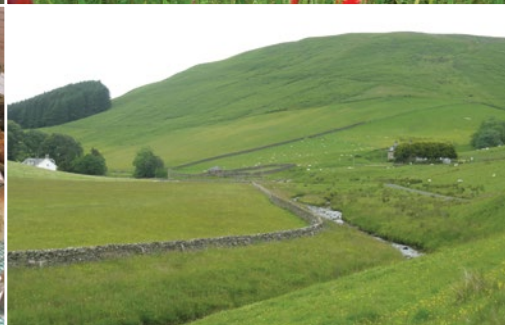


NOURISH SCOTLAND MAGAZINE

AUTUMN 2014

£3.50 • ISSUE 3



Where
next for
food?



**Changing what we eat • Changing how we farm and grow food
Changing local food economies • Changing public policies**

About Nourish...

Nourish works alongside others for a Scotland where:

- We eat more of what we produce and produce more of what we eat.
- You can find healthy, local, seasonal, organic food all across the country.
- There is a stronger food culture, which is bringing people closer together.
- Everyone can afford to feed themselves and their family well.
- There is a diversity of thriving small food businesses.

Nourish exists to establish a sustainable food system in Scotland based on ecological farming and short supply chains. Changing our food culture and public policies are key to achieving this. Nourish facilitates this change through engaging with organisations, community initiatives, politicians and officials. We work to influence policies from local to EU level. For the local food community Nourish provides a platform for networking and sharing best practice.

Nourish makes sure that food is brought to the fore in public

debates of various kinds, making the link between a localised food system and its positive outcomes for economic development, job creation, skill development, health, environmental stewardship and justice.

Nourish's work also directly contributes to growing the local food economy, e.g. through training programmes, such as the New Farmer Programme (teaching food production, processing, marketing and business skills) or linking local food producers with community food initiatives.

Join Nourish...

Would you like Nourish to represent your views and those of the wider local food movement in Scotland to government and industry? Would you like to be part of a movement for a just and sustainable food system in Scotland and beyond? Then join us!

Nourish membership includes a subscription to our tri-annual magazine, discounts to Nourish events, and an opportunity to vote and stand for positions on the board of directors. Membership is currently available in three categories: individual, business, and food groups.

To join us please see our website <http://www.nourishscotland.org/> or contact us at the details below.

If you would like to connect with like-minded people with similar interests and find out what is happening, both locally and nationally join the online community on www.nourishscotland.org.uk.



Nourish Scotland, 54 Manor Place, Edinburgh, EH3 7EH
Tel: 0131 226 1497 • Email: info@nourishscotland.org.uk
www.nourishscotland.org

In this issue

4 Editorial: Where next for food?

5 What's on at Nourish

6 Sixteen views on where next for food in Scotland

7 Voices from Scottish Commentators

- Lesley Riddoch, Author
- Alex Renton, Journalist

8 Voices from Scottish Politicians

- Claire Baker MSP, Scottish Labour Party, Shadow Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and the Environment
- Alex Fergusson MSP, Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party, Member of the Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment Committee
- Rob Gibson MSP, Scottish National Party, Convener of the Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment Committee
- Jim Hume MSP, Scottish Liberal Democrat Party, Member of the Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment Committee
- Alison Johnstone MSP, Scottish Greens, Food and Rural Affairs spokesperson for the Scottish Green Party
- Alyn Smith MEP, Member of the European Parliament, Scottish National Party

11 Voices from the Food, Farming, Fishing and Environment Sector

- Jim Fairlie, Farmer, Logiealmond, Perthshire
- Scottish Tenant Farmer's Association, Christopher Nicholson, Farmer, Kildale Farm, Whithorn
- National Farmers Union Scotland, Jonathan Hall, Director of Policy
- Scottish Environment LINK, Diarmid Hearn, Head of Policy, National Trust for Scotland
- Scottish Fishermen's Federation, Bertie Armstrong, Chief Executive
- Scotland Food & Drink, James Withers, Chief Executive
- Scottish Organic Forum, Laura Stewart, Director, Soil Association Scotland
- Scottish Land & Estates, Andrew Midgley, Head of Policy

16 Nourish Conference 2014: Our Common Wealth of Food



Front cover images copyright:

1st row L-R – © Nourish; © Nourish; © Soil Association.

2nd row L-R – © Nourish; © Plantlife; © Scottish Tenant Farmer Association.

3rd row L-R – © Nourish; © Nourish; © Niall Duffy.

4th row L-R – © Nourish; © Matilda Scharsach.

5th row L-R – © Jonathan Hall; © Nourish; © Jo Hunt.

6th row L-R – © Nourish; © Whitmuir.

Above: 1 © Arpita Shah; 2 © Sally Darbyshire; 3 © Sally Darbyshire

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK!

Please send any comments or magazine enquiries, including advertising and responses to articles to info@nourishscotland.org.uk



Nourish Scotland Magazine is published by Nourish Scotland. © Nourish Scotland. No part of this magazine may be reproduced without the express permission of the publisher.

