



## ANNEX C

# THE CONTRIBUTION OF LOCAL PRODUCTION IN SCOTLAND'S FOOD SYSTEMS

# SSAC – Who are we?



- SSAC was created in 2002
- **Council** – currently chaired by Maggie Gill; along with 12 members plus 2 Associate members and *ex officio* CSA; Chief Scientist, Health; CSA ENRA; Chief Social Policy Adviser
- **Secretariat** – Science Advice and Engagement team within SG Industrial Transformation and Office of the Chief Scientific Adviser Division

# Distinctive features of SSAC



- a remit that cuts across all sectors and policy areas;
- we provide independent science advice at “arm’s length” to SG ;
- we have no disciplinary or sectoral “agenda”;
- we operate as a “collective” (i.e. Members have a responsibility to provide checks and balances within the Council);
- our combined knowledge of Scottish science skills and context enables us to ensure that advice commissioned from outside Scotland is appropriate to the Scottish context

# Principles of engagement:



- Our focus is on *science* advice, where science includes social and economic disciplines;
- We need to be thinking of future needs and highlighting the potential value of science;
- We can be both reactive (responding to requests from within SG) and proactive (identifying topics we think are opportunities or risks for Scotland);
- In developing Terms of Reference for specific pieces of work we take into account the broader landscape of advice available (e.g. Centres of Expertise, other advisory committees and organisations, the RSE etc)

# Recent reports

[Publications | The Scottish Science  
Advisory Council](#)



scottish  
science  
advisory  
council

- Use of Science and Evidence in Aquaculture Consenting
- Opportunities and Challenges associated with hydrogen's role in the delivery of future energy systems in the context of a Just Transition
- Quantum Technology: Opportunities for Scotland
- Building on the Science Legacy of Covid-19 in Scotland
- Future Landscapes: Report on Geospatial Knowledge
- Technical Briefing Note - Sustainable Chemicals
- Environmental Impacts of the Scottish Manufacturing Industry



- The SSAC is hosting this roundtable to gather evidence on local primary food production, covering urban and peri-urban farming, as well as remote and rural areas and to explore some international and national examples of innovative practices.
- Nutritional, social and economic aspects of local primary food production will also be considered.
- The roundtable is part of a study which has included seeking evidence from the community of stakeholders and which will contribute to an SSAC report.



A reminder that for the purpose of our discussions today, local food and local primary food production are defined to be:

- 1) it is produced locally (this includes your town, region or elsewhere in the rest of Scotland)
- 2) 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).

*by Kieran Fowler*

Food Systems Research Intern at SSAC



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advisory  
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# Summary of Questionnaire responses

In total, 17 questionnaires were returned from participants across a wide range of backgrounds.

From the total completed questionnaires, some general themes were evident across the variety of responses.



The perceived higher cost of local produce was mentioned as a potential barrier in all-but-one survey response. Affordability of local food was the most prevalent theme across all responses.

Themes across survey responses	Number of mentions
<b>Cost of Local produce</b>	16
<b>Targeted funding for small producers</b>	11
<b>Local producers using non-retail sales channels</b>	11
<b>Small producers shared working &amp; pooling resources</b>	11
<b>Procurement in Scotland</b>	11
<b>Access to Land in Scotland</b>	9
<b>Planning (Local Authority &amp; Government)</b>	9
<b>Local post-gate processing facilities (abattoirs etc.)</b>	9
<b>Challenge posed to small producers by regulations</b>	7

"Due to under investment and lack of support, local food is currently a premium product for people on higher incomes. This makes the produce unaffordable and inaccessible to all. With income support targeted at small scale producers like myself, I would be able to reduce this cost."



"It is very challenging for local producers to compete with mass distributed / supermarket prices for selling equivalent produce, no matter the scale of the organisation. "

"Lack of infrastructure in many remote communities increases cost of production."

"Simplification of accreditation to reduce barriers of economies of scale – supporting communal investment could help."

"Cost of local food – comparatively high compared to buying from retailers and wholesalers. Public sector procurement practices need to be addressed to enable local suppliers."

"Grant support should be focused on enabling enterprises to become economically sustainable and resilient, combining financial with business support.

There should be a recognition that 'breaking even' for infrastructure projects e.g. food hubs, abbatoirs may take several years. Financial support should be targeted to help these enterprises reach that stage."

Scotland's national diet and the culture of food in Scotland was raised over ten times across responses.

Nearly half of respondents discussed Local Authorities having their own food plans and the role of the Good Food Nation policy.

