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Submitted to Local food for everyone
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Part A - Local food: introduction

1 Do you agree with the Scottish Government definition of local food as set out above?

Yes

Please provide further detail on what local food means to you in the text box below:

This definition is similar to that used in the Glasgow City Food Plan (launched in June 2021), which defines 'local food' as food that is produced in Scotland. However, we believe that wherever possible 'local food' should be food that aims to shorten supply chains as much as possible – e.g. Glasgow or peri-urban grown.

We would welcome support and initiatives for city regions to work together to make this a reality.

Local food producers and retailers can not only help make healthy food more accessible, but can also support local people through employment and help build a more local, resilient food supply chain. Growing our local food economy can be supported by our personal food choices, but also by how we spend our public money on food. It also matters how our food is produced; food that is good for the planet tends to also good for us. If we are aiming to meet our climate emergency commitments, we all need to change how we all think about the food we eat and Scottish Government has an important role in shaping this.

The benefits of local food

2 Do you agree with the benefits associated with local food as set out in the strategy?

Yes

Please provide further detail on your response in the text box below, including whether there are there any further benefits not captured. Please provide examples if possible. :

We would like Scotland to be a country where local food enterprises are supported and celebrated. A country where we produce, provide, purchase and consume food that is good for the planet, good for animal welfare, and good for those involved in growing, making and selling it. In doing this, we will work towards an inclusive, sustainable, resilient and fair economy for our whole community.

It will also be important to increase demand for more sustainably produced food – an important part of the impact of food on the environment is shaped by the diet we eat. However, imported food will continue to be an important component of our diet, particularly in the short term while local food production and supply is developed, so choices about imported food should include consideration of the sustainability and fair trade principles employed in producing that food.

3 Are you aware of any disadvantages of local food?

No

Please provide further detail about your response in the text box below. Please provide examples if possible. :

Increasing local food production has a wealth of benefits including shorter supply chains and creation of local jobs. However, currently it can be hard for growers to access land for food growing and more training and support is needed for new growers to gain the skills required and have enough finances to get started.

We would welcome new initiatives and investment to support new growers to access land and hope to have more financial support and training available for organic and/or agroecological food production.

Scottish Government activity

4 Do you have any comments on the first pillar of the Scottish Government's local food strategy: connecting people with food?

Please provide your views using the text box below:

Making land available for growing

We commend the Scottish Government for requiring all local authorities to develop a food growing strategy. However, we would welcome initiatives that makes land easier to access, for example simplifying the asset transfer process. Currently the process is complicated and can discourage smaller growers to apply.

Grow Your Own

We are very much in support of providing people with space and the skills to grow their own food whether it's as part of a community growing project, on a windowsill or in their own garden. However, many people don't have access to a growing space, so we would encourage increased allotment provision and reduced waiting times for plots.

Learning About Food

We agree that food education should become an integral part of the educational curriculum. In addition to learning about cooking, nutrition and where food comes from, we would like to see food sustainability and environmental impacts (such as planet-friendly seasonal food and food waste) covered as part of school education. Food Education could be developed further to cover and combine topics such as biology, geography (what is grown in Scotland), environment, agriculture, gastronomy, supply chain, nutrition, diversity, culture and food sovereignty.

Community Food projects have a wealth of experience in delivering food education programmes and could be utilised to deliver some training, but this would need to be properly financed. Ultimately food education needs to be a part of teacher training.

We would also like to see all schools with either their own growing spaces or access to community gardens to deliver some of the food education activities. Allowing external groups access to school facilities, such as school kitchens, for education activities would also have a positive educational impact.

We commend the Scottish Government for its work to offer free school meals to primary school children, which is a major achievement. We also see the mealtimes as an opportunity to teach children about enjoyment of food, widening the range of foods they eat, as well as minimising food waste, and would welcome a drive towards staff accompanying children at lunchtime to guide them towards different choices and less waste. This might mean extending the lunch hour in order to make the experience less rushed and more positive.

