fewer food miles and therefore an improved environment, less food poverty and contribution to rural economies through increased jobs and investment. Within communities people would have an improved understanding of where and how food is produced/sourced and through this understanding realise the local contribution being made to the Scottish Government’s aim of Scotland being a healthier, wealthier and fairer country.

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

Consideration needs to be given to identifying the resources to drive forward and deliver this agenda. This includes identifying local resource in terms of human resource and national resource in terms of financial support. This will then allow for the delivery to take place without putting additional pressure on organisations. A mapping of resource at both national and local level will assist in determining capacity to deliver this work. A review of existing evidence and knowledge would be useful and would assist in identifying the needs amongst the prioritised population groups. For children and young people it is vital that this agenda and vision is embedded as part of the school curriculum.

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

As an advocate and national driver there is a real opportunity for the Food
Commission to co-ordinate the national framework, support change and monitor progress. The Food Commission could be a key interface between local areas and the Scottish Government. It is felt that the Food Commission could play an important role in building the evidence base and disseminating best practice.

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

Developing a 'basket' of indicators to measure the success of this work should be an early priority. This work is wide ranging and both short-term and long-term in terms of realising outcomes. Indicators should therefore reflect the complexity and cross sector nature of this work. There are many existing indicators/targets which could be used e.g. obesity rates, breastfeeding rates, oral health/dental indicators, cancer and diabetes rates, number of food banks, NHS Food, Fluid and Nutritional Care Standards, food wastage, number of food outlets achieving the Healthy Living Award. Indicators relating to the impact of food on the economy and sourcing/procurement of food require to be developed. Such indicators could include; number of jobs in the food and drink sector, contribution of food and drink to local gross domestic product. It would be useful to consider the development of indicators which measure the impact of partnerships and numbers of communities engaging in delivering the aspirations of Good Food Nation.

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

The approaches described are required but with differing levels of input. The approach throughout the delivery of the Good Food Nation framework requires to be multi-faceted with links being made with other existing and new legislation/policies e.g. Community Empowerment Bill and allotments, Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) Act, Beyond the School Gate, Better Eating, Better Learning and education inputs. With the wide ranging ambitions of Good Food Nation there is a need to identify the workforce who will deliver, implement and monitor the work and development of the complementary roles of the public, private and third sectors.

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, it is considered that these are the right areas where work should be focussed.
10. Which other areas would you prioritise?

Consideration could be given to prioritising the following areas:
- Food poverty, food and the links with climate change, supporting behaviour change and food and older people.
- There is a requirement to focus work on the hospitality and service sectors since these are the public interface of food and food consumption.

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

It is vital there is cross party political buy-in for this work and a joined up approach across all Scottish Government departments. There is a need to focus work around prevention and this should include ‘upstream’ investment. This entails placing resource with those who can affect behavioural and cultural change.
- There is a need for discussion with farmers and producers to ensure that future farming methods and output can meet demand and the aspirations of the Good Food Nation 2025 vision.
- At local level Community Planning Partnerships should be tasked with taking forward the aspirations of a Good Food Nation.

12. What else should be considered?

The links between poverty and food choices require to be addressed. The impact of recent welfare reform changes has seen an increase in the number of food banks and the number of people finding it difficult to make good food choices. The increasing older population means there should be a focus on supporting older people to access quality food e.g. within the care home setting.
- There needs to be an understanding that this is an important issue in rural areas where accessibility and affordability are often barriers to achieving a healthy diet.

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?

Engagement will be undertaken across the Community Planning Partnership in order to develop an awareness of the 2025 Vision. Work with key partners will be taken forward with the aim of producing an action driven response to the aspirations set out in Good Food Nation.
- Dumfries and Galloway Council are currently finalising arrangements for launching its own Provenance brand, in formation and learning from this initiative will be shared with local and national partners.
- The Dumfries and Galloway Regional Economic Strategy due for completion in December 2015 will include food and drink as a key sector. Our local Food Town, Castle Douglas, will continue to host various food festivals and events and there are Farmers Markets and other similar initiatives across the region.

14. How did you hear about this Discussion Document?
Through a number of National networks and the Scottish Government website.