Registered address: 54 Manor Place, Edinburgh, EH3 7EH. Tel: 0131 226 1497. Email info@nourishscotland.org.uk. Website: www.nourishscotland.org.

Where next for food?

Welcome to this special edition of the Nourish Magazine where we focus on the future of food in Scotland after the independence vote on September 18th.



Pete Ritchie

**DIRECTOR OF
NOURISH SCOTLAND**

The Commonwealth Games were eleven days of pride and joy – and a referendum-free zone. Food wasn't centre stage for most people – though the Commonwealth Games food charter certainly helped to raise the profile of fresh Scottish food. The Games have helped us see ourselves as a nation that's good at sport: there's a few more years' work before we see ourselves as a good food nation.

The history of the Commonwealth and the history of food in Scotland are linked in many ways. Scots were pushed or pulled off the land here to build food-exporting economies in Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Scots ran plantations in the Caribbean, bringing sugar and tobacco to the good Scots diet, money to Glasgow and playing our part in the misery and injustice of the slave trade.

Slavery and forced labour still underpin much of our 'cheap' food system, and land grabs are back in the headlines as the 21st century 'scramble for Africa' intensifies.

At Nourish's Glasgow conference in October, we'll be discussing with present-day farmers from Malawi, India and the Caribbean how to build a fairer food system and what Scotland can usefully do to support this, locally and globally.

Nourish is working for a transformation of the food system in Scotland. We know it's technically possible for everyone in Scotland to eat well without relying on forced labour and without inflicting so much damage on the environment here and in other countries. But it means a big social and political change, which will take at least a generation.

Is this more or less likely to happen if Scotland votes to become an independent country? Arguably, many of the levers over food policy are already devolved to Scotland – agriculture, environment, health and education. But we see that independence could have a broader positive influence over the medium term.

Self-confidence: as former Chief Medical Officer Harry Burns commented recently, independence could bring a dividend in people feeling more in control of their lives. This would encourage faster change – not just in how people eat individually, but also in how communities engage in their local food system.

Local democracy: independence may increase the pressure for greater local power and accountability in Scotland. Cities, towns and rural communities could become more active in shaping local food economies and land use.



More powers at national level: land reform, tax, social security, minimum wage and competition policy are all areas where new policies could make food fairer (though the challenge of joining up policy across all the areas already devolved has not yet been fully tackled). Food banks will not disappear on September 19th if there is a yes vote: but all the powers to do something better would be moving to Holyrood.

The constitution: Scotland's constitution may or may not end up including the right to food or the rights of Nature – but the debate will sharpen our thinking about the sort of food system we want.

Engagement in Europe: an independent Scotland would play a larger and more distinctive role in Europe. We've probably seen the last round of CAP subsidies in their present form, but having our own voice in Europe would make it easier for Scotland to get a better deal. Just as importantly, it would raise the profile of the debate in Scotland about how to reform the CAP so that public money is used to deliver public goods through food and farming.

Foreign policy: Scotland has already achieved a great deal through the Scotland-Malawi partnership and as a Fair Trade Nation. Our emerging foreign policy could include a commitment to ethical trade in food. As one of the newest members of the United Nations, Scotland would become a member of the Food and Agriculture Organisation, and can play a small part in the global institutions which will shape the future of food.

Of course, there may be some downsides. Some charitable foundations which currently work across the UK may draw the line at Berwick – and there may be changes in the way Research Councils operate. And of course food is only one small issue for people to take into consideration when they are making their mind up about how to vote on September 18th.

Independence would create new opportunities – but to make the most of these we need a coalition of civil society organisations engaging with government and the food and farming sector over the long haul. And independence does bring risks and uncertainties.

As Niels Bohr said, "Prediction is very difficult, especially if it's about the future". 🌱

What's on at Nourish?

Despite the summer holidays it has continued to be busy in the Nourish office, with a constant stream of official consultations, research work and events. We've continued to work to survey the local food economy in Scotland. We received 180 responses from a wide range of businesses and social enterprises. Over the next few months we will analyse the results and hope to publish our findings later this year.

On the policy side, we submitted evidence to the Scottish Parliament on the creation of the food standards agency successor body in Scotland. We also responded to the Scottish Government regarding research priorities for rural affairs and the environment 2016-2021. We gave oral evidence to the Scottish Parliament's Rural Affairs and Climate Change Committee on the Common Agricultural Policy and the rural development plan and kept in touch with the Procurement Reform Bill as it made its journey through the parliamentary process. We also submitted a response to the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Hunger and Food Poverty.

Coming up, we will be submitting written evidence in relation to the Community Empowerment Bill, which contains some very wide-ranging provisions on land reform, asset transfer, allotments and growing and community planning. We'll also be attending meetings of the Scottish Rural Parliament steering group, and working on research and policy on food poverty with a number of other agencies.

We'll also be responding to the Scottish Government's discussion paper *Becoming a Good Food Nation*. If you haven't seen it yet, please see our website where you will find a handy briefing paper on this along with our other policy papers. Make sure you have your say on how Scotland can become a Good Food Nation – the deadline for responses is 17 October.

