

Recipe for Success: Scotland's National Food & Drink Policy – Becoming a Good Food Nation



RESPONDENT INFORMATION FORM

Please Note this form **must** be returned with your response to ensure that we handle your response appropriately

1. Name/Organisation

Organisation Name

Cairngorms National Park Authority

Title Mr Ms Mrs Miss Dr *Please tick as appropriate*

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2. Postal Address

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Email

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3. Permissions - I am responding as...

Individual

/

Group/Organisation

Please tick as appropriate

(a) Do you agree to your response being made available to the public (in Scottish Government library and/or on the Scottish Government web site)?

Please tick as appropriate Yes No

(b) Where confidentiality is not requested, we will make your responses available to the public on the following basis

Please tick ONE of the following boxes

Yes, make my response, name and address all available

or

Yes, make my response available, but not my name and address

or

Yes, make my response and name available, but not my address

(c) The name and address of your organisation **will be** made available to the public (in the Scottish Government library and/or on the Scottish Government web site).

Are you content for your **response** to be made available?

Please tick as appropriate Yes No

- (d) We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

Please tick as appropriate

Yes

No

CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

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

Very important. We consider that the Cairngorms National Park is a good place to help make it happen. The Cairngorms National Park is an iconic visitor destination, a home to a resident population of over 18000 people and a place that produces some high quality food in an outstanding landscape. Food and Drink is a key part of the Park's economy and is linked to the wider regional economy of North Scotland. The four aims of Scottish National Parks are relevant and the Park therefore provides an important place for policy integration at a regional level with opportunities to help people make the connections between Scotland, the land and the production and consumption of quality food.

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

- Scotland's food and drink economy would be thriving;
- Scotland would be considered by people from overseas to be a world-class food and drink destination; and,
- Scotland's people, regardless of income, would be healthy and happy, benefiting from the economic success of the sector and the readily available and affordable produce.

There would also be:

- an increase in the amount of quality food and drink produced - more producers and processors producing quality food;
- an increase in the use of local food - more local producers supplying more businesses and customers locally;
- an increase in the consumption of locally produced food - more of the people of Scotland and tourists consuming local food;
- expansion of the local food economy - increase in the development of new businesses and increase in the productivity of existing businesses;
- a decrease in Scotland's carbon footprint - reduction in food miles, resource consumption and food waste through the supply chain;
- an increase in the health of Scotland's people - more people adopting healthy and sustainable diets;
- an increase in the strength and resilience of Scotland's communities - more people participating in community activities and initiatives; and,
- an increase in the value people placed on local produce.

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

Yes, we broadly agree with the proposed vision. In addition, we would add a short phrase or sentence about the connection between quality food production and the outstanding landscapes of Scotland – because this is so important to the image of quality food and to

the future of such landscapes. In addition, the vision should reflect:

- the need for change and the Government's commitment to making this happen, through legislation where necessary (see comments in Section 6 below);
- the social goals that are picked up in the consultation response from Nourish Scotland in relation to nutrition, poverty and health inequalities – these are real issues in parts of the Cairngorms National Park; and,
- the need for jobs relating to farming and primary production to be seen as valuable, well paid, and with more young people choosing that career path.

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

In the Cairngorms National Park we can describe what being a Good Food Nation means in terms of the three long-term outcomes that have been agreed for delivery with partners through the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan:

