

Cyflwynwyd yr ymateb hwn i'r ymgynghoriad ar y [Bil Bwyd \(Cymru\) Drafft](#)

This response was submitted to the consultation on the [Draft Food \(Wales\) Bill](#)

FB022

Ymateb gan: | Response from: Dr Robert Bowen, Prifysgol Caerdydd | Dr Robert Bowen,
Cardiff University

Question	Response
Why is the Bill required	
Question 1: Do you agree with the overarching principles that the Bill seeks to achieve?	Yes, it is important to have a cohesive approach towards the food and drink industry in Wales, as this encompasses many different aspects of the Welsh economy and Welsh society. The industry is especially important for rural communities, particularly largely Welsh-speaking communities. The aims of creating greater cohesion, and developing greater scrutiny are important as the industry faces many challenges, from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, Brexit issues relating to supply chain issues, food standards and financial support to the industry, the impact of the War in Ukraine on the supply chain, the cost of living crisis and the impacts this has on individuals and businesses within the industry, and the climate crisis, which requires an urgent consideration of the industry can undertake sustainable practices. The key objective of achieving affordable, healthy, and economically and environmentally sustainable food is vital for

	<p>Welsh society as a whole, in ensuring that everyone in Wales has the opportunity to access affordable and healthy food, with localised supply chains supporting communities to access food in this way.</p>
<p>Question 2: Do you think there is a need for this legislation? Can you provide reasons for your answer.</p>	<p>Yes. The food and drink industry is very important to Wales and the previous food and drink industry strategy was outlined for the 2014–2020 period, therefore it is an important time to look at how this industry can be supported, and a new strategy is needed. This is especially relevant now following the Covid–19 pandemic, which, alongside Brexit, the War in Ukraine and the cost–of–living crisis, has underlined many challenges across all parts of society, but has underlined the importance of developing more resilient, coherent and sustainable practice in industries like food and drink. The passing of legislation in this way could ensure that future strategies for the food and drink industry in Wales would be underpinned by the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, which is important in ensuring that the principles of wellbeing, notably resilience, cohesive communities, prosperity and global responsibility are respected in the decision–making processes in relation to this industry. This would enable future strategies to focus on resilience of the industry and of businesses within the industry, as</p>

	well as developing sustainable practice in order to deal with climate change issues.
Food Goals	
Question 3: Please provide your views on the inclusion of the Food Goals within the Bill as the means to underpin the policy objectives.	I believe that this is an important part of the Bill in ensuring a focus on different areas, including education, health, environment, food waste, sustainability, social cohesion and prosperity in the industry. The industry covers a wide range of areas along the supply chain from the producer to the consumer, therefore it is important to take all actors along the supply chain into consideration. This is particularly true for the consumer in ensuring that all people in Wales have access to affordable and healthy food that has been produced in a sustainable and environmentally friendly manner. The inclusion of wellbeing in the secondary food goals is important in aligning with the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act.
Question 4: Do you agree with the inclusion of a Primary Food Goal supplemented by Secondary Food Goals?	All of these goals are important to the food and drink industry, and these cover important aspects of the food industry and how it relates to society, from the producer to the consumer.
Question 5: Are there additional / different areas you think should	I believe that standards are a vital aspect that should be taken into consideration. Wales has developed a reputation for high standards in food production, which has been valued in recent

<p>be included in the Food Goals?</p>	<p>years through Welsh foods achieving PDO/PGI/TSG status. This has been a key part of the previous food and drink industry strategy and aligns with the marketing and branding of Welsh foods, which has increased visibility in international markets in recent years. A significant concern of post-Brexit UK policy is the lowering of food standards and the impact this could have on the food and drink industry, through lower-standard practices, and the impact this could have on the reputation of the Welsh food and drink sector. It would, therefore, be important for high standards to be maintained and enhanced in Wales, to ensure that the industry can meet future challenges, especially in relation to climate change.</p>
<p>Question 6: Do you have any additional comments on the Food Goals, including the resource implications of the proposals and how these could be minimised?</p>	<p>Resource implications may exist in relation to the food goals, and access to resources is often a challenge in the food and drink industry, therefore it is vital that support is in place to help overcome these issues.</p>
<p>Question 7: Please provide your views on the inclusion of targets within the Bill as the means to measure how</p>	<p>I believe that targets would be useful in measuring how the food goals would be advanced, however these would need to be clearly established, with a clear time frame. Consulting relevant stakeholders would be</p>

<p>the Food Goals are being advanced.</p>	<p>important in ensuring that the targets are realistic and achievable within the set time frame.</p>
<p>Question 8: Do you agree with the process for setting the targets?</p>	<p>Yes, I believe that the development of a Welsh Food Commission would be valuable for this, as well as input from independent experts.</p>
<p>Question 9: Do you think the reporting mechanisms set out in the draft Bill provide sufficient accountability and scope for scrutiny?</p>	
<p>Question 10: Do you have any additional comments on the targets, including the resource implications of the proposals and how these could be minimised?</p>	
<p>Wales Food Commission</p>	
<p>Question 11: What are your views on the need for a Welsh Food Commission?</p>	<p>I believe that having a body that is responsible for the food and drink sector in Wales would be important, given the importance of the sector in</p>

