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Food Matters: One year on

August 2009

Food Matters: 1 year on

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Cabinet Office Strategy Unit published *Food Matters: Towards a Strategy for the 21st Century* in July 2008. The report, commissioned by the Prime Minister, brought together the various elements of food policy and considered the challenges and opportunities for the food system as a whole for the first time in decades.
- 1.2. The challenge set by *Food Matters* was for Government to join up its efforts on food policy looking at health, food safety, the economy and the environment. It noted that many of the elements required for a comprehensive food policy already existed, but that central Government needed to integrate them, and work with the public, food chain businesses and other stakeholders to put a new policy framework in place.
- 1.3. The last 12 months has seen a significant increase in activity on food-related issues, not only on the challenges identified by *Food Matters* but also on food security, including access to, affordability and availability of food, and on international food policy. This report provides an update on progress over the past year and identifies priorities for the next 12 months.
- 1.4. We have made progress on the following:
 - In October 2008, Hilary Benn established the Council of Food Policy Advisers to provide advice on the practical measures Government should take to create a healthy, sustainable food system;
 - The Change4Life campaign launched in January 2009 encouraging us to ‘eat well, move more, live longer’;
 - Hilary Benn hosted a roundtable discussion on skills in the farming industry in April 2009;
 - Defra is contributing £10 million to the Anaerobic Digestion Demonstration Programme – a programme that will show how cutting-edge technology can help turn food waste into energy;
 - By June, the first group of restaurants, cafes and food outlets were displaying calorie information on menus;
 - Government is leading efforts with international partners to tackle global hunger through the Global Partnership for Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition (GPAFSN). The G8 committed funding of \$20 billion over three years to the L’Aquila Food Security Initiative in July 2009 with \$1.8 billion coming from the UK;
 - Defra continues to promote sustainable farming and food production through e.g. campaigns to eradicate animal disease, funding research into key challenges and threats (e.g. Defra launched a £10 million initiative in April 2009 to identify the main threats to bees and other pollinators), and supporting an industry-led voluntary approach to recapture the environmental benefits of set-aside’
 - Hilary Benn has hosted a roundtable discussion on ways to increase production and consumption of fruit and vegetables in England;
 - Defra has completed an assessment of UK food security to provide timely information on key components of our food security; and

- The first pilots of the Healthier Food Mark will be launched later in the year, providing food meeting ambitious nutritional and sustainability criteria in public sector workplaces.
- 1.5. But the significant challenges that *Food Matters* described remind us that we have a lot of work still to do.
- The greenhouse gas emissions associated with the food system are significant, as are the other environmental impacts of food production and waste. Feeding the global population is set to become much more challenging in the future. The food chain faces the combined pressures of increasing demand and decreasing resources. By 2050 the world will need to feed an estimated 9 billion people, and will have to do so sustainably, with oil severely constrained and climate change happening.
 - Our diets continue to put a burden on the economy and society. *Food Matters* concluded that 70,000 premature deaths could be avoided if nationally, diets met nutritional guidelines for sugar, salt and fat and if we all ate five portions of fruit and vegetables a day. Diet related ill health costs the NHS an estimated £8 billion a year and obesity alone is estimated to cost the wider economy £15.8 billion (Foresight suggests that this figure would rise to £50 billion by 2050).
 - The current economic climate is difficult for all sectors of the economy, including for the food and drink – the UK’s largest single manufacturing sector. The food and drink sector as a whole is characterised by a small number of very large firms, and a long tail of diverse small and medium-sized enterprises. All are facing increasing challenges as consumer purchasing patterns change to achieve best value (e.g. changing between retailers and brands, eating out less often).
- 1.6. Government committed to report on progress made in implementing the actions identified in *Food Matters*. This document is the first update on progress. A second update will be published in summer 2010.
- 1.7. This report has two sections:
- Progress and achievements over the last year; and
 - A forward look over the next 12 months, setting out our priorities and areas of work.

Annex A provides a detailed progress update for all the actions identified in *Food Matters*.

2. Progress over last 12 months

2.1. This section gives an overview of progress made over the last 12 months. Detailed updates for each action identified in *Food Matters* are provided in Annex A.

Government's strategic objectives on food

2.2. *Food Matters* set out four strategic policy objectives for food – to secure:

- Fair prices, choice, access to food and food security through open and competitive markets;
- Continuous improvement in the safety of food;
- The changes needed to deliver a transition to healthier diets; and
- A more environmentally sustainable food chain.

2.3. The Government signed up to these policy objectives, and:

- Defra has a new Departmental Strategic Objective, to ensure sustainable, secure and healthy food supplies. A consultation paper on indicators to measure progress towards achieving this objective is published alongside this report;
- The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is developing its strategy for 2010-2015, which will focus on improving food safety and improving the balance of the diet. Work is underway with Defra and the Department of Health to ensure that the FSA's strategic priorities complement work in other Departments to achieve the four strategic policy objectives from *Food Matters*.
- A key strategic objective for the Department of Health (DH) is to help people stay healthy and well. DH has been working with other Government departments and industry to promote healthier food choices, and provide to opportunities for people to make healthier choices.

A future food strategy is being developed

2.4. One of the key recommendations from *Food Matters* was for Defra, working in partnership with the Food Standards Agency and the Department of Health, to develop a vision for a sustainable and secure food system.

2.5. The objectives of this are to:

- Define what we mean by sustainable and secure food;
- Set a roadmap to achieving our goal; and
- Build buy-in with stakeholders to help improve delivery of existing and future policies.

2.6. The benefits of this project are to:

- Give stakeholders a clear indication of Government's thinking on sustainable food;
- Demonstrate leadership on the big challenges in the food system;
- Develop a framework to measure the success of policy initiatives – and to be clearer on where we should be focusing our efforts in order to achieve what we want to achieve on food; and

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- Bring together our policies for a sustainable and secure food system.
- 2.7. An online discussion on “Food 2030” – our ambitions for the food system for 2030 – is being launched alongside this report asking for views from a wide range of organisations. Together with a set of indicators for sustainable food, it seeks to define our goal, set out how we aim to achieve it, and measure progress in getting there. (For more details, see Annex A, section 3.2.)
- 2.8. Defra also published *The Future of our Farming*¹ in July 2009, outlining our shared aims for and actions towards achieving a thriving and environmentally sustainable farming industry.

Working with devolved Governments

- 2.9. The UK Government works closely with the devolved Governments in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland on areas of shared interest. Over the last year, this has included:
- A pan-UK Ministerial Summit on Sustainable Food and Food Security in May 2009;
 - Devolved Government presence on the Food Strategy Task Force; and
 - Work on the development of a joint research strategy for food.
- 2.10. The **Scottish Government** published *Recipe for Success*², Scotland’s national food and drink policy in June 2009. The aim of the policy is to promote Scotland's sustainable economic growth by ensuring that the Scottish Government's focus on food and drink, and its work with Scotland's food and drink industry, addresses quality, health and wellbeing and environmental sustainability, recognising the need to ensure access and affordability at the same time.
- 2.11. The **Welsh Assembly Government** has published its *Farming, Food and Countryside*³ strategy in May 2009. The strategy sets out an action plan for a sustainable and profitable future for farming families and businesses through the production and processing of farm and forestry products.
- 2.12. New arrangements have been established in **Northern Ireland** to support industry engagement with Government and they are currently finalising a revised strategic vision for the food sector.

The UK has pressed for international action on food security

- 2.13. As the number of hungry people increased by over 100 million to almost 1 billion, the UK Government has led calls for a coordinated international response in our efforts to tackle food security and sustainable agricultural development. The International Development White Paper *Eliminating World Poverty: Building our Common Future*⁴, published in July

¹ Defra (2009) *The Future of our Farming*

² Scottish Government (2009) *Recipe for Success – Scotland’s National Food and Drink Policy* (www.scotland.gov.uk/food)

³ Welsh Assembly Government (2009) *Farming, Food and Countryside: Building a Secure Future*

⁴ DFID (2009) *Eliminating World Poverty: Building Our Common Future*

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2009, builds on this work and commits the UK to ensuring that food security and agriculture are given the highest international attention in the coming years. There have been a number of significant achievements over the last 12 months:

Global partnerships

- In response to a call from Gordon Brown, through the G8 process, the UN established a High Level Task Force on Global Food Security in 2008 which agreed a Comprehensive Framework for Action in July that year.
- The UK has been a strong advocate of the Global Partnership for Agriculture and Food Security (GPAFS). Consultation is underway across the Governments in both developed and developing countries, with a view to implement the partnership by the end of 2009.
- During Hilary Benn's visit to Beijing in November 2008 for the Third Ministerial round of the Sustainable Development Dialogue (SDD), he signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation on Sustainable Agriculture with Chinese Agriculture Minister Sun Zhengcai. He also launched the China-UK Sustainable Agriculture Innovation Network (SAIN), which will share ideas and practice on agriculture and food security.

