

Y Pwyllgor Newid Hinsawdd, Amgylchedd a Materion Gwledig | Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee
Ailfeddwl am fwyd yng Nghymru: brandio a phrosesu bwyd | Rethinking food in Wales: food branding and food processing

UK Protected Food Names Association

I am delighted to be able to give evidence before this committee here in Cardiff. My brother Kevin was born in this City and later he and I spent our early years in North Wales.

The food heritage of a country is as important as its art, architecture and other aspects of its cultural history. It also has a current economic value. On the continental mainland of Europe, countries such as France, Italy and Germany have been much more zealous in protecting their food heritage with the establishment of regional, national and craft groups which are recognised in law. The Appellation Controlee regime is a good example of a protection scheme for French wines.

Unfortunately in the UK we have done very little to protect our food heritage. The urbanisation of the population during the Industrial Revolution breaking the link between the population and the countryside is partially to blame but with the exception of a few guilds such as the Worshipful Company of Bakers, the lack of concern stems all the way back to the Middle Ages. It was only with the invention of the European Protected Food Name Status did food protection really traction in the UK. Sadly our record in registering PFN's is woefully behind our European partners. The UK has around 87; Italy has well over 200. Although the number of UK PFN's is relatively small, their value is significant. The UK Government estimates that UK GI's (Geographical Indications which include PFN's) are worth some £5billion per annum and account for 25% of all UK food and drink exports by value.

The Welsh Government has done exceptionally well in promoting the PFN scheme within the UK. This is the deliberate result of the Welsh Government putting resources behind the scheme to encourage registrations. No other part of the UK has done or is doing this. The result is that the majority of new registrations for UK PFN status have come from Wales.

PFN's have an economic value. Many producers charge a premium for a PFN product and customers are prepared to pay that premium for a product with provenance and heritage. One estimate is that PFN status increases the value of a product by 2.23 times. In the case of foods such as the Melton Mowbray Pork Pie, PFN status has meant the survival of the Pie which would have soon disappeared into a generic pie without the authentic recipe or proper means of production. Protection against copying has an economic value – Cornish Pasties are another case in point – They must be made in Cornwall preserving jobs in the County.

PFN's are not a cartel or anti-competition. In the case of the Melton Mowbray Pork Pie, the registration belongs to the area and the MMPP Association has encouraged new entrants by sharing the recipe with them and in at least one case seconding a pie maker to help a newcomer into the market.

The fact that a PFN is a recognised standard of production and heritage also benefits the producer when marketing the product to potential buyers. The PFN logo immediately opens doors and allows

the short-cutting of initial conversations as the value of the product is already confirmed due to its PFN status. It was this status, I believe, that helped Welsh Beef and Lamb win the contract to supply meat to the schools in Rome.

Increasingly the interest by the public in food and in Experience Tourism has led to the growth of food destinations; cheesemakers who open their dairies to the public, Brewery Tours and the like. In Melton Mowbray the two local PFN products Melton Mowbray Pork Pies and Stilton Cheese have led to a significant growth in food tourism to the extent of approximately £80million a year, which for one of the ten smallest boroughs in the country is a significant boost to the local economy. This is on top of the value of the local production of the products themselves. The value for Food Tourism is increased by the hospitality sector where the products are sold as part of a meal or similar.

1. Welsh Government strategy:

- Activity to promote Welsh food products within the UK and internationally

With the exception of one or two products, Wales does not enjoy a distinct reputation for distinctive foods or food brands. As the memory of coal mining recedes, the rural identity of Wales is coming to the fore and with it an opportunity to promote its food as wholesome and based on a long tradition of food heritage. A lot more could be done to promote Welsh food within the UK, particularly in the sectors of meat, cheese, other dairy products and drinks.

Internationally, with a few exceptions I don't believe the overseas consumer has much recognition of even where Wales lies never mind the identity of Welsh foods. Many regard it as just a subset of England. Promotion of Welsh food and Welsh identity should go hand in hand. The fact that there is a separate country with its own heritage and traditions and more remarkably its own language should be promoted along with its food heritage.

