

The Rt Hon Emma Reynolds MP, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs,
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

cc. Dame Angela Eagle DBE MP, Minister of State for Food Security and Rural Affairs

3 December 2025

By email

Dear Secretary of State,

Collectively, we are five alliances; Eating Better, Sustain: the alliance for better food and farming, Obesity Health Alliance, Wildlife and Countryside Link and Plant-based Food Alliance. We represent over 160 civil society and business organisations spanning health, animal welfare, conservation, food production, farming and social justice sectors. Earlier this year, we formed the Food Strategy Alliances to ensure civil society organisations working across the food sector have a coherent voice and unified role in supporting the development and delivery of a successful UK Food Strategy.

As alliances, we believe in the potential that a food systems approach to policy-making can have across farming, environment, health, social justice and animal welfare. We recognise that poor diets are holding back economic growth. We therefore welcome the UK Government's commitment to this exciting, transformative and cross-cutting policy agenda. We want to support policymakers to meet the opportunities of the upcoming Food Strategy at this important moment for the future of food and farming in the UK.

Below we have outlined key asks across three areas of delivery that the Government must address in the Food Strategy. These asks have the firm backing of civil society and address the UK Government's priorities: Healthier and More Affordable Food, Good Growth, Sustainable and Resilient Supply Chains, and Vibrant Food Cultures. These asks are our starting point and may expand as the Food Strategy process evolves.

Our calls align with the overarching aim of providing a resilient supply of healthy and sustainable food, and the vision as set out in the UK Government's Good Food Cycle of "A healthier, more affordable, sustainable and resilient 21st century UK food system that grows the economy, feeds the nation, nourishes people, and protects the environment and climate, now and in the future".

We are clear that primary legislation is necessary to achieve the vision and priority outcomes of the Food Strategy, provide a framework for accountable action, and to future-proof our food system for the long-term. However, we also provide asks that do not necessarily require legislation to enable progress; for example, redirecting funding, updating existing regulations, and implementing existing policies more effectively.

Finally, there is strong public support for these approaches and an ever-growing awareness amongst the UK public about the need for transformational change of our food system.

Top requirements for the UK Government from the Food Strategy Alliances:

- **Create a joined-up healthy food and sustainable farming plan - backed by legislation**
- **Put nature and climate friendly farming and growing at the core of the Food Strategy**
- **Make healthy, sustainable, culturally appropriate diets affordable and accessible to everyone in the UK**

Detailed asks can be found on page 4 onwards.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you and your colleagues to discuss in more detail in advance of the Food Strategy action plan (expected Spring 2026). We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Rebecca Sunter, Executive Director (Interim), Eating Better

Kath Dalmeny, Chief Executive, Sustain: The alliance for better food and farming

Katharine Jenner, Director, Obesity Health Alliance

Richard Benwell, CEO, Wildlife & Countryside Link

Marisa Heath, CEO, Plant Based Food Alliance

Supported by the following alliance members:

Action On Salt and Sugar | AFN Network+ | Adfree Cities | Alexandra Rose Charity | Allergy Alliance | Alliance to Save Our Antibiotics | Association of Directors of Public Health | Baby Milk Action | Behaviour Change | Better Food Traders | Beyond GM | The Biodynamic Association | The Bio-Dynamic Agricultural College | Bite Back 2030 | British Association for the Study of Community Dentistry | British Dental Association | British Dietetic Association | British Heart Foundation | Bumblebee Conservation | Campaign for National Park | Caroline Walker Trust | Centre for Agroecology Water and Resilience | Centre for Food Policy, | City St George's, University of London | Changing Markets Foundation | Chartered Institute of Environmental Health | Chefs in Schools | Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) | Children's Alliance | CLEAR | Client Earth | Commonwork Trust | Community Supported Agriculture | Compassion in World Farming | CPRE The Countryside Charity | Crack'd | Diabetes UK | Diverse Nutrition Association | Dung Beetles for Farmers | E.coli 0157 | Edinburgh Community Food | English Organic Forum | European Public Health Alliance | Faculty for Public Health | Fairtrade Foundation | FareShare | Farm Wilder | Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group SouthWest | Feedback | First Steps Nutrition Trust | Flora | FoodCycle | Food Ethics Council | Food Matters | Food Sense Wales | Food Systems and Policy Group, University of Hertfordshire | Forum for the Future | Four Paws | Friends of the Earth | Gaia Foundation | Garden Organic | Global Justice Now | GMB Union | GM Freeze | Good Food Institute | Green Alliance | Green Christian | Greenpeace UK | Growing Communities | Health Education Trust | Health Equalities Group | HENRY | HSI UK | Hubbub | Humane World for Animals | Incredible Edible | Independent Food Aid Network (IFAN) | International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) | Kids Kitchen | Kindling | Landworkers Alliance | LEAF | Made In Hackney | Madre Brava | Magic Breakfast | Marine Conservation Society | Marine Stewardship Council | Meat Free Mondays | Medact | National Federation of Women's Institutes (WI) | National Trust | Nature Friendly Farming Network | New Economics Foundation | NME Plastic | Nourish NI | Nourish Scotland | NUS Charity | Oatly | Open Food Network | Oral Health Foundation | Oxford Real Farming Conference (ORFC) | Organic Farmers & Growers | Organic Growers Alliance | Organic Research Centre | Oxford Climate Alumni Network (OXCAN) | Pasture for Life | People Need Nature | Peat Free Partnership | Permaculture Association | Peoples Trust for Endangered Species | Pesticide Action Network UK | Plant-based Health Professionals | Plantlife | ProVeg | Quorn | Rare Breeds Survival Trust (RBST) | Real Zero | River Action | Royal Academy of Culinary Arts, Chefs Adopt a School Trust | Royal Society for Public Health | Royal Society for the Protection of Birds | RSPCA | School Food Matters | School of Artisan Food | Scotland The Bread | ShareAction | Slow Food UK | Social Farms and Gardens | Soil Association | SOS-UK | Stockfree Farming | Sustainable Food Trust | Sustainable Healthy Food Group | Sustainable Restaurant Association | Sustainable Soils Alliance | Table Debates | The Country Trust | The Food Foundation | The Humane League | The Orchard Project | The Real Farming Trust | The Scottish Pantry Network | The Wildlife Trusts | The Woodland Trust | Think Through Nutrition | This is Rubbish | UKHACC | UNISON | Unite the union | Transform Trade | Vegan Society | Vegetarian for Life | Vegetarian Society | Which? | Whole Health Agriculture | Women's Environmental Network | World Animal Protection | World Cancer Research Fund UK | Worldwide Opportunities on Organic Farms (WWOOF) | WRAP | WWF Scotland | WWF-UK

Summary

1. Create a joined-up healthy food and sustainable farming plan - backed by legislation

- 1.1 Introduce a Food Bill** - Primary legislation should establish the food system impact targets, and long-term levers, that will support the cross-government action needed to transform the food system for current and future generations.
- 1.2 Ensure policy coherence and joined-up government** - The Food Strategy must be co-developed and integrated alongside existing and new food-related strategies. It should provide an aligned, consistent and integrated framework to: support farmers through a just transition towards profitable agroecological farming; require and enable food and farming industry reform; maximise the social and environmental value of food procured and served by public sector bodies; and enable access to healthy, sustainable, affordable and culturally appropriate food for everyone.
- 1.3 Protect the policy-making space** - Food legislation and policy development must be protected from the negative influence of businesses and their associations with vested interests, who oppose regulation of policies and practices that are harmful to health and to the environment.

2. Put nature and climate friendly farming and growing at the core of the Food Strategy

- 2.1 Strengthen the sustainable farming budget** - Reverse funding cuts to DEFRA (2.7% annually from 2025/26 to 2028/29) and direct support through Environmental Land Management schemes (ELMs) for farmers in, or transitioning to, nature and climate friendly farming systems, that embed demonstrably higher animal welfare.
- 2.2 Provide clarity on the long-term vision for the Environmental Land Management scheme in England -** Introduce a clear roadmap for its implementation over a period of years to enable a transition to nature and climate friendly farming systems, that embed demonstrably higher animal welfare.
Develop a Sustainable Horticultural Growth Strategy - Implement a strategy that invests in horticulture as a
- 2.3** key green growth sector for UK agriculture, creates a strong home market for British organic and agroecological horticulture, and enables a government-backed renewal programme which must be introduced in 2026.
Increase infrastructure and growth investment - Invest in the UK's food system to support local and values-
- 2.4** led food systems and businesses, and shorter supply chains for fresh and nutritious food, with benefits for community and household resilience and food affordability. Investment in local food infrastructure means improving access to appropriate scale processing, abattoirs, packing, distribution, supply chain facilitation, wholesale coordination, retail and marketing methods, tools, facilities and opportunities to enable shorter supply chains that connect farmers and growers with diverse market outlets.

