



SCOTTISH
TOURISM
ALLIANCE

Your voice in tourism matters

Scottish Government Consultation on National Good Food Nation Plan Scottish Tourism Alliance Submission (22 April 2024)

Part A: Consultation on the national Good Food Nation Plan

Question 1

Does each individual Good Food Nation Outcome describe the kind of Scottish food system you would like to see?

Outcome 1: Everyone in Scotland eats well with reliable access to safe, nutritious, affordable, sustainable, and age and culturally appropriate food.

Strongly agree

Mostly agree **X**

Neither agree nor disagree

Mostly disagree

Strongly disagree

Outcome 2: Scotland's food system is sustainable^{[\[1\]](#)} and contributes to a flourishing natural environment. It supports our net zero ambitions, and plays an important role in maintaining and improving animal welfare and in restoring and regenerating biodiversity.

Strongly agree **X**

Mostly agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Mostly disagree

Strongly disagree

Outcome 3: Scotland's food system encourages a physically and mentally healthy population, leading to a reduction in diet-related conditions.

Strongly agree **X**

Mostly agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Mostly disagree

Strongly disagree

Outcome 4: Our food and drink sector is prosperous, diverse, innovative, and vital to national and local economic and social wellbeing. It is key to making Scotland food secure and food resilient, and creates and sustains jobs and businesses underpinned by fair work standards.

Strongly agree

Mostly agree **X**
Neither agree nor disagree
Mostly disagree
Strongly disagree

Outcome 5: Scotland has a thriving food culture with a population who are interested in and educated about good and sustainable food.

Strongly agree
Mostly agree **X**
Neither agree nor disagree
Mostly disagree
Strongly disagree

Outcome 6: Scotland has a global reputation for high-quality food that we want to continue to grow. Decisions we make in Scotland contribute positively to local and global food systems transformation. We share and learn from best practice internationally.

Strongly agree
Mostly agree **X**
Neither agree nor disagree
Mostly disagree
Strongly disagree

Question 2

What, if anything, would you change about the Good Food Nation Outcomes and why?

Under Outcome 1, there is an opportunity to add that “Everyone living in and visiting Scotland” eats well.

The provenance and quality of Scottish produce is a significant driver of visitors and their experience while visiting, which are key in delivering our ambition to become the world leader in 21st century tourism, as set out in the national tourism strategy, Scotland Outlook 2030.

Under Outcome 4, there is the potential to add to the outcome that our food and drink sector acts as a major driver of tourism, contributing to the overall visitor experience in Scotland.

Under Outcome 5, there is also a crucial role for tourism and hospitality in educating domestic and international visitors about good and sustainable food. Many visitor experiences offer the opportunity for tourists to meet producers, learning more about where their food and drink come from, and how they are produced, prepared and cooked.

Agritourism is an excellent example of educating consumers and visitors about good and sustainable food and drink, giving visitors the opportunity to visit and stay in agricultural settings and at the same time connect with farming, food production, and the environment. There has also been a growth in demand for ‘Voluntourism’, where visitors

can experience first-hand working on a farm or working with local food and drink businesses to learn more about where produce comes from and how to protect the environment.

As farms have moved to mechanisation over the years, agritourism is importantly reconnecting local visitors with where their food comes from as part of their farm retail activities, tours, events and pick-your-own opportunities, such as pumpkin patches and fruit picking.

Agritourism has a further valuable role in proactively engaging with local hospitality venues and encouraging them to use local, sustainable produce – ensuring healthy, fresh food is served and bringing to life the story behind the locally-sourced ingredients used in their dishes.

Under Outcome 6, further acknowledgment is needed about the role of tourism in raising the country's global reputation for high-quality food.

Question 3

Do you think that these targets will contribute to achieving the overall Good Food Nation Outcomes?

Strongly agree

Mostly agree **X**

Neither agree nor disagree

Mostly disagree

Strongly disagree

I don't know

Question 4

Would achieving these targets contribute to making the kind of Scottish food system you would like to see?

Strongly agree **X**

Mostly agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Mostly disagree

Strongly disagree

I don't know

Question 5

If you have other comments on the suggested Good Food Nation targets, please comment:

We welcome that there is a Target/Measure that the Scottish Government supports the food and drink sector by providing funding for 'Sustaining Scotland: Supplying the World – The Food and Drink Industry Strategy', but we believe there needs to be an additional

Target/Measure added that the Scottish Government supports the food and drink tourism sector by providing funding to directly support the activities of Scottish Agritourism.