1. A sustainable economy supporting thriving businesses and communities:
 - a Cairngorms Economic Strategy is now in place and sets out how we will grow our Agriculture, Food, and Drink sectors locally overseen by an industry-led Food and Drink Delivery Group;
 - addressing health inequalities and issues related to hunger and malnutrition in parts of the Park that are particularly disadvantaged;
 - building skills, knowledge, capacity, and best practice learning in local food & drink businesses e.g. monitor farms and a land based business training programme have been operating in the National Park for a number of years supporting development and training for agriculture businesses; and,
 - increasing awareness and availability of local produce e.g. a Directory of local producers has been created to enable local residents and businesses to find out what is produced locally and where to source it therefore encouraging increased purchase and use of local produce.
2. People enjoying the Park through outstanding visitor and learning experiences:
 - quality food and drink from the area is considered as part of the visitor experience, e.g. we have produced a food and drink trail leaflet for visitors;
 - opportunities to take local food and drink home after a visit;
 - opportunities to collect and consume wild food e.g. using ranger service, local providers and businesses to enable residents and visitors to learn about foraging and where their food comes and providing opportunities from fishing and hunting to foraging events; and,
 - opportunities to learn about food production e.g. we have promoted this in schools and as training opportunities including operating a schools 'Adopt a Chef' Programme and through a 'Community Orchards' scheme.
3. A special place for people and nature with natural and cultural heritage enhanced:
 - a quality environment to produce food and drink, meat production and processing and game are particularly important in the area; and,
 - providing opportunities for food producers to improve practices and promote their environmental credentials as a key selling point e.g. close working with businesses to utilise the Cairngorms National Park brand to connect their product to the area, this has been particularly effective with Cairngorm Brewery who carry the brand on their bottles and donate some of their profit to key natural heritage projects.

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

No – best to get on with the work now.

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

While the Strategy is phrased very positively, we believe there are also significant issues where Scottish Government will require to take a harder line, through legislation and compulsion where necessary, to challenge the most significant players in the food industry (including the larger food manufacturers, food processors and the supermarkets) and compel them to take action. The influence of these stakeholders is highly significant on peoples' food choices and behaviours and the Government must act robustly to improve the quality of food and people's diets, reduce harmful elements (including fats, sugar and salts), modify pricing (including on alcohol) and improve food labelling and packaging. If these issues are left unaddressed then the wider aspects of the National Food and Drink Policy will have limited impact. We believe the Commission can play a strong role in helping to make this happen.

A Food Commission must be focussed on adding value to what existing players do. Lines of accountability to Ministers and connections to industry must be clear for all to understand. The Commission could make recommendations on strategic direction of Government policy. It should also work to celebrate good practice and identify and challenge any barriers to progress. The Commission should work to promote the integration of what happens at national, regional, and local level.

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

We need to avoid the selection of too many indicators and make sure they are built into, and complement, the National Performance Framework. Indicators could include:

- social Indicators – e.g. Health of population, number of new community food projects, number of children and adults learning about where their food comes from;
- economic indicators – e.g. Number of new food & drink business start ups; number of farms selling directly to consumer with shorter supply chains; and,
- environmental indicators – e.g. Number of new community gardens and allotments, number of measures introduced to promote environmentally sensitive, sustainable farming.

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

It is right that a range of different approaches are utilised. Government needs to ensure that all arms of Government are clear about the priority to be given to this area of work and we agree with the points made by Nourish Scotland about the need for greater policy integration. The flow from national to local level needs to be thought through and resourced.

National Parks are great places to try out new or different approaches to provide exemplars for the rest of Scotland and we would be interested to host further discussions about what may be possible, particularly if it is linked to strengthening this key sector of the local economy, to the visitor experience and to the quality of the natural environment.

We know from our work in the National Park that people working at community level have considerable capacity to make a difference on issues such as this but they do need to be resourced effectively and encouraged. Clearly there are opportunities to encourage communities to use the Community Empowerment legislation to take this forward.

In the period since 2010 we have worked on the basis of a Food for Life Development Plan which is a strategic regional food and drink plan that was developed collaboratively by the Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) and Soil Association Scotland (SAS). The Plan was developed on the shared understanding that local food production, procurement, and consumption within and around the Cairngorms National Park should respect the overall aim of caring for the soil, biodiversity, resources and communities of one of the most unique and important natural environments in Scotland.

The overall vision of the Plan is to:

- 'increase the availability and use of local, fresh and seasonal produce for both residents and visitors in the Cairngorms National Park, and in so doing to seek long-term improvements to our health, environment and economy'.

