CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

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

Changeworks welcomes a vision of Scotland becoming a Good Food Nation with well-informed individuals eating a healthy, nutritious, sustainably produced diet, in a country with a thriving food led economy. However there are significant food related issues that are missing in the document, there is no real focus on food poverty, no mention of food banks or focus on removing health inequalities.

Changeworks has over 25 years’ experience working with low income householders experiencing fuel poverty and fuel debt. The ‘Heat or Eat’ question is very real for those living on low incomes. Changeworks Affordable Warmth team regularly encounter clients that are denied the luxury of food choices. Many survive off food parcels or are forced to buy the cheapest food products available to them – low nutrition frozen ready meals for those that can afford to heat food, or cereal, bread and crackers for those that cannot afford cooking costs. People’s confidence in the kitchen, the level of their cooking skills and their confidence to recognise and use different food products also has a huge impact on the choices they make, with those lacking confidence also choosing ready meals as an easy option.

We note that food waste is mentioned however there is little emphasis on the costs of wasting food to individual householders and the impact this can have on their daily budget and their ability to make food choices. 2012 figures show the cost of avoidable food waste per Scottish household has risen from £430/yr to £470/yr. Our experience backs up findings by Scottish Government data that showed the lowest income groups “generate significant amounts of avoidable food waste: largely driven by pre-prepared meals and snacks” and “very little effort is made to minimise the amount of uneaten food that is thrown away.” Changeworks Canny projects – incorporating our Kitchen Canny service – support low income households to understand how best to reduce their food waste and save food costs by: better planning meals, storing food, using leftovers, portioning meals and understanding best before/use by dates.

We employed an independent organisation in 2011 to evaluate our Kitchen Canny outcomes: which found that the 3000 people we’d supported had reduced their waste by 37% on average – saving an equivalent £160per/household/year – with proven long-term behaviour changes. 56% of participants said they had saved money.

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

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1 Scottish Gov segmentation data: [http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/climatechange/resourcematerials/segmentationtool/segmentationmodel](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/climatechange/resourcematerials/segmentationtool/segmentationmodel)
3. Do you agree with the proposed vision? How would you improve it?

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

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

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

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

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

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?

Changeworks agrees that these are all worthy issues. However, we recommend that tackling food poverty rises up the agenda and is included as a focus area. Households in food poverty have no choice and so most aspects of this document are not relevant to them.
10. Which other areas would you prioritise?

Comments

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

Comments

12. What else should be considered?

Comments

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?

Changeworks will continue its work to empower low income households to be in control of their fuel and food costs thus enabling them to have choices presently denied to them.

14. How did you hear about this Discussion Document?

Comments