Question 6

Do you think these indicators will be useful for measuring progress towards the Good Food Nation Outcomes?

Strongly agree

Mostly agree **X**

Neither agree nor disagree

Mostly disagree

Strongly disagree

I don't know

Why or why not?

Greater recognition of the role and impact of tourism and hospitality sector needs recognised in the Indicators and Targets used to measure the impact of the Good Food Nation Plan Outcomes, as Scotland's tourism and hospitality offer and visitor food and drink experience go hand-in-hand with supporting the ambitions of being a good food nation.

The Great Britain Tourism Survey in 2022 reported that there was £489 million total spend on eating and drinking by GB residents in Scotland that year, while 475,431 overnight trips in Scotland by domestic visitors involved visiting a food or drink producer.

VisitBritain MIDAS research published in 2022 found that 82% of international travellers surveyed felt that "a good variety of food and drink to try" was an important consideration when choosing a destination for an international break or holiday.

Research commissioned by VisitScotland and carried out by 56 Degrees Insight in 2021 reported that 60% of survey respondents search out places to eat that source local food and drink, while 75% would choose independent local shops, cafes, restaurants in Scotland. Interestingly, it found that the main area where Scotland residents believe that tourism businesses could do more was the sourcing of local products (72%), highlighting the potential for further investment and development to achieve this.

There is an opportunity to ensure that the Outcomes, Indicators and Targets are linked to the growth of food and drink tourism, particularly the valuable role of Scottish Agritourism in connecting visitors to farming, food production, and the environment.

The tourism and hospitality sector has a crucial role to play in achieving the ambitions of the Good Food Nation Plan and driving business activity that will in turn benefit both visitors and local communities. The STA believes it would be a missed opportunity to not put in place Targets and Indicators to measure and encourage growth in this important area.

Cross-portfolio policy development across the Scottish Government will be key to the successful delivery of the outcomes of the National Good Food Nation Plan and other key strategies such as our national tourism strategy, Scotland Outlook 2030, the Food Tourism Strategy and Action Plan, and Scottish Agritourism 2030 – The Strategy for Sustainable Growth.

The actions taken to achieve the Outcomes, Indicators and Targets set out in the plan must also take into consideration whether they will result in unintended consequences for industry, which places any additional time or cost burden on business. For example, further consideration around public procurement targets would need to consider potential cost implications for business.

Question 7

What other indicators, if any, would you like to see included?

There is an opportunity to use data collected by sources such as the Great Britain Tourism Survey, the Scottish Agritourism Growth Tracker, the Scottish Government, as well as commissioning new VisitScotland research, to capture the impact of food and drink tourism in supporting the ambition and Outcomes of the Good Food Nation Plan. These include:

- ***Number of overnight trips in Scotland by GB residents involving buying or tasting local food (source: Great Britain Tourism Survey)***
- ***Number of trips in Scotland by GB residents involving visiting a producer (source: Great Britain Tourism Survey)***
- ***Visitor satisfaction with availability of local food and drink***
- ***Percentage of food and drink distributors in Scotland that have adopted a Scottish product identifier***
- ***Percentage of Scottish produce being sourced across Scottish tourism and hospitality businesses***
- ***Percentage of visitors that think it is important that the food that they eat on holiday is sourced locally (source: VisitScotland previously commissioned survey data on this)***
- ***Percentage of visitors that would choose vegan or vegetarian options more often when eating out on holiday in Scotland (source: VisitScotland previously commissioned survey data on this)***
- ***Percentage of visitors that would search out places to eat that source local food and drink (source: VisitScotland previously commissioned survey data on this)***
- ***Percentage of visitors that are willing to pay more for locally sourced and produced food and drink (source: VisitScotland previously commissioned survey data on this)***
- ***Percentage of visitors that would choose independent local shops, cafes, restaurants in Scotland (source: VisitScotland previously commissioned survey data on this)***
- ***The value added by Scottish food and drink tourism to the Scottish economy (source: Scottish Government)***

- *The value added by Scottish agritourism to the Scottish economy (source: Scottish Agritourism Growth Tracker)*
- *Number of agritourism visitors annually (source: Scottish Agritourism Growth Tracker)*
- *Number of farm retail visitors annually (source: Scottish Agritourism Growth Tracker)*
- *Percentage of farms that sell produce direct to consumers (source: Scottish Agritourism Growth Tracker)*
- *Percentage of farms that process produce on their farm (source: Scottish Agritourism Growth Tracker)*
- *Percentage of agritourism businesses that cater for produce being eaten onsite (source: Scottish Agritourism Growth Tracker)*
- *Number of 'meet-the-buyer' trade events hosted under the Sourcing Scotland brand to showcase Scottish suppliers and facilitate new listings*
- *Number of agritourism and rural businesses supported by the Agritourism Monitor Farm Programme*
- *Number of food tourism apprentices*
- *Number of Scottish Food Guide Charter members*
- *Number of businesses achieving 'Taste Our Best' quality assurance accreditation promoting local sourcing*