Funding

- Since 2008 the Department for International Development (DFID) has announced a package of assistance worth over £910 million, including both short and long-term measures, to help increase food security and promote sustainable agricultural development.
- This includes a doubling of support to the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research to £400 million over next five years, and an increase in funding for both the World Food Programme and International Fund for Agricultural Development.
- DFID has successfully lobbied other donors and international organisations to ensure that funding has supported country-owned initiatives, in line with the Accra Agenda for Action, and in particular in support for the African Union's Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme, to which DFID has also contributed.
- The UK has helped to agree new efforts for food security and sustainable agricultural development through the G8 process, where leaders have collectively committed to mobilise \$20bn of funding over the three years 2009/10 – 2011/12 through the L'Aquila Food Security Initiative, with the UK's commitment amounting to \$1.8 billion (in addition to the UK's spending on emergency humanitarian food aid).

A major Foresight project has been launched to examine the challenges of feeding a growing world population

- 2.14. The Government's Chief Scientist, Professor John Beddington has launched a Foresight project that will examine 'how can we feed a global population of 9 billion by 2050 sustainably, healthily and equitably'. The project aims to catalyse action by key influencers across the world. (A full update on progress is in Annex A, section 5.5).

An assessment of UK food security and the policy framework

2.15. Defra published a discussion paper on UK Food Security in July 2008⁵. This built on previous work, including earlier analysis published by Defra in December 2006⁶. Over the past 12 months the challenges and risks to the UK's food security have been analysed and the resilience of our food supplies has been assessed. A paper has been published alongside this report with the results of this further analysis, and describes what Government plans to do to ensure that we remain food secure and have sufficient supplies of safe and nutritious food in the face of the challenges ahead.

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/foodrin/security/assessment.htm>

Analysing the causes and implications of the 2008 commodity price spikes

2.16. After 30 years in which global food prices had fallen in real terms, in 2007-8 a range of factors combined to drive up food prices, particularly in the markets for maize, rice, soybeans and wheat. Food price inflation was significant in the UK and around the world, with the world's poorest households worst affected. Agricultural commodity prices receded sharply in the second half of 2008, with wheat, maize and soybeans down 40-50% from their peaks. But in many countries, the prices of basic food staples still remain higher than the price levels before the crisis.

2.17. This experience has stimulated considerable debate, both about what caused the price spikes and about the longer term implications. A cross-Whitehall group is taking stock of the factors that led to the agricultural price spikes of 2008, what damage they caused and the policy implications. A paper considering these issues will be published in the autumn.

The UK has continued to lead discussions in Europe on the role of agriculture in mitigating and adapting to climate change

2.18. Defra and the French Ministry of Agriculture jointly hosted a High Level Experts' Seminar on Agriculture and Climate Change on 17 June 2009 to discuss practical measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture. Representatives from the two countries will meet again in the autumn to continue discussions on issues including anaerobic digestion, financial tools, research, and strategy for the international negotiations in Copenhagen later this year. (For details, see Annex A, section 5.7)

2.19. The UK has continued to influence the priorities and policy approaches of key international organisations such as the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UN FCCC), the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the Methane to Markets Partnership towards addressing climate change in agriculture and land management, to promote sustainable agriculture more broadly, and to share details of our domestic efforts to tackle climate change in the agricultural sector.

⁵ Defra (2008) *Ensuring the UK's Food Security in a Changing World*

⁶ Defra (2006) *Food Security and the UK: an evidence and analysis paper*

- 2.20. Mitigating greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture will remain on the agenda on the run-up to the UN climate change conference in Copenhagen in December 2009. Discussions at a UN FCCC workshop in April concluded that the agricultural sector, like every other sector, should make a contribution to mitigating climate change under any comprehensive global agreement. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture is feasible – although finding ways to achieve this will need further research and analysis – globally, and in the context of Defra’s carbon budget for the agricultural sector (see para 2.29 below).

The focus of Government's work on food is on supporting consumers, engaging the supply chain, and joining up Government's approach to food policy

Supporting consumers

A new web advice and information service and calorie labelling in cafes and restaurants

- 2.21. We are developing an advice service to consumers on healthy, balanced diets and the environmental and social impacts of different food choices. Led by the Food Standards Agency, the 'eatwell' website (www.eatwell.gov.uk) will be enhanced to include a wider range of food information and advice. (For details, see Annex A, section 4.1.)
- 2.22. The Food Standards Agency is developing a voluntary initiative to provide calorie labelling in catering establishments. Currently it is working with around 20 companies which have already started to introduce calorie labelling on menus in restaurants, cafes and food outlets. Some of the companies have made a long-term commitment to provide calorie information, whilst others are providing it on a trial basis. This initiative by the Food Standards Agency sits alongside its work with caterers to develop healthier options for customers. (For details, see Annex A, section 4.2.)

Increasing awareness and consumption of 5-A-DAY

- 2.23. The Department of Health are developing a 5-A-DAY Action Plan to promote the importance of and encourage more people to eat five portions of fruit and vegetables a day. Increasing consumption of fruit and vegetables is also one of the Council of Food Policy Advisers' priorities (see para 2.39 for more details on the Council), and Hilary Benn has hosted a roundtable discussion with key representatives from the fruit and vegetable industries in July 2009. The meeting focused on ways to increase production and consumption of fruit and vegetables in England. (For details, see Annex A, section 5.4.)

Reducing food waste to reduce environmental impacts and save money

- 2.24. WRAP (the Waste and Resources Action Programme) re-launched their Love Food Hate Waste campaign in April 2009. Building on the success of the first phase of the campaign, they aim to raise awareness of the amount of food wasted in the home and show people how they can reduce this, and save money. Food wasted in UK homes costs the average household £420 a year (rising to £610 for households with children) and eliminating this waste would equate to the carbon saved by taking 1 car in every 5 off the road in the UK.

Engaging the food supply chain

Continuous improvement in the safety of food

- 2.25. The Food Standards Agency has conducted an analysis of food safety risks and controls to increase understanding of the public health and economic impacts of food safety hazards across the whole food chain. The aim is to ensure that resources and controls are targeted where they will be most effective. (For full details, see Annex A, section 5.2.)

Understanding the interaction of the international animal feed market and the EU regime for GM products

- 2.26. *Food Matters* called for two pieces of analysis on genetically modified (GM) products:
- i. Defra has assessed the potential impacts of global trends in GM production on the UK livestock sector. It confirms that if soya feed imports from South America were curtailed because of problems with the EU GM regime, it could have a serious effect on livestock production. There would be little scope for alternative soya supplies, and use of other protein feeds would cost more and be less efficient. The likelihood of a major supply problem arising is uncertain, being dependent on whether or not Brazil and Argentina cultivate new GM soya crops before they are cleared for EU import, and on whether the EU adopts a more pragmatic approach towards the potential for low level presence of unapproved GM material in imported commodities.
 - ii. The FSA has analysed the extent to which changes in the market are putting a strain on the regulatory system for GM products (including animal feed) and the implications for consumers. Their research concluded that the supply of GM and non-GM soya are of immediate concern to the animal feed industry. There are likely to be parallel issues for the food industry in the future which may have implications for consumer choice.
- 2.27. A report on the analyses will be published on the respective departmental websites (for details, see Annex A, section 5.3).

Supporting skills in the farming industry

- 2.28. Farming and food production are highly skilled businesses, and skills are increasingly critical to profitability, productivity and responding to consumer demand. Hilary Benn hosted a roundtable discussion with the farming industry in April on the areas where skills need to be strengthened. The industry is now developing an action plan setting out what it can do and how we can help. Agriculture also needs to attract young people into it. Defra is providing a new Diploma in Environmental and Land-based Studies for 14-19 year olds, which will start in September 2009. Defra is continuing to support Fresh Start training academies that offer business and management skills and mentoring for new entrants to the farming industry.