Nourish has also drafted a think piece *Food in a Common Weal Scotland* for the Common Weal library which was started by the Jimmy Reid Foundation taking the opportunity of the independence referendum to think about what would make Scotland a fairer, more equal society. Common Weal, an old Scots phrase means both wealth shared in common and for the wellbeing of all.

We've also run two successful learning events. We had a one-day seminar on True Cost Accounting in food and farming for 100 delegates at Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Innovation and then followed that with a half-day conference for 60 people on access to land for new entrants. This was with Terre de Liens from France, the Kindling Trust from Manchester, and the Forestry Commission Scotland. We also organised a briefing for the land reform team and a parliamentary reception with Terre de Liens.

We were also pleased to attend the launch of Edinburgh's Sustainable Food City Plan in July and are also represented on a steering group taking forward sustainable food city work in Glasgow.

Finally, we are happy to announce, and invite people and organisations to contribute to, a new project of Nourish: the Sustainable Food Atlas. It's a collaborative effort that should result in a compendium of around 50 maps, charts and graphics demonstrating the connections between food, energy consumption, economic viability, public health, environmental degradation and climate change in Scotland.



Sixteen views on where next for food in Scotland

For this special issue of the Nourish Magazine we have invited sixteen contributors to give their views on what's needed to build a fairer and more sustainable food system in Scotland.

Food and farming policy is central to many of the most pressing social, environmental and economic challenges facing Scotland and global society. Issues include: the increase in food poverty and rise in the use of food banks, our poor diet and associated health issues; loss of biodiversity and damage to habitats; an ageing farming population and difficulties for new entrants getting access to land; huge amounts of food waste and the challenges faced by businesses trying to produce and sell local food.

Given its vital role in our sustainable development, food and farming need to play a central part in the debate on what the future of Scotland should look like. In advance of the referendum it is important that we keep asking how our greater political powers

— whether through devolution or independence — can be used to ensure a more sustainable food system is developed. How do we ensure that our households can access affordable nutritious food, that we have more local businesses and social enterprises producing sustainable food and recycling money back into their local communities and that our environment is protected?

We have asked commentators, politicians and organisations what they think. What their vision for a new food and farming system is. What needs to change? What could we do better? How should the Scottish Parliament use its powers? And how would change be facilitated through independence or continued devolution? We hope you find their musings interesting and thought-provoking. 🌱

Voices from Scottish Commentators

Lesley Riddoch, Author



Comments by the former Chief Medical Officer for Scotland, Sir Harry Burns in July make interesting reading. He told Radio Scotland that if independence meant “people felt able to engage more with local government, with central government and

make choices more easily for themselves then it would improve their health.”

This is a rare intervention from a learned source on the possibilities of general empowerment through greater and closer democratic control rather than the usual contributions about sharing the pound, collecting a pension or winning an extra £500. Of course, though, there’s no guarantee more powers for Holyrood will mean more powers for communities beyond. And the SNP have given large farmers immunity from forthcoming plans to consider imposing rates on sporting estates. But the rest of the promised Land Reform Act could re-establish the Scottish Government’s bona fides in this key area.

A maximum acreage per person or interest, an agricultural tenant’s right to buy, and an end to eldest sons legally inheriting all their father’s land without contestation by siblings – all these provisions would transform the weird situation in Scotland where 16 people own 10 per cent of the land.

It’s true that some of these powers already exist under devolution – but without the ringing endorsement of the Scottish people, the will does not exist amongst politicians to stare down the barrel of the Establishment gun. If Scots take a bold move away from the top-down, market-ruled model of British democracy and agriculture, to intervene directly in the market for food and land, it is more likely that shorter food chains will be easy to establish. 🍷

Alex Renton, Journalist



How does Scotland become a more sustainable producer of food? By being very clever. Nimble policy, inventive solutions and open minds are what’s needed. Despite 15 years of devolved government, we haven’t got there yet. Big Farming with its old industrialised ideas still seems to direct agricultural policy, just as Big Fishing does at sea.

I spent much of July on the West Coast, where scallop and prawn dredgers are still being allowed to destroy crucial seabed, and, absurdly, will go on doing it in the new Marine Protected Areas. One day I helped a crofter slaughter and butcher his lambs, to give the meat away to friends. Since the island slaughterhouse closed he hasn’t been able to afford to send the beasts away. For small fishermen and marginal farmers – the backbone of productive use of Scotland’s wilder places – things may be worse than they were pre-devolution.

Would independence enable us to organise these things better? It depends who’s in charge. Is there a government that will stand up to the food and drink barons, the behemoth supermarkets and the agri-aristocracy? The SNP has shown its willingness to rile the corporations in some areas – a sugar tax is being discussed, and, when the courts allow it, minimum alcohol pricing will come.

