

**PRIORITIES FOR DIET AND NUTRITION POLICY IN SCOTLAND –
PROGRESS REPORT**

Executive Summary

The Committee will be aware that the FSA Board will discuss a paper at its meeting in September, the purpose of which is to provide an update on progress with Agency nutrition priorities, as well as to discuss future challenges. This paper provides an update to the Committee prior to those discussions on work conducted in Scotland to help achieve UK wide Agency goals.

The Committee is therefore invited to:

- Note the progress to date with the Eating for Health programme in Scotland;
- To discuss challenges which will influence this forward programme; and
- To advise on how best to take this programme forward in Scotland.

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Priorities for Diet and Nutrition Policy in Scotland – progress report and next steps

BACKGROUND

1. The Agency's UK 'Strategic Plan 2005-2010 - Putting Consumers First'¹ was published in December 2004. The FSA Board considered and agreed the implementation of those priorities in June 2006, as outlined in Board paper 06/06/05. SFAC was asked to consider those priorities ahead of the Board's discussion in April 2006. The aim of the 'Eating for Health' programme outlined in the Strategic Plan is to contribute to consumers making healthier choices by influencing products, people and the environment in which we make choices about our diets. This is first annual progress report to SFAC; drawing out key developments and likely challenges for Scotland. This follows previous input by SFAC to the development of policy in this area.
2. Food Standards Agency Scotland (FSAS) shares responsibility for nutrition with the Public Health and Wellbeing Directorate within Scottish Government.

¹ Food Standards Agency (March 2005) Strategic Plan 2005 – 2010 – *Putting consumers first*, www.food.gov.uk

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

3. The Scottish Diet Action Plan review² published in September 2006 indicated that in general food and nutrient targets set in 1996 for the Scottish population as a whole have ‘overwhelmingly not been achieved’.³ However, the review indicates that some progress has been made in relation to reformulation e.g. availability of lower salt products, which in tandem with recent Agency publicity campaigns⁴ appears to have had a small but significant effect on dietary salt intakes across GB⁵. It is therefore clear that FSAS needs to build on progress made by maintaining and developing a programme of engagement with consumers, Scottish industry, voluntary organisations, and partners within Government.
4. Good links between officials across responsible Scottish Government Directorates, along with other partners such as NHS Health Scotland and the Food and Health Alliance have been established and will continue as the new Scottish Government outlines its future food and health priorities in further detail.
5. The Agency and Scottish Government will also look review our Concordat in 2007/08 in order to maintain an integrated working relationship between the organisations.
6. In order to support the Agency’s strategic goals in this area, and mirrored within the Scottish Government’s ‘*Eating for Health – Meeting the Challenge*’⁶, FSAS has been actively involved in a number of areas. FSAS is encouraging reformulation of Scottish products to reduce fat and energy with industry; raising Scottish consumer awareness of salt

² Review of the Scottish Diet Action Plan: Progress and Impacts 1996-2005, NHS Health Scotland 2006

³ Detailed analysis in support of the SDAP review provided by: Wrieden et al (2006) *Review of Food Consumption and nutrient intakes from national surveys in Scotland: Comparison to the Scottish dietary targets*, University of Dundee, 2005. Available from: www.food.gov.uk

⁴ Phase 1-3 Salt campaign (all media) - raising awareness about salt in the diet, recommended maximum intake, and encouraging people to check the label – details available at: www.salt.gov.uk

⁵ Details available at: <http://www.food.gov.uk/science/dietarysurveys/urinary>

⁶ *Eating for Health: meeting the challenge*, Scottish Executive, June 2004, <http://www.scotland.gov.uk>

consumption and signposting; encouraging Scottish Industry to use clear, useful front of pack labelling; inputting to the development of dietary standards and resources for Scottish schools, communities and public sector institutions and taking forward the Board's recommendations on folic acid fortification in Scotland.

Reformulation

7. Evidence continues to confirm that maximising the potential for reformulating the products that we eat is crucial if we are to shift average Scottish population intakes. UK-wide initiatives such as the self-reporting framework for salt, and the development of a saturated fat and energy programme are supported by FSAS in Scotland by proactive engagement with Scottish industry and partners. For example, FSAS has met with Scottish Enterprise sponsored food fora across Scotland, having provided presentations and workshops covering the reformulation and labelling agenda to four in the past year.