	<p>Wales. The idea of having a commission as set out in this proposal is logical in view of this.</p>
<p>Question 12: Do you agree with the goals and functions of the Welsh Food Commission? If not, what changes would you suggest?</p>	<p>Yes, these appear to be logical.</p>
<p>Question 13: Do you agree with the size of the membership of the Food Commission and the process for appointing its members?</p>	<p>Yes, this appears to be logical. I believe that it would be important that the commission is representative of all aspects of the Welsh food and drink industry and includes representatives that would cover all aspects of the goals and objectives within the Bill. As such, the size of the commission should ensure that these aspects are sufficiently represented.</p>
<p>Question 14: What are your views on the proposal that the chair and members can serve a maximum term of five years and that an individual may be re-appointed as a chair or member only once?</p>	<p>This appears logical.</p>

Do you believe this is appropriate?	
<p>Question 15: Do you have any additional comments on the Food Commission, including the resource implications of the proposals and how these could be minimised?</p>	
National Food Strategy	
<p>Question 16: Do you agree that there is a need for a national food strategy?</p>	<p>Yes. A new strategy is needed, as the previous strategy covered the period 2014–2020, which has now passed. Since the previous strategy, many issues have emerged, which a new strategy would need to consider, including the impact of the Covid–19 pandemic, Brexit, the War in Ukraine, the cost–of–living crisis, and climate change.</p>
<p>Question 17: Do you believe the Welsh Government’s current strategies relating to ‘food’ are sufficiently joined up / coherent?</p>	<p>The food industry covers a wide range of areas; therefore it would be important to ensure that the Welsh food and drink strategy takes a more holistic approach. Since the previous food and drink strategy, the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act has been passed in Wales, which would be vital in ensuring that any upcoming strategy is underpinned by the principles of</p>

	<p>wellbeing set out in this Act, which could ensure that a more coherent approach is taken in the future strategy. This would need to consider issues across the industry from producer to consumer.</p>
<p>Question 18: Does the draft Bill do enough to ensure that Welsh Ministers take advice and consult on the strategy before it is made. If no, what additional mechanisms would you put in place?</p>	<p>The inclusion of a Food commission could facilitate the process of seeing consultation, however, I believe, as someone who has previously been involved in a consultation process on the food and drink industry in Wales, that consultations are in place in Wales for such matters. This is something that is important in ensuring that all voices are heard, especially given the many challenges that have emerged in recent years, and especially given the wide scope of the food and drink industry from producers to consumers.</p>
<p>Question 19: Do you think the provisions of the draft Bill relating to reporting on the national food strategy are sufficient? If not, what changes would you like to see?</p>	<p>I believe this is sufficient. The consultation with the Food commission would be important, as well as ensuring that all relevant industry stakeholders are consulted.</p>
<p>Question 20: Do you think the provisions of the draft Bill relating to</p>	<p>I believe so.</p>

<p>reviewing of the national food strategy are sufficient? If not, what changes would you like to see?</p>	
<p>Question 21: Do you have any additional comments on the National Food Strategy, including the resource implications of the proposals and how these could be minimised?</p>	
<p>Local Food Plans</p>	
<p>Question 22: Do you agree that there is a need for local food plans?</p>	<p>I believe that local food plans would be useful in having a place-based focus to matters in the food and drink industry, as there are different factors that may be important in different parts of Wales. Having a local focus could also help ensure that the goals of the Food Bill are reached.</p>
<p>Question 23: Does the draft Bill do enough to ensure that public bodies consult on their local food plans before they are made. If no,</p>	<p>Consultation with the Food commission would be important in ensuring consistency across the various food plans and ensuring that the Food Bill can be effectively seen across all parts of Wales.</p>

<p>what additional mechanisms would you put in place?</p>	
<p>Question 24: Do you think the provisions of the draft Bill relating to reporting on the local food plans are sufficient? If not, what changes would you like to see?</p>	
<p>Question 25: Do you think the provisions of the draft Bill relating to reviewing of the local food plans are sufficient? If not, what changes would you like to see?</p>	
<p>Question 26: Do you have any additional comments on local food plans, including the resource implications of the proposals and how these could be minimised?</p>	

General Provisions	
<p>Question 27: Do you agree with the list of persons defined as being a ‘public body’ for the purpose of this Bill?</p>	
<p>Question 27: Do you have any views on the process for making regulations set out in the Bill?</p>	
<p>Question 27: Do you have any views on the proposed commencement date for the Act?</p>	
General Views	
<p>Please provide any additional information relevant to the draft Bill.</p>	<p>I have answered the questions above that are most relevant to me, as an academic who undertakes research on the food and drink industry in Wales, particularly Welsh food-producing SMEs. As such, my answers have focussed mainly on the business-side of the industry, but also aim to take into consideration consumers in Wales, particularly the ability for everyone to be able to access affordable, healthy</p>

food. From the business perspective, one aspect that is not mentioned in the Bill is the marketing and branding of Welsh foods, which I believe is an important aspect of the industry and may be something that would come under the remit of the Welsh Food Commission. I have seen from my research in Brittany that effective branding and marketing of food products can be beneficial to the area, which I believe is also true in Wales. Furthermore, a notable aspect of the visibility of Breton-branded and marketed foods is their clear visibility in supermarkets, as a place where many consumers purchase their food. I believe that better engagement with supermarkets in Wales, and more visibility of Welsh food products would be an important aspect for a future Welsh food strategy or commission to consider.