Improving access

There are vast inequalities in Scotland and improving access to local food is required. In Glasgow for example, around one third of children are estimated to live in poverty and recent research showed around 11% of people had experienced food insecurity at least once in the previous year. Many areas of the city also have limited local access to healthy affordable food sources. The role and scale of emergency food providers has continued to grow with over 40 foodbank delivery points in the city and around 50 places providing free hot meals. Partnership work to tackle food insecurity has been strengthened and increased focus is placed on maximising household income, promoting "cash first" approaches and testing and developing new models of support.

Equal access to good quality food is important and local food should not be a privilege just for those who can afford to pay for it. Linking community food groups, food hubs and pantries with local producers might be part of the solution, but first local food production has to increase ensuring small growers and producers are paid a decent wage. Perhaps this could be done by allowing even the smallest producers to access subsidies and something that the Right to Food bill might also be able to address.

Glasgow is currently exploring whether food pantries could be linked to growing projects and if more accessible food markets could be opened in different areas of the city. It is also worth exploring whether subsidised food vouchers could be spent at local farmers markets (eg. Alexandra Rose Voucher's available for low-income families to allow them access to fruit and vegetables).

5 Do you have any comments on the second pillar of the Scottish Government's local food strategy: connecting Scottish producers with buyers?

Please provide your views using the text box below:

Foster short and circular supply chains

Creation of short supply chains by connecting Scottish food producers with public or private buyers in local or regional markets requires investment in the establishment of efficient distribution networks and adequate processing facilities for Scottish produce. The development of regional distribution hubs would connect local producers with supply chains and help manage the uneven spread of food production across Scotland. Furthermore, implementing more innovative models of procurement, such as Dynamic Purchasing Systems, can facilitate the incorporation of smaller producers into the often-large public food and drink contracts. This would not only allow for fluctuation in supply due to producer capacity, but also helps take advantage of the seasonal changes of supply.

There must also be a role for smaller scale alternative supply chains, e.g. support for the establishment and running of farmers' markets that are accessible to all, support to veg box schemes and models such as Community Supported Agriculture.

Encourage retailers to stock Scottish food

Retailers should be encouraged to maximise opportunities for the promotion of Scottish produce in store, using 'local' as lever to increase sales. There is also potentially a role for Scottish Government's 'Healthy Living Programme' to work with local suppliers to ensure that convenience stores have better access to local and seasonal produce. However, in order for retailers to stock Scottish food, local production has to be increased and diversified.

Encourage consumers to buy Scottish food

There are already campaigns encouraging consumers to buy Scottish food, but if imported food is sold at cheaper rates local food might not be accessible to all households, especially those on low incomes. Whilst value should be put on locally produced food with proper wages for those growing and producing food, there might have to be other incentives to make local food attractive for all. Clear labelling about the origin of food and its benefits to the local economy is likely to have an impact on those already valuing fair and ethical food, but further campaigns and education on this issue is also needed.

6 Do you have any comments on the third pillar of the Scottish Government's local food strategy: harnessing public sector procurement?

Please give your views using the text box below:

Public sector procurement has a major role to play in procuring local food and can positively impact local economies and create meaningful jobs in agroecological food growing. To strengthen the local food procurement frameworks and setting a minimum % of locally and agroecologically produced food to be procured, public institutions would ensure that local food is a priority. At the same time, the capacity of local producers to compete in the tendering process should be strengthened. In particular, where possible, reducing the size of contracts to allow more diverse range of businesses (e.g. smaller and local businesses) to bid, would have a greater local economic impact for every pound spent.

Creation of local, sustainable supplier directories covering both social and environmental criteria to guide purchasing decisions for both public and private sector procurement has an important role to play with this. Establishing cross regional sectoral procurement groups to share good practice and encourage more local sourcing might also help along with local sourcing pilots.

7 Are there any areas related to local food where Scottish Government involvement could bring further benefits or reduce disadvantages?

