

Response ID ANON-UMMK-8EF6-K

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:

'Local' food is primarily regional produce within Scotland (narrower definitions limit the range of produce which can be usefully identified) and secondarily food from Scotland in general. It should also be noted that there is an aspect to 'local food' which reflects the multicultural nature of modern Scotland, and includes unexpected uses of foodstuffs that can be grown in Scotland that haven't been grown traditionally.

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. :

These are all benefits an additional benefit is the impact on tourism. The Burns and the Scottish Economy Report (2020) indicated the significant remaining opportunities for produce and catering which has a strong regional narrative and the failure of many hotels and smaller tourist sites to cater to demands for a terroir-related narrative. Community businesses such as Fresh Ayr strongly supported this approach, as did a number of distilleries. Following the report, work in Dumfries and Galloway is developing some of its produce-related findings while the National Trust for Scotland (of which the Co-chair of SAHA is a board member) has introduced strongly provenanced practice at Gladstone's Land (advised by our Cultural and Digital Economy working group member Lindsay Middleton) and at Newhailes among other properties. Encouraging HeS and other visitor attraction agencies in similar directions could be a useful development-farmers' market at Newhailes has been very successful on initial indications.

3 Are you aware of any disadvantages of local food?

Yes

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

Disadvantages mainly come through lack of variety and single point of failure issues (crop damage, adverse weather, business collapse, shortage of labour). There is also a general lack of substantial research in Scottish food history which would help build greater awareness of the local produce story among customers from the area and the overnight (ONS) tourist. There can in addition be uncounted carbon impacts in local production- not all impacts are of course transport costs.

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:

Very positive

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:

There are many positive developments, including Food and Drink Scotland's regional food groups as well as the new tourism ambassadors, but there needs to be stronger engagement with the tourism industry. A measure of the (in general) carbon equivalent benefits of local food (e.g. 4kg of Co2 equivalent for 500g Scottish shellfish vs 25kg for East Asian (Berners-Lee (2010)) should also be more heavily publicised and more 'hard-baked' into decision-making.

There also needs to be an understanding that food miles are just one part of a very complex system of carbon footprint and that doesn't seem to be clear within the consultation document itself - e.g the carbon footprint of lemons grown in Ayrshire for Ayrshire people may be far greater than importing from Spain or Portugal. Any policy needs to consider the environmental impact of food production as a whole, not just food miles.

Rather than discounting supermarkets as is the case with the proposal, SG could engage with them and encourage them to also be involved in showcasing local food in their area. e.g the Co-Ops on the Isle of Arran sell Arran butcher meat, Aldi has been very successful at promoting Scottish

produce, supermarkets could at least be part of the conversation as that is where the vast majority of the population shops and will continue to do so, so any move to encourage the population to eat local food needs to have some support, however small, from supermarkets.

With regard to promoting 'access to fresh local produce through butchers, fishmongers, bakers and farm shops', often farmer's markets and local shops are competing for the same market in the same town and farmer's markets and food hubs can cause resentment as they often don't sell anything that isn't already available in shops that are already struggling, and their definition of local can stretch from one end of Scotland to another. As a result of this generous definition of local, preparation can differ radically: for example in St Andrews Arbroath Smokies are smoked in the market, whereas in Stirling they are prepackaged: the former works much better. Also food/farmer's markets in Scotland can often end up being little more than craft and cake stalls as other stall holders who supply fresh food don't make enough at fortnightly markets that are often very weather dependent. So while being supportive of this approach, care is needed not to show unconditional preference for one form of provider over another.

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

Please give your views using the text box below:

Positive: more focused interaction-including budgetary nudge-with local authorities and health boards &c will be required as appropriate, as will greater education regarding the carbon footprint of food brought from a distance and energy-intensive local production.

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:

See discussion of Tourism above: the tourist industry is missing from the consultation, but given the huge growth in experience-led tourism, there is a view within the Cultural and Digital Economy workstream of the Scottish Arts and Humanities Alliance that Scotland continues to miss out on selling some of its tremendous food & drink stories to the widest possible public.

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:

1. Encouragement and nudge budgetary pressure on public procurement
2. Recognition of the produce narrative's importance to the food and drink industry
3. Increasing publicity/education on the carbon cost and other environmental vulnerabilities in extended produce supply chains.
4. The presentation of local food everywhere as a local experience.

There is a huge opportunity here in towns and cities to look at spaces vacated by chain stores to create hybrid food markets for people to buy food as well as sitting and eating and drinking and having cooking classes at all levels for all ages and abilities and demonstrations on a regular basis from local chefs and food and drink producers that can be filmed/recorded and then used on social media channels to promote the locality for tourism both within Scotland and abroad, as well as engaging with the local population through the social media channels that almost everyone now uses. Hybrid markets are becoming increasingly popular in Spain, e.g Mercat de Santa Ana in Barcelona, the main market in Santa Cruz de Tenerife and due to the decline of traditional food markets all over Spain in the face of supermarkets with work friendly opening hours, many municipal markets across the country are now looking at the hybrid model of stalls selling produce and also serving food and drink on site on a much larger scale than previously.