Climate change is a key challenge for the food system

- 2.29. In 2006, 59 million tonnes of CO₂ equivalent were produced between the farm gate and food arriving on our plates. Since *Food Matters* was published, we have introduced legally

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binding greenhouse gas budgets, and the Government published the UK Low Carbon Transition Plan in July 2009⁷. Emissions from large food businesses are covered by policies such as the Climate Change Agreements and EU Emissions Trading Scheme, but the Government is investigating whether we need new policies to help the many diverse small food businesses save money and reduce emissions through more efficient practices or technology.

- 2.30. WRAP is working with the food and drink retail chains to identify carbon hotspots as part of its preparation for a successor to the Courtauld Commitment for 2010 onwards. WRAP has established a new Carbon Research Forum (supported by Defra, The Carbon Trust and the Environment Agency) to bring together stakeholders with an interest in measuring and reducing the greenhouse gas emissions associated with food and drink products.

Reducing waste in the food supply chain to lower its environmental impact and increase efficiency

- 2.31. WRAP are working with food businesses by:
- i. Making it easier for consumers to reduce their food waste by ensuring they can buy a range of pack and portion sizes and have clear advice on food storage and use. WRAP are also looking at retail promotions that are less likely to result in consumers wasting food, e.g. avoiding buy-one-get-one-free promotions in favour of 'half price' offers backed up by hints, tips and recipes. This work forms part of developing a successor to the Courtauld Commitment – a new voluntary agreement to set quantified, carbon-based targets for reducing food waste. WRAP has engaged with over 50 food companies so far and many are expected to sign up to the new agreement by the beginning of 2010.
 - ii. Helping food businesses identify and reduce waste in their supply chains through waste prevention reviews with members of the Food and Drink Federation.
- (For further details, see Annex A, section 5.9.)

- 2.32. Defra launched a new packaging strategy for the UK⁸ on 9 June 2009. The aim of the strategy is to minimise the environmental impact of packaging without compromising the product it is designed to protect. Government's vision is that by 2020, packaging is designed to use as little material as is needed to do the job, and designed with re-usability, recyclability or recovery in mind. (For more details, see Annex A, section 5.8.)

- 2.33. Defra published 'Anaerobic Digestion – Shared Goals'⁹ in February 2009. This has been developed jointly with a broad range of stakeholders and sets out our collective ambitions for the use of anaerobic digestion in this country. To date over 50 organisations have formally endorsed these shared goals. The Government appointed the Anaerobic Digestion Task Group to consider how we can achieve these collective ambitions. The Task Group

⁷ DECC (2009) *The UK Low Carbon Transition Plan*

⁸ Defra (2009) *Making the most of packaging: a strategy for a low carbon economy*

⁹ Defra (2009) *Anaerobic Digestion – Shared Goals*

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published an Implementation Plan¹⁰ in July setting out its recommendations for practical actions.

- 2.34. Other measures to encourage greater use of anaerobic digestion include the £10 million Anaerobic Digestion Demonstration Programme. Hilary Benn announced the five preferred bidders in June 2009. These projects will demonstrate the cutting edge use of anaerobic digestion to create renewable energy, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and avoid waste being sent to landfill.

Helping consumers achieve a healthy, balanced diet by reducing the levels of salt, sugar and saturated fat in foods

- 2.35. In February 2009 the Food Standards Agency ran a campaign to increase consumer awareness of the need to reduce saturated fat intakes. The campaign included television, poster and media advertising and partnerships with retailers and manufacturers, to provide simple practical tips to help people cut down their intakes. The Agency has continued discussions with the food and drink industry to explore the issues involved in reformulating foods, and making smaller portion sizes available. The Agency published a formal consultation on voluntary recommendations in July¹¹. The focus is on soft drinks, confectionery, biscuits and cakes. Recommendations for other food groups will follow in the autumn.

¹⁰ Defra (2009) *Developing an Implementation Plan for Anaerobic Digestion* see www.defra.gov.uk/environment/waste for more information

¹¹ see www.food.gov.uk/consultations/ukwideconsults/2009/saturatedfat

Government leadership on food

Public sector food procurement is a key lever for change within Government

- 2.36. Government spends £2 billion a year on food in schools, hospitals, prisons and in public sector workplaces. The Collaborative Food Procurement programme, facilitated by the Office for Government Commerce, aims to drive efficiency and increase value for money in public sector food procurement. A key factor in achieving this is greater collaboration between food procurers at local, regional and national levels to encourage competition and to open up the market for large, medium and small enterprises.
- 2.37. A Healthier Food Mark is being developed which will offer voluntary standards for the nutrition and sustainability of food provided in the public sector. Pilots for the Healthier Food Mark will begin later in 2009 in a range of public sector organisations. The pilots will test the nutrition and sustainability criteria that have been developed against a range of procurement models that are used in the public sector. Organisations will be able to apply to take part in the pilots via the Healthier Food Mark website. An evaluation will run alongside the pilots until summer 2010, followed by full consultation in 2011, to inform wider rollout of the initiative from 2012. (See Annex A, section 6.1 for details.)

Stronger arrangements to coordinate food policy across Government

- 2.38. Following the Machinery of Government changes in October 2008, Defra took on an enhanced role on food, and Defra's Secretary of State chairs the new Cabinet sub-committee on food. There is now much more dialogue between Government departments on food-related policies which means that opportunities to link policy initiatives are identified earlier, giving greater coherence to our work. The Food Strategy Task Force, established following the publication of *Food Matters*, provides a mechanism to discuss and take decisions at the most senior level within Government. Sub-groups of the Task Force are in place to improve coordination and collaboration on key projects arising from *Food Matters*. (See Annex A, section 7.1 for details.)
- 2.39. Defra has established a **Council of Food Policy Advisers** to provide independent advice on a wide range of food policy issues. The Council was established in December 2008, chaired by Dame Suzi Leather and supported by 15 members who bring experience and expertise from across the food chain. The Council's immediate priorities are:
- Sustainability metrics for a low impact, healthy diet;
 - Public sector food procurement;
 - Increasing consumption of 5-a-day;
 - Sustainable meat and dairy consumption
- Full details of the Council's membership, work programme and priorities are at <http://www.defra.gov.uk/foodrin/policy/council/priorities.htm>.

Improving food research coordination across Government

- 2.40. Government funds a range of research on food, from curiosity-driven science, to research with direct application into use, and evidence to inform policy development. This research

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covers a broad range of disciplines including biosciences, nutrition, economics and social sciences. *Food Matters* identified a need to coordinate this funding more effectively, to fill gaps in evidence and to achieve better value for the money spent on food-related research (which totalled around £390 million in 2007-08).

- 2.41. A strategy for food research and innovation is being developed, under the leadership of Professor John Beddington, the Government Chief Scientific Adviser, and with input from stakeholders. The strategy will identify concrete actions to join-up food research across Government and Research Councils, to address cross-cutting issues, and to identify key research gaps.
- 2.42. Alongside the forthcoming research strategy, a Food Research Partnership has been established. The Partnership brings together key stakeholders from Government, the public sector, industry, and the research community to improve UK food research and innovation in a collaborative manner. The partnership will address key issues identified in developing the joint research strategy, such as maintaining and improving the skills base, and translating research into practical use. (See Annex A, section 7.3 for details.)

Coordinating Government's communications campaigns on food

- 2.43. Government runs a number of public-facing campaigns on food. As recommended by *Food Matters*, Government departments are actively sharing consumer research and jointly planning future campaigns to ensure the coherence and consistency of messages on food.
- 2.44. One example of this is the Change4Life campaign, led by the Department of Health, which aims to raise awareness of the impacts of diet and exercise on health. A number of other Government departments have used the brand, each promoting specific activities to reinforce Change4Life's basic message of "eat well, move more, live longer", for example Swim4Life promotes free swimming for under 16s (led by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport), and Muckin4life encourages people to get involved in conservation and volunteering activities (led by Defra). (For further details, see Annex A, section 4.3.)

3. Priorities for the next 12 months

3.1. This section identifies key areas of work that we will be taking forward over the next year, to complete the actions set out in *Food Matters*, and to tackle new and emerging priorities.

Further improvements in food safety

3.2. The Food Standards Agency's objectives on food safety are to reduce foodborne illness and to reduce contamination in the supply chain. Key activities over the next 12 months include:

- Providing a fourth round of grant funding to local authorities in England to help small catering and food retail businesses to improve food safety through the *Safer Food, Better Business* initiative;
- Launching a *Safer Food Better Business* information pack for childminders, and a teaching pack for catering colleges later in the summer; and
- Developing a national *Scores on the Doors* scheme to make it easier for consumers to make informed choices about where to buy food when eating out. National rollout of the scheme will also encourage food businesses to improve standards.

Tackling obesity, improving dietary health and reducing food waste through clearer and accessible information

3.3. The cross-Government obesity strategy, *Healthy Weight Healthy Lives*¹² set out our challenge to industry through the Healthy Food Code of Good Practice. Priorities for the coming 12 months were set out in *Healthy Weight Healthy Lives: One Year*¹³ on, published in April 2009. Responsibility for delivering the Healthy Food Code in partnership with industry is shared between DH and the FSA.

3.4. The Food Standards Agency is encouraging voluntary introduction of **calorie labelling** on menus in cafes, restaurants and other food outlets. Consumer views and reactions to this labelling will be sought, and the practical implications for businesses will be assessed. The study will inform wider rollout. The FSA will continue to develop advice for different sectors, e.g. fish and chip shops, Indian restaurants, on the simple, practical actions small business owners can take to offer healthier foods on their menus.

3.5. In the autumn the Food Standards Agency will finalise its recommendations for voluntary reductions in **saturated fat and sugar** content, and recommendations on portion size for sugary soft drinks, biscuits, cakes and confectionery. The FSA will launch a further consultation on meat and dairy products and savoury snacks. The Agency will continue to provide consumer-facing advice and develop further specific advertising on reducing saturated fat consumption in early 2010.

3.6. Revised targets for reducing salt in food were published in May 2009 following public consultation. The FSA is working with the food industry to meet the challenging but

¹² Department of Health (2008) *Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives: A Cross-Government Strategy*

¹³ Department of Health (2009) *Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives: One Year On*

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achievable target, and to promote consumer demand for products that have a lower salt content. A consumer awareness campaign is planned for autumn 2009. This will focus on foods where choice of product can make a significant difference to salt intakes, and will provide more information to consumers to help them make healthier choices.

- 3.7. The Food Standards Agency is developing a single front of pack nutrition labelling scheme. The scheme will draw on the results of an independent study commissioned by the Food Standards Agency to evaluate the impact of the three main types of **front of pack nutrition labels** currently used on many food products. The study found that a single, consistent labelling scheme would be most helpful for consumers, containing the elements 'High, Medium and Low', traffic light colour coding and percentage of Guideline Daily Amount.
- 3.8. Consumers increasingly rely on **date labels** as a means of knowing what to eat by when, but don't always understand what the different date labels mean. This confusion can result in consumers unnecessarily throwing away food that may still be perfectly safe to eat, or potentially eating food that may no longer be safe to eat. WRAP, Defra and the Food Standards Agency are working with the food industry to:
- Improve consumer understanding and confidence in date labels;
 - Clarify existing guidance to industry on the use of date labels; and
 - Enable changes to industry practice that will lead to greater consistency and simplification in the use of date labels.
- 3.9. The Department of Health is looking at developing a set of voluntary principles to underpin all forms of marketing food and drink to children. This work is part of the Healthy Food Code which was published in the *Healthy Weight, Health Lives* strategy. It will look at marketing, promotion, advertising and point-of-sale placement, to reduce the exposure of children to foods that are high in fat, salt and sugar, and increase their exposure to healthier foods.

Developing a better understanding of what a healthy, sustainable diets looks like

- 3.10. The Sustainable Development Commission (SDC) has started a project to map the existing research and initiatives on a healthy sustainable diet, and to areas on which Government should focus to build consensus with stakeholders. The SDC work will also identify areas of further research that are required in order to fill gaps in the evidence base. Initial results from the project will be available early in the autumn.

Determining the food industry's potential to reducing greenhouse gas emissions

- 3.11. The food sector makes a significant contribution to climate change – around 116Mt CO₂ equivalent in 2006. The food industry is characterised by a small number of large manufacturers and retailers with a long tail of very diverse small and medium sized enterprises. These range in type from niche food manufacturers to boutique food retailers to independent restaurants each with different priorities and business models. We plan to identify whether there are any hot spots of greenhouse gas emissions in food businesses that are not being tackled by existing policies, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises. If there is evidence from analysis or discussions with stakeholders that food

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businesses could save money and reduce emissions through more efficient practices or technology, Government may consider whether further policies should be developed to overcome barriers to greater resource efficiency.

Developing a more thorough understanding of the links between low income, diet and social exclusion

- 3.12. Food price increases hit the poorest in society hardest, since they typically spend a larger proportion of their income on food than other groups. Defra is investigating what impact food price rises have had on the ability of certain groups to eat well and are assessing the impact of food price rises and the economic downturn on the poorest households. We are also working to develop a better understanding of how food consumption choices are made within households, and what the barriers are to eating healthy, sustainable food (whether these relate to income, pricing or skills, access etc).
- 3.13. The evidence review is currently underway and we will consider options for any potential policy interventions by autumn 2009.

Responding to the Competition Commission's groceries inquiry and the proposal to establish an Ombudsman

- 3.14. The Office of Fair Trading asked the Competition Commission to investigate the "supply of groceries by retailers in the UK" on 9 May 2006. The Commission found that, in many respects, competition in the UK groceries industry is effective and delivers good outcomes for consumers.
- 3.15. However, the Commission found that the retailers transferred excessive risk and unexpected costs to suppliers which could adversely affect investment and innovation in the supply chain, ultimately limiting the range, quality or value of groceries offered to consumers. The Commission therefore held a public consultation on a new strengthened Groceries Supply Code of Practice (GSCOP) and has now announced that it is ready to make an Order to establish it. The Commission also consulted on the voluntary establishment of an Ombudsman to arbitrate on disputes between retailers and suppliers and to investigate complaints under the new GSCOP. The Commission has not been successful in this attempt and has now recommended to Government that it considers the merits of doing so. We are grateful to the Commission for its work on this important market and will consider carefully the Competition Commission's findings and recommendations. The concept of an Ombudsman for the grocery market raises complex issues which impact on consumers and the wider economy.

Annex A: Detailed progress report

(Numbers against the actions refer back to the *Food Matters* report)

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3.1 Strategic policy objectives for food

Action: The Government will adopt the following strategic policy objectives for food:

- Fair prices, choice, access to food and food security through the promotion of open, competitive markets;
- Continuous improvement in the safety of food;
- The changes needed to deliver healthier diets; and
- A more environmentally sustainable food chain.

Timeline: complete – the objectives have been adopted

Lead: all departments

Progress:

Following the Machinery of Government changes in October 2008, Defra revised its departmental strategy and introduced a new Departmental Strategic Objective (DSO) *to ensure a sustainable, secure and healthy food supply*. This sits alongside existing objectives for sustainable production and consumption, and a thriving farming and food sector. Together these DSOs reflect the four strategic policy objectives for food set out in Food Matters. The four strategic objectives are also at the core of work Defra, FSA and DH are taking forward to develop a shared understanding with stakeholders and the public of 'sustainable food' (see action 3.2).

The Food Standards Agency has adopted two Strategic Objectives for its UK-wide strategy for 2010-2015: to improve food safety; and to improve the balance of the diet. The strategic objectives support the Government's strategic policy objectives for food.

Over the past year, the Department of Health have been taking forward implementation of our obesity strategy *Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives*. A key focus over the past year has been to promote healthier food choices. In April, DH published "*Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives: One Year On*". This document outlines how we will help people make healthier choices, and create an environment that promotes healthy lifestyles.

3.2 A vision and strategy for food

Action: The Government will test and refine the new strategic framework for food set out in *Food Matters*, as part of an open and collaborative process to be run over the next year

Timeline: For completion by autumn 2009

Lead department: Defra leading a partnership of Defra, DH and FSA

Progress:

- Sought stakeholders' views on the approach for the work
- Designed a programme of engagement based on developing the shared vision iteratively – starting with a 'straw man' and refining it through discussions and workshops with stakeholders
- Convened a series of discussions with stakeholders across the food system (from farm to consumer groups) with the aim of defining our shared goal for a 'sustainable, secure food system'
- Looking at economic, environmental and social sustainability, the synergies between those goals and the tensions. Where there are tensions, we are convening further discussions to unpick the issue and come up with solutions

Next steps:

- We will continue with our programme of engagement over the summer, including:
 - Publishing a short discussion paper on 'secure and sustainable food' to give a wider range of stakeholders an opportunity to comment and feed into the process;
 - Lead a series of workshops on the key themes/priorities that emerged from the stakeholder workshops we held in February and March
- We will publish our shared vision for a secure and sustainable food system (shared with stakeholders), with an accompanying action plan in the autumn.

Background

- The objectives of this project are to:
 - Define what we mean by a 'sustainable and secure food system';
 - Set up a roadmap to achieving our goal;
 - Build buy-in from stakeholders to help improve delivery of existing and future policies.
- The benefits of the work are to:
 - Give stakeholders more certainty on Government's thinking on sustainable food;
 - Demonstrate Government leadership on some of the big challenges in the food system; and
 - Develop a framework to give coherence to and to measure the success of policy initiatives – and to be clearer on where we should be focusing our efforts in order to achieve what we want to achieve on food.

4.1 Making it easier for consumers to access information on a healthy, low-environmental impact diet

Action: The FSA will expand its current advice to provide a one-stop-shop to consumers looking for information and advice on nutrition, food and sustainability and food safety.

Timeline: work to develop the new website will start later in 2009

Lead department: FSA

Progress to date:

- The FSA has completed scoping work for a new 'eatwell' website which incorporated consumer research into the amount and type of information sought on food and diet, and preferred presentation. The new website will address gaps in existing information, for example on local food and food security and will integrate messages on the environmental impacts of food choices with current healthy eating advice.

Next steps:

- The FSA, with support from other Government departments, will commission work to design and develop the new website, and, working with other departments, integrate information and advice currently available into one coherent website, and develop new sections of information to address the gaps. The implementation phase is expected to run for approximately 18 months from autumn 2009 to early 2011.

4.2 Making it easier for consumers to make healthy choices when eating out

Action: The FSA will launch a new programme focused on food eaten out of the home. It will work with food businesses and consumers to understand what information consumers would find helpful when eating out of the home and to improve the nutritional standard of the food on offer.

Timeline: Calorie labelling will start appearing in some outlets in summer 2009

Lead department: FSA

Progress to date

The FSA is engaging with the catering sector as part of its work with the wider food industry to reduce intakes of salt and saturated fat, to help consumers maintain an energy balance, and to increase the amount of nutrition information available to consumers. This supports the objectives of both *Food Matters* and the cross-Government obesity strategy *Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives*.

There are three strands to the FSA's work:

Catering commitments - working with caterers to provide **healthier options** to consumers. To account for the diversity of the sector the FSA has developed a "Flexible Framework" (covering procurement, kitchen practice, menu planning, and consumer information) that enables companies to tailor activities to suit their business. These activities include reducing the amount of fat, salt and sugar in popular dishes and providing a wider range of healthier options. Over 40 major companies have made public commitments that will help consumers to make healthier choices when eating out. The companies involved serve nearly 8 million customers every day and include:

- Twelve of the UK's largest providers of workplace catering
- Six major fast food chains
- Six major pub dining chains
- Eleven major coffee and sandwich shop chains
- Five major casual dining restaurants
- Two of the UK's largest foodservice suppliers

Engaging small businesses – expanding the work with the catering sector to cover small businesses. Guidance will be developed to include advice for different sectors, such as fish and chip shops, and Indian restaurants, and will provide simple, practical actions small business owners can take to make the foods they offer to consumers healthier.

Calorie labelling - taking forward the commitment within the *Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives* strategy to develop nutrition information in a wide range of catering settings which is clear, effective and simple to understand. The Agency is working with the catering industry to introduce **calorie labelling at point of choice**. To date some 20 companies - including high street names (Burger King, KFC, Pizza Hut, Pret-a-Manger, Subway, Wimpy) as well as workplace caterers, pub restaurants, theme parks and leisure attractions, and cafes – have agreed to voluntarily introduce calorie labelling at point of

choice by June 2009. This information appears on menu boards, paper menus or on the edge of shelves.

Independent research will take place over the summer and will assess how easily customers understand and use the information, and gather feedback from the restaurants themselves to look at practical issues and the costs involved in providing the information. In the autumn the FSA will consider the case and options for rolling-out calorie labelling more widely in catering settings.

Next steps

Commitments

- *The FSA will continue to work with the catering industry to increase the number of voluntary commitments.*

Calorie Labelling

- *Summer 2009: Businesses introduce calorie labelling and research takes place.*
- *Autumn 2009: Publication of research results.*
- *2009/2010: Wider roll-out of calorie labelling.*

Small Businesses

- *Summer 2009: Development of strategy for engaging small businesses.*
- *Autumn 2009: Generic and sector specific best practice guidance published.*

4.3 Aligning marketing and communication campaigns on food

Action: The Food Strategy Task Force will ensure that campaigns, public consultations and engagement efforts on food-related issues are better coordinated across departments

Timeline: ongoing

Lead department: Defra

Progress to date

- Defra chairs a cross-Whitehall group of communication practitioners. The group regularly share information on forthcoming campaigns and messages, identifying future opportunities for joint messaging and ensuring consistency and coherence of messages on food.
- Departments are also coordinating efforts on wider research and stakeholder engagement.
- Campaigns and other work which are already benefitting from increased cross-departmental coordination include:
 - DH's Change4Life campaign is aligned with other government departments e.g. the Department of Culture Media and Sport's (DCMS), Swim4Life and Defra's muckin4life. Over the coming year the campaign will extend to include adults, early years and ethnic minority communities, and the Change4Life team will work with other Government departments on this. Other Government departments are also involved in work to introduce sub-brands e.g. breakfast, walk, play, cook.
www.nhs.uk/change4life
 - FSA campaign activity highlighting public health risks of eating too much saturated fat was closely coordinated with DH to avoid over-burdening the target audiences with messages, and was timed to coincide with an appropriate break in DH's Change 4 Life campaign. The FSA and DH ensured consumer messaging and stakeholder partnership activity were clearly aligned, that each stage of activity did not compete and shared opportunities to amplify and complement each department's work.
 - The Defra-supported Reynolds-Cheshire campaign on eating seasonally, launched in May 2009, ensured coordination with work done by the School Food Trust on its "seasonality chart".
www.eatseasonably.co.uk

Next steps

Future opportunities for aligning food communications across Government include:

- FSA activity on salt consumption in autumn 2009 will be closely coordinated with DH's Change 4 Life campaign, exploring timing, approach, audience targeting and potential appropriate use of branding to reach shared audiences.

- Department of Health (DH)/Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF) are looking at developing a voluntary set of principles to underpin all forms of promotion and marketing of food and drink to children, particularly where established mandatory self- or co-regulatory regimes do not exist. DH will be working closely with DCMS, FSA and Defra as well as a range of external stakeholders during the development of this work.

- WRAP research has revealed that as much as 3 million tonnes of food is not being stored in the best way, or is being thrown away due to confusion over date labels. WRAP, the FSA and Defra will work together to help reduce food waste by improving consumer understanding of date labelling and food storage guidance.

5.1 Effective competition throughout the grocery supply chain

Action: (as at July 2008) The Government is currently considering the Competition Commission's recommendations in the final report from its Groceries Market Investigation published in April 2008

Timeline: initial response published in July 2008. The Commission has announced on 4 August that it is ready to make an Order establishing the GSCOP and is recommending to government that it considers the creation of an Ombudsman.

Lead department: BIS

Progress:

- Government published its response to the Competition Commission's inquiry in July 2008.
- The Competition Commission has since consulted publicly on its proposals for the new Groceries Supply Code of Practice (GSCOP). It has also consulted on its draft Undertakings to establish an Ombudsman to arbitrate on disputes between retailers and suppliers and investigate complaints under the new GSCOP. We will consider the Competition Commission's findings and recommendations carefully. The concept of an Ombudsman for the grocery market raises complex issues which impact on consumers and the wider economy.

5.2 A whole food chain approach to tackling food-borne illness

Action: To develop a 'whole food chain approach' to increase understanding of the public health and economic impacts of food safety hazards across the whole food chain. The aim of the analysis is to help ensure that resources and controls are targeted where they will be most effective at controlling risk.

