

Background Briefing

Scotland: A Good Food Nation?

We have plenty of land in Scotland, and plenty of sea, and plenty of skilled people, scientists and innovators. There's no reason why we shouldn't have plenty of good food for everyone! Yet the reality is our food system is not working: food banks are on the rise, as well as diet-related diseases, while workers in the food sector (including many farmers) are poorly paid with insecure jobs, intensive farming systems compromise wildlife and animal welfare, and contribute to climate change.

Solutions are often framed in terms of individual behaviour: people should choose organic food, eat less meat, more vegetables, less sugar etc., Whilst it's true – collectively we do need to change our eating habits – these habits have formed as a result of the food system around us. We have made it easy to eat an unhealthy, environmentally damaging diet, and hard to eat well.

Until now Government has mostly looked at parts of the food system in isolation. There have been few opportunities for people to participate in making big decisions about how the food system works. That is all about to change!

The Scottish Government is going to introduce a 'Good Food Nation Bill', Scotland's first piece of legislation that looks at the whole food system. This Bill is about taking a more proactive approach to determining how we want our food system to work, rather than just dealing with the consequences.

The food system involves all of us, and the Scottish Food Coalition hopes that this legislation will be a chance for everyone to shape Scotland's food system. As we gear up for an exciting year, we'd love to hear your ideas for what a Good Food Nation looks like, what bothers you about how our food system works at the moment, and what you think the Government should do about it.

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The Right to Food

Governments have a responsibility to respect, protect, and fulfil the right to food. This covers the **accessibility**, **adequacy**, and **availability** of food.

The UN institutions describe the key elements of the right to food as:



Any questions? Email us: goodfoodnation@nourishscotland.org.uk