Please give your views using the text box below:

Scottish Government must recognise that the involvement of Local Authorities is critical to the success of any local food strategy as it is Local Authorities that are best placed to work at a local level. However, they will need to be adequately supported and resourced to do so, and we suggest that around 5-10% of the reformed CAP budget would go directly to local authorities to support the local food economy and local food partnerships.

Local food partnerships, such as the Sustainable Food Places network, have a crucial role to play in tackling social, economic and environmental food-related issues, bringing together stakeholders from across all sectors of the food environment and engaging directly with food citizens in their communities. We hope the Scottish Government will recognise this work and ask that it will provide centralised funding to support the work of these partnerships (possibly through local authorities as mentioned above), so that this burden does not fall entirely on public and third sector organisations which are already under unsustainable financial strain. Establishing and supporting Local Food Partnerships in every local authority area would make a huge contribution to effective coordination and delivery of food projects ensuring that integrated local food policies and strategies are in place to build food resilience and a healthy and sustainable food system in a post-Covid Scotland.

Prioritising locally produced food in Scotland's public food service also provides the Scottish Government with the opportunity to shape local food systems which benefits food workers and their communities through fair wages and employment security, thereby taking one step closer to the realisation of the Right to Food in Scotland.

Local food: questions for individuals

8 Please indicate how willing you are to pay more for local food

Please select an option from the dropdown list:

9 Please indicate how willing you are to go to more/different shops to access local food

Please select an option from the dropdown list:

10 Please indicate how likely you are to change your diet, for example to eat fewer exotic foods or to eat more seasonally, in order to eat more local foods?

Please select an option from the dropdown list:

11 Are you aware of where you can access local food?

Not Answered

Please provide further detail about your answer above:

12 Are you currently able to buy healthy, affordable food groceries within a 20 minute walk (approximately 800 metres) of your home?

Not Answered

Please provide further detail about your answer above, particularly focusing on any barriers to your ability to access healthy, affordable food:

13 Are you currently able to buy local food within a 20 minute walk (approximately 800 metres) of your home?

Not Answered

Please provide further detail about your answer above, particularly focusing on any barriers to your ability to access local food.:

Local food: access and public sector food questions

14 Do you have any further comments on improvements that could be made to allow for everyone living in Scotland to have better access to healthy, affordable and locally sourced food?

Please provide your views:

Many people in Scotland face huge financial barriers to accessing healthy, affordable, and locally sourced food, and any new strategies must include 'cash first' principles, as lack of money has been shown to be a major barrier to people eating a healthy diet. GFPP supports the Right of Food bill as a step towards a more fair and equal society.

Furthermore, The Good Food Nation Bill provides an opportunity for the Scottish Government and Local Authorities to set out plans for addressing both the geographic and financial barriers that people face and ensure these are integrated into ongoing work. For example, Best Start Foods and the Scottish Child Payment are mechanisms through which the Scottish Government can respond to changes in the affordability of healthy and locally sourced food to ensure that families are being offered the financial support required to afford these foods.

Those providing public sector food in Scotland can also play an important role in ensuring that everyone living in Scotland has better access to healthy, affordable and locally sourced food. For example, inclusion of local food in the provision of universal free school meals will establish a regular and consistent way for children to access and become connected to healthy and local food, while simultaneously reducing the burden on families for sourcing and affording these options. Making this a reality requires significant investment across the food supply chains, school food environment, and human resources. This should not be regarded as a cost to the Scottish Government, but as sustainable, long-term investment in Scotland's community resilience, public health, environmental sustainability and contribution to global climate change mitigation.

15 Do you think that Scotland's schools, hospitals and other public institutions provide sufficient access to healthy, locally sourced food?