One thing this consultation is lacking is examples from other countries of successful food policies, we do need to look abroad at other nations successes and challenges.

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:

Hospitals in particular have frequently very poor catering: the quality has improved in recent years, but the fat, sugar and salt content of many hospital meals bear witness to their processed and unhealthy nature. There is clearly insufficient pressure for healthy produce at the procurement stage, and an ethos of 'feeding up' still seems frequently to prevail.

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.:

In the past decade Keep Scotland Beautiful have had their Eco Schools initiative going, encouraging the growing of food and produce by Scottish schools. The intersectionality of food and climate awareness is a significant opportunity for these sectors, and could be built on.

There are many schemes in the US, the Fundacio Alicia in Spain works extensively with local Catalan farmers and has also worked with care homes, schools and hospitals to link local producers with these institutions as well as improving the quality of the meals available while working within a budget. Once again, greater comparative examination of policies and practice elsewhere would benefit this enquiry.

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:

Pandemic and Brexit-related supply issues have made it increasingly clear that the vast majority of our food is imported and vulnerable to supply-chain issues. Local food producers should be priorities and supported in light of these events to support a more sustainable direction for the industry.

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.:

Veg/dairy supply boxes from companies such as Mossgiel Farm that converted from industry to home delivery during lockdown. Much of the success of providers in the face of the pandemic can be accounted for by the agility, capacity and preparedness to switch delivery channels and to focus on product lines most strongly in demand via that channel.

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. :

Food and Drink Scotland's Regional Food Groups are worth noting here. There was also the regional food fund. Examples of the groups funded by F&DS can be seen here: <https://www.foodanddrink.scot/regional-food-growth/case-studies/>

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.:

Business responses to the Covid-19 pandemic were a good example of how this can be done. Produce that normally went to restaurants and cafés needed redistributed so it didn't go to waste, and started vegetable boxes etc. Mossgiel Farm in Ayrshire ramped up home deliveries, and overcame the commercial challenge of developing into a major Scottish supplier at just the point at which the pandemic struck (they remain a good example of a local food producer using Scottish history/iconography (Burns) in their marketing!).

The 'food miles' issue is not a simple one and there are some complex calculations to do on carbon impacts, depending on circumstances.

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.:

Taste of Arran has been particularly successful at engaging produce providers, and both Arran and Annandale distilleries have sought to incorporate regional Scottish cultural references into their branding. Many restaurants and cafés provide examples of good practice here: the Smiddy at Blair Drummond both makes such food available at scale in their shop and refer to its provenance in their restaurant section.

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:

These are generally quite energy intensive: it is difficult to know what the need for them is in Scotland: once again, are there examples of this practice in other small northern countries? This issue should not be considered in isolation.

Vertical farming: further questions

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

Slightly reduce

Please provide further detail about your answer.:

Unless the yield of food was incredibly high, surely not a huge effect – is this just another kind of 'local' food? Are similar economies (e.g. Denmark, Ireland) adopting it? This is potentially a big policy issue and it would be more than useful to establish comparative practice and overall economic and carbon impact. Do we need vertical farming in such a sparsely populated country as Scotland? We've already got food not being picked as we can't get the labour. Vertical allotments however, in inner cities and former industrial towns in back courtyards and primary schools would be a great idea to create a connection between what people can see growing and what they can eat, as well as creating a culture of local food growing and the idea of growing and eating food as pleasure .

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:

No effect

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

Decrease

vertical farming - impacts - matrix - Water usage:

Decrease

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:
Decrease

vertical farming - impacts - matrix - Seasonality of produce:
I don't know

vertical farming - impacts - matrix - Freshness of produce:
Increase

vertical farming - impacts - matrix - Cost of production:
I don't know

Please give examples:

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

Lack of supply chain integration

Please give examples.:

Supply chain integration in general was a clear issue that has come through in recent work on produce and tourism.

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.:

We need continuing discussion of fish farming processes and development in the context of aquaculture research and the practice of innovative providers, e.g. FishFrom: <https://fishfrom.com/>

Provenance of carbon-intensive products (e.g. beef) could lead to stronger demand domestically if there was greater awareness of differential carbon impacts. There is more capacity to provide shot wild venison (for sale at House of Bruar for example and supplied by Mar Lodge to restaurants) from the wild deer population, while major supermarkets (e.g. Waitrose) are predominantly selling New Zealand sourced deer meat. A provenance scheme for low carbon impact Scottish meat could borrow aspects of the Beefchain scheme in Wyoming (<https://beefchain.com/>)

About you

What is your name?

Name:
Murray Pittock

What is your email address?

Email:
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Are you responding as an individual or an organisation?

Organisation

What is your organisation?

Organisation:
Scottish Arts and Humanities Alliance (with Lindsay Middleton and Rachel McCormack, Cultural and Digital Economy workstream)

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

Publish response with name

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.