

RFW 32

Ymateb gan :  
Evidence from : Slipstream Wales

It is with pleasure that I make the following points and suggestions about the Welsh Government's plans for food & drink in Wales.

### **Introduction**

This response is from Slipstream Wales, an ambitious, collaborative initiative to use this country as an innovation lab to develop test country-scale solutions the world's greatest challenges.

### **Context**

Whilst many businesses are moving in the right direction, there's almost a complete absence of understanding of the scale, speed and depth of change needed for creation of a resilient food system. Our biggest concern is that Welsh Government cannot alone develop the vision or ambition for change, and must work radically, and collaboratively with new and unlikely partners if it is to succeed in its purpose of serving community.

### **Profile**

There's not enough money in Wales to raise a profile of food and drink based on identikit marketing ideas that can only win by buying more space online and in the media. The only approach that we believe valid is for a 'Blue Water Strategy' approach that clearly separates the values, strategy, behaviours and goals of Welsh food & drink businesses from those they compete against, locally and internationally. That clear blue water can be created by a full, transparent commitment to aligning our food & drink strategy to the WFG Act with a scale of response that matches the challenges that we actually face, not the ones we'd prefer to have that dictate today's response.

What is your vision for the future of food in Wales and what needs to be done to achieve it?

*1. Healthy, locally produced food that is accessible and affordable.* Get behind the emerging collaborative goals being developed by NFU Cymru, FUW, CLA Cymru, NRW and other organisations and take actions that include a) ensuring that every child in Wales has grown, foraged, cooked and served food to a group of seven friends before they reach adulthood to build an understanding of where food comes from, how it grows and where taste comes from, b) work with procurement to find innovative ways that ensure local sourcing for 100% of Wales' schools, hospitals, prisons & government, c) work with

businesses such as FarmDrop to close the gap between availability and need, d) cracking a combination of growing and teaching how to cook will make food affordable provided that comms are in place to teach people how.

Resources. Dozens of farmers have already offered land to get kids growing and there's no shortage of organisations that could teach cooking at zero cost.

*2. An innovative food industry sustaining high quality jobs;* IF Wales' government and farmers commit to work together with NRW and our environmental orgs (WTW, WWF, RSPB etc) then businesses such as M&S, Ben & Jerry's, Pukka and Danone will work with us at country scale to grow and build the food and solutions they know they need in 3–5 years' time. This would include, for instance, reaching zero waste to landfill, 80% reduction in carbon. Imperative innovation must fit inside the green lines of [doughnut economics](#).

Resources: M&S have already said yes, and are ready to go when we are.

*3. Sustainably produced food with high environmental and animal welfare standards.* To create clear blue water, Wales' practices on sustainability and welfare need to be the best in the world. Whilst they're not bad now, ambition and practice must be high enough to create sustained advantage. For instance, a big majority of food and drink products grown or produced in Wales would have been audited against total cost accounting

*4. An internationally renowned destination for food lovers?* If we collaborative deliver on 1–3, it would be impossible to not end up with this. When the 400,000 young people in Wales enter the world of work equipped with insight and knowledge of growing, preparing and serving the tastiest food they can imagine, the positive eruption of talent would have to be seen to be believed.

### **Caveat**

The trick to this is to walk through the darkness of our reality, whilst holding fear at bay to create experiences and lifetimes with depth, meaning and beauty, as those are some of the most nourishing qualities we will ever find. Whilst on this journey, the food and drink must open its eyes to the consequences of our broken system that has, in the news of the last couple of weeks shown i) 80% of tap water, and most sea salts, contaminated with plastic, ii) 1/3rd of the world's agricultural land is degraded and less able to produce food, iii) whole regions with population in 10s of million losing 1/3 of their water within the lifetime of young people today, iv) the impact of storms on destroying land and crops as well as homes. All is not well, and compassionate, innovative change is needed.

The Slipstream Wales team are building a team to help the food industry change rethink the way it works to be fit for the future, and would be delighted to with WG to make this happen.

