

CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

1: Should the scope of the new food body extend beyond the current scope of the FSA in Scotland? If yes, what specific extensions of scope would you suggest, and why?

- . We agree that the scope of the new FSA in Scotland could usefully be extended to tackle issues of public health and nutrition – facilitating activities, creating an evidence base and consult with the Scottish Government on what needs to be done around issues such as food labelling, food messaging, and food poverty.

2: Should the new food body and the Scottish Government continue the arrangements for independent and partnership work on diet and nutrition set out in Annex A? If not, what changes would you suggest, and why?

- We would suggest that good practice would be for partnership work to take place where possible on some of these issues to ensure that the Scottish Government and the food body are providing non-contradictory information on nutrition topics.

3: Are there any additional roles, responsibilities or functions in respect of diet and nutrition that you think the new food body could take on to help deliver an improvement to the health of the people in Scotland? Please give details and reasons.

- As noted in question 1 the new body could undertake research on nutrition and food issues to make recommendations and propose legislation on issues such as fortified foods – for example, the issue of adding folic acid to bread to cut the risk of defects such as spina bifida.

4: What steps do you think could be taken to ensure the new food body is able to access the best available independent expert advice it needs to underpin its work on food safety and public health nutrition in Scotland? Please give reasons.

- Comments

5: Do you consider that the new food body should focus its research and surveillance activities on issues that are particularly pertinent to Scottish citizens or should it also contribute to science and evidence programmes on wider issues which have relevance to the UK as a whole? Please give reasons.

- The Scudamore Review stated that Scotland had unique and complex problems in relation to diet, obesity and certain diseases. There are certain topics that immediately come to mind that a independent food

body may wish to investigate – for example the high levels of MS in Scotland and links with vitamin D. On issues such as labeling recommendations it would seem sensible for messages in Scotland and in other parts of the UK to be as consistent as possible - which might require food bodies and Governments working together. We would like to see alcohol produced in Scotland to carry clear labeling on the dangers of drinking during pregnancy.

6: Do you agree that the new food body should be responsible for the coordination of all Scottish Government funded research on food safety and public health nutrition? What steps could be taken to raise the profile of the new food body as a research funder across the UK and beyond? Please give reasons.

- The new body should attempt to widely engage across sectors - including the voluntary sector, for example via Voluntary Health Scotland. The information and advice sector such as Citizens Advice Bureau may also be good links – eg to provide information on food related benefits that families can receive.

7: Do you have any further suggestions for how the new food body could establish a strong independent evidence base for food safety, food standards and nutrition policy? Please give reasons.

- Comments

8: Do you consider that the new food body would require any further statutory powers, in addition to those that the FSA already has, to equip it to deal effectively with incidents such as the recent horse meat substitutions, and to prevent such incidents happening? Please give reasons.

- Comments

9: Do you have any further comments about how the new food body might ensure that it can deal effectively with contraventions of food standards and safety law? Please give reasons.

- Comments

10: Should the new food body take on any roles and responsibilities not currently fulfilled by the FSA in Scotland? If yes, please give details and reasons.

- As noted in the response to question 1 the issue of food poverty should be a key interest of the new body – this includes not only food crisis, but also access to healthy food access to resources to prepare food, and access to and promotion of information on nutrition.

11: Please tell us your views about these suggestions for changes to the delivery of official food and feed controls. Do you think that the new food body should work in a different way with local authorities? Please give reasons.

- Comments

12: Do you have any views on how the new food body should assure delivery of official controls and meet the relevant EU obligations? Please give reasons.

- Comments

13: Are there any additional or alternative relationships that you would suggest that would help the new food body achieve the Scottish Ministers' objective of longer, healthier lives for the people of Scotland? Please give details and reasons.

- Integration with other health issues, for example, alcohol use.
- Working with the Department for Work and Pensions over the impact of welfare reforms.
- Working with Local Authorities to develop education programmes.
- Working with the Health Inequalities Ministerial Task Force.
- Working with the GIRFEC team around early years.
- Links with Curriculum for Excellence and Education Scotland.

14: Do you have any suggestions about how the new food body can engage effectively with consumers, both in developing policy and providing information and advice?

The term 'consumers' implies that people are passive users rather than active citizens engaged in their own health. The food body could play a role in ensuring the voice of the public is heard.

15: Do you agree with the suggested approach to ensuring the new food body's independence from Government and the food industry? Do you have any further suggestions for how the new food body could best establish and maintain its position as an arms length part of Government? Please give reasons.

- Comments

16: Do you have any further comments, or suggestions, on the creation of a new food body for Scotland that are not covered by any of the previous questions?

- In addition to this response Children in Scotland also participated in a

roundtable with Scottish Government officials, hosted by Voluntary Health Scotland.