But these are skirmishes compared with the big battle to sort out our unproductive, unfair and unsustainable farming systems – and so many attached problems of poverty and health. That, as everyone knows, can only be done by addressing Scotland’s huge inequality in land ownership. “It will take a Mugabe to sort that out!” an Ayrshire farmer said to me recently. A bill is on its way, but true and just land reform cannot happen in Scotland while Westminster rules. 🍷





Voices from Scottish Politicians

**Claire Baker MSP, Scottish Labour,
Shadow Cabinet Secretary for
Rural Affairs and the Environment**



Devolution has afforded the Scottish Parliament the opportunity to directly and positively impact on our food and farming sectors, from making important decisions on our exports to tailoring the Common Agricultural Policy to meet specific Scottish needs.

We have the opportunity in the months ahead, regardless of September's result, to deliver a new Scottish controlled body that replaces the old UK wide Food Standards Agency. This will result in a food body designed and delivered by Scottish politicians

having consulted with the food sector within the country. However there is still work to be done especially to tackle the rise in food banks across our cities and towns. With a larder as great and as famous as Scotland's it is an outrage that so many in Scotland go to bed at night hungry.

To combat this we must see a joined up strategy that links local produce to our export markets, tackles food poverty and Scotland's poor levels of obesity, benefits our environment and ensures that public money is used for public good. We had the opportunity recently with the implementation of the latest Common Agricultural Policy. I, along with my colleagues, argued strongly for the Government to be bold in protecting our environment and ensuring that the funds are available to help local growers and not just support the big players. This can be achieved by moving away from piecemeal policy and legislation, and viewing our food and farming sectors in the round. By doing so we can deliver a system that is both resilient and sustainable. 🌱

Alex Fergusson MSP, Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party, Member of the Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment Committee



Scotland's food and drink sector is currently worth some £5.5 billion a year. In anybody's terms, that is a fantastic success story that we should rightly highlight and celebrate. It more than matches the success of the UK's food and drink sector, but I believe that we have

been so successful in Scotland precisely because we are an integral part of the UK, rather than in spite of being part of the UK as some would have us believe.

There is no doubt in my mind that Scotland's ability to so successfully export our food and drink is helped immeasurably by having unparalleled access to the UK's 260 worldwide embassies and consulates – a network of international trading posts that is second to none.

Set alongside that phenomenal success are more worrying statistics on food poverty, the increase of food banks, some loss of diversity and damage to habitats, and it is right that we should be concerned about them. However, I do not accept that wholesale changes to either our farming systems or patterns of land ownership would provide any sort of magic-wand solutions to these age-old problems.

Nor do I believe that Independence can deliver any kind of instant solution to these issues, which have been with us since time immemorial. We already have the powers to address them through devolution. Enhancing those powers, which will assuredly happen after a 'No' vote in September, can only add to our ability to do so, while retaining the physical and financial safety net of being part of the UK. With Food and Drink, as with every other facet of life, we are surely Better Together. 🌱



There is no doubt in my mind that Scotland's ability to so successfully export our food and drink is helped immeasurably by having unparalleled access to the UK's 260 worldwide embassies and consulates – a network of international trading posts that is second to none.



Respect for our soils, plants and animals, the balance of nature, are driving this argument about returning to one planet living. Food for the mind and food for the body are at the heart of sustainable lives, which Scots can make a recipe for success

Rob Gibson MSP, Scottish National Party, Member of the Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment Committee



The Scottish Government's discussion paper "*Becoming a Good Food Nation*" was launched in June. It seeks for Scotland's food and drink policy a recipe for far wider success. However, this policy hinges not on exports and lucrative niche markets but on a target for

2025 for people from every walk of life to take pride and pleasure in the food served day by day in Scotland.

This comes as a huge challenge in financially challenging times where thousands of working poor families require food banks every month. It proposes nothing short of a food revolution. The ready availability of what constitutes good food requires all sections of Scottish life from schools to food manufacturers via hospitals, retailers and restaurants to commit to serving it.

Children's wellbeing and reducing the most intractable dietary-related diseases need an increasingly organic food industry to thrive on Scotland's culinary heritage past and present.

I see the Scottish Government's role in tackling climate change as a key driver. I see land reform and community empowerment as means to reintroduce the ability for more Scots to own and control the land that supports their lives. In so doing the vision of Scandinavian levels of fairness and social justice that have been debated in the Independence Referendum campaign can energise the nation.

Respect for our soils, plants and animals, the balance of nature, are driving this argument about returning to one planet living. Food for the mind and food for the body are at the heart of sustainable lives, which Scots can make a recipe for success. 🌱

Jim Hume MSP, Scottish Liberal Democrat Party, Member of the Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment Committee



Addressing the challenges that our food and farming sector is facing requires action on issues like support for new entrants and coupled payments to secure the future of our hill-farming sector.

Liberal Democrats in the UK government helped push for progress on these key issues during talks at the EU. We have also seen action at the UK level to tackle bullying behaviour from some supermarkets towards our small-scale producers, with the establishment of a new ombudsman to protect farmers.

Devolution means that Scottish ministers already have the powers required to shape agricultural policy to Scottish needs. What has been lacking from the SNP up to this point is a focus on using these powers to help our industry rather than scoring political points ahead of the referendum. That needs to change.

