CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

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

The quality of food and drink, and use of high quality food and drink as an additional selling point for Scotland, is very important to the events and tourism sector and we are fully supportive of the aim to be a good food nation and promote this.

20% of the money visitors spend when they are on holiday is on food and drink, so it is a very significant contribution to the Scottish economy.

Research also tells us that our visitors are interested in the story of our food - in the provenance of the produce. They want quality, and they like freshness. Sampling local produce is now the second-top activity undertaken once they are here.

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

We would know success has hit when high quality food and drink with genuine provenance stories was being served at all visitor attractions; accommodation providers and events. When international visitors talk about coming to Scotland they would list food and drink as a top reason for coming and for returning.

We will also be aware of our success with user-generated content on social media and when positive comments and stories are passed by word of mouth by visitors and Scots alike, who have had good experiences. These positive experiences will help drive the food and drink industry to future success and will also mean that locals will speak more confidently about their offering.

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?

(See Q.2)
5. Are there any other essential steps we need to take before setting out on this journey?

We need to keep working to ensure a full ‘Team Scotland’ approach across the public sector. Food and Drink is a complex policy area with a significant number of stakeholders across and within public, voluntary and private sectors and within communities. Mapping and simplifying this landscape will be key to shared understanding of the challenges faced and actions required.

We, in a joined up approach, must be clear how healthy eating and promotion of Scottish produce can sit together – if both of these elements are to result in being a Good Food Nation. Currently, this is not always the case – and one does not always go in hand with the other. Research tells us, for example, that there is an element of ‘indulgence’ while on holiday.

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

With the existence of the Food Standards Agency and Scotland Food and Drink, as well as sector organisations such as NFU and Scotch Beef, it would have to be careful not to clutter the landscape any further. The Food Commission should also be able to fulfil a role not already undertaken and clearly demonstrate added value above what is already being delivered.

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

We already have indicators in VisitScotland’s ongoing work and specifically for Year of Food and Drink 2015 and Taste Our Best scheme.

Taste Our Best is the new VisitScotland Food & Drink Quality Assurance scheme designed to drive change in use and promotion of Scottish produce, which responds to identified consumer demand.

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

A cross sector action plan with clear leadership would be most effective. Each relevant organisation involved would have its own role to play, which would outlined in the top-level strategy.

9. Do you agree with the proposed initial focus on:
The visitor economy is worth £11.6bn to Scotland, and with an increased visitor demand for local produce and quality food, the importance of sourced, quality food and drink produce cannot be underestimated for the benefit of the whole economy.

10. Which other areas would you prioritise?

Provenance, seasonality, innovative and traditional foods and approaches to serving food and drink. Think it is important that drink is not overlooked.

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

Build on the work of Year of Food and Drink and influence public facing food outlets and supermarkets.

12. What else should be considered?

The international view of Scottish food on the plate, not just its produce in a natural state, should be improved. We need to become a good food destination to external visitors.

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?

VisitScotland will lead the work on Year of Food and Drink 2015 and will work with all policy interests and industry partners who want to engage to advance the aims of the year. We will also continue to roll out our ‘Taste our Best’ programme and to work on improving the quality of food and drink at all visitor touch points.

Taste Our Best activity carried out by VisitScotland will also contribute towards raising awareness of where our food comes from, which is in-line with Good Food Nation aspirations.

A target of 1,000 Scottish businesses achieving the Taste Our Best award by December 2015 is in place and being worked towards.

14. How did you hear about this Discussion Document?
Via email from NewsDirect