

FOOD 2030: How we get there



FOREWORD

Food sustains us. Producing it provides jobs, supports our economy, and helps shape the character of our landscape and our countryside. A vibrant food culture has developed in the UK, reflecting the diversity of our country and celebrating the best of British regional food.

Many people take pleasure in growing and cooking food. People care more now about where and how their food was grown, and that it's safe. And we understand better than ever the impact of what we eat on our health.

2008 saw food prices rise sharply for the first time in a generation, provoking riots in some parts of the world. With the challenge of climate change and a growing world population, we need to ensure that we can feed ourselves in the years to come by growing enough food sustainably.

In the UK, food is our biggest manufacturing sector. It employs 3.6 million people in a huge range of businesses, from farms to retail. We must make the most of this strength to help us face the future.

So what do we need to do?

There are a number of things we can do.

Produce more food in ways that protect and enhance the natural environment. Invest in the skills and the knowledge that will help the industry prosper. Improve labelling so that as consumers, we can make informed choices about what food we buy and how it is produced. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the food chain. Cut food waste and use the technologies that allow us to create energy from the waste we can't avoid. Take responsibility for the food we eat - supporting the 5-A-DAY message - and understand better the impact food has on our health and on the environment.



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Science will be very important in helping us develop crops that need less water, fertiliser or chemicals. By turning research into practical ideas, and by learning from what the best are doing, we can achieve a lot more. Science will also tell us when nature is under strain; like, for example, from over-fishing.

Globally, agriculture needs to produce more food, and impact less. We can help make this happen by pressing for a fairer international trade system and for the end of import restrictions and subsidies, and by supporting fair trade products.





This pamphlet is a summary of *Food 2030* – Government’s new food strategy – the first of its kind in over 50 years. In it we set out our vision of what we want the food system to look like in 2030, and how we can get there. I hope you will find it of interest, and I look forward to working with you to make it happen.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'H. Benn', written in a cursive style.

The Rt Hon Hilary Benn MP

Secretary of State for Environment,
Food and Rural Affairs

January 2010

OUR SHARED AIM

What we want by 2030...

- Consumers are informed, and can choose, and afford healthy, sustainable food. This demand is met by profitable, competitive, highly skilled and resilient farming, fishing and food businesses, supported by first class research and development.
- Food is produced, processed, and distributed to feed a growing global population in ways which:
 - use global natural resources sustainably,
 - enable the continuing provision of the benefits and services given to us by a healthy natural environment,
 - promote high standards of animal health and welfare,
 - protect food safety,
 - make a significant contribution to rural communities, and
 - allow us to show global leadership on food sustainability.
- Our food security is ensured through strong UK agriculture and food sectors, and international trade links with EU and global partners which support developing economies.
- The UK has a low carbon food system which is efficient in using resources – any waste is reused, recycled or used for energy generation.



ENABLING AND ENCOURAGING PEOPLE TO EAT A HEALTHY, SUSTAINABLE DIET

90% of people say that eating healthily is important to them, but only 14% of us eat the recommended 5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day. The best way to help us eat healthy food is through:

- Education – learning about how food is produced, where it comes from, and how to grow and cook it. Preparing and cooking food is already on the school curriculum, and we can all learn more about food - at home and in our communities.
- Making it easier to eat healthy food, especially for those on low incomes: for example Change4Life's *Convenience Store Project*, gives local convenience stores 'fresh fruit and

veg makeovers'. These have already seen sales of fruit and vegetables increase by an average of 40% when they were first tried out in the North East of England. To help those on the lowest incomes improve their diet, Healthy Start gives around 450,000 families vouchers to buy healthy food.

Internationally we are committed to achieving the Millennium Development Goal of halving the proportion of underweight children in the world by 2015 (from the 1990 level). The UK overseas aid budget is rising and we are supporting many practical programmes on the ground.



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We want more people to know about how and where their food is grown, and to grow some of it themselves.

We will expand the *Growing Schools Programme* to enable another 65,000 pupils, parents and staff to gain hands-on experience of growing food, and will help make more land for growing available to communities, for instance by developing 'meanwhile leases' (which let people use temporarily vacant land).

We aim to define what a 'sustainable diet' is so that we can give consumers clear, consistent advice and information. It would be easy to just pick one thing to measure, like 'carbon footprint' but this could make matters worse if we

started reducing one environmental impact in ways that increased other problems. We also need to look at greenhouse gas emissions, water use, animal welfare and how food bought in the UK can support both UK farming, and communities in developing countries. We will give clear information to consumers through the Food Standards Agency's *eatwell* website, bringing together advice on healthy eating and sustainability.

Government plans to lead by example by serving healthy, sustainable food in the public sector. The *Healthier Food Mark* will provide an incentive for healthier and more sustainable food to be offered.



