

Consultation Title	Good Food Nation: Legislation Framework
Date	12th April 2019
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Scottish Land & Estates is the voice of rural businesses throughout Scotland. We are a membership-based organisation representing a wide range of rural businesses, including farmers, foresters, tourism operators, housing providers, leisure companies, and renewable energy providers.

Our members provide a wide range of economic, environmental and social benefits which are vital to the success and survival of communities throughout rural Scotland. They play a critical role in ensuring sustainable, healthy and empowered rural communities, providing housing, employment and a wide range of economic, environmental and social benefits.

1.To what extent do you agree with the framework proposals for Ministers and public authorities to prepare statements of policy, have regard to them in the exercise of relevant functions, and report on implementation, with regard to international obligations and guidance?

Agree.

SLE welcomes Scottish Government's conclusion that the focus of achieving Good Food Nation ambitions should be the responsibility of Scottish Ministers and selected public bodies and not extended to private food-related businesses, however, we recognise that everyone has a part to play.

We agree with the principle that any legislation introduced to underpin the Good Food Nation Ambition should be simple and clear. By providing a public lead on the delivery of the Good Food Nation policy from Scottish Ministers and specified public bodies we agree this would act as an example for other organisations, including private businesses, without introducing specific reporting or significant additional costs.

2.Whilst we do not plan to require all sectors to prepare statements of policy on food, they do all have a role to play in achieving our Good Food Nation ambition. To what extent do you agree that Government should encourage and enable businesses in particular to play their part?

Agree.

Land managers play a significant role in the delivery of food for Scotland through livestock, arable and horticulture production. High standards of production are legislated through cross compliance and additional accreditation schemes such as Red Tractor, QMS and Leaf. Business practices fit for a Good Food Nation are ones which contribute to a sustainable food system, throughout the supply chain. Food production is an area where we already have mechanisms in place to influence environmental impact. With many producers going beyond compliance in their production practices. Changes to agricultural regulations, financial support, and a robust look at the advice that is given, improvements can be made to the sustainability of the whole food system, safeguarding our long-term food security and our right to food, while contributing to solving Scotland's most pressing environmental issues, such as addressing wildlife declines and climate change.

Improving society's interest and view of food and what constitutes good food should also seek to recognise the work of producers while also encouraging those who can do more to improve the quality of the food produced. Improving the understanding of food production and its place in the environment would also help the agriculture industry to show how it can deliver high quality food while protecting and improving the environment. This needs to be understood throughout the supply chain to ensure producers receive a fair price for the food they produce. An understanding of what constitutes good food whether produced in Scotland or imported is also needed.

The Good Food Nation vision for 2025 is for Scotland to be a Good Food Nation where people from every walk of life take pride and pleasure in, and benefit from, the food they produce, buy, cook, serve, and eat each day. SLE members are well placed to help deliver this ambition as food producers and land managers.

3. To what extent do you agree with the proposed approach to accountability of Scottish Ministers and specified public authorities?

Agree (Nothing further to add)

4. To what extent do you agree with the proposal for targeted legislation relevant to specific policy areas as an alternative to a single piece of legislation?

Agree.

We support the use of an integrated policy especially for food production and land management. By incorporating Good Food Nation ambitions in relevant legislation we agree it would be an incentive to deliver the ambitions and make it easier to track the outcomes. The Land Use Strategy would be a useful tool in integrating land management policy including farming, forestry and the environment. Secondary legislation could then cover individual requirements of each sector but they should be linked by a piece of primary legislation that minimises conflicts and contradictory legislation. In the same regard Good Food Nation ambitions would be best delivered by including it throughout relevant legislation rather than a stand alone piece of legislation.