Somewhat

Please provide further detail about your answer above, focusing on any changes you think could be made to improve access to healthy, locally sourced food within schools, hospitals or other public institutions:

In recent years, the Scottish public food service has made significant efforts to improve the quality and sustainability of the food it provides. The adoption of the Soil Association Food For Life Served Here (FFLSH) Certification in many of Scotland's councils is a sign of commitment to serving food which is good for public health, communities and the environment. However, challenges persist with regards to facilitating access for local food producers to public food procurement contracts and much more could be done. For example:

- Public sector procurement should proactively encourage the use of local and organic food by setting targets. This would act as a stimulus to increase supply and give confidence to the market.
- More innovative models of procurement should be implemented to allow smaller producers to compete for large public food contracts. This in turn will create more jobs and diversify food production.
- Budgets for public procurement of food should be adequate and secure in order to pay the true cost of food and pay fair wages for those growing and producing food.

16 Are you aware of any examples of schools, hospitals or other public institutions that have been particularly effective in providing healthy, locally sourced food?

Yes

If you responded 'Yes' to the question above, please provide further detail on these and why they were effective.:

North Ayrshire Council has a long-standing commitment to sourcing and serving sustainable school meals. Holders of the Gold Food for Life Sold Here (FFLSH) award since 2013 has meant that the council pays much attention to food provenance and has sourced many items which are organic, free range, and promote good animal welfare practices. The majority of the food spend is with Scottish suppliers and over 27% with suppliers located in North Ayrshire. The Council's Community Wealth Building (CWB) strategy allows progression of local wealth and supports and creates local jobs. One of the pillars of the CWB is procurement. Facilities Management liaises with the Soil Association and the Ayrshire Regional Food Group Co-ordinator to discuss local routes to market and sourcing the best possible food for school menus. North Ayrshire Council has set a target to increase local spend and officers are working across services including Business Development and Procurement to work towards this. Additionally, North Ayrshire has been joined by other major Ayrshire anchor organisations (Including East and South Ayrshire Councils, NHS Ayrshire & Arran Ayrshire College) to pledge to encourage local spend therefore supporting local companies and jobs. Working collaboratively across the council and with other external organisations and communities secures commitment locally and provides support to achieve positive outcomes for the community as a whole. The Soil Association's Food for Life Served Here (FFLSH) Award has been adopted by more than half of Scottish councils who now serve at least 75% of their meals freshly prepared, ensuring high welfare standards of all meat served and making the most of local and seasonal produce.

Local food: Covid-19 questions

17 Has your attitude to local food changed at all due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and related restrictions?

Somewhat

Please provide more detail about your answer:

There was a huge increase in those sourcing their food more locally with a rise in veg box schemes and people shopping more locally. Also, many local businesses offered home-delivery schemes during the pandemic making it easier for those isolating to buy local food. However, this varied hugely

between areas of the city/country.

The pandemic brought to people's attention the complicated supply chains and global distribution networks and how quickly these can be affected. Growing more food locally in all different areas of cities/local authorities and linking market gardens/growing spaces with local shops, markets, food hubs or food pantries would make it easier for people to access local food in the future at the same time allowing them to learn where food comes from. Localising food systems would also help create new jobs, improve community well-being and strengthen local economies. Supporting the local food economy and everyone working in it should be a long-term goal for our country.

The period of lockdowns also highlighted the growing inequalities and over-reliance on foodbanks. Many foodbanks had to close due to either a lack of food or a lack of volunteers many of whom belonged to high-risk groups themselves. Other foodbanks were working around the clock to get food to those who needed it. Once again, Right to Food bill would ensure that everyone in Scotland would eat well without having to visit foodbanks.

18 Are you aware of any organisations or schemes that have been particularly effective in providing local food during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Yes

If you responded 'Yes' to the question above, please provide further detail on these and why they were effective.:

Glasgow Community Food Network and its partners set up Food for Good Glasgow (FFGG) project in the very beginning of the pandemic. Its aim was to provide food for people not entitled to direct statutory help, making sure fewer people in desperate circumstances were left out. FFGG compiled a database of 150 organisations and groups involved in the local response and were in touch with them regularly to offer or request support around supplies, logistics, volunteers and food. It aimed to substitute food donations with healthy food items (such as root vegetables, beans and pulses), and procured from local businesses wherever possible. This included buying produce from Locavore (local organic grower, veg-box scheme and food shop) and whole foods from local wholesalers. Locavore's Good Food Fund scheme also gave local projects quick and easy access funding to support their emergency responses.