We also should not ignore the fact that in agricultural terms, Scotland is a small nation reliant on exports. At least 60% of our beef and lamb and 80% of our pork is sold into the English market. In the event of a vote to leave the UK, our farmers would continue to raise beef and lamb, but stepping outside of our shared home market and putting up new barriers to trade would have very real financial consequences for our farm sector. We all want to see a Scottish food and farming sector that can produce and sell more of the high quality goods that we are famous for. This can best be achieved with a vote to remain part of the UK family. 🌱

Alison Johnstone MSP, Scottish Green Party, Food and Rural Affairs spokesperson



Scotland can create a more resilient and sustainable food and farming system. The overly complex nature of supply chains exposed by the horsemeat scandal should have woken everyone up to the need to rethink our relationship with food.

Allowing four supermarket firms to control three-quarters of our grocery market is clearly unhealthy and as their dominance of street corners and on-line shopping increases we must do more to protect local economies and ensure consumers have genuine choice.

Small businesses are crucial to our economy, and I want them to have a larger slice of the procurement cake. One company – Brake Brothers – gets 34 per cent of local authority annual food and drink spending.

Using Freedom of Information I've highlighted the lack of Scottish chicken in our school meals, and the capacity challenge our schools face from rolling out free lunches for P1-3. It's a great policy but it does highlight how far we've strayed, designing new schools with no kitchens.

Food goes hand-in-hand with land, and it's sad that despite the government's own Review Group recommending it, ministers appear to have dismissed the idea of land value tax.

I do welcome the cap on the amount of Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) funding a single landowner can receive, and the end of payments to sporting estates. I would like to have seen a greater share of CAP funding go from direct payments to rural development.

And given the latest failure to meet our climate targets we must invest in the type of farming that improves our soil and cuts emissions. 🌱

Alyn Smith MEP, Member of the European Parliament, Scottish National Party



With the powers of devolution, much has been done to promote a renaissance in Scottish food, drink and rural vitality: through the first ever Scottish National Food and Drink Strategy, the beginnings of reform in the way land is owned and managed, financial support for farmers markets, and support for farm diversification into renewable energy through to rural development programmes, and better nutrition and more access to free school meals.

However, we can do so much more with the powers of independence, both at home and in Brussels. We can use our place at the top table in the EU to argue for alterations to competition law to abolish unfair commercial practices by retailers in the food supply chain such as listing fees, and to improve the ability of producers to come together in co-ops and producer groups to improve their bargaining power. We can make the case at European level against the expansion of unwanted genetically modified crops, and for the promotion of crops for food, not fuel. We can help target the Common Agricultural Policy payments at environmentally sustainable farming and local markets, thus preserving our landscape and rural communities.

We need a revolution in the control of land and resources in Scotland, with the opportunity for different forms of mutual ownership and community management of assets to flourish. We need to use the tax code to stop the abuse of Scottish land as a speculative asset for fund portfolios, and put it to its greatest social use instead. And we need a holistic strategy to combat food waste. 🌱



Voices from the Food, Farming, Fishing and Environment Sector

Jim Fairlie, Farmer, Logiealmond, Perthshire



We will have a better idea of how much government priority is given to food and drink after the result of the referendum in September and that will in turn let us understand how ambitious we can be. For me, the only limit to our ambition should be our own imagination, and our imagination should know no limits.

There are two distinct areas that I feel are crucial.

The first is beef farming. The current system of cattle raised and fattened in sheds has done nothing to halt the decline in our national suckler herds, and we are in danger of seeing it shrink even further given recent drops in fat cattle prices. The sad fact is, the farmers trying to run profitable businesses are all too often at the mercy of the supermarkets and processors who have only one objective, and sustainable environmentally sensitive beef production is not it. Scotch beef is one of the world's most

expensive consumer products, and yet the farmers who produce these fat cattle can't make a working profit from Scotch beef. So there's an anomaly to ponder, too expensive for the consumer, but too cheap for the producer?

Perhaps we need to look at different ways of farming cattle, and native breeds like Galloway Angus and Highlanders may be the answer. They may be slower maturing and have less carcass weight at finishing, but native bred beef finished on a predominantly grass diet have a taste and texture that can command a premium, with grass being the cheapest form of feeding we can produce. So a premium product with very low input costs must surely be worth investigating.

Our hills and glens have emptied of sheep over the last twenty years. That results in communities shrinking or disappearing altogether. If we can put native hill reared cattle in these empty glens, it will be the younger generations who take up the challenge of farming in these remote and challenging areas. We can reinvigorate the ambition of our young folk by getting them hill units to rear cattle and put young families back into our rural communities.

When I started out, setting up the farmers market, tackling the local authority on public procurement and getting involved in our education system to teach kids about what our industry was, my goal was that all the things we have worked so hard to achieve became the norm. It would appear to be happening.



The second point I want to touch on is the artisan food producers up and down Scotland. They are working their socks off to survive in the world of corporate machines providing mass produced foods full of lots of things we just shouldn't eat, in order to maximise profits.