Timeline: Results of the analysis are informing the FSA's strategic plan for 2010-2015

Lead department: FSA

Progress to date:

- High level analysis of food safety risks and official controls has been undertaken and reported to the FSA Board. A summary of the analysis was reported to the FSA Board in June 2009 to help inform development of the Agency's strategic plan for 2010-15.

Next steps

- More detailed analysis of priority food groups (e.g. poultry and red meat) is being carried out to understand better the hazards and control options across the food chain. Food chain analysis is likely to continue on an ongoing basis with analysis being updated as additional data becomes available, and to cover more priority food groups.

Background

Summary of the conclusions from the analysis:

Risks

- Foodborne diseases are by far the largest known food safety risk. Priority areas include campylobacter in poultry, salmonella in poultry and eggs and Listeria.
- The high priority given to reducing salmonella in pigs seems disproportionate in comparison to other higher risk areas.
- Chemicals used in food that we do not know about and are therefore not monitoring present a major risk. Horizon scanning and intelligence gathering are key to mitigating this risk

Controls

- Several official controls are not aligned to public health risks (i.e. very high inspection frequency for dairy farms and abattoirs compared to risks).
- High proportions of ruminants entering abattoirs are hosts to foodborne pathogens. Further areas to explore include:
 - Whether alternative or additional interventions prior to slaughter would be cost effective;
 - Whether enough is being done in abattoirs to contain risks from foodborne pathogens (linking with the review of official controls for meat).
- The main challenge for this analysis is the limited data and information available on hazards and on the impact of control options across the food chain. One output from the analysis will be to identify data and information gaps.

5.3 Animal feed and the regulation of GM products

Actions:

- a) Defra, working with the Food Standards Agency (FSA), will publish an analysis of the potential impacts of global trends in GM production on the UK livestock sector
- b) The FSA, working with Defra, will publish an analysis of the extent to which changes in the market are putting a strain on the regulatory system for GM products (including animal feed) and the implications for consumers

Timeline: The analytical papers will be published shortly on the respective departmental websites.

Lead departments: Defra & FSA

Progress to date

- Both Defra and the FSA have completed their respective analyses. The combined findings are
 - our livestock farmers are reliant on imported soya feed from Brazil and Argentina;
 - if the supply from these countries were halted it could have a very serious effect on our livestock sector;
 - it is unlikely that the UK would be able to obtain anything like the same volume of soya imports from other countries;
 - because of its cost and efficacy, soya is the most favoured protein feed currently available – so while other feeds could be used if necessary, it would have an adverse effect on the industry;
 - although identity-preservation systems normally allow for the operation of distinct commodity supply chains, they cannot guarantee the complete avoidance of unauthorised GM material, where a GM feed crop that doesn't have EU approval is being grown in a supplier country.
 - While it was encouraging that the EU did approve the import of two new GM feed crops last year, concerns remain.
- This work was delayed from the original timetable due to the need for an extensive economic analysis and follow-up peer review.

Next steps

- The individual reports will be published on the respective Departmental web sites.
- Defra and the FSA will continue to monitor the adoption of new GM crops in producer nations and the rate of approval of these for EU import, and continue to argue for the operation of the EU regime to be improved.

5.4 Increasing consumption of fruit and vegetables so that more people reach and exceed the 5 A DAY target

Action: DH will target messages aimed at increasing fruit and vegetable consumption in specific population groups who are least likely to consume fruit and vegetables, such as young men and low-income young families.

The Government will work with industry to increase the range of products that will count towards the 5 A DAY target, to improve product placement and the clarity of the message to consumers.

Timeline: the Action Plan will be published in autumn 2009

Lead department: Department of Health

Progress to date:

- Household purchases of fruit and vegetables has shown a gradual increase over recent years – since 1974, purchases of fruit and vegetables increased from the equivalent of 3 to 3.9 portions a day in 2006.
- The 5 A DAY programme provides information and advice to consumers through a range of channels: TV and radio advertising, printed material, PR and partnership marketing.
- The 5 A DAY logo is now used by over 550 organisations and on many well-known food brands
- DH have recently revised the advice on the number of portions for a pure fruit smoothie. Manufacturers can now apply to use the 5 A DAY logo, subject to meeting the criteria, for up to a maximum 2 portion count.
- Defra's Secretary of State held a roundtable meeting of key representatives from the fruit and vegetable industries on 20 July 2009. The objectives of the meeting were to consider barriers to increasing production and consumption of fruit and vegetables in England, and to consider what solutions might be available and how to take them forward.

Next Steps:

- Build on existing communication to address the gap between awareness, intention and action when it comes to eating 5 A DAY
- The School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme provides fruit and vegetables to Key Stage 1 children to promote the importance of eating more fruit and vegetables. DH will be providing fridges to schools to improve the range of foods available to children, and to reduce cost and food waste.
- Promote 5 A DAY as part of British Food Fortnight 19 September – 4 October 2009
- Explore potential to profile 5 A DAY through two 3rd sector organisations which have retail outlets in a number of hospitals across England.

5.5. Foresight Global Food and Farming Futures Project

Action: The Government's Chief Scientific Adviser will commission a major new Foresight project to examine the future global food system. This will explore how the food system and its associated policy framework will need to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

Timeline: Project launched in September 2008; completion late 2010

Lead department: Foresight team, Government Office for Science

Progress to date:

- The high-level question to guide the Project is: "How can a future global population of 9 billion all be fed healthily and sustainably?" The project will look to 2050 and will consider demand, production and supply as well as broader impacts of the global food and farming system.
- The project's scoping is now well underway with several lines of technical work being developed. These include: defining the food system; commissioning reviews of drivers of change and state of the art of science; modelling of the food system; undertaking regional case studies; and carrying out a study of marine and freshwater food production. Defra and DfID Ministers co-sponsor the project (Jim Fitzpatrick and Mike Foster).
- A High-Level Stakeholder Group has been convened with a strong international membership. Its role is to offer strategic advice on the direction of the project and to catalyse actions based on the project's findings. The first meeting took place on 19 May, co-chaired by the project's sponsoring Ministers.
- A Lead Expert Group has also been convened, comprising of 8 leading experts from a range of fields. The experts provide technical advice on the development of the project and ensure that the work is of the highest scientific standard.
- An Economics Advisory Group, which will oversee and ensure the quality of the project's economic analysis, met for the first time in May.
- In March the project convened a workshop which brought together international expertise in the global agricultural modelling to review existing models, to consider the state of the art in long-run scenario modelling, and to explore potential links and integration with climate change models. As well as generating an exchange of views between various modelling communities, the workshop made substantial progress in informing the modelling work of the project. The project also hosted a group of marine and freshwater experts to begin planning the aquatic food workstream in March. Following this meeting several studies of aquatic food production, in both marine and freshwater contexts, have been commissioned.

Next steps:

The project is being conducted in two phases; the first phase will collect evidence to identify the most important future challenges facing the food and farming system, whilst the second phase will analyse possible options for addressing these challenges. The project is currently in phase 1 and the evidence from phase 1 will be synthesised and phase 2 planned by Autumn 2009.

The project's findings are due to be launched around October 2010.

5.6 A smarter system for calculating greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture

Action: The Government will work towards the introduction of a ‘smarter’ system for calculating greenhouse gas emissions from UK agriculture. This system will be better able to recognise the kind of abatement technologies that will be adopted by farmers as they move to cut greenhouse gas emissions.

Timeline: Research completed by 2013 in time to support a new climate change agreement

Lead department: Defra

Progress to date:

- Research is underway to refine the UK GHG inventory, to reduce the uncertainty in the estimates and to test the effects of mitigation options.
- Defra will be commissioning further work to improve the inventory’s methodology and to enable it to account for the effects of mitigation options which appear to be the most cost-effective in delivering a reduction in GHG emissions from agriculture.
- The results of this work will also feed into Defra’s work on carbon budgets for agriculture.

Background

As part of Defra’s Farming for the Future Programme, a research project “Inventories of Ammonia and Greenhouse Gases from UK Agriculture” was commissioned in April 2008, prior to the publication of *Food Matters*. Its aim is to develop a more detailed, robust inventory model for estimating emissions of ammonia, nitrous oxide and methane from UK agriculture and to deliver inventory estimates for each of these gases for the years 2007 – 2011. In taking forward our commitment to developing a ‘smarter’ inventory system for calculating GHG emissions from UK agriculture, Defra will be commissioning further work in Autumn 2009 to improve the inventory’s methodology and to enable it to account for the effects of mitigation options which appear to be the most cost-effective in delivering a reduction in GHG emissions from agriculture.

