

RFW 04

Ymateb gan : Unigolyn
Evidence from : Individual

I am writing to contribute to your consultation on the future of food and drink in Wales. To support and develop the production and enjoyment of foods and drinks in Wales action is needed in two areas; agriculture and education. Welsh farmers tend to be highly specialised in sheep, dairy cattle or beef cattle. Meat and dairy products are only a fraction of what we eat and drink, and for our health should be a smaller fraction. In living memory farms were more diversified, growing vegetables alongside meat production. What are the barriers to making Welsh farming more diversified? It would give greater financial security to farmers as well as increasing local food production.

Where are the people who will want to grow foods and to consume food produced locally? An interest in food is developed at home and in school. Government policy has an important role to play. Gardening at school is being used as an integral part of teaching subjects as diverse as maths, biology and geography. It has physical health benefits as well as intellectual ones. This approach should be encouraged and extended to secondary schools. We also need a revival of horticultural courses in higher education. I live near what was once the Welsh Horticultural College in Northrop. A much respected institution in the near past. Now part of Glyndwr University its horticultural department has been run down to nearly nothing. This may well be because there was reduced demand from students for these courses. But this reflects the lack of vegetable and fruit production in Wales, and a general lack of interest in food culture, as in "where does our food come from?."