Food is integral to every country's culture and societal cohesion. For a number of years we were in danger of losing both. However, the fight back is on, those of us in the artisan food industry are gathering ourselves and gearing up to make sure that 2014 leaves a legacy far more important than any physical structure or agency driven research.

Scotland Food and Drink is a Scottish government development, but it has taken on a life of its own under the direction of chief executive James Withers. With the full backing of cabinet secretary Richard Lochhead, James and his team have ensured that our SME food companies are represented and able to develop and thrive. These small family run companies in particular, have responded and pushed on to develop and to be part of the growing food revolution that is happening in Scotland right now.

I had the great pleasure of being interviewed by the very talented Matty Watson, a traditional musician who is traveling the country talking to individuals with a cultural link or story to tell. I was struck by the fact that, at the tender age of 26, he believed that our food culture of farmers markets, farm shops, artisan producers and provenance guarantees were the norm and always had been. When we explained that prior to setting up Perth Farmers Market, there was virtually no emphasis anywhere on local sourcing, he found that unfathomable. That was a huge thing for me personally. When I started out, setting up the farmers market, tackling the local authority on public procurement and getting involved in our education system to teach kids about what our industry was, my goal was that all the things we have worked so hard to achieve became the norm. It would appear to be happening.

My hope is that all of this work and all that we have achieved so far is not hijacked by the major companies with bigger marketing budgets than a small country's GDP. We have to educate the consumer to ask what's behind the marketing gloss. When they are told the meat they are buying comes to them direct from a

farm, they should ask which farm. They should get behind the marketing gloss and ask for the story, the breed of animal, who the farmer is and whether the stock was born reared and finished on that farm. Artisan and family businesses' futures rely on the consumer awareness, and demand for the genuine article. They also rely on government policy, and that will be my final point.

Since devolution, the food industry has moved up the priority ladder in Scotland. The national food and drink policy for Scotland has created a solid backdrop for our industry to grow from. We need to continue with that growth. For me the only way that our industry will sustain its current path of being reinstated as a huge part of our culture economy and environmental safeguarding, is if policy is in the hands of an independent Scottish government. Devolution has shown us what we can do with limited powers. Imagine how much better we can be with full independence. Personally I can't wait for the next chapter to begin. 🌱

Scottish Tenant Farmer Association, Christopher Nicholson, Farmer, Kidsdale Farm, Whithorn



2014 looks set to become an important milestone for agriculture as Scotland embarks upon the process of land and farm tenancy reform. With half of Scotland's land owned by less than 500 people, these measures are long overdue and have the potential to improve vitality and enterprise on Scotland's family farms.

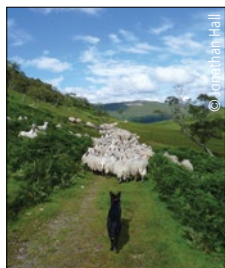
Family farms are the backbone of Scottish agriculture, and over the years have proved their resilience to the challenges that nature and the economic cycle may throw in their path. However, cracks in the system are now cause for concern: sectors of Scotland's agriculture look stagnated; we have an ageing population of farmers; and opportunities for new entrants are at an all-time low, denying the industry new blood and fresh ideas. In particular Scotland's tenanted sector, which accounts for 25% of our family farms, is showing serious signs of ill health: lack of investment and uncertainty for tenants on key issues have left the tenanted sector in a feudal time warp.

The Scottish Government are now committed to reforming the tenanted sector; the problems have been identified and we now have open debate about the measures required to fix the system. The contributions made by tenants have been recognised, not only to Scotland's food production, but also in underpinning rural communities and local economies.

If tenant farms are to thrive, reforms must address the imbalance of power between landlord and tenant, bring about fairer farm rents, and give tenants control over investment and succession decisions for their businesses.

Currently the Scottish Government has the necessary powers to bring about these reforms. Increased fiscal powers through further devolution or independence would be another policy tool to influence the way Scotland's land is managed. The success of the next generation of tenant farmers is dependent on the reforms being debated this year. 🌱

National Farmers Union Scotland, Jonathan Hall, Director of Policy



Scotland is unique in the context of European agriculture. No other Member State or region of the European Union has such a variable farming backdrop over relatively short distances.

Scotland has it all – from intensive soft fruit, vegetables and potatoes, to productive cereals and intensive grassland for dairying and finishing livestock, and on to more extensive breeding systems that can utilise less fertile hills and uplands. Yet, the farm types and enterprises that the Scottish landscape underpins are highly interdependent. This is to Scottish agriculture's advantage, with production and financial flows across sectors.

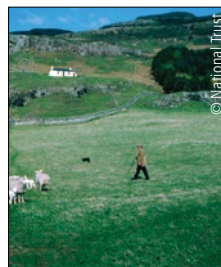
But when it comes to farm policy and the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reform, applying an area-based system of direct support is also Scotland's Achilles heel. As a result, Scottish farming will now be entering a further period of major upheaval and change – for better or worse?

