CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

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

Very. I strongly agree that the policy should be holistic and not solely about the economic success of commercial food and drink producers. I agree with the approach of seeing dietary ill-health as an issue to be addressed in national food policy, and think this is more likely to produce improvements than continuing to compartmentalise that issue as a healthcare question. I consider that improving what and how we eat as a nation has an important role to play in improving our society and developing our communities.

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

Effective local supply chains would connect local food from producers large and small to local consumers. Eating seasonally would be re-established as a norm – even for convenience food.

No one wishing an allotment would have to wait more than one growing season to get one. Every primary school would have a polytunnel. It would be normal for landowners, public or private, to make surplus or temporarily vacant land available for growing use, and the planning, rating and land taxation regimes would incentivise this.

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

I would like to see a sentence added “more people will grow and farm more food for themselves, their families and their communities.”

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?

Whilst the second paragraph of the discussion under “everyone on board” in chapter 8 of the consultation document says that everyone needs to be involved, the discussion that follows makes no reference to consumers, or to the third sector. I think that there should be representation for consumers – the public at large – on the Scottish Food Commission. I think that the third sector should be engaged because I think that grass roots third sector projects and initiatives which involve growing, cooking and sharing food have an important role to play in imparting skills and
knowledge, and in changing attitudes. This is particularly the case in more deprived areas and in engaging society’s harder-to-reach groups.

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

I think it important that the composition of the Commission be such that it cannot be dominated by major commercial producers, processors or sellers.

I see a role for the Commission in providing national support for local initiatives, co-ordinating and avoid duplication of effort and carrying out activities such as media campaigns.

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?

**Food in the public sector**

Yes, but the sector’s role in leading by example should include, in addition to the matters discussed on pages 21 and 22 of the discussion document, setting an example as landowners and as an employers. The public sector controls much land which could be used, whether long-term or short-term for food production of purposes that support food production (e.g. the Scottish Parliament’s agreement to host bee hives to support pollination – see http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/newsandmediacentre/73944.aspx.).

The Northern Ireland Assembly provide work-place allotments for their staff at Stormont. This is an example that public sector bodies in Scotland who have suitable land should be encouraged to follow.

**A children’s food policy**
This point was discussed at a discussion event which CLAS, the Federation of City Farms and Gardens and Nourish Scotland arranged in Glasgow on 12 September. A view which appeared to be widely agreed was that this should be the top priority. Views expressed also included that the policy needs to be backed by resources, and that to be effective in changing young peoples’ eating habits, parents as well as children need to be the subjects of the policy. It was commented that engagement with allotments has proven benefits in improving children’s relationship with food and this this should therefore be an element of the policy.

**Local food**

Yes, and this should include a focus on community growing and other forms of community engagement in the food chain (such as community supported agriculture.)

**Good food choices**

Yes. The education and information should not be restricted to nutritional matters and should cover matters such as environmental impact, soil health, better- and worse- types of cultivation and sustainability.

10. Which other areas would you prioritise?

Insofar as not prioritised under local food, “grow your own” and communal growing should be a priority.

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

Comments

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?

CLAS aim to continue to support community groups and landowners in reaching mutually satisfactory agreements that permit community growing. Assuming the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill is enacted, preparing to support community groups to take advantage of the new rights to make participation and asset transfer requests and the extended right to buy is likely to be a significant activity in the second half of the coming year.

14. How did you hear about this Discussion Document?
Through an SG consultations email alert