Local food: examples of good practice questions

19 Are you aware of any organisations or schemes that have been particularly effective in developing a strong sense of local food culture and community?

Yes

If you responded 'Yes' to the question above, please provide further detail on these and why they were effective. :

A very effective way of linking communities with their local food environment are through food partnerships. The most developed of these in the Scotland is the Sustainable Food Places (SFP) network. SFP food partnerships work across all aspects of the food system, establishing cross-sector food partnerships to transform their local food system and to solve some of today's most pressing social, environmental, and economic issues. Crucially, these food partnerships have the proactive support of their Local Authority and perform the function of linking together communities with the wider food sector, creating a 'good food movement' around sustainably sourced and culturally appropriate food. Currently the Scottish members of the network include Aberdeen, Clackmannanshire, Dumfries & Galloway, Edinburgh, Fife, Glasgow, North Ayrshire, Stirling and South Lanarkshire.

Glasgow Community Food Network (GCFN) was established with the support of Glasgow Food Policy Partnership, one of the SFP network members, in 2017. It now has over 200 members (private/public/third sector organisations/projects) who are actively involved in various food related projects eg. community growing, food education, health/nutrition work, community meals and events, food sharing, surplus food redistribution, food justice work and community food retail/cafes. GCFN organises seasonal networking events, runs national campaigns such as Veg Cities campaign including events such as Chefs Challenge using locally grown vegetables. Since 2018 50 restaurants and 20 growing spaces have taken part in this yearly competition attracting great media coverage and local interest.

20 Are you aware of any organisations or schemes that have been particularly effective in reducing the distance that food travels from being grown or produced to being eaten (the number of 'food miles' travelled)?

Yes

If you responded 'Yes' to the question above, please provide further detail on these and why they were effective.:

Two of the six 'Key Issues' that Sustainable Food Places (as described in Q.19 above) work on are 'catering and procurement' and 'local food economy', actively working to link producers and growers with their local communities.

Various online platforms operating in different areas of Scotland, such as the Open Food Network, Great British Food Hubs and the BigBarn, have been designed to help to shorten the distance between food producers and the public.

In Glasgow, there are 3 markets gardens growing vegetables for local veg box schemes and some restaurants: Locavore, Washouse Garden and Tenement Veg

Scotland Food & Drink also organises events to meet local producers in different areas of Scotland.

21 Are you aware of any organisations or schemes that have been particularly effective in the increasing availability of locally produced food?

Yes

If you responded 'Yes' to the question above, please provide further detail on these and why they were effective.:

Locavore, in Glasgow (local organic grower, veg-box scheme and food shop)

have 3 growing sites where they grow a large amount of produce for their veg boxes distributed to clients in the central belt. They also have a partnership with Caldwell's organics to grow food specifically for their retail and veg box schemes. This not only means they are able to guarantee supply, but they are also able to provide market confidence to the grower. Locavore is also working with other farmers to buy their whole crops which again provides security around supply and demand. Locavore also recently won the contract to provide school food in East Ayrshire.

Part B - Vertical farming: introduction

22 Have you considered using vertical farming technologies?

No, it's not suitable for me/my product/my industry

Please explain your reasoning:

GFPP is a food partnership and not directly involved in food growing; however, some of our partners are interested in this method of growing food including Glasgow City Council, Glasgow Community Food Network and Chamber of Commerce. The Glasgow City Food Plan launched in June also hopes to explore potential for urban and peri-urban agriculture and vertical farming.