8. In addition, since January last year we have also met with industry organisations, including the Scottish Federation of Meat Traders' Associations and approximately 15 companies across a range of sectors keen to discuss these issues more detail. We also invited approximately 350 Scottish companies to engage with FSAS directly on their work in relation to reformulation and signposting generally. We also aim in the future to facilitate innovation and assistance for small and medium sized companies in order to meet reformulation targets in partnership with industry groups. Our consultation on a draft saturated fat and energy programme was sent to over 100 interested parties in Scotland and 10 responses were received from a range of business, consumer and public health groups. These responses, including that from the SFAC, will contribute to the development of a UK wide programme tackling these issues over 2007-08.

9. FSAS also supports the Scottish *healthyliving Award*, which compliments wider UK Agency work on reformulation with the food service sector. As the award moves into the high street, FSAS are committed to utilising the Agency's extensive UK-wide contacts with major food retailers in order to facilitate this move, in support of both Agency and wider Scottish policy commitments. The award was discussed at a recent meeting of the Nutrition Strategy Steering Group⁷, which is chaired by Dame Deirdre Hutton and Department of Health, and whose membership includes a number of large UK food retailers. Actions arising are being followed up by Agency officials and in close contact with SE and the project manager for the award.

Front-of-pack labelling

10. There is also clear evidence from formal adopters of the Agency's recommended approach to front-of-pack labelling – and from other businesses – that the Agency's traffic light colour code is also a powerful incentive for reformulation. This has been confirmed in discussions with Scottish businesses thus far.

11. To date 8 retailers, 13 manufacturers and 4 service providers across the UK have adopted the Agency's recommended approach and discussions with other interested businesses continue. One Scottish-based manufacturer has applied the Agency's scheme to their own brand products and discussions continue with other potential adopters in Scotland.

⁷ <http://www.food.gov.uk/healthiereating/nutcomms/nutritionstrategy/nssg070612>

12. Support for the Agency's scheme has been provided by the Scottish Consumer Council, and there is public support from within Scottish Government including the Chief Medical Officer. FSAS aims to build on this support through Scotland's network of professional, consumer and voluntary bodies in order to maintain visibility of the scheme and the 'Eating for Health' agenda as a whole.

Consumer awareness and advice

13. Cross-Agency discussions have identified a number of opportunities for disseminating nutrition messages. For example in phase three of the salt campaign earlier this year, specific materials were sent to all Scottish local authorities and health board premises and shopping centre salt 'road shows' were held in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Dundee. The campaign was also publicised at a range of stakeholder events such as Recipe for Success and the Royal Highland Show.

14. Links will require to be developed with other Scottish partners in order to reach as wide a Scottish audience as possible. We will be meeting with the Scottish Women's Rural Institute later this summer, and presenting at the Association of Public Sector Excellence in November. We have had fruitful discussions with the Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland and CoSLA about possibilities for future work in diet, nutrition and food safety areas which we would hope to progress in the coming year. Similarly we have met with lead Health Promotion Managers across Scottish Health Boards with a view to raising the profile of Agency work generally.

15. We have also ensured that any Agency resources developed with schools and community groups are closely linked to the Agency's *Eating for Health* agenda. For example, FSAS has developed the 'HHEAPS' (Hygiene, Healthy Eating and Activity in Primary Schools) initiative to increase children's awareness of food hygiene, healthy eating and keeping fit. Linking positive role models with a colourful 'Mission Book' of classroom

activities has proven to be an effective way to communicate the Agency's hygiene & healthy eating messages. Following successful pilots over the past 2 years; HHEAPS is now expanding nationwide in partnership with the Scottish Rugby Union and five major Scottish football clubs and links with other activities are being sought for future development.

16. Utilisation of press opportunities has also been taken up where possible, through publications such as the *Scottish Grocer*; 'salt diaries' offered to press to coincide with the publication of salt intake surveillance earlier this year, and photo opportunities covering the launch of pilot resources such as '*What's Cooking?*'⁸; and the adoption of the Agency traffic light scheme by the food manufacturer, Patterson Arran.

Nutrient profiling

17. The Agency's nutrient profiling model is now being used to underpin new Ofcom rules on TV advertising of foods to children. When the FSA's Board agreed in October 2005 that the nutrient profiling model be recommended to Ofcom for use in development of further controls on the broadcast advertising of foods to children, the Board also committed to reviewing the impact of using the model on the nature and balance of TV advertising to children one year from the date of use. An announcement on review arrangements was made to interested parties on 8 May and information posted on the Agency's website. An independent expert review panel has recently been set up to take forward this work. The Committee will be given an opportunity to input into the process in the consultation process.

Folic acid fortification

18. Discussions with UK industry are underway following the Board's recommendations to Ministers in May 2007. Minister for Public Health, Shona Robison responded to the Agency Chair by confirming that the

⁸ Press release details available at:

http://www.food.gov.uk/scotland/aboutus_scotland/pressreleases/2007/mar/whatscookingfsa

Scottish Government looks forward to working with the Agency to develop an approach that meets Scottish and other UK country requirements. The Agency's recommendations, which followed an extensive round of consultation include full advisory committee input, can be found in Board papers 07/05/04 and 07/06/04.

Work to improve standards of food in the public sector in Scotland.

19. The public sector has an important role to play in improving the choice of consumers. In particular, *Meeting the Challenge* provides a strategic framework for food and health in Scotland which recognises that public sector providers must '*demonstrate an exemplary role in the provision of healthier choices and support the production of healthier foods*'.⁹ In its Strategic Plan to 2010, the FSA is committed to supporting health, education and other relevant departments in establishing and periodically surveying standards for providing healthy meals in public sector institutions, and supporting their work to encourage adoption of the whole school approach to food hygiene, diet, nutrition and food choice.
20. In support of these objectives in Scotland, FSAS has led on providing nutrient and food based standards for various areas of the public sector. For example, FSAS provided standards to the Scottish Prison Service in January 2007 and we are also working in partnership with the Scottish Government in the development of recommended standards for hospital patients. These draft standards will be issued for comment in September. In addition FSAS will contribute to the development of recommended standards for care homes for the elderly and children in conjunction with relevant partners in Scotland as well as proposals for standards for wider public sector employee provision, due by end March 2008.
21. In the past year FSAS has played a vital role in the development of the mandatory nutritional standards for schools in Scotland to support the *Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007*¹⁰, and this support will continue into 2008. Our nutritionists were members of the Expert Working Group and currently lead on the preparation of a guidance document which aims to explain the proposed mandatory nutritional standards, and give guidance around other foods to ensure consistent healthy eating messages across the whole school day. A finalised draft will be submitted by the end of September 2007.

⁹ *Eating for Health: Meeting the Challenge*, Scottish Executive, June 2004, <http://www.scotland.gov.uk>

¹⁰ Available from OPSI website: <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/acts2007/20070015.htm>

22. In addition FSAS are working with the Scottish Government Directorates to assist with setting nutritional standards for independent and residential special schools. Whilst Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) will lead on the assessment of compliance with the standards, this will require significant input from FSAS nutritionists.

RESEARCH AND SURVEILLANCE

23. The range of work areas outlined above is supported by the Agency's research and surveillance programmes commissioned and managed by the FSAS Science Branch. FSAS maintains contact with funders of research which impact on the Agencies remit. For example, we sit on the Rowett programme management group and act as peer reviewers for other projects commissioned by partners in Government. As in other areas noted above, it is essential that we develop links with academic institutions and science bodies in order to maintain an effective programme for Scotland.

24. FSAS will continue to monitor dietary intakes using several different data sources, together with standalone projects. A selection of current diet and nutrition projects is outlined in **Annex 1**.

SCOTLAND AND THE UK

25. As a UK department with offices in all 4 countries the FSA is well placed to try out new ideas and identify commonality. For example the Agency has extended Target Nutrient Specifications for manufactured products used in school meals from Scotland across the UK and developed a single 'food competency' framework which has relevance across all UK school curricula and the wider community. We have also had input to the food and health section of the Scottish 'Curriculum for Excellence' which will be rolled out across schools in Scotland by 2010. FSAS has also taken forward pilot work in developing resources for schools and community groups which will be considered as part of a wider Agency schools resource strategy currently under development. The Agency can therefore draw on experience from all 4 countries and FSAS will work to ensure that this dynamic can continue to work effectively.

THE FUTURE

26. Scotland has some of the worst rates of diet related chronic disease in Europe¹¹. As such the biggest challenge we face is to trigger changes in consumer behaviour. The Agency has played a part in increasing awareness of the importance of healthy eating and healthy eating messages (both are now relatively high¹²) but we do not yet have clear evidence of changes in behaviour.
27. Maintaining a commitment to public education campaigns is therefore essential. FSAS will liaise closely with other Agency offices, Scottish Government and other partners to establish with stakeholders a long term campaign and advice programme which will support the balanced diet message and reformulation programmes. In Scotland this will take into account the Public Health and Well Being Directorate's social marketing campaigns through our membership of the Directorate's Social Marketing Strategy Group. We will also utilise the Agency's Social Science expertise and work being taken forward as part of the Agency's wider consumer engagement agenda.
28. Whilst FSAS has made great strides in establishing links with partners in a range of industry, consumer, enforcement and science fields, more could be done to maximise the potential for joined up approaches. For example, we will need to consider how best to disseminate healthy eating messages through existing local authority networks; and how might we develop all local authority grant-aided Agency projects, and any new grant schemes in future in order to ensure both food safety and dietary messages are integral.
29. The Agency is also aware of the number of bodies across Scotland currently acting as 'gatekeepers' to community projects who will already be delivering much of the Agency agenda 'below the radar'. For example, the Agency is looking to develop a resource for first-time caterers leaving care and FSAS has already had discussions with Community Food and Health Scotland about how best this might proceed, given the range of

¹¹ In: Leon, DA *et al* (2003) *Understanding the Health of Scotland's Population in an International Context*, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, London.

