



National Veg Summit: Summary Report

1. INTRODUCTION

Scotland's '**National Veg Summit**' (NVS) was held on 31st October 2023 at Edinburgh International Conference Centre and was one of four veg summits held across the UK nations to mark the end of the current phase of the Peas Please project.

The summit was also held against the backdrop of a forthcoming consultation on Scottish Government's 'National Food Plan', a commitment made in the Good Food Nation Act (2022). We know the Scot's diet is one of the worst in Europe - the Good Food Nation Act provides a once in a generation opportunity to fundamentally change how we do food in Scotland. Therefore, as the first UK nation to have a food plan, the NVS provided an opportunity to bring people together to ask the question:

'How can we make it easier to eat veg in a Good Food Nation?'

Alongside the main event, the space featured interactive exhibitions on veg and a competition to find the 'Best Scottish Veg Display', judged by the Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society. Attendees also enjoyed a veg-packed, seasonal Scottish lunch by Leith's.

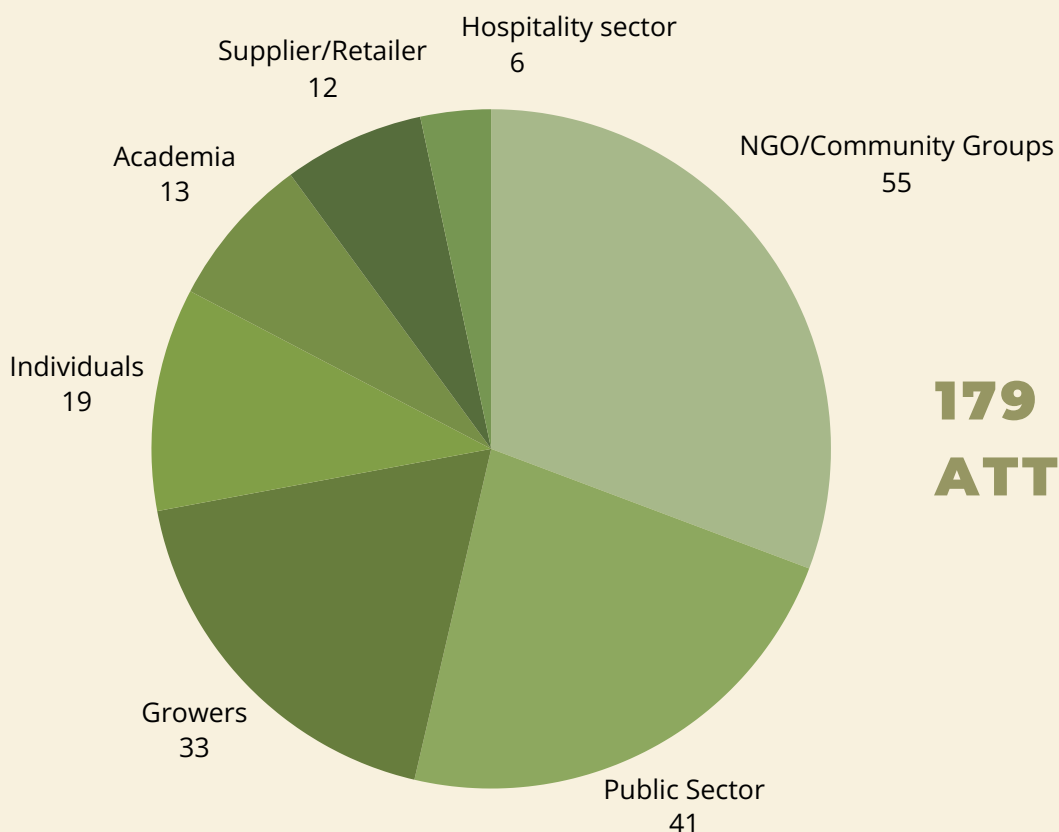


The Peas Please project, started in 2017, is a UK-wide initiative increasing access and reducing barriers to eating veg.

Working across the food system, Peas Please has been shown to increase UK veg consumption by over **1.1 billion portions** – no mean feat and a cause for celebration!

2. WHO WAS THERE?

On the day there were **179 attendees** representing a diverse range of people and organisations from across the Scottish food system, from government to growers, caterers to communities.



179
ATTENDEES

3. WHAT DID WE DO?

The NVS focussed on **generating new ideas to increase veg consumption in Scotland**. Each of the 23 tables had a facilitator and a seating plan to encourage discussion across the food system.

The core of the event consisted of a series of ‘provocations’ by speakers. Each speaker had five minutes to inform, excite, and challenge attendees about the future of veg in Scotland.

To reflect the draft National Food Plan, the ‘provocations’ were split into four themes. They were interspersed with group reflection and deep-dive discussions at the tables.

Providers & Places

The role of the ‘out of home’ sector and the public kitchen in encouraging us to eat more veg.

DAVID HAY
COMPASS SCOTLAND

JAYNE JONES
ASSIST FM /
ARGYL & BUTE COUNCIL

Producers & Processes

The role of veg production and processing in helping Scotland eat more veg. How to eat more of what we grow and grow more of what we eat?

JOSSIE ELLIS
LAURISTON FARM

NICOLA PHILLIPS
KETTLE PRODUCE

Policymakers

To get people thinking about what roles the Government and wider public institutions play in supporting Scots to eat veg.

GILLIAN PURDON
FOOD STANDARDS SCOTLAND

PETER FAASEEN DE HEER
SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

People & Communities

Experiences of eating veg at an individual and community level in Scotland. What needs to happen to make veg more accessible and appealing?

JOANNE FULLERTON
PEAS PLEASE ‘VEG ADVOCATE’ &
FOOD ACTIVIST

VIVIEN OPIOLKA,
OLUFISOLA
OLATOFOWOMO JUNAID &
MOSLEH AKHGAR
CENTRAL & WEST
INTEGRATION NETWORK



After each theme, everyone was given ten minutes to reflect on what they had heard. Responding to the following prompts, each group collected their thoughts on a map of post-it notes:

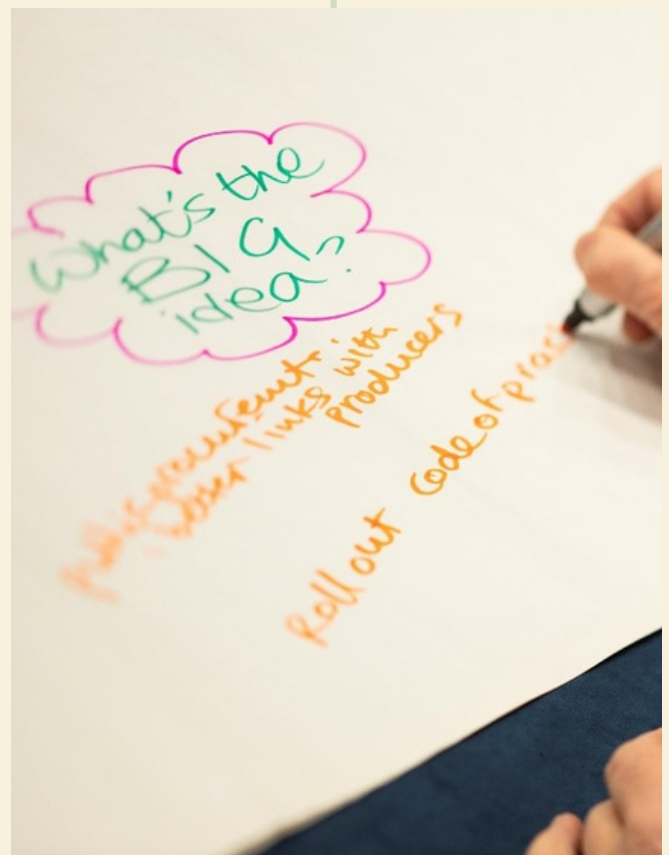
- What **stood out** for you from these two provocations?
- What do you think we should see **more** or **less** of in a Good Food Nation?
- Is there anything **missing**?

This encouraged people to consider the question of ‘how to eat more veg’ from various perspectives, and set the stage for the final discussion.

4. SO WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA?

The NVS culminated in facilitated discussions on transforming the role of veg in the Scottish food system. Participants were asked to draw upon everything they had heard so far, both from the speakers and those at their tables to come up with **bold, radical and audacious ideas** to help people eat more veg in a Good Food Nation.

People were encouraged not just to think about how to grow more veg or how to make it more affordable, but to focus on how to help people **EAT** more veg. This complex question required participants to think about the food system as a whole.



During the group discussions, the facilitators used their phones to live-feed ideas onto the large screens. This collective sharing connected the discussions across the room, and allowed the groups to use each others' thoughts as inspiration.

What are your bold, radical or audacious ideas for Scotland to truly become a Good Veg Nation?			
Food education is key for increased veg consumption. But less focus on nutrition/nutrients. More about enjoying and connecting with veg	5. Less precarious funding situations for groups that are trying to create positive change	7. Funding investment to allow all hospitals in Scotland to have full control over food service and delivery to patients	Link value of veg to savings in NHS spending rather than the idea profits and financial viable businesses.
19- Growing food, increasing access to land and looking at all spaces to make them available for growing. To create committees	Radical procurement change so locally grown food, or food grown in school grounds can be used in kitchens for lunches	20 - education on how to eat better and buy better from anti-racist stage onwards.	23- need local infrastructure to enable small processing, storage to allow local produce to stay in local area

A summary of the principal 'big ideas' that came out of these discussions is presented on the following page.



"CITIZENS, NOT CONSUMERS"
"AN INVESTMENT NOT A COST"

GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP

Eating more veg requires government leadership in order to replace big business in shaping Scottish diets.

Develop assertive policies banning unhealthy foods are needed, holding public institutions and companies accountable for marketing and selling HFSS foods.

Establish permanent food focussed roles in local authorities and public bodies

THE LAND

Land for growing veg locally should be incorporated into city planning: compulsory for planning applications and public infrastructure.

Simplify application routes and prioritise access to land for community growing & small producers.

Reallocate vacant plots for farming and allotments.

"NATIONALISE THE LAND"
"REPURPOSE GOLF COURSES INTO FOOD GROWING LAND"
"USE GREEN BELTS FOR GROWING"

REFORM FUNDING

Incentivise small growers and retailers, linking subsidies to nutritional and environmental outcomes.

Tax HFSS foods heavily, using true cost and social impact accounting to calculate the cost of food.

Community initiatives and public procurement need more secure and longer-term funding.

EAT MORE VEG

FOOD EDUCATION

Education is foundational to eating more veg in Scotland. Update the curriculum to include compulsory food education, farm visits, and involve students in growing and cooking veg to promote the social importance of veg.

Implement universal, free, good-quality and tasty school meals for all ages.

Educate chefs to cook and develop tasty and nutritious veg recipes.

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

Train Scottish growers in sustainable production methods that protect nature and soils.

Increase the number of market gardens.

Identify and promote pathways for communities to participate in farming.

Develop veg varieties adapted to the changing Scottish climate, and for flavour and nutrition.

IMPROVE ACCESS TO VEG

Make veg more accessible by building community kitchens, food hubs, and processing infrastructure to keep locally grown veg in the area. Link local veg producers to local retailers.

Make veg more affordable through publically procured and subsidised meals that are open to all.

"SCOTTISH AGRICULTURE ORGANIC BY 2030"
"4-DAY WORKING WEEK"

"PUBLIC DINERS"
"COMMUNITY VEG VEHICLE"

Public Diners

Public diners were state-subsidised restaurants which operated in Britain in 1940s-70s. Nourish is currently exploring the benefits of, and potential plans for, re-introducing these diners as a new piece of social infrastructure for Scotland - helping us to eat well and sustainably.

In designing solutions for how to eat more veg in Scotland, the NVS participants focussed on publicly procured and subsidised food, such as free school meals. Public diners were proposed as a way to meet this need.

Nourish is developing a new programme of work to plan a model for public diners, starting with a one-day conference on 1st February 2024.

[Contact us for more information.](#)

5. NEXT STEPS

Get veg into Scotland's 'National Food Plan'

- Once published, we will send NVS attendees a link to the consultation with guidance notes about how best to bring veg into the conversation.

Big ideas into big realities

- Do any of the big ideas that came out of the NVS really resonate with you? Is there anything missing? What part could you play in making them a reality?

We invite anyone interested in any ideas that came out of the National Veg Summit to continue the discussion with us. **[Get in contact](#)**

Keep in touch

- Sign up to get our **[newsletter](#)** or become a Nourish member to work with us to make Scotland a truly Good Food Nation.

THANK YOU

Nourish Scotland is very grateful to **Compass Scotland** and **Food Standards Scotland** for sponsoring the event, and to the **Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society** and **Garden Organic** for supporting the Best Scottish Veg Display Competition.

Finally, a HUGE thanks to our team of 23 facilitators, and all the exhibitors and competition entrants for making it such a vibrant event.

Peas Please is a UK partnership



Our Food.
Power of Good.