Vertical farming: further questions

23 What effect would increased usage of vertical farming have on food imports to Scotland?

Have no effect

Please provide further detail about your answer.:

Vertical farming will have little effect as it is not suited to the production of root veg or cereal crops. It is better suited to growing small plants such as salad leaves.

24 Would vertical farming cause an increase, decrease or have no effect on the following concerns compared with conventional production?

vertical farming - impacts - matrix - Emissions from transportation:

Decrease

vertical farming - impacts - matrix - Pesticide and fertiliser usage:

Increase

vertical farming - impacts - matrix - Water usage:

Increase

vertical farming - impacts - matrix - Electricity usage:

Increase

vertical farming - impacts - matrix - Packaging:

No effect

vertical farming - impacts - matrix - Land use:

Decrease

vertical farming - impacts - matrix - Labour requirements:

No effect

vertical farming - impacts - matrix - Seasonality of produce:

Increase

vertical farming - impacts - matrix - Freshness of produce:

No effect

vertical farming - impacts - matrix - Cost of production:

Increase

Please give examples:

This question compares vertical farming to conventional production, which has been geared towards export-oriented commodity markets, rather than local and agroecological production. In agricultural terms, 'conventional' refers to a system of food production which includes the use of synthetic chemical fertilisers, pesticides, herbicides and other continual inputs, concentrated animal feeding operations and large-scale monoculture cultivation. Where vertical farming may have some isolated benefits in comparison with current

industrial production, comparisons in the context of a strategy for local food production should be made with alternative forms of local production, such as agroecological and small-scale farming.

Additionally, it is important to recognise the limitations of what can be grown in vertical farms: primarily small perishable crops such as salads and herbs. Comparisons must therefore be made with other methods of production for these crops.

25 What barriers do you see to the uptake of vertical farming in Scotland?

Regulatory barriers, Capital expenditure costs, Economic return/cost per unit too high, Lack of supply chain integration, Lack of awareness of vertical farming techniques, Lack of knowledge or skill in vertical farming techniques, Lack of market

Please give examples.:

Our understanding is that vertical farming in its current form is only suitable for a very limited range of food crops, mainly small plants such as salad leaves and perishable fresh herb. These foods, although very healthy, have a very low calorific value and could not replace carbohydrate & fibre- rich foods required to give us energy. There is an example of a working vertical farm in the city centre of Glasgow run by a company called Glasgow Greens.

Vertical farming: other technologies

26 Are you aware of any other technologies, other than vertical farming, which would help Scotland produce more of its own food?

Yes

If you responded 'Yes' to the question above, please provide examples.:

Glasshouse technology has been shown to lengthens the growing season and can be used to grow a much wider range of produce. Glasshouses have potential to make Scotland more self-sufficient and generate high-quality jobs for local people. Glasshouses can be heated with our abundant renewable energy supplies (including anaerobic digestion from food waste) and similar to community growing projects, are ideally suited for active participation by a wide range of people including kids/schools' learning projects, elderly, disabled, and marginalised people.

Agroecological farming is knowledge intensive and requires a holistic approach to research and development, across disciplines and academic and practical spaces. It requires research beyond a more narrow and sectoral focus on technological innovation only. We want to see significant R&D investment into knowledge and technologies that are affordable and can be widely implemented, that benefit farmers rather than big agricultural businesses providing inputs.

About you

What is your name?

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Are you responding as an individual or an organisation?

Organisation

What is your organisation?

Organisation:
Glasgow Food Policy Partnership (GFPP)

The Scottish Government would like your permission to publish your consultation response. Please indicate your publishing preference:

Do not publish response

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?

Yes

I confirm that I have read the privacy policy and consent to the data I provide being used as set out in the policy.

I consent

Evaluation

Please help us improve our consultations by answering the questions below. (Responses to the evaluation will not be published.)

Matrix 1 - How satisfied were you with this consultation?:

Very satisfied

Please enter comments here.:

Matrix 1 - How would you rate your satisfaction with using this platform (Citizen Space) to respond to this consultation?:

Very satisfied

Please enter comments here.: