Going large: taking a broader public health approach to food

Jill Muirie
In other words….

How can we move towards a food system that supports our public health vision ("A Scotland where everyone thrives")?
A food system?

The cycle of food growing/production, processing, distribution, retail, consumption and disposal.

- Food systems are complex and interconnected.
- The food system influences many aspects of our health and wellbeing, inequalities, our economy and our environment.
Proportion of disposable income* used up if the Eatwell Guide Cost was spent by all households, by income decile

74%

29%

20%

21%

18%

15%

13%

11%

9%

6%

Income decile 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

* After housing costs

Broader public health issues across the food system

- Funding challenges facing community food projects
- Lack of quality employment in the food sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Food Industry (wholesaling, retailing, agriculture)</th>
<th>All UK employees</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low paid</td>
<td>46.5%</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum wage</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>7%</td>
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Broader public health issues across the food system

- Funding challenges facing community food projects
- Lack of quality employment in the food sector
- Reliance on complex, global supply chains
- Dominance of global food businesses

Source: Oxfam International.
www.behindthebrands.org
Broader public health issues across the food system

- Funding challenges facing community food projects
- Lack of quality employment in the food sector
- Reliance on complex, global supply chains
- Dominance of global food businesses
- Environmental impacts of intensive food production
Broader public health issues across the food system

- Funding challenges facing community food projects
- Lack of quality employment in the food sector
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- Environmental impacts of intensive food production
- Food waste

Food Waste, Scotland 2016
= 987,890 tonnes
Broader public health issues across the food system

- Funding challenges facing community food projects
- Lack of quality employment in the food sector
- Reliance on complex, global supply chains
- Dominance of global food businesses
- Environmental impacts
- Food waste
- Climate change
A policy ‘cacophony’
(Prof Tim Lang, City University London)
The right to food: Our individual right to sufficient, nutritious food, as well as our collective right to a fair and sustainable food system.
THE GLOBAL GOALS
For Sustainable Development
The Public Health Priorities for Scotland

1. Scotland where we live in vibrant, healthy and safe places and communities.
2. A Scotland where we flourish in our early years.
3. A Scotland where we have good mental wellbeing.
4. A Scotland where we reduce the use of and harm from alcohol, tobacco and other drugs.
5. A Scotland where we have a sustainable, inclusive economy with equality of outcomes for all.
6. A Scotland where we eat well, have a healthy weight and are physically active.
How can we work towards a food system that supports and enables health, and social and environmental justice in Glasgow?
A GCPH seminar in 2014 asked “how can we promote healthier cities through more sustainable food systems”?

A partnership of interested people and organisations was formed.

This became the ‘Glasgow Food Policy Partnership’ (GFPP).
The Glasgow Food Policy Partnership

Public, private and third sector partners working together towards our goals:

• Everyone has access to fresh, fair, healthy, affordable food;
• Growing and cooking food brings communities together;
• The local food economy is thriving;
• We can all enjoy and celebrate diverse, tasty and healthy food; and
• Our food is produced and disposed of in a way that’s good for the environment as well as us.
Making it happen?

• Consider the whole food system
  – where are the opportunities?
• Learn from others (‘Sustainable Food Cities’)
  – what has worked?
• Ambition and cross-sectoral leadership
  – who are the champions?
• Make connections - national/local; between policies.
  – where are the synergies?
• Support and enable communities
  – what do they need and how do we learn from them?
• Build a stronger local food economy
  – can we get a bigger bang for our buck?
Supporting and enabling communities

Did you know Glasgow is a Veg City?
Sign up here: vegcities.org

https://glasgowfood.net/
Building a stronger local economy

Multiplier effect:
Spending £10 in a local food outlet is worth £25 to the local economy.
(source: LM3, New Economics Foundation)

Benefits from investing more in the local food system:
• Money is spent and reinvested within the local community
• Supports local businesses and local employment
• Reduces food miles and carbon emissions
• Builds a more resilient local food system
• Supports more vibrant neighbourhoods
Next: Towards a city strategy

- Sustainable Food Cities Coordinator.
- City food summit (May 2019).
- Commitment to a city strategy.
- September 2020.
Key messages

• The current food system can impact negatively on public health - beyond dietary related ill-health and food insecurity.

• More connected action on health, equity and sustainability across the broader food system could help achieve multiple public health priorities.

• There are promising developments nationally and in communities that need our support.

• City/locality level strategies can help connect national and local developments, and across sectors and policies.

• Public health has an important role in leading, supporting and enabling change across the food system.
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http://goodfoodforall.co.uk/

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