Moving forward from an historic to an area-based system of support was always going to be challenging. Add in Scotland's complex farming landscape, plus the individual circumstances of all farms and crofts, and things just got tougher. Then apply the shackles of strict rules and tighter funding, and things started to look impossible. Any and all of the solutions were partial at best, suiting some but not others and creating division and tension along the way. Perhaps accepting the imperfect nature of any CAP reform is always the first and most important step.

Sticking to principles has to be the next. Activity driven support has to be the goal. Whether established business or new entrant, the active farmer has to be the target. Whether rough grazing, permanent or temporary grass, or arable land, active farming has to be the target.

Targeting limited support to those doing the job across all sectors and all regions of Scottish agriculture must be the priority if Scotland is to safeguard both its food production heritage and future. Together with the new Scottish Rural Development Programme, Scotland's new CAP package can provide the right support to all active farms and crofts and, importantly, enable those that want to farm the land to get on with it. 🌱

Scottish Environment LINK, Diarmid Hearn, Head of Policy at the National Trust for Scotland



It's not only silage that you might find inside a silo – much of our agricultural, environmental, and food and drink policies occupy similar silos, despite being mutually dependent.

The Common Agricultural Policy is the main public support for farming, but the

Scottish Government's Direct Payment guide, dispensing some £2.8 billion over six years, makes only one reference to food, and that in relation to meeting statutory food safety requirements. Conversely, the Government's new document on becoming a Good Food Nation makes only one reference to the role of the Common Agricultural Policy (and that only in relation to beef production).

Charles Lindblom, in his 1959 paper *The Science of "Muddling Through"*, described how governments often find it easier to deal with complex issues through a "branch" approach, building on existing institutions and initiatives, rather than by going back to the "root" and approaching the problem from first principles. Despite their interdependencies, a branch approach has been preferred in food and farming. But as long as changes in public policy are limited to making changes within one or other of these silos, then an environmentally sustainable, socially beneficial food and farming system seems unlikely to emerge.

Scottish Environment LINK, a network of 35 third sector organisations (including Nourish), wants to see the development of a joined-up agriculture policy, which delivers demonstrable public benefits in sustaining activity, promoting biodiversity, and underpinning a healthy diet. Dismantling these silos won't be quick, but without joined-up thinking we will all be the poorer. 🌱





Scottish Fishermen's Federation, Bertie Armstrong, Chief Executive



One should never under-estimate the importance of fish in ensuring the food security of our nation. There are so many pluses for wild-caught seafood – it is nutritious, tastes great and is, of course, sustainable.

Whilst over-fishing is still an issue to be resolved in some other parts of the world, happily this is not the case around our shores. Indeed, there has been a quite remarkable sea-change in our fisheries since the turn of the millennium. According to the respected independent scientific body, the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES), fishing pressure in the north-east Atlantic is now at its lowest level in over 50 years.

This has been achieved through a combination of conservation measures, many of which have been spearheaded by Scottish fishermen. The end result is that the majority of our stocks are now increasing in size, some dramatically so such as Northern Hake and North Sea plaice. A growing number of key fish stocks are also certified by the Marine Stewardship Council for the sustainable nature of their management, including flagship species such as North Sea haddock and herring.

As to the future, it is essential that national Government and the EU continue to recognise the fundamentally important role that seafood plays in our diet – the Food Standards Agency says we should all aim to eat two portions of fish per week. There needs to be a sensible management regime in place that rewards fishermen for their sustainable fishing practices and doesn't burden their activities with ill-conceived legislation. 🌊

Scotland Food & Drink, James Withers, Chief Executive



What constitutional future lies ahead for Scotland after 18th September? The truth is nobody knows. But there is one thing that I am certain of, that I couldn't have said 10 years ago: food and drink will be central to the debate.

At Scotland Food & Drink, we measure the industry's prosperity using pound signs. But we know that the economic growth success of the last five years and the key to achieving our ambitions over the next five requires a much broader view of prosperity. It is about the growth in our customer base for sure. But it is about that growth being founded upon reputation. That means a sector that is at the heart of communities and one that contributes to a healthier relationship between our citizens and their diet and lifestyle. It is about establishing food and drink as a real career opportunity for our youth, not a fall-back option. It is about a sector that allows the value of our produce to be shared by all links of the supply chain and one which forges customers in the four corners of the globe as well as the four corners of Scotland.

The race for cheap food can be run by others and will be won by others. Scotland's opportunity is brighter, more fulfilling and more fitting for a nation with a unique natural larder and environment. Our higher standards should not be viewed as a cost burden, but as an attribute that underpins our national brand. Those natural assets are twinned with a debate centred on aspiration and ambition. What a great starting place for whatever awaits us after the referendum. 🌱

Scottish Organic Forum, Laura Stewart, Director of the Soil Association Scotland



If Scotland is to become a good food nation with a bright future for organic food and farming, we can learn from other nations already on that journey.

Europe has seen a growth of 25% in organic sales since 2008, very impressive given the economic downturn. European countries, both large and small meticulously planned this development to maximise the multiple benefits of organic farming. Organic Action Plans set realistic targets backed up with actions designed to grow both organic production and consumption. For example, France aims to double the amount of certified land, and to see public catering in schools and hospitals using 20% organic ingredients by 2017.