A Food for Life Development Officer was employed, supported by funding from the LEADER programme, to co-ordinate work with schools and communities whilst wider work was undertaken to improve market intelligence improve understanding of the local food sector, improve skills and capabilities and increasing promotion and information about what is available to local residents, businesses and visitors. Improving availability and distribution of local produce is also an ambition but has proved particularly challenging to deliver. **We have attached a summary of what we have achieved with partners over the last few years through this approach at Annex A.**

Finally, we have some experience of encouraging the supply of locally produced food in supermarkets – both through use of planning conditions to address the proportion of shelf-space available but also through brokering local agreements with local suppliers. We believe there is scope to expend and promote such approaches further while also encouraging consumer-led approaches.

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 in part. Within the Cairngorms National Park we are particularly interested in picking up the national priorities relating to Continued Economic Growth and Local Food. See below. See also our comments in Section 6 about the need for Scottish Government to take a robust approach with the larger food and drink industry players.

10. Which other areas would you prioritise?

Nothing – there is enough in the priorities above.

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

Nothing to add.

12. What else should be considered?

Nothing to add.

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 have just approved a new Economic Development and Diversification Strategy for the National Park. The preparation of the Strategy was led by key businesses in the Park under the umbrella of the Cairngorms Business Partnership, guided by discussions through the Cairngorms Economic Forum.

Each of the 6 Priority Themes of the Strategy has potential to deliver the Vision for a Good Food Nation. These are

1. Building on the key strengths of the Park (*grow key economic sectors : Tourism, Forestry, Agriculture, Food & Drink; and, Renewables and Energy Efficiency*)
2. Supporting and attracting Businesses
3. Strengthening education and training as an economic asset
4. Attracting Investment
5. Infrastructure (*accommodation, transport, connectivity*)
6. Planning for the future

The Strategy sets out how we wish to build on the key strengths, including Agriculture, Food & Drink, over the next few years. We will be discussing how best to do that in the near future with Food and Drink Delivery Group. Key priorities include collaboration, training, and removal of barriers to doing effective business e.g. infrastructure, telecommunications, etc.

14. How did you hear about this Discussion Document?

Scottish Government communication.

Responding to this Consultation Paper

We are inviting written responses to this consultation paper by 17th October 2014. Please send your response with the completed Respondent Information Form (see "Handling your Response" below) to:

goodfoodnation@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Or by post to:
Good Food Nation
Food and Drink Division
B1 Spur
Saughton House
Edinburgh
EH11 3XD

If you have any queries please contact Eugenia Christie at 0131 244 9574.

This consultation, and all other Scottish Government consultation exercises, can be viewed online on the consultation web pages of the Scottish Government website at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations> .

The Scottish Government has an email alert system for consultations, <http://register.scotland.gov.uk>. This system allows stakeholder individuals and organisations to register and receive a weekly email containing details of all new consultations (including web links). It complements, but in no way replaces Scottish Government distribution lists, and is designed to allow stakeholders to keep up to date with all Scottish Government consultation activity, and therefore be alerted at the earliest opportunity to those of most interest. We would encourage you to register.

Handling your response

We need to know how you wish your response to be handled and, in particular, whether you are happy for your response to be made public. Please complete and return the Respondent Information Form which forms part of the consultation questionnaire attached as an annex as this will ensure that we treat your response appropriately. If you ask for your response not to be published we will regard it as confidential, and we will treat it accordingly.

All respondents should be aware that the Scottish Government is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and would therefore have to consider any request made to it under the Act for information relating to responses made to this consultation.

Where respondents have given permission for their response to be made public and after we have checked that they contain no potentially defamatory material, responses will be made available to the public in the Scottish Government Library (see the attached Respondent Information Form). These will be made available to the public in the Scottish Government Library by (date to be confirmed). You can make arrangements to view responses by contacting the Scottish Government Library on 0131 244 4556.

Responses can be copied and sent to you, but a charge may be made for this service.

What happens next?

Following the closing date, all responses will be analysed and considered in shaping the direction of Scotland's Food Policy.