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ENSURING A RESILIENT, PROFITABLE AND COMPETITIVE FOOD SYSTEM

Agriculture and food processing is worth over £80 billion to the UK economy and is our largest manufacturing sector. 3.6 million people are employed in food production, and we want them to have the training they need to develop their careers, and to be part of a skilled and professional workforce.



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It is dynamic businesses that will find the answers to the challenges we face. We want more firms that innovate and improve the way they produce food while making sure that its safety is protected.

Regulation should be clear, consistent, and fair, giving businesses confidence to make long term investments. As Government we will work with businesses in the food sector to reduce the burden of regulation just as we have done for farmers through the Campaign for the Farmed Environment – an industry-led, voluntary campaign to retain the environmental benefits associated with set-aside. For the fresh produce sector, we aim to simplify and deregulate controls on EU marketing standards for fresh fruit and vegetables.

Our food system needs to be prepared for shocks and to be able to manage risk – from climate change, sharp commodity price increases, and natural disasters, to food contamination. An important part of ensuring long term success is for food producers to make sure that their businesses are ready for these challenges.

A new cross-Government report looks at the causes and implications of the 2007-08 agricultural price spikes in detail and is available at www.defra.gov.uk/foodfarm/food/index.htm. It points to the importance of better functioning international markets to mitigate the size, impact and duration of any future spikes.

Using resources more efficiently reduces the environmental impact of producing our food, and saves money by reducing waste.



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Government will help encourage wider public interest in how and where food is produced by:

- establishing clear and unambiguous country of origin labelling rules,
- providing consumers with better environmental and welfare information about their food and how it was produced.

INCREASING FOOD PRODUCTION SUSTAINABLY

We need to increase food production to feed a growing world population – there'll be another 2-3 billion people in 40 years.

This food will need to be produced in a way that protects the natural resources on which food production depends - soil and water - and on which we rely for drinking water, to regulate our climate, stem flood waters and filter pollution.

We want UK agriculture to produce as much food as possible, as long as it's what people want, and it's done sustainably. Farmers have already shown what they can do, for example, by reducing fertiliser use while maintaining or improving yields. Fishermen have shown how they can reduce discards by using more suitable nets.

And the best way to get results is through cooperation, as we have done with the Campaign for the Farmed Environment.



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The UK can play an important role in helping the world to grow more food. The food industry has a business interest in making sure that its supply chains are resilient - both to the economic impacts of world financial markets, and to the environmental impacts of deforestation and climate change.

Civil Society helps by raising awareness of what's unsustainable and works with the food industry to improve their supply chains.

Government helps by investing in scientific research and new production methods, and by providing assistance to developing countries to improve markets so that their farmers can grow more food.

REDUCING THE FOOD SYSTEM'S GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Reducing our greenhouse gas emissions is a major challenge for all of us, including the food sector. The *UK Low Carbon Transition Plan* has set out what each part of the economy needs to do, working with Government.

For food, this means:

- Agriculture reducing emissions by the equivalent of 3 million tonnes of CO₂ by 2020,
- Food processing, retail and distribution playing their part by reducing emissions from energy use and transport, and influencing emissions reductions up the supply chain.

Consumers can help develop a lower-carbon food system by buying food with a smaller environmental footprint. Better information, from Government and the food sector, will help us to do this.

Internationally, there is a risk that our own efforts might simply 'export' emissions to other countries. The best way to avoid this is through a global deal on climate change. Building on what was agreed at Copenhagen, we will work with our international partners to help developing nations reduce their greenhouse gas emissions from food production.



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By 2030 we aim to...

- Reduce emissions from agriculture by using anaerobic digestion to manage slurry, reduce nitrous oxide emissions, and generate clean energy instead.
- Provide consumers with clear information on the impact of food production on the climate, so we can make choices.
- Make our food chain more energy efficient by providing advice, using regulation sensibly, and offering financial incentives.

REDUCING, REUSING AND REPROCESSING WASTE

We can reduce the amount of food wasted in food preparation and in our homes.

At home, we can plan what we need, store food to make sure it is safe while lasting as long as possible, and recycle or compost any waste that can't be avoided.

Defra, the Food Standards Agency and WRAP (the Waste and Resources Action Programme) are working together to make date labelling and storage guidance on food clearer and more consistent, to help reduce food waste and ensure food safety.

WRAP is also working with food producers to find ways of reducing waste and creating new opportunities for recycling. This includes reducing the amount of unnecessary packaging used for food, as well as making more of our essential packaging recyclable. Retailers are working to make packaging lighter, which is cheaper and uses less fuel to transport.

Anaerobic digestion is a big opportunity to use food waste to generate heat and electricity; it makes good use of what would otherwise be wasted.

