

RFW 18

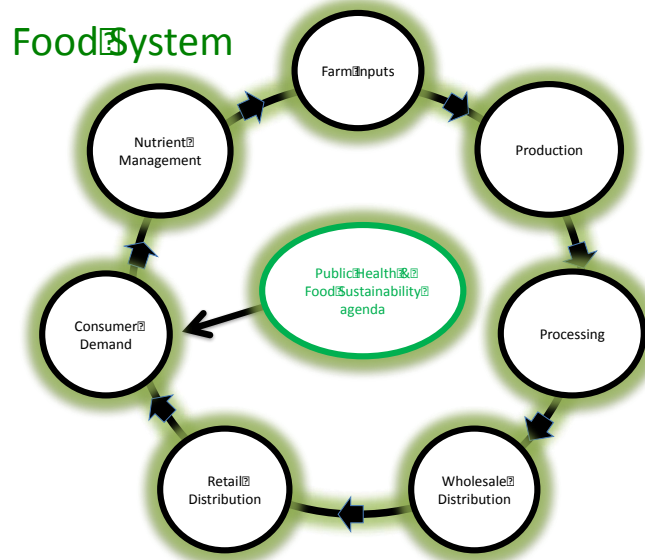
Ymateb gan : Prifysgol De Cymru a Grŵp Llywio Peas Pleas  
Evidence from : University of South Wales and Peas Please Steering Group

What is your vision for the future of food in Wales and what needs to be done to achieve it?

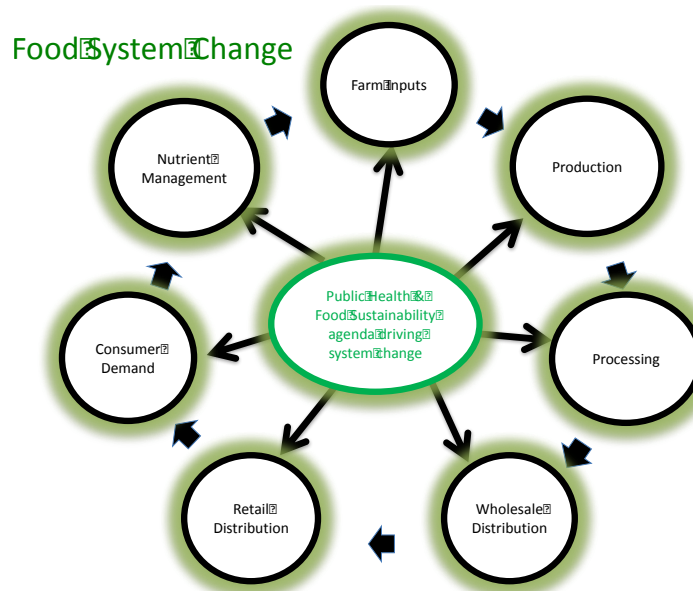
There is much good food work being done across Wales in terms of production, manufacturing, processing, brands, food poverty alleviation, community growing, food sustainability and more with many enthusiastic and successful stakeholders. However, there is more that can be done to enhance the food and drink sector, and particularly the food we eat, by adopting a more collaborative approach and adding to that work.

For many years I have been conducting doctoral research around a vision for a sustainable food system in Wales that is linked to fulfilling the health requirements of the nation. The particular focus of my research has been fruit and vegetables but I have learnt a lot, through extensive consultation and engagement, that can be applied across the food sector. I have found there is a lack of overall vision, lack of a plan and lack of an organisation and network to deliver a food secure and sustainable food system in Wales. Some key points: -

1. It is clear from my research and the research of others, see particularly <http://foodfoundation.org.uk/publication/force-fed/>, that the food system, as it stands, is not enabling the population to eat as healthily as it should.
2. Historically the approach has been to try and drive food system change through focussing mainly on the consumer, but this narrow focus has not been enough to drive change : -



3. What might be needed is a new systemic approach where food sustainability and public health issues are worked on by every aspect of the food system: -



4. This model needs exploring further in Wales. Through participatory doctoral research I became involved with the Food Foundation, Nourish Scotland, WWF-UK and Food Cardiff in organising national initiative called Peas Please to increase vegetable availability and increase consumption through supply chain collaboration <http://foodfoundation.org.uk/peasplease/>. As a result of Peas Please, major stakeholders in the supply chain will be pledging to increase the availability of veg in the UK at summits held in London, Edinburgh and Cardiff on October 24<sup>th</sup> 2017, see <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/wales-vegetable-summit-tickets-37725815931>. This initiative represents a test bed of a systemic approach to public health and sustainable food and yet it is being delivered in Wales by myself, as a volunteer and

Food Cardiff who are coming up against the limits of their capacity to deliver Wales wide work. Wales is missing a national food organisation.

To achieve a sustainable and secure food system in Wales it is clear that we need the following: -

1. A Food Needs Assessment

We need to model the secure and sustainable food needs of the Welsh population. In relation to fruit and vegetables my research remains the only research to date, showing that there is a large deficit in terms of production and availability compared to public health requirements of the population. Fish and wholegrain needs would be an easy next step to analyse. Once secure and sustainable food needs have been established national aims can be set and actions generated.

2. A Plan

We need a new Sustainable Food For and From Wales Action Plan based on a Food Needs Assessment and the current Food and Drink Action Plan.

3. An Organisation

Progress does not happen without a driving force. Scotland has Nourish Scotland <http://www.nourishscotland.org/> and England has the Food Foundation <http://foodfoundation.org.uk/> who are pushing forward these agendas with small, flexible teams. Wales does not have a national organisation, though Food Cardiff has been increasingly helping in this capacity. We need a national organisation, funded from central resources, as Nourish Scotland, which drives this agenda in tandem to the other nations.

4. A Network

A national organisation will need to be backed up by a Wales Food Network where good practice can be shared and spread across the nation in an efficient way.

Without these steps progress is likely to be slow and disjointed. With these steps Wales has a really good chance of becoming a leading light in sustainable food and helping to ensure Wales has a thriving food sector as well as a healthy eating nation.