Organic farming and growing brings benefits to our soil and water, increases biodiversity, offers exciting and diverse jobs on farm and through processing, cooking and retailing. It supports communities, enhances our landscape and provides a wonderful classroom. Let's make sure organics is a core part of the vision for good food in Scotland

Our experience through the recession in Scotland and the UK has been different. During the downturn, the organic market contracted, and we lost vital skills and certified land. We now have a core of skilled, dedicated businesses, keen to build a positive organic future. We need to extend outwards by welcoming new farmers and to encourage the right research to help increase yields whilst enhancing our environment. We must encourage vibrant organic businesses to emerge and develop; and identify new routes to market. We need to communicate effectively with people, connecting them with their food.

The next Scottish organic action plan is an opportunity to capture realistic ambition, and turn it into a reality. Your input is vital to help shape this in the autumn through an open consultation process.

Organic farming and growing brings benefits to our soil and water, increases biodiversity, offers exciting and diverse jobs on farm and through processing, cooking and retailing. It supports communities, enhances our landscape and provides a wonderful classroom. Let's make sure organics is a core part of the vision for good food in Scotland. 🌱

Scottish Land & Estates, Andrew Midgley, Head of Policy



Taken in historical context our food and farming systems can be viewed as having made huge strides forward. We are no longer subject to the devastating famines that caused suffering across the country and drove significant social change.

But this is not to say that everything is perfect. Increasingly intensive production methods have resulted in the industry

shedding labour, and farmers, as businesses seek efficiencies to achieve or maintain profitability. Such changes have resulted in substantial change to the social fabric of rural areas. But perhaps the greatest challenge we face is an environmental one. Indicators continue to highlight how farmland wildlife has declined and it is important that we find ways of farming with wildlife rather than at the expense of it.

Today globalisation and the concentration of market power in a few hands can sometimes push prices below the cost of production. Even with EU support, some farmers cannot make a living from agriculture alone. This is extremely important because, under conventional systems, if they are struggling financially, farmers are unlikely to be delivering environmentally. The result is that many farmers are living off the financial (machinery and buildings) or natural (soil, water, carbon) capital of their farms and as a result this financial and natural capital is being run down. The emphasis in the near future therefore needs to be on devising mechanisms that reward farmers for enhancing natural capital rather than depleting it. Farmers do deliver a huge amount to society; the problem in recent times has been that many of the really valuable things they deliver are not reflected in the market price of their produce and this leads to an inevitable squeeze as they seek to work in the current market place. We urgently need to develop robust ways of measuring and valuing ecosystem services so that mechanisms can be developed that reward farmers for delivering them.

What we need to work together in this positive direction is cohesion within the farming industry. At present the industry is all too often divided and continuous battles over tenure and capital values takes everyone's eye off the real task at hand. 🌱





Book Now!

Images: 1 © Arpita Shah, 2 & 3 © Clementine Sandison

OUR COMMON WEALTH OF FOOD

How can we play our part to make food fair for all?

Can we use a Common Wealth approach to food? There is enough food for everyone, but people go hungry in Scotland as well as in poorer Commonwealth countries. With increasing inequality, food poverty and diet-related diseases are escalating. Meanwhile, family farmers across the world are being squeezed off the land, and the food system is harming biodiversity and driving climate change, which in turn makes farming dangerously unpredictable.

At this year's conference we'll be sharing experiences and ideas with farmers and policymakers from India, Malawi and the Caribbean countries. What would it take for everyone to eat well without messing up the planet? And how should Scotland play its part?

Nourish Conference 2014

Glasgow Royal Concert Hall, October 16th, World Food Day & 17th, 2014

SPEAKERS INCLUDE:

- ✿ **Olivier de Schutter** (UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food) on the gravity of the situation and avenues for change
- ✿ **Rucha Chitnis** (Women's Earth Alliance) on the intersection of gender inequality, food security and climate change
- ✿ **Pete Smith** (University of Aberdeen & IPCC author) explaining the critical relationships between the food system and climate change

Conference dinner and panel discussion chaired by Sheila Dillon

On the evening of 16th October the conference moves to the Old Fruitmarket Gallery with an evening debate chaired by the BBC Food Programme's Sheila Dillon. We will focus on the role of family farms in feeding people in Scotland and around the world sustainably.

The evening will celebrate the diversity of food in the Commonwealth, with a wonderful feast that fuses flavours from Scotland with Asian, African and Caribbean cuisine, and entertainment including poetry and music from around the Commonwealth.

BOOKINGS: www.OurCommonWealthOfFood.eventbrite.co.uk

ENQUIRIES: 0131 226 1497 or conference2014@nourishscotland.org.uk

✉ [@nourishscotland](https://twitter.com/nourishscotland), conference updates [#nourish2014](https://twitter.com/nourish2014)

Exhibition space is available, and there are opportunities to book a table for the evening event – please contact us if you are interested.

**15%
DISCOUNT
FOR NOURISH
MEMBERS**
Join now to get your
discount code!



www.nourishscotland.org