¹² In: <http://www.food.gov.uk/science/surveys/foodsafety-nutrition-diet/cas07>

existing resources that have been developed across Scotland.¹³ As mentioned above we are keen to facilitate the sharing of best practice on reformulation among business in Scotland but are aware that other organisations, such as *Scotland Food and Drink*, have a lead in supporting the Scottish food industry generally. Encouraging exemplar companies to come forward and demonstrate how targets have been reached could provide tremendous incentive to others.

30. We will also need to consider any commitments made by the new Government in Scotland in relation to food and health, where relevant to Agency policy. FSAS will look to maintain an open dialogue with Government partners in order to ensure best delivery of Scottish dietary targets and the Agency's strategic goals. The first of several proposed meetings between Minister for Public Health Shona Robison and FSA Chair Dame Deirdre Hutton has already taken place. Agency officials have also participated in early discussions with a wide range of Scottish Government Directorates looking at the future direction of Scottish food policy. These discussions should form the basis for a fully integrated approach to the future food and health agenda in Scotland.

31. As noted throughout this paper, relationship building, consistency in message delivery as well as a sound evidence base form the basis for progress on our 'Eating for Health' agenda. A critical mass on dietary health change in Scotland will only be possible if engagement on all fronts is united and concerted. **We would therefore invite SFAC to consider how we best to take forward this programme in Scotland and in particular to ask members if they have any networks that could assist the Agency to further achieve engagement with consumer, industry and professional organisations across Scotland.**

¹³ Wrieden, W. et al (2005) *Review of Resources Designed to Assist First-time Caterers*, University of Dundee. (available at: <http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/selfcateresscotland.pdf>).

SFAC ACTION

32. SFAC is invited to:

- Note the progress to date on the Eating for Health programme in Scotland; and
- discuss potential challenges and issues which will influence the forward programme; and
- to advise the Agency on how best the Committee might assist in taking this programme forward in Scotland.

Summary of Annexes

Annex 1 Selection of FSAS diet and nutrition projects.

Annex 1

Current FSAS dietary research and surveillance programme.

1. Research - Access to Affordable Healthy food in Scotland

This project was designed to provide a retail map of access to affordable and healthy food across Scotland using a combination of GIS mapping and a newly developed Healthy Indicator Shopping Basket Tool for Scotland. The research was based on detailed studies of selected local areas typical of different socio-economic environments in Scotland. The aim was to provide insights into the relationship between accessibility and availability on the one hand, and degrees of affluence-deprivation and urbanism-rurality, on the other. The final report for the above study is now undergoing peer review. Plans for its dissemination are currently being made.

2. Surveillance - Intake of Non Milk Extrinsic Sugars (NMES) by Scottish School Children

This nationwide survey of Scottish schoolchildren began in December 2005 with the aim of providing information on the intake of NMES in relation to the Scottish Dietary targets. The survey was carried out between May and September 2006, with 1721 children taking part. The dietary assessment methodology includes a combination of Food Frequency Questionnaires, Diet Diaries and 24 hour recall and will provide information on NMES, as well as other nutrients of interest in relation to children diets in Scotland. The final report is currently out to peer review.

3. Secondary Analysis of the Expenditure and Food Survey (EFS) and the Scottish Health Survey 2003 (SHS)

Two new projects have been commissioned which will be used to monitor Scottish food and nutrient intakes. One project, which began in March 2007, is using an already established and robust methodology to examine food and nutrient intakes from the EFS (2001-2007) and comparing this with dietary targets. In addition it will examine differences in diet, food groups and nutrients by quintile of socioeconomic group and area of residence. The final report is due in October 2009.

The other project, which began in April 2007 and is due to be completed in July 2008, will carry out secondary analysis of the Scottish Health Survey 2003 and the EFS 2001-2004 to derive and interpret dietary patterns within the current Scottish Diet using a) Principal Component Analysis (PCA) and b) a Diet Quality Index. The association between dietary patterns and demographic, lifestyle behaviours and health outcomes will be assessed using appropriate multivariate analysis techniques.