<b>Themes across survey responses</b>	<b>Number of mentions</b>
<b>Scotland's food culture / education</b>	11
<b>Scotland's Nutrition</b>	9
<b>Central shared spaces, consumer (pantries, food hubs etc.)</b>	9
<b>Local Authority Food Plans</b>	8
<b>Good Food Nation</b>	8
<b>Regional Food Groups</b>	7
<b>Transport &amp; Infrastructure</b>	8
<b>Use of Data in the food system</b>	8
<b>Vertical Farming</b>	7

“If there is limited local production remaining and the infrastructure for the exchange of food products has been run down or eliminated, it will have to be rebuilt, which will require investment before local procurement can be viable”



“Small-scale, local producers may be unfamiliar with food safety and business regulations that apply to food production, as they may be typically targeted at large-scale operations.”

"There is a need to support networks and groups. This approach ties straight into adoption of Local Food Plans as specified in the Good Food Nation."

“Though less than 2% of overall food spend, public procurement can not only create a market for local and organic produce but also send a market signal and enable producers to invest in on-farm processing”

“The major economic issue is access to market. There could be a more targeted national/local drive to promote locally grown food in preference to imported.”

“The UK society has become accustomed to cheap food, always available with almost unlimited choice. This has broken the connection to where and how food is produced.”

# Good Food Nation Act

**Tracy McCollin**  
**Food and Drink Division**  
**Scottish Government**

A word cloud featuring various terms related to food, agriculture, and social issues. The words are arranged in a roughly circular pattern, with some larger than others. The colors range from light green to dark blue. The most prominent words are 'Food insecurity', 'Climate change', 'Animal welfare', and 'Allotments'. Other visible words include 'Education', 'Diet', 'Organics', 'Public procurement', 'Obesity', 'Local food', 'School meals', 'Food waste', 'Food businesses', 'Fair pay', 'Right to Food', 'Biodiversity', and 'Community gardens'.

Obesity Food insecurity Education Diet  
Public procurement Organics  
Climate change  
Local food School meals Food waste Food businesses  
Animal welfare  
Fair pay Allotments Right to Food Biodiversity  
Agriculture  
Community gardens

# Good Food Nation Act duties...



- Underpins ongoing work
- Places duties on Scottish Ministers and relevant authorities to produce Good Food Nation Plans of policies in relation to food
- Need to have regard to the Good Food Nation Plan when carrying out specified functions

Now

- Preparation of the national Good Food Nation Plan

Summer  
2023

- Consultation and Parliamentary scrutiny

End  
2024

- National Good Food Nation Plan published
- Start timeline for relevant authorities



# Preparation of the Plans



- **Must set out:**
  - Main outcomes in relation to food-related issues
  - Indicators or measures to assess progress
  - The policies to achieve the outcomes

**Sustainable Development Goals**

**National Performance Framework**

**Main Outcomes**



**National Good  
Food Nation Plan**

# Relevant Authorities



- Local authorities and health boards
- Duty to publish a Good Food Nation Plan
- Must have regard to the national Plan
- Legislation allows for flexibility at local level
- Must have regard for Plan when carrying out specified functions

# Scottish Food Commission



A Non-Departmental Public Body

- scrutinising and making recommendations
- conducting research
- providing advice