Defra’s work on agriculture and climate change includes looking at the challenges of tackling GHG emissions from the agriculture, forestry and land management sector. This includes work in the following areas:

- Working directly with the sector to raise awareness and encourage behavioural change, primarily through the Rural Climate Change Forum. This is a high level stakeholder group, which provides advice on policy, research and communications for climate change and land management (comprising the Agricultural Industries Confederation, the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board, the Carbon Trust, the CLA, the Environment Agency, the Forestry Commission, the NFU, the National Trust, Natural England, RSPB, the Soil Association and the Sustainable Development Commission).
- Building greater awareness of climate change among farmers, primarily through the Farming Futures communications project which Defra funds (£150k up to March 2010). Farming Futures provides advice to farmers on the impacts of climate change and what they can do to deal with

this and reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. It has produced a series of fact sheets and case studies, some of which focus on reducing emissions from the livestock sector. It is also holding a series of regional workshops for farmers.

- Carrying out further analysis of policy instruments that have potential to drive reductions in GHG emissions in the agriculture, forestry and land management sector. This sector, like every other sector will need to play its part in reducing emissions. We are examining, with stakeholders, what kind of policy framework will be needed to ensure that the savings which are available from this sector are realised. The work of the Climate Change Committee and the Rural Climate Change Forum are important inputs to this.
- Driving faster growth in the uptake of anaerobic digestion by farmers, businesses and local authorities. Anaerobic Digestion has the potential to be a win-win technology as it can help reduce GHG emissions (e.g. from manures, slurries and other organic matter such as food waste), generate renewable energy, and reduce waste going to landfill.

This work is supported by a strong Farming and Food Science Programme. This includes a specific programme of research on agriculture and climate change (around £5m per year), focusing on how to measure and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture and how climate change will impact on UK agriculture.

5.7 Action to transform European agriculture's response to the risks, responsibilities and opportunities of climate change

Action: The Government will promote the role of agriculture in both the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change. It will work closely with other major partners, such as Germany and France, to build consensus on priorities and secure effective action.

Timeline: Seminar held with the French on 16-17 June 2009

Lead department: Defra

Progress to date

- We are working closely with other major partners such as Germany and France to promote the role of agriculture in both the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change.

Next steps

- We are now following up on actions from the UK-France Experts' Seminar which we organised in partnership with the French Ministry of Agriculture on Wednesday 17 June in Paris.

Background

UK-France High Level Experts' Seminar on Agriculture and Climate Change

The seminar was held in Paris on 17 June, preceded by a Ministerial reception at the British Embassy attended by both Hilary Benn and the French Minister for Agriculture, Michel Barnier in Paris on Tuesday 16 June. The Seminar was well attended by officials, farmers unions, NGOs and scientists from both countries. It was also attended by representatives from the current and upcoming EU presidencies, the EU commission, Denmark (host of COP15), OECD and UNFCCC. The aims of the seminar were to:

- Consider the role of agriculture in greenhouse gas mitigation and the prospects for future emissions reduction;
 - Share French and UK experiences on policy, research and communications;
 - Discuss future priorities and mechanisms for enhancing agriculture's role in climate change mitigation; and
 - Consider the EU and global context, including the road to COP-15 in Copenhagen.
- There was agreement for continuous collaboration between both countries on a range of key issues related to agriculture and climate change. French officials have been invited to London in the autumn to continue discussions on various issues of common interest including awareness raising, anaerobic digestion, research and development, development of national greenhouse gas inventories, and strategy for the international negotiations in Copenhagen later this year.
 - An article co-written by Hilary Benn and Michel Barnier appeared in Le Figaro on 16 June, covering the future challenges for agriculture and food security in the context of climate change, and stressing the need for the two countries to continue to work together.

Follow up to the UK-Germany Experts' Seminar on Agriculture and Climate Change

- Following up on the UK-Germany experts' seminar held in February 2008 in Berlin, a Defra representative attended a two day workshop in Germany in June 2009. A German representative also attended the UK-French seminar.

5.8 A new food packaging strategy

Action: A new strategy for dealing with food packaging waste will be developed, set within the framework provided by the Waste Strategy for England (2007), and the EU Packaging and Waste Directive. It will aim to get incentives better aligned along the food chain to encourage more prevention of excess packaging and more re-use and recycling. It will aim also to improve information flows between food manufacturers, retailers, consumers, local authorities and re-processors.

Timeline: the strategy was published on 9 June 2009

(<http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/waste/topics/packaging/strategy.htm>)

Lead departments: Defra, BIS

- The new Packaging Strategy (entitled *Making the Most of Packaging*) was published on 9 June 2009 and sets a clear direction for packaging policy for the next ten years, with the overall aim of minimising the environmental impact of packaging, without compromising its ability to protect the product.
- Government will work with a range of delivery bodies (e.g. WRAP, Envirowise and others) and industry so that in 10 years' time, packaging is designed to use as little material as will do the job, and with re-usability, recyclability or recovery in mind – as standard
- The Strategy also sets out plans to improve the recycling of packaging waste, particularly glass, plastics and aluminium, with a focus on the household waste stream and on quality. The intention is ensure that over time the UK achieves a recycling rate similar to the best EU performers.

Background

The strategy has been produced by Defra, BIS and the Devolved Administrations, following a review of packaging policy with input from key industry stakeholders.

The strategy sets out how packaging policy will play its part in the climate change and resource efficiency agenda, and how it will address consumer concerns about packaging.

The key themes of the strategy are:

- **Optimising packaging** through better design and through voluntary agreements on minimisation/reduction
- **Maximising recycling.** This will involve increasing the proportion of packaging steel, glass, paper and above all aluminium and plastics collected for recycling, working with businesses and local authorities. It will also involve increasing the proportion of glass collected in such a way that it can be used for re-melt to make new containers, and develop sorting and reprocessing technologies that allow more closed loop recycling of plastics.

The Strategy indicates the intention to look at other environmental indicators, such as carbon-based measures, as opposed to a simple weight based system. This is a complex and challenging area and will require significant work following publication.

5.9 Reducing food waste and recovering energy

Action: The Government will work with the Waste & Resources Action Programme (WRAP) and the food industry to secure a new voluntary agreement to cut significantly the amount of food wasted in the supply chain and in the home

Timeline: A new agreement is expected to be reached and signed by companies early in 2010

Lead department: WRAP, working with Defra and the FSA

Progress to date:

- WRAP have taken a twin-track approach to this work:
 - Working with the food industry to reduce food waste in the supply chain; and
 - Raising consumer awareness through the Love Food Hate Waste campaign.

On reducing food waste in the supply chain:

- Improving data: the industry and regulators identified lack of knowledge on the composition and amount of waste in supply chains. WRAP is therefore calculating packaging, food and non-food waste at all points within the supply chain and identifying opportunities to reduce that waste.
- Waste prevention reviews: helping members of the Food and Drink Federation to find ways to prevent or reduce packaging and product wastes. WRAP have also worked with the industry to develop resource maps – these provide a detailed analysis of where waste occurs in specific food categories. WRAP then give advice on the best solutions to improve resource and carbon efficiency.

On the Love Food Hate Waste campaign:

- The multi-media campaign was been launched in November 2007, and re-launched in April 2009.
- Evaluation of the first phase of the campaign shows that people are developing new habits in an attempt to avoid food waste – including: storing fruit and vegetables in the fridge, using the freezer more, planning meals and making lists before going shopping, and using up leftovers.
- The next phase of the campaign, launched in April 09, is based on the proposition that “it pays to be a food lover” – the idea being that a food lover gets the most from what he/she buys. The ‘love food hate waste’ website has a number of tips and recipes to avoid food waste, helping save consumers up to £50 a month.

Next steps

Working with the food industry to help reduce food wasted by consumers:

- The current 42 signatories to the Courtauld Commitment (WRAP’s voluntary agreement with the food and drink industry) have agreed to help reduce the amount of food wasted by householders by 155,000 tonnes by 2010.