Question 8

If you have other comments on the suggested Good Food Nation indicators, please comment:

n/a

Questions 9-17

n/a

Question 18

If you have any further comments on the national Good Food Nation Plan, please comment here

The STA welcomes that a plan has been created to deliver on the Good Food Nation (Scotland) Act. Scotland's food and drink sector is integral in delivering a high-quality visitor offer and experience for both domestic and international tourists, promoting our image as a must-visit destination and offering a distinctive visitor experience across different parts of the country to sample what produce is on offer.

We further welcome the ambition and broadness of the Outcomes in the plan, along with the recognition that it will take time to deliver on the aspirations set out in the original legislation to have a more sustainable food system. We believe that ensuring that tourism/visitor activities are recognised under the Outcomes, Indicators and Targets will make a significant contribution to the successfully delivery of the plan.

The industry-led Food Tourism Scotland Strategy and Action Plan launched in 2018, developed by the STA and Scotland Food & Drink, has been crucial in bringing together two of Scotland's most successful sectors and helping support the country's ambition to be a good food nation that benefits our businesses, visitors and our local communities.

The three principles underpinning the Food Tourism Strategy and Action Plan are essential in also delivering on the Good Food Nation Plan:

- Celebrate diversity: showcase the many expressions of our natural larder and allow the people behind our food and drink to shine through our products and experiences.***
- Grow with integrity: develop a relationship of trust with locals and visitors alike and share as much information as possible; it's part of the story behind our food and drink.***
- Be responsible: secure the long-term viability of food tourism by prioritising economic, environmental, cultural and social sustainability.***

A key vision of our national tourism strategy, Scotland Outlook 2030, which was published in 2020, is that tourism acts as a force for good, with a clear commitment to the green agenda and achieving our national ambition to become a net-zero society through sustainable and responsible tourism.

The successful delivery of the National Good Food Nation Plan is further integral in helping us to achieve our mission set out in Scotland Outlook 2030 that "Together we will grow the value and positively enhance the benefits of tourism across Scotland by delivering the very best for our visitors, our businesses, our people, our communities and our environment."

The aim of the Scottish Agritourism 2030 strategy, published in 2021, is to deliver "a high quality, authentic visitor experience with agriculture and food and drink at its core, sustaining the future of family farms in Scotland contributing to the rural economy and positioning Scotland as a key player in global agritourism."

Its ambition to have 1,000 Scottish farming and crofting enterprises offering an agritourism experience, with at least 50% providing a food and drink element by 2030, is critical in delivering on the ambition to become a good food nation.

The Good Food Nation Plan is an important vehicle to continue to support and deliver on the vision and ambition of these important tourism strategies.

The National Good Food Nation Plan is an opportunity to further develop and enhance the role of tourism and hospitality as a force for good and a part of the solution, particularly in growing the valuable agritourism sector, helping to mutually deliver on the outcomes identified in the plan, and our overall vision of Scotland becoming a 21st century leader in tourism.

Food and drink tourism has a critical role to play in promoting and enabling healthy and local food choices, driving business activity that will benefit both visitors and local communities.

Part B: Consultation on specified functions for the national Good Food Nation Plan

Question 19

Please let us know if we have missed any function falling within a specified description or relevant specified functions in the list.

The STA welcomes that the promotion of food and drink in relation to tourism is recognised as a function under Outcome 5 on increasing interest and education about food. However, we believe that food and drink tourism, particularly the role of agritourism, should also be recognised as a function under Outcome 1, Outcome 2, Outcome 4 and Outcome 6.

Question 20

Why do you think this specified function/function falling within a specified description should be added?

There is a need for greater recognition of the role of food tourism, particularly agritourism, as an action or aim of government to achieve the ambitions of the Good Food Nation Plan.

As previously set out in our submission, food and drink tourism is at the heart of driving further activity concerning sustainable local produce and healthier lifestyle choices. It is a real force for good that can help Scotland deliver on its good food nation ambitions and deliver wider benefits for the net zero agenda and Scottish economy.