3. Make healthy and sustainable diets the norm for all in the UK

- 3.1 Implement the Government's 10 Year Health Plan for England in full at scale and pace.**
- 3.2 Implement the 'Healthy Food Standard' outlined in the NHS 10 Year Plan** - Require mandatory healthy and sustainable food sales reporting for all large food businesses. Use that reporting to set new mandatory, equitable improvement targets.
- 3.3 Reform public sector food** - Establish legally-binding minimum standards for healthy, sustainable and locally sourced meals across the public sector, including nurseries and schools. Revise the Government Buying Standards for Food (GBSF), and extend to nurseries, schools, and update and implement the School Food Standards and Early Years Guidance, and update nutritional standards in line with the latest the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) guidance. Require more plants, and less and better meat and dairy on menus, alongside monitoring and evaluation of compliance.

- 3.4 Improve supply chain fairness and transparency** - Ensure the financial and operational burdens of transitioning to sustainable practices are shared equitably across the supply chain, in line with recommendations from the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (EFRA) Committee and the Groceries Code Action Network (GCAN). Introduce core environmental and animal welfare standards and implement due diligence legislation.
- 3.5 Require transparency in the food system** - Introduce mandatory and honest front-of-pack product labelling for human health and animal welfare, including mandatory, clear front-of-pack nutritional labelling and warning labels. There should be no misleading health or nutrition claims on commercial baby food. Require method of production labelling for products with animal-derived ingredients.
- 3.6 Use fiscal measures to incentivise the production of healthy and sustainable food** - Review how the mechanisms, processes and outcomes of the Soft Drinks Industry Levy could be applied to unhealthy food as a way to increase change at pace and scale across the supply chain. This can also raise much needed revenue to invest in interventions supporting children's health and access to nutritious, sustainable food.
- 3.7 Invest in access to affordable, healthy food from the very start of life** - Make healthy and sustainable food affordable and accessible to everyone, prioritising support for people on lower incomes by prioritising a cash-first or income-focused approach to food insecurity, supporting nutrition security and requiring and enabling local authorities to support local food partnerships and community food assets and infrastructure while ending the need for charitable food aid.
- 3.8 Update the Eatwell Guide** - Reflect the latest evidence on healthy, sustainable diets and strengthen the guide's role in supporting a shift towards healthy, minimally-processed eating and wider food system change. This will ensure The Eatwell Guide can continue to play an important role in food systems change, for example, through its use in setting National Dietary Guidelines (NDGs) that are used as a reference for what a healthy diet is by both public and private institutions, including the food retail sector.
- 3.9 Protect all children and babies from unhealthy food and drink advertising** - End all forms of less healthy advertising by the end of this Parliament. This includes extending the current restrictions to outdoor advertising and sports sponsorship, adopting the new Nutrient Profile Model, bringing exempt categories including commercial baby foods, and brand advertising, into scope, strengthening and enforcing marketing rules for commercial milk formulas and baby/toddler foods, and adopting the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes.
- 3.10 Enable Local Authorities to prioritise 'preventing ill-health' objectives** - Build "pride in place" through healthier neighbourhoods - addressing inequalities, supporting resilient local food supply, and managing fast-food density.

How our policy proposals achieve the Good Food Cycle aims				
Policy proposal	Good Food Cycle priority area			
	Healthier and More Affordable Food	Good Growth	Sustainable and Resilient Supply Chains	Vibrant Food Cultures
1.1 Food Bill	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.2 Policy coherence and joined up government	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.3 Protected policy-making	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.1 Sustainable Farming budget		✓	✓	
2.2 Environmental Land Management scheme	✓	✓	✓	
2.3 Sustainable Horticultural Growth Strategy	✓	✓	✓	
2.4. Infrastructure and growth investment	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.1 10 Year Health Plan for England implementation	✓	✓		✓
3.2 Public procurement reform	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.3 Supply chain fairness and transparency		✓	✓	
3.4 'Healthy Food Standard' implementation	✓	✓		✓
3.5. Food system transparency	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.6 Fiscal measures for healthy and sustainable food	✓	✓	✓	
3.7. Access to affordable, healthy food from start of life	✓	✓		✓
3.8 Eatwell Guide update	✓	✓		✓
3.9 Children and unhealthy food and drink advertising	✓	✓		✓
3.10 Local Authorities prevention of ill-health objectives	✓			✓