- Activity to support Welsh food producers to develop their branding

The work that the Welsh Government has done to register and promote PFN's is to be admired. Registering a PFN involves a whole process which at the start consists of bringing producer who are competing against each other to realise a mutual benefit in a PFN application and so cooperate instead of compete. Food producers are not the best at filling in forms and applications and so any support to bring them together and help with the application process, even writing the forms for them, is invaluable. The EU has funding to support the promotion of PFN products provided this is match by a contribution from the host country. The UK Government has never supported the sector financially, something which I believe the Welsh Government should support for its own products.

2. UK Government activity to promote Welsh food products internationally

The UK Government does promote UK foods internationally, but these tend to be the much larger scale producers and Wales is little to the fore. In fact there is a danger that promotion of Welsh foods by the UK government merely reinforces the view that Wales and Welsh food is a sub-set and identical to English food rather than something distinctive.

3. The value of branding food as local, Welsh, British or otherwise

There is evidence that the public are persuaded to buy more branded food in respect of origin; local Welsh or British. Supermarkets are even inventing geographical names for products with no relation to the place in order to badge the product with a local identity; Marks & Spencer Oakham Chicken is a case in point where none of the chickens have been anywhere near the Rutland county town of Oakham.

4. The value of Protected Food Names (Geographical Indicators), including the UK Government's proposals for a new post-Brexit UK scheme

UK GI's are worth some £5billion of which the food aspect is worth almost £1billion. As stated already GI's account for roughly 25% of the UK's total food and drink exports.

Once the UK leaves the EU all legislation that protects UK products lapses, since it was only the EU scheme that gave them protection in the first place. The Government has proposed a new post-Brexit scheme similar to the current EU scheme to replace it. The scheme will be useful to protect UK products that are vulnerable to copying within the UK such as Melton Mowbray Pork Pies and Cornish Pasties; it will not give any degree of protection to UK products sold in EU countries. The UK Government has stated that it is confident that the EU will continue to protect these products but at the same time it states that it is under no obligation to protect EU products in the UK. This is surely naïve. If the EU finds its products no longer protected in the UK then it is most likely that it will withdraw protection of UK products in retaliation.

The UK could register as a third country to agree mutual protection of products in the two areas. This is similar to Colombia which has registered Colombian Coffee in the EU and affords protection of EU products in Colombia. The Withdrawal Agreement negotiated by the Government does state the desire for the two sides to respect and protect each others PFN's.

What is of concern is the future of PFN's in future Trade Agreements. The EU Canada Agreement does not afford protection to UK PFN's. The UK Government failed to consult on or put forward any current UK protected food names (PFNs) for inclusion in the EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement with Canada, with the result that CETA protects many European PFNs but none at all from the UK. Nor did the UK consult the Scottish Government in the trade negotiations with Japan and Mexico with regard to PFNs for inclusion in those deals.

The US Government has always been hostile to PFN's. It took the EU to the World Trade Court over the EU scheme and arguing that the scheme was anti-competitive. The Court ruled that the scheme was lawful providing other countries outside the EU have access to the scheme to register their products as third countries which is what Colombia has done. It is unlikely given the UK Government's desire for a post-brexit trade deal with the US, that any protection will be afforded to UK PFN's.

5. The value of food branding in the tourism and hospitality sector

In the past many tourism campaigns encouraged tourists to visit an area and 'while you're there try our tremendous food'. In other words the food was the secondary consideration. With the increasing popularity of food shows and food provenance, a number of areas and businesses have converted themselves into food tourism destinations. Melton Mowbray earns £78million a year from food tourism based on the Melton Mowbray Pork Pie and Stilton Cheese. It boasts 5 food and

drink festivals in the year as well as the British Pie Awards and Artisan Cheese Awards. Towns such as Bakewell have also capitalised on its food heritage. A number of areas have developed food trails. Angus County in Scotland boasts a host of local delicacies; Arbroath Smokeys, Forfar Brides, Kirriemuir Gingerbread, never mind Angus Beef, Scotch Whisky and Salmon. County Armagh has reinvented itself food-wise based on its gaining protected name status for the Armagh Bramley Apple, a rare example of a product being registered to an area where it did not originate. Apples, apple pie filling, cider and cider brandy are all products based on this protection. Autumn visits to the orchards are complimented by spring blossom visits, particularly favoured by Japanese and Oriental visitors.

