



HOUSE OF LORDS

SELECT COMMITTEE ON FOOD, POVERTY, HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT CALL FOR EVIDENCE

The Select Committee on food, poverty, health and the environment was appointed by the House of Lords on 13 June 2019 to “consider the links between inequality, public health and food sustainability”. It has to report by 31 March 2020. A central question for this inquiry is how to make a healthy, sustainable diet accessible and affordable for everyone.

This is a public call for written evidence to be submitted to the Committee.

The Committee is happy to receive submissions on any issues related to the subject of the inquiry, but would particularly welcome submissions on the questions listed below. You need not address every question.

Diversity comes in many forms and hearing a range of different perspectives means that Committees are better informed and can more effectively scrutinise public policy and legislation. Committees can undertake their role most effectively when they hear from a wide range of individuals, sectors or groups in society. We encourage anyone with experience of, or expertise in an issue we are investigating to share their views with the Committee, with the full knowledge that their views have value and are welcome. If you think someone you know would have views to contribute, please do pass this on to them.

Instructions on how to submit evidence are set out at the end of this document.

If you have any queries please email the staff of the Committee at HLFOODPOVERTY@parliament.uk or phone 020 7219 4878.

The deadline for submissions is Thursday 30 September 2019.



Questions

- 1) What are the key causes of food insecurity in the UK?¹ Can you outline any significant trends in food insecurity in the UK? To what extent (and why) have these challenges persisted over a number of years?
- 2) What are some of the key ways in which diet (including food insecurity) impacts on public health? Has sufficient progress been made on tackling childhood obesity and, if not, why not?
- 3) How accessible is healthy food? What factors or barriers affect people's ability to consume a healthy diet? Do these factors affect populations living in rural and urban areas differently?
- 4) What role can local authorities play in promoting healthy eating in their local populations, especially among children and young people, and those on lower incomes? How effectively are local authorities able to fulfil their responsibilities to improve the health of people living in their areas? Are you aware of any existing local authority or education initiatives that have been particularly successful (for example, schemes around holiday hunger, providing information on healthy eating, or supporting access to sport and exercise)?
- 5) What can be learnt from food banks and other charitable responses to hunger? What role should they play?
- 6) What impact do food production processes (including product formulation, portion size, packaging and labelling) have on consumers dietary choices and does this differ across income groups?
- 7) What impact do food outlets (including supermarkets, delivery services, or fast food outlets) have on the average UK diet? How important are factors such as advertising, packaging, or product placement in influencing consumer choice, particularly for those in lower income groups?
- 8) Do you have any comment to make on how the food industry might be encouraged to do more to support or promote healthy and sustainable diets? Is Government regulation an effective driver of change in this respect?
- 9) To what extent is it possible for the UK to be self-sufficient in producing healthy, affordable food that supports good population health, in a way that is also environmentally sustainable?

¹ There is no universally accepted definition of food insecurity, but the most commonly used is: "limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways (e.g. without resorting to emergency food supplies, scavenging, stealing or other coping strategies)." (The Food Foundation, *Too Poor to Eat: Food insecurity in the UK*, May 2016, <https://foodfoundation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/FoodInsecurityBriefing-May-2016-FINAL.pdf>. This definition was also used for the UK's 2007 Low Income Diet and Nutrition Survey.)



HOUSE OF LORDS

- 10) Can efforts to improve food production sustainability simultaneously offer solutions to improving food insecurity and dietary health in the UK?
- 11) How effective are any current measures operated or assisted by Government, local authorities, or others to minimise food waste? What further action is required to minimise food waste?
- 12) A Public Health England report has concluded that “considerable and largely unprecedented” dietary shifts are required to meet Government guidance on healthy diets.² What policy approaches (for example, fiscal or regulatory measures, voluntary guidelines, or attempts to change individual or population behaviour through information and education) would most effectively enable this? What role could public procurement play in improving dietary behaviours?
- 13) Has sufficient research been conducted to provide a robust analysis of the links between poverty, food insecurity, health inequalities and the sustainability of food production? How well is existing research on the impact of existing food policy used to inform decision making?
- 14) What can the UK learn from food policy in other countries? Are there examples of strategies which have improved access and affordability of healthy, sustainable food across income groups?
- 15) Are there any additional changes at a national policy level that would help to ensure efforts to improve food insecurity and poor diet, and its impact on public health and the environment, are effectively coordinated, implemented and monitored?

² Scarborough, P, et al. *Eatwell Guide: modelling the dietary and cost implications of incorporating new sugar and fibre guidelines*, 2016, <https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/6/12/e013182>



HOUSE OF LORDS

How to submit evidence

Written evidence should be submitted online using the written submission form available at: <https://www.parliament.uk/food-pov-health-enviro-comm/written-submission-form>

If you do not have access to a computer, you may submit a paper copy to:
Clerk to the Select Committee on Food, Poverty, Health and the Environment,
Committee Office, House of Lords, London SW1A 0PW

The deadline for submission of written evidence is Thursday 30 September 2019. Short, concise submissions are preferred. Submissions longer than 6 pages should include a one-page summary. Paragraphs should be numbered. Please ensure the submission is free of logos and signatures. Submissions should be dated, with a note of the author's name, and of whether the author is acting in an individual or corporate capacity. Submissions with a university or college address should make clear whether they are submitted in an individual capacity or on behalf of the university or college. All submissions made through the written submission form will be acknowledged automatically by email.

Submissions become the property of the Committee which will decide whether to accept them as evidence. Evidence may be published by the Committee at any stage. It will normally appear on the Committee's website and will be deposited in the Parliamentary Archives. Once you have received acknowledgement that your submission has been accepted as evidence, you may publicise or publish it yourself, but in doing so you must indicate that it was prepared for the Committee. If you publish your evidence separately, you should be aware that you will be legally responsible for its content.

In certain circumstances the Committee may be prepared to accept submissions but not to publish them, in whole or in part. If you would like to submit evidence on this basis you should first discuss this with the Clerk to the Committee.

You should be careful not to comment on individual cases currently before a court of law or matters in respect of which court proceedings are imminent. If you anticipate such issues arising, you should discuss with the Clerk to the Committee how this might affect your submission.

Personal contact details supplied to the Committee will be removed from submissions before publication but will be retained by the Committee staff for specific purposes relating to the Committee's work, such as seeking additional information.

Certain individuals and organisations may be invited to appear in person before the Committee to give oral evidence. Oral evidence is usually given in public at Westminster and broadcast in video and online. Persons invited to give oral evidence will be notified separately of the procedure to be followed and the topics likely to be discussed.

This is a public call for evidence. Please bring it to the attention of other groups and individuals who may not have received a copy direct.



HOUSE OF LORDS

Substantive communications to the Committee about the inquiry should be addressed through the Clerk, whether or not they are intended to constitute formal evidence to the Committee. You can follow the progress of the inquiry at: <https://www.parliament.uk/food-pov-health-enviro-comm/>