# Local Food for Everyone



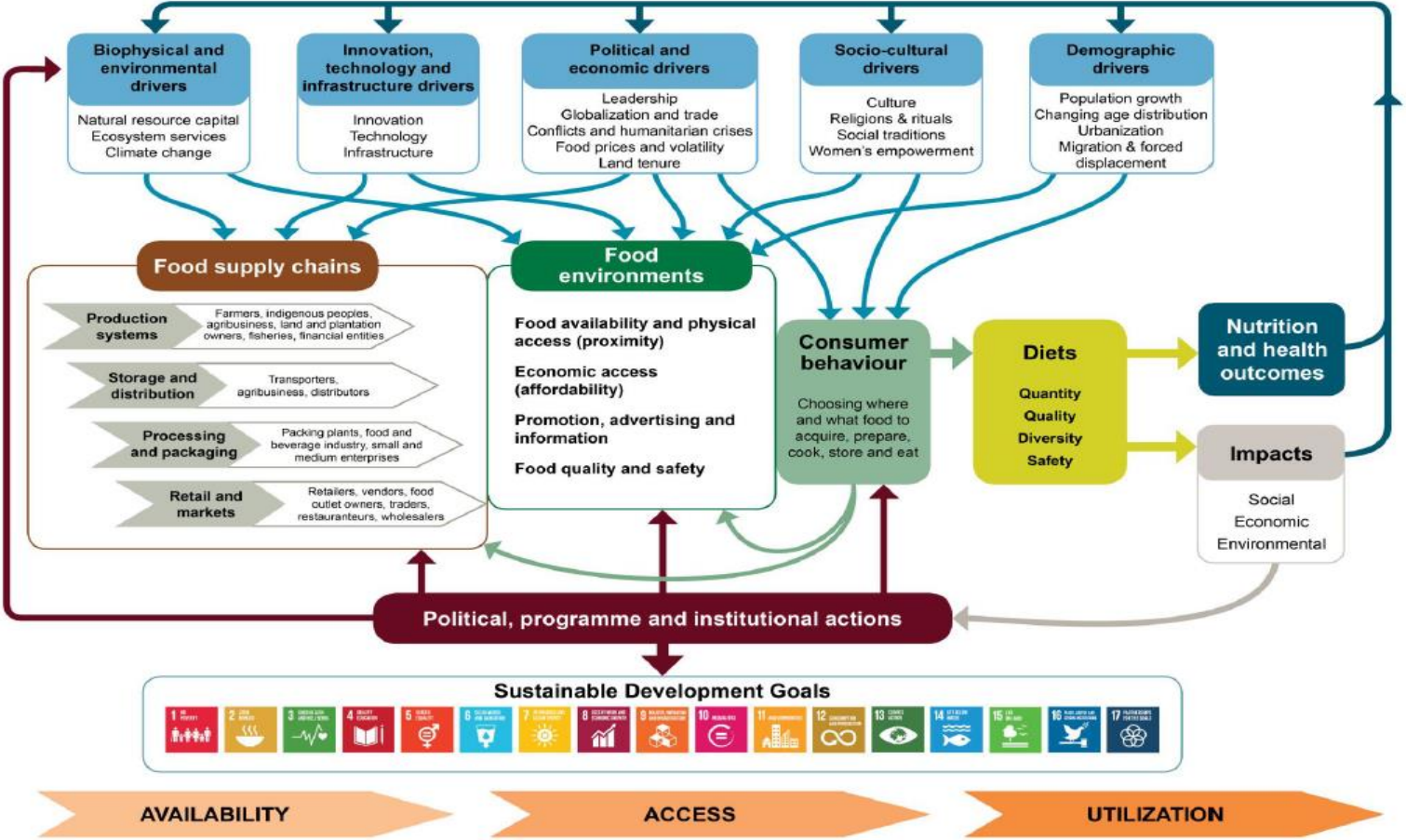
- Analysis of 298 responses (81 from organisations and 217 from individuals).
- Broad agreement on the definition of local food
- Barriers were cited such as
  - Supply chain
  - Affordability
  - Availability
  - Access to market for smaller producers (especially with public procurement)
- A steering group has been formed to drive forward local food priorities