A number of food and drink businesses have redesigned their premises to draw significant numbers of visitors, who not only pay to visit but spend significant amounts of money in the cafes and shops associated with the business. Example are the Wensleydale Creamery and Black Sheep Brewery. Scotch distilleries have long been welcoming the more affluent visitor.

There is much scope for the Welsh Government to support the development of food trails and food destinations and also to encourage food businesses to turn themselves into tourist attractions.

Another aspect of modern tourism is Experience Tourism where tourists may visit a place to learn a craft or a skill. A number of dairies now teach cheese making which if accommodation is provided keeps the visitor in the area and spending. The School of Artisan Food in Nottinghamshire is a good example of several of these courses being grouped together. A Welsh School of Rural Food might be a useful model.

The hospitality sector also has a role in promoting local food and drink by ensuring local delicacies are on the menu and identifying them as such. A Michelin rated pub in Rutland has a map on the back of its menu showing where all its food and drink comes from. The English Breakfast and Ulster Fry are famous examples of meals that associated with a country. The PFN scheme should also include meals such as the Birmingham Balti which has applied for registration as a PFN.

Finally the value of Food and Drink Festivals and Farmers Markets in promoting local food should not be underestimated. The Abergavenny Food Festival draws thousands of visitors from across the UK.

Food processing

6. Welsh Government strategy and support for food processors

There ought to be a strategy for the Government to ensure that every producer of a primary product is encouraged to think how they might add value to their produce. For a dairy this would be cheese, yoghurt, clotted cream, butter, or the more esoteric bio drinks or Scandinavian style dairy products. For meat it might be branching out into charcuterie or beef jerky. Wagu Beef is highly prized.

The Japanese Government after the War analysed all its imports through MITI (Ministry of International Trade and Industry) and developed a strategy to replace them one by one by growing home industries. There is no reason why the Welsh Government should not look at the value added food imports into the country and see which of these could be encouraged to be produced locally.

One should not forget the demands of the growing ethnic population for foods that are used in their cuisine. Melton Mowbray currently produces tofu for Japanese restaurants, halal lamb for the Muslim sector and paneer for the Indian trade. Meat, fish, dairy products, vegetables and herbs are all products that could be produced for the ethnic market by a diversified food and drink sector.

Given the effects of climate change, there ought to be a study of what new foods might benefit from the climate change. A good example of this is the production of sparkling wines in Southern England where the chalky soil is not dissimilar to that of the Champagne region of France. A number of French Vineyards are buying estates in England as climate change favours them for growing grapes for sparkling wine and perhaps affects adversely the land of their origin.

7. Trends in processing capacity in Wales and how Brexit might affect this

It is very possible that Brexit could be an opportunity for Welsh producers in that tariffs may make the import of some foods more expensive and so allow local producers to make similar products at a more affordable price. Continental charcuterie and cheese are the first products that come to mind.

The Longer Term Future

Some 8-10 years ago the Scottish Government produced one of the best examples of a national food strategy that I have ever seen. The way that they developed the strategy was also innovative; forming small working groups across the country on a variety of topics eg sustainability and security of supply, with a leading figure in the sector to chair and report on progress.

Whilst it has done more than any of the other nations of the UK for PFN's. I believe the Welsh Government could do significantly more.

Firstly it could look at other products see about supporting producers to register these for PFN Status. I include a list of Welsh regional products for consideration. It may well be that there are products which in English might be considered generic but could be registered in Welsh as having a more unique identity.

Secondly it could 'invent' traditional products based on distinct terroirs in the country. The EU recognise products as 'Traditional' which have a single generation lifespan usually placed at 25 years. The Welsh Government should look at a scheme to invest in traditional products based on particular areas within the country. These could be meat based, dairy, spirits, wines, ciders, baked goods etc. Connemara Lamb is a product that has been developed similar to this scheme.