Work has already begun on five Government-funded anaerobic digestion demonstration projects to show the potential of this technology.

In developing countries, a lot of food is lost after harvest. Losses are as high as a third for some crops in certain areas due to inefficient methods of harvesting, difficulties in transport and storage, and poor market information. The Government is working with others to help countries to improve food storage facilities, establish better functioning markets, use appropriate land tenure arrangements, and support farmers and alternative livelihoods.



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INCREASING THE IMPACT OF SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE, RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY

Skills are at the heart of every successful farm or food business. We want to work with the food industry to improve people's skills, helping them to become even more professional in business, innovation and management.

Scientific research and development will also be increasingly important if we are to make best use of the finite resources we have to produce more food to feed a growing population, while improving health and nutrition, and ensuring high standards of food safety.

Research helps to develop new techniques, so allowing farmers to produce more food with less water or fertiliser, for example, while protecting the natural environment. Turning research into practical applications, and sharing knowledge and best practice are important ways of improving productivity, competitiveness and sustainability. The Technology Strategy Board's Sustainable Agriculture and

Food Innovation Platform will bring business, academia and Government together with extra funding, to understand better the challenges and what to do about them.

Internationally, the UK plans to double investment in agricultural research for development to £80 million a year by 2013 to provide poor farmers with access to technologies and help national governments with more effective agricultural policies, based on good evidence. This includes support to the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), and regional research organisations in Africa. The Foresight Global Food and Farming Futures project is looking at the challenge of how a global population of 9 billion people can be fed. The project is taking a global view of the food system, looking at demand, production and supply as well as environmental concerns.

Through a new food security programme, Research Councils and Government Departments will strengthen research coordination, to build a community of researchers, funders and users that extends across disciplines, organisations and sectors.

The new Cross-Government Food Research and Innovation Strategy is available at www.bis.gov.uk/GO-Science.



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SUMMARY

Sector

Challenge

Farmers

Improve profitability, productivity and competitiveness, and produce more food sustainably and in line with what the market wants. Build up skills, and attract new people into farming.

The fishing industry

Attract new business and use new technology to increase sustainability. Ensure that fishing is a flexible and economically viable industry that provides sustainable livelihoods for coastal communities.

Food processors

Develop sustainable supply chains. Improve resource efficiency and skills. Manage risks and plan for climate change. Ensure food safety. Reduce food waste.

Retailers

Develop and maintain resilient supply chains and help consumers lead greener and healthier lives. Improve resource efficiency, and continue to innovate. Manage risks, and plan for climate change. Ensure food safety.

Food service

Develop and maintain sustainable supply chains and help consumers lead greener and healthier lives. Improve resource efficiency and build a highly skilled and innovative sector. Ensure food safety.

Sector	Challenge
Government	Set clear strategic goals. Address market failures (through regulation where appropriate). Press for action globally on food security and poverty. Provide accurate information to consumers. Lead by example through public food procurement and support for the industry.
Local and regional bodies	Support action locally to help businesses, including primary producers, and consumers to get what they need.
Consumers	Find out more about food – how and where it is produced. Use their influence and spending power to support those who produce sustainable and healthy food. Waste less food.
Research and education bodies	Undertake high quality research that looks at the challenges we face. Apply what is learnt. Improve public confidence in science.
Third sector	Use their networks, working with communities to help deliver the goals described in Food 2030, working with all parts of the food chain.

WORKING TOGETHER: WHAT OUR PARTNERS ARE SAYING

Retailers are working with their suppliers to ensure sustainable supply chains and with their customers to give them improved, affordable choice. We recognise the complexity of issues that affect food production and consumption from our leading work on animal welfare, nutrition labelling and sustainability and look forward to working with the Government and our supply chain partners to bring these together in a comprehensive and coherent food strategy.

British Retail Consortium

Food and Drink Federation members are pleased that Defra has accepted the challenge to set out a strategic vision for the food sector. We are a vital part of the UK economy and look forward to working with government to continue to deliver safe, nutritious, affordable food to UK consumers whilst building on our ground-breaking work on both nutrition and environmental impact – for example reducing our CO₂ emissions by 19% by 2008.

Food and Drink Federation

As we look ahead to 2030, the whole food supply chain and Government will need to work together to optimise productivity within an increasingly competitive and sustainable framework. This vision clearly sets out many of the challenges that the food system faces and indicates a number of possible solutions which farmers and growers will want to scrutinise as they think through the long-term direction of their businesses.

National Farmers Union



125

99

Top Onions 1.79/lb

Sweet Onions 1.89/lb

Large Onions 1.99/lb

Callings 4.14/lb

Callings 4.14/lb

1.89

Marfona 2.24/lb

1.89

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