

ANNEX A

SSAC REPORT – SCOTLAND’S FOOD SYSTEMS – THE CONTRIBUTION OF LOCAL PRODUCTION

INVITE LETTER AND QUESTIONNAIRE

25 April 2023

Dear colleague

Scotland’s food systems - the contribution of local production

The Scottish Science Advisory Council (SSAC) – Scotland’s national independent scientific advisory body has convened a Short-Life Working Group (SLWG) to engage with key stakeholders across Scotland to gather insights into the contribution of local production to food systems in Scotland. For the purposes of our work, the SLWG have identified, working with policy officials in the Scottish Government’s (SG) Directorate for Agriculture and Rural Economy, the following areas:

- innovation and use of new technology and data to support (local) food production
- innovative (local/central) government policies to support (local) food production
- the health, social and economic issues of local food production, including its relation to food poverty and nutritional aspects and unintended consequences on other policies

For the purposes of clarity, we are using the following definitions:

" the food system can be defined as the complete set of people, institutions, activities, processes, and infrastructure involved in producing and consuming food for a given population. This covers all stages of the value chain - from growing and harvesting agricultural products through to processing, packaging, transporting, selling, cooking, consuming, and the disposal of waste food and packaging."

UNEP (2016) Food Systems and Natural Resources. A Report of the Working Group on Food Systems of the International Resource Panel.

For the purpose of the SLWG, our work will focus on production aspects of the system.

Local food production is defined by the SG as food that has some or all of the following features:

- it is produced locally (this includes your, town, region or elsewhere in the rest of Scotland)
- it has short supply chains (there are fewer steps than global and imported food between the primary producer of the food and the person who eats the food, this could include a farm supplying a local shop or supermarket)."

While we recognise that these definitions are very broad, we would ask that if in your answer you are referring to a specific sector, or geographical extent, please make this clear.

The methodology we are adopting is to seek responses from a broad range of stakeholders to the attached questionnaire and then to invite those who respond to attend a virtual roundtable to be held on 22 May 2023 at 10.00-14.00. The Roundtable will explore the areas above and others, informed by the questionnaire responses, in more detail, and will provide further background to SG thinking. Further details on the roundtable will be issued to those completing the questionnaire in due course.

As someone with expertise and interest in the sector, we would greatly value your input into this important Scotland-wide initiative by answering the open-ended questions in the attached questionnaire. There are three sections - innovation in technology, innovation in policy and finally health, social and economic aspects. In completing the questionnaire, please do feel free to engage with colleagues in your institution/department who may have relevant insights to share. You may not be in a position to answer all questions in all sections, – if so, please just respond to whichever questions you feel most comfortable answering.

Please note that questionnaire responses may be shared with the relevant policy team within the Scottish Government. However, if you would rather submit your answers anonymously then please let us know in your reply and your response will be treated confidentially.

Please send your questionnaire responses, and confirmation that you would like to attend the Roundtable, to caroline.murray@gov.scot by no later than Tuesday 9th May.

From the Roundtable and questionnaire responses the SLWG will synthesise the views expressed which will be used to inform a formal report to be published on our website in July 2023 and shared with all those responding to the questionnaire.

Thank you for engaging with us.

Yours sincerely,



Professor Marian Scott
SSAC Project Lead



Professor Maggie Gill
SSAC Chair

Questionnaire

Respondent:

Name:

Organisation:

Email:

How would you like your response to be considered:

- a. Kept confidential to the SSAC and used solely for informing this study
- b. Quotes from your response could be used (in the Roundtable and/or report) but not attributed
- c. Quotes from your response could be used (in the Roundtable and/or report) and attributed to your organisation
- d. Quotes from your response could be used (in the Roundtable and/or report) and attributed to you
- e. Your response could be shared in whole or part with relevant policy officials in Scottish Government

Section 1: Innovation and use of new technology and data to support (local) primary production through to food availability to consumers.

1. What are the opportunities of innovation in local food production and their expected time frames for development.
2. What barriers are there to support a local food supply chain (from production to consumer) And how might they be addressed?
3. What are good examples of innovative practice to support local food production?

Section 2: Innovation in policy

4. What are examples, that you are aware of, of innovative (local/central) government policies to support (local) food production?
5. Could a local food supply provide sufficient volume to bring increased resilience to National food systems? What are the risks?
6. What innovations in policy and policy levers could support and prioritise local food production?
7. Do you consider that local/central polices are well articulated and aligned? Please give examples
8. How, in your opinion, should local food policy be developed if it is to be holistic and, inclusive across all relevant policy areas, particularly in relation to the environment (please consider seasonality and regional differences in your answer).

Section 3: Health, social and economic aspects of Health, social and economic aspects of (local) primary food production food

9. What issues do you see in local food production, in particular are there any health, social and economic challenges, and what are the potential solutions
10. How, in your opinion, can local food be made affordable and accessible to all, with a Right to Food embodied in local food policies
11. What role can local food production play, if any, in improving access to healthy, nutritious food in an equitable manner.