Thirdly it could develop its own scheme for registering and protecting its food and drink heritage. Buildings of architectural merit are listed according to their importance in the cultural history of the nation and their location. Grade 1, Grade II*, Grade II are the different classes of the scheme. What if a similar scheme was developed for Welsh food and drink. Grade 1 products of International importance. Grade II of national significance, Grade III of regional merit and Grade IV of local interest. Just five miles down the road from Melton Mowbray, the village of Syston announces proudly on its village sign "Welcome to Syston – Home of the Syston Plum." The plum sustains a bakery making plum jam, tarts, pies and the like. A local nursery sells the trees so providing a small modicum of employment based on this humble fruit as well as generating some local pride perhaps on a plum festival.

There is the opportunity to take the GI or PFN scheme further to include other aspects of intellectual property linked to an area. For example the use of slate in some areas of Wales. In Sheffield this would be Sheffield Cutlery. Again in Japan, some products and skills are designated national treasures. There are also people; potters, calligraphers, tatami mat makers, kimono producers who are themselves designated national treasures. The Eisteddfod celebrates the best in Welsh music, why not similar for food and drink – and craft skills as well.

Product	Type	EU Class
Caws Beltane	cheese	Class 1.3. Cheeses
Caws Imbolc	cheese	Class 1.3. Cheeses
Caws Lammas	cheese	Class 1.3. Cheeses
Caws Samhain	cheese	Class 1.3. Cheeses
Elderflower Ice Cream	ice cream	Class 2.9. Ice-creams and sorbets.
Potato Cake	cake	Class 2.4. Bread, pastry, cakes, confectionery, biscuits and other baker's wares
Black Mountain Liqueur	Liqueur	Class 2.3. Beverages made from plant extracts
Danzu Jones Liqueur	Liqueur	Class 2.3. Beverages made from plant extracts
Penclawdd Cockles	shellfish	Class 1.7. Fresh fish, molluscs, and crustaceans and products derived therefrom
Sewin (Sea Trout)	fish	Class 1.7. Fresh fish, molluscs, and crustaceans and products derived therefrom
Carmarthen Ham	Ham	Class 1.2. Meat products (cooked, salted, smoked, etc.)
Clotted Cream	Cream	Class 1.5. Oils and fats (butter, margarine, oil, etc.)
Ffos-Y-Ffin	Beer	Class 2.8. Beverages made from plant extracts
Laverbread Sausage	seaweed	Class 1.8. Other products of Annex I of the Treaty
Rissoles	Meat	Class 1.2. Meat products (cooked, salted, smoked, etc.)
Brecknock Lamb	Meat	Class 1.1. Fresh meat (and offal)
Cacen Boeth	Cakes	Class 2.3. Confectionery, bread, pastry, cakes, biscuits and other baker's wares
Cothi Blue Goats Cheese	goats cheese	Class 1.3. Cheeses
Crempog	Pancakes	Class 2.3. Confectionery, bread, pastry, cakes, biscuits and other baker's wares
Dolau Cothi Lamb	lamb	Class 1.1. Fresh meat (and offal)
Gwynt Y Ddraig Cider	cider	Class 2.8. Beverages made from plant extracts
Katt Pie	Lamb	Class 1.1. Fresh meat (and offal)
Leek & Potato Soup	meal	Class 2.5. Pre-cooked meals
Leek Soup	soup	Class 2.7. Soups or broths
Mussel Broth (Wales)	soup	Class 2.7. Soups or broths
Pantmawr Cheese	cheese	Class 1.3. Cheeses
Princess Gate	Water	Class 2.8. Beverages made from plant extracts
Salt Marsh Lamb	Meat	Class 1.1. Fresh meat (and offal)
Snowdonia Lamb	Meat	Class 1.1. Fresh meat (and offal)
Teifi Salmon	Fish	Class 1.7. Fresh fish, molluscs and crustaceans and products derived therefrom
Ty Nant Water	water	Class 2.8. Beverages made from plant extracts
Welsh Char	fish	Class 1.7. Fresh fish, molluscs and crustaceans and products derived therefrom
Welsh Faggots	Processed Product	Class 1.2. Meat products (cooked, salted, smoked, etc.)
Welsh Leek Pie	Pie	Class 2.5. Pre-cooked meals
Welsh Liqueurs	Liqueur	Class 2.8. Beverages made from plant extracts
Welsh Lovecake	Cakes	Class 2.3. Confectionery, bread, pastry, cakes, biscuits and other baker's wares
Welsh Rarebit	Bread	Class 2.5. Pre-cooked meals
Welsh Whisky	Whisky	Class 2.8. Beverages made from plant extracts
Elan Valley Mutton	Mutton	Class 1.1. Fresh meat (and offal)

