

KEY MESSAGES FROM WALES

Overwhelmingly, citizens want systemic change and are calling for:

- Leadership, collaboration and governance
- Support for farming to be more sustainable and for businesses to pay farmers fairly for work
- Taxation and standards to increase access to healthier food
- A stronger local food system and food culture change

Citizens support policies that will ensure a fairer food system for producers, farmers and the environment:

- More than 4 in 5 citizens (81.8%) support strict nutrition standards for early years settings, schools and public institutions
- 73% of citizens support bans on UPFs being sold in schools and hospitals
- 66% of citizens want to see a strong regulatory framework that increases fairness in the system between retailers, suppliers and farmers
- 64% of citizens support restrictions on junk food advertising
- 60% of citizens support the introduction of a windfall tax for big food companies, with revenue raised being directed to initiatives that will increase the accessibility and affordability of healthier food*

*Data from research undertaken with citizens during their participation in *The Food Conversation*

The Food Conversation: Wales

The Food Conversation, a much-needed opportunity to ask citizens what they really want from food, involves hundreds of people across the UK. In May and June it took place in North and South Wales.

VIEWS OF THE FOOD SYSTEM

There was broad consensus in Wales on some key themes:

- **Political:** current governance structures and food policies are too complex and disjointed. There is a need for coherent and long-term planning for the entire food system with clear leadership
- **Environment and climate:** unsustainable farming practices are leading to soil degradation, land clearance, and pollution, as well as the farming sectors' impact on and resilience to climate change
- **Animal welfare:** intensive livestock farming practices are a particular concern in South Wales
- **Food Culture:** better food choices are limited by disconnection from food production and a lack of understanding about food and nutrition
- **Power:** supermarkets and large food businesses hold too much power compared to local food producers / farmers
- **Ultra-processed Foods (UPFs):** UPFs are too accessible and heavily marketed with huge health impacts
- **Inequalities:** lack of access to healthy food for too many
- **Health:** poor diets impact the NHS
- **Unsustainable:** current system is unsustainable - from environmental and health impacts to a lack of leadership and accountability

A SNAPSHOT OF WHAT WE HEARD:



CONSENSUS AROUND KEY POLICIES AND ACTIONS

Leadership: a National Food Plan for Wales was a popular suggestion among citizens, recognising the specific needs of Wales. Led by a Food Minister, citizens see potential in a dedicated independent regulatory body. They identify the Future Generations Act as key to ensuring duty of care to future generations – including food education and free school meals.

Farming: citizens understand the impact of current farming practices on the environment and the importance of incentivising farmers to transition to sustainable and regenerative farming (3 in 4 support). Citizens want training, advice and financial support – in the form of a guaranteed agricultural transition budget (2 in 3 support). There is also concern about a fair price for farmers.

Taxation and standards: citizens want to see unhealthy produce, such as UPFs, phased out and replaced with accessible and affordable healthy alternatives. They view taxation on food companies or policies that make sure all food sold in public institutions meets strict standards as tools to achieve this.

Local food: citizens see a potential for a stronger food culture with government investment in local food hubs to increase the sense of community – perhaps linked to St David's Day.

- More than 3 in 4 citizens (77%) want changes in the national curriculum and school provision to ensure that children leave school with a knowledge of the food system and know how to grow and cook healthy food.
- Citizens in North Wales support national legislation to embed food, health and wellbeing into the curriculum
- Citizens in South Wales want wider changes to improve the school food environment, such as the provision of free school meals

CONCLUSION

People in Wales want a fairer food system, with accessible and affordable food for all and a fairer deal for farmers. The public appetite for food system policy to achieve such a system is incredibly high.

For more information about The Food Conversation, including how citizens are identified to take part, where else in the country it is taking place and more, visit: [The Food Conversation](#)