# Good Food Nation: local and nutritious?

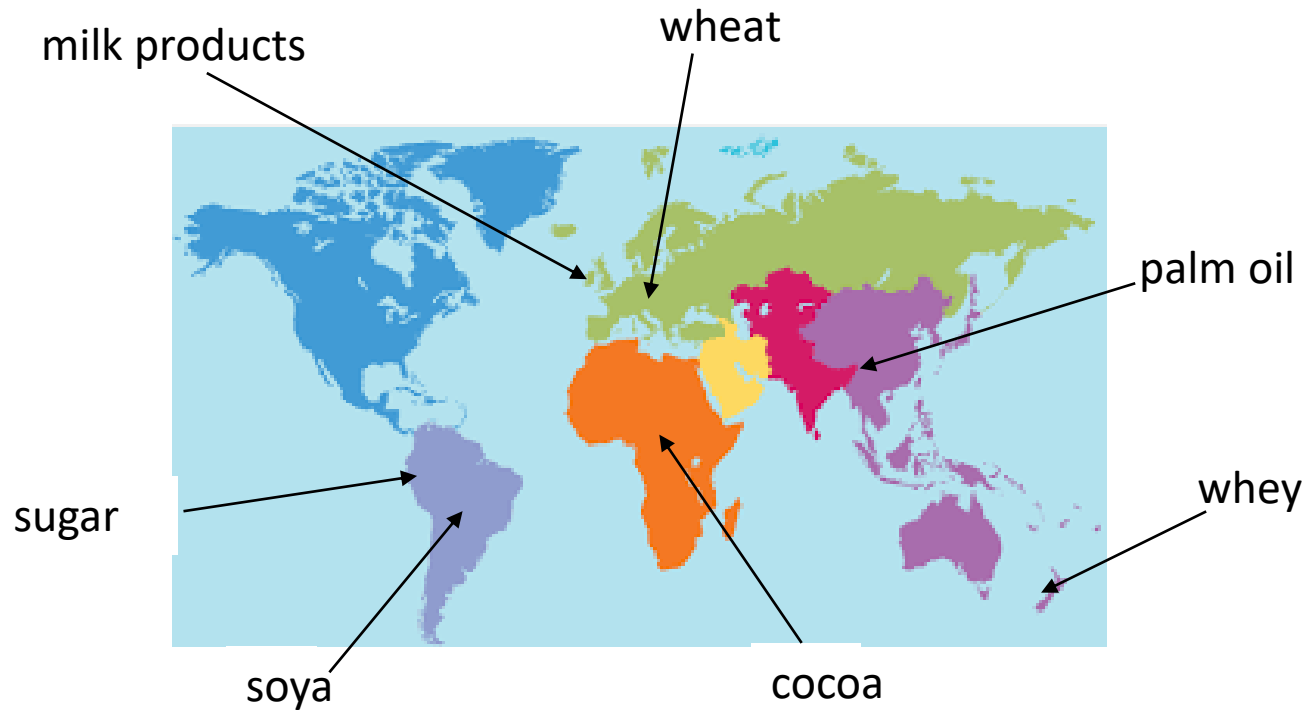
**Jennie Macdiarmid**

**Professor Sustainable Nutrition and Health**

# Global food system: Where does local food fit?



# Global food system and supply chains



**Sugar, Wheat** flour, Dried whole **Milk**, Cocoa mass, Cocoa butter, Vegetable fats (**Palm kernel**), **Whey** (from **Milk**), Whey powder (from milk), Emulsifiers (Sunflower lecithin, **Soya** lecithin), Butterfat (from **Milk**), Natural flavourings, Yeast, Skimmed **milk** powder, Raising agent (Sodium bicarbonate), Natural vanilla flavouring, Salt.

*Slide: Tim Benton GFS*



# Good Food Nation Act (2022)

**SUPPLY CHAIN:** each part of the food system and supply chain plays an important role in the provision of food,

**ENVIRONMENT:** sustainable food system and supply chain in contributing to mitigation of climate change, halting and reversing of loss of biodiversity and improvement in animal welfare

**NUTRITION AND HEALTH** the ability of high quality, nutritious and culturally appropriate food to improve the health and physical and mental wellbeing of people,

**HUMAN RIGHT TO FOOD:** that adequate food is a human right and essential to the realisation of other human rights,

**BUSINESS:** importance of the food business sector

- (i) continuing to be a thriving part of the Scottish economy,
- (ii) having resilient supply chains,
- (iii) operating with fair work standards, and
- (iv) contributing to resilient local economies across Scotland.

Local food production:

Dilemma, unintended consequences, assumptions

Education

Nutritious

Healthy

Price

Transport

Accessible

Fresh

Cooking skills

## Local produce & food: Nutritious

Fruit & Vegetables (fresh vs. frozen, variety)

Lean meat (other cuts)

Fish (fried)

Potatoes (crisps)

~~biscuits, alcohol, soft drinks~~

## **Local produce & food: Cost (producer vs consumer)**

Prices sustainable for producers (local supplies/larger retail/producers/imports)

Who does the producer sell to (locally, retail, international)?

Who can access and afford local produce?

Does it increase the inequality gap?

## **Local produce & food: Education & cooking skills**

Is a lack of education driving food choices, e.g. cooking skills, knowledge (which generation)?

Would reducing the price and increasing access of locally produced fruit & vegetable increase consumption?

20% population eat 5/day

How can we turn intentions, knowledge & attitudes into action?

# **Local produce & food: Environment**

Production methods (e.g. out of season)

Transport (e.g. short supply chains, food miles)

## **Positive initiatives & outcomes**

Small scale local production schemes

(e.g. allotments schemes, urban growing, school schemes):

- Mental, physical health & wellbeing
- Social interactions
- Skills
- Little evidence to show it improve diets

# Food system

local food production does has an important place in the food system

## Challenge:

*How can we have it all?*

- Health & wellbeing
- Protect the environment
- Livelihoods / economics
- Equality (affordable, accessible)
- Changing behaviours

**Systems approach!**