Aberffraw Cake	shortbread type biscuit	Class 2.4. Bread, pastry, cakes, confectionery, biscuits and other baker's wares
Bara Brith	Fruit bread	Class 2.4. Bread, pastry, cakes, confectionery, biscuits and other baker's wares
Bara Planc	bread	Class 2.4. Bread, pastry, cakes, confectionery, biscuits and other baker's wares
Bara Pyglyd	bread	Class 2.4. Bread, pastry, cakes, confectionery, biscuits and other baker's wares
Caerphilly Cheese	cheese	Class 1.3. Cheeses
Cawl (Welsh Broth)	meal	Class 2.5. Pre-cooked meals
Cockle (Penclawdd)	shellfish	Class 1.7. Fresh fish, molluscs, and crustaceans and products derived therefrom
Crusty Swansea	bread	Class 2.4. Bread, pastry, cakes, confectionery, biscuits and other baker's wares
Glamorgan Sausage	Savoury Rissole	Class 1.6. Fruit, vegetables and cereals fresh or processed
Laverbread	seaweed	Class 1.8. Other products of Annex I of the Treaty
Llanwenog	lamb	Class 1.1. Fresh meat (and offal)
Mussel (Wales)	shellfish	Class 1.7. Fresh fish, molluscs, and crustaceans and products derived therefrom
Shearing Cake	cake	Class 2.4. Bread, pastry, cakes, confectionery, biscuits and other baker's wares
Teisen Fel	cake	Class 2.4. Bread, pastry, cakes, confectionery, biscuits and other baker's wares
Teisen Lap	cake	Class 2.4. Bread, pastry, cakes, confectionery, biscuits and other baker's wares
Welsh Pot Bread	bread	Class 2.4. Bread, pastry, cakes, confectionery, biscuits and other baker's wares
Welsh Bacon	bacon	Class 1.2. Meat products (cooked, salted, smoked, etc.)
Welsh Beef	beef	Class 1.1. Fresh meat (and offal)
Welsh Black Cattle	Beef	Class 1.1. Fresh meat (and offal)
Welsh Cake	bread	Class 2.4. Bread, pastry, cakes, confectionery, biscuits and other baker's wares
Welsh Ham	ham	Class 1.2. Meat products (cooked, salted, smoked, etc.)
Welsh Lamb	lamb	Class 1.1. Fresh meat (and offal)
Welsh Mountain Sheep	lamb	Class 1.1. Fresh meat (and offal)
Welsh Pancake	pancake	Class 2.4. Bread, pastry, cakes, confectionery, biscuits and other baker's wares
Welsh Plate Cake	cake	Class 2.4. Bread, pastry, cakes, confectionery, biscuits and other baker's wares
Anglesey Eggs	meal	Class 2.5. Pre-cooked meals
Badger Face Welsh Mountain Lamb	lamb	Class 1.1. Fresh meat (and offal)
Lobsgows	meal	Class 2.5. Pre-cooked meals
Menai Oysters	shellfish	Class 1.7. Fresh fish, molluscs, and crustaceans and products derived therefrom
Swp Pys (Pea And Ham Soup)	meal	Class 2.5. Pre-cooked meals
Anglesey Sea Salt	Salt	Class 1.8. other products of Annex I of the Treaty (spices etc.)
Monmouth Pudding	Fruit pudding	Class 1.6. Fruit, vegetables and cereals fresh or processed
Salt Duck	prepared duck	Class 1.2. Meat products (cooked, salted, smoked, etc.)
Welsh Onion Cake	Vegetable dish accompaniment to meat	Class 1.6. Fruit, vegetables and cereals fresh or processed