- WRAP will be working with the food and drink industry to set a new target for reducing food waste. The new target will deliver savings of over £370million to UK consumers, and will equate to a saving of almost 700,000 tonnes of CO₂ emissions (equivalent to taking 220,000 cars off the road for a year)
- Ways of making it easier for consumers to waste less food will include:
 - Making sure that there is an appropriate range of pack/portion sizes are available
 - Using packaging technologies to extend shelf life without losing product quality
 - Providing clear advice on food storage and use
 - Trialling and introducing retail promotion strategies that are less likely to lead to food waste in the home e.g. “buy one get one free” offers on short life, perishable food items in favour of “half-price” offers, backed up with hints, tips and recipes to enable consumers to take advantage of promotions.

A successor to the Courtauld Commitment:

- WRAP is currently negotiating a successor to the Courtauld Commitment to span 2010 to 2015. The current proposal shifts the emphasis from weight-based targets towards a carbon reduction scheme, focusing on reducing the carbon impacts associated with traditional grocery products, including their associated packaging systems.
- Over 50 companies are currently expected to sign up to the new agreement, with the first tranche of companies expected to sign-up in early 2010.

6.1 Improving the nutritional standards and environmental sustainability of food served in the public sector in England

Action: More nutritious, environmentally sustainable food will be delivered through a new 'Healthier Food Mark' linked to standards for food served in the public sector. The standards will help in delivering better food with existing resources. The scheme will be voluntary initially and piloted within central Government, HM Prison Service and NHS services. Government will then consider if compliance should be made compulsory in England for central government and prisons. As the scheme progresses, all public bodies in England will eventually be encouraged to sign up – ensuring a minimum standard of healthier food across the public sector.

Timeline: Voluntary scheme defined and ready for piloting by autumn 2009

Lead department: DH

Progress to date:

- Draft criteria for nutrition and sustainability have been developed for the Healthier Food Mark which were discussed at a stakeholder event in Birmingham on 30 April. The stakeholder event galvanised the goodwill and support that exists for the initiative, and gave participants an opportunity to discuss how to make the scheme work in practice, given the breadth of different organisations and procurement models that are used in the public sector. A Healthier Food Mark website will be launched in summer 2009, which will have a twofold purpose: to act as a means of communication with stakeholders and to enable organisations to register to participate in pilots.
- The Office of Government Commerce (OGC) will ensure through the Collaborative Food Procurement Programme that full consideration is given to the commercial implications of the Healthier Food Mark, particularly in contractual requirements and within its strategic supplier engagement programme

Next steps

- The Healthier Food Mark will be piloted later in 2009. An evaluation will run alongside the pilots until summer 2010. Full consultation will follow the pilots in 2010 with the aim of going live by 2011.

Background:

The objective is to establish a voluntary Healthier Food Mark in the public sector so that public sector food can be an exemplar, makes a positive contribution to a nutritionally balanced diet, and improves the sustainability of public sector food procurement.

Scope:

The Healthier Food Mark will be awarded to participating public sector organisations that achieve specified standards for their catering services. Guidance will be issued to assist participating caterers in the application of the standards. Though initially the Healthier Food Mark will be available to all public sector organisations, there is no reason why it could not in time be extended to the private

sector organisations, given that many private sector commercial catering companies provide catering facilities within public sector organisations.

The Healthier Food Mark will operate in England. The Scottish Government and Consumer Focus Scotland will continue to roll out their Healthy Living Award north of the border. Colleagues in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are engaged on any opportunities and impacts provided by the Healthier Food Mark. In Wales, they will continue to roll out the Healthy Options Award as the approach to promoting healthier choices in catering businesses.

The draft framework for the Healthier Food Mark is based on three tiers. The first level has standards that have been designed to be achievable in the short term by the majority of public sector organisations, which are broadly aligned with good practice and the various voluntary agreements in place between Government and industry. The second level is for progressive organisations that may already have achieved the entry level, but again will be aligned with good practice in industry. Finally, the top level has been set at a sufficiently high level for those organisations who may want to aspire to much higher levels of nutritional provision and sustainability.

We will also seek to align the mark as far as possible with other initiatives in the field such as the nutritional standards in schools, the Department of Health's Improving Nutritional Standards – Joint Action Plan, the Food for Life work and the sustainability agenda.

7.1 A food strategy task force

Action: The Cabinet Office will chair a new cross-Whitehall Food Strategy Task Force which will coordinate departments' work on food issues and the Government's medium-term response to developments in international food markets, and will track and ensure progress in delivering measures in *Food Matters*. Sub groups of the Task Force will take forward individual key actions on a cross-Whitehall basis, each with a lead department.

Timeline: Established in October 2008

Lead department: Cabinet Office

Progress:

- The Food Strategy Task Force has been established and it meets roughly quarterly.
- Sub groups of the Task Force have been set up to oversee and give strategic steer to 6 particular workstreams:
 - Global food markets
 - Food communications
 - Developing a vision for a sustainable and secure food system
 - Joint Food Research Strategy
 - Healthier Food Mark
 - Integrated Advice to Consumers
- Since the publication of *Food Matters*, a new cabinet sub-committee on food has been established, which gives Secretaries and Ministers of state from all the key departments a dedicated opportunity to discuss and take decisions on food policy across the piece. Details of the committee's membership is available at:
<http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/secretariats/committees/daf.aspx>

7.2 Improving food policy outcomes through the performance management framework

Action: The Government will consider how best to incentivise efforts to reduce the public health and environmental harms associated with food and to support the food economy within the performance management framework for the next Spending Review.

Timeline: In advance of the next Spending Review

Lead department: Food Strategy Task Force, Cabinet Office

Progress:

With the four strategic policy objectives for food (see Annex A, section 3.1) now embedded in Departments' aims, we are not currently proposing introducing a new formal performance measure on food.

Defra will be measuring and reporting on progress towards achieving our goal of a safe, healthy, sustainable and equitable food system. We are developing a set of indicators to measure the direction of travel towards a sustainable food system – a draft set of these indicators have been published for consultation and finalisation by the autumn.

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/foodrin/security/indicators.htm>

7.3 A joint research strategy for food

Action: The Government will put in place a cross-departmental strategy to ensure coordination of departmental research and development relating to safe, low-impact food and a healthy diet, working with the Research Councils and other funders.

Timeline: for publication in autumn 2009

Lead department: Government Office for Science

Progress to date:

- An outline strategy for food research and innovation has been developed, under the leadership of Professor John Beddington and with input from stakeholders.
- A 'Food Research Partnership' has been established to promote cross-sector dialogue and improve the UK food research and innovation system through collaboration between the funders and users of research.

Next steps:

- The Strategy is expected to be published in autumn 2009.

Background:

A strategy for food research and innovation is being developed by a cross-government group bringing together key public sector funders of food-related research, including Departments (BIS, Defra, DFID, DH and FSA), Research Councils (BBSRC, ESRC, MRC and NERC), NDPBs (TSB) and the Devolved Administrations (Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland).

The strategy will sit across the more detailed research programmes of the various funders, concentrating on areas where greater collaboration and joint initiatives between funders will be beneficial. The strategy will also identify opportunities to address cross-cutting issues including improving and maintaining the skills base and research infrastructure, and promoting translation and dissemination of research.

As a linked initiative, a 'Food Research Partnership' has been established, bringing together senior representatives of Government, the public sector, academics, NGOs and industry from across food and agriculture. The Partnership will focus where there is an opportunity to change and improve the UK food research and innovation system through collaboration between the funders and users of research.

7.4 Public reporting on progress

Action: The Food Strategy Task Force will report to the Prime Minister on progress made in implementing the actions identified in this report and on key developments in the UK food system in summer 2009 and summer 2010. These reports will be published.

Timeline: First progress report by July 2009; second by July 2010

Lead department: Food Strategy Task Force

- Defra are coordinating public reporting on progress given their lead role in coordinating food policy across Government.
- This document forms the first progress update. A second update will be published in summer 2010.

7.5 Clarifying the interface between DH and the FSA on healthy eating

Action: DH and the FSA will publish a joint statement clarifying the roles and responsibilities for the Healthy Food Code of Good Practice

Timeline: completed

Lead departments: DH, FSA

Progress:

- DH and FSA sent a joint letter to interested parties in July 2008, which was also published on their websites.
- The letter sets out which department leads on particular aspects of the Healthy Food Code of Good Practice.
- The Healthy Food Code of Good Practice is reviewed annually to ensure it reflects progress and new developments.