

SCOTLAND
FOOD & DRINK
PARTNERSHIP

NET
ZERO 
COMMITMENT

NOVEMBER 21

INTRODUCTION

As governments, communities and businesses grapple with the right actions to take on a just transition to Net Zero, what we eat and drink – and how it is produced – is at the heart of this.

Net Zero transition will require sustained focus from Scotland's food and drink sector but the ambition and foundations are already in place. This document shows how we will accelerate our activity, working across the Scotland Food & Drink (SF&D) Partnership to pool resources and put in place the mechanisms to tackle our most pressing

shared challenges, deliver the Scottish Government's 2045 Net Zero target, and help businesses stay on the front foot commercially.

As we do this, we will always remember – and celebrate – that Scotland is a nation blessed with food production potential. From our long, bountiful coastline to the 75% of our land mass under agricultural production, we are a land of food and drink. Reducing food production activity could be a crude way to reduce emissions. But it wouldn't be the responsible thing to do. In a country such as ours

which has such enormous potential to be a global leader and model in climate-friendly food production, we should see it as an obligation to grasp this potential. To produce more, better.

Inevitably, our Net Zero route will vary as new learning, technologies and consumer behaviours emerge, but one thing will be constant: **Scotland's vital food and drink sector will be relentless in capturing the opportunities in our journey to Net Zero.**



“Scotland's vital food and drink sector will be
RELENTLESS
in capturing the opportunities in our journey to Net Zero.”

OUR NET ZERO JOURNEY

There's an urgency about the transition to Net Zero, but a need for plans that are based on commercial realities and make best use of our sectoral strengths. Across the SF&D Partnership, we recognise the need to take all parts of the sector and supply chain with us, supporting businesses to invest their resources fruitfully and in ways that will meet market demands.

To do this, our approach to the transition is built on:

1

CLEAR COMMITMENTS

2

TARGETED INTERVENTIONS

USING OUR STRENGTHS

Reaching Net Zero presents challenges for Scotland's food and drink sector.

We are a diverse sector encompassing farming, aquaculture, fishing and food manufacture. We have a high proportion of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), which may have the ambition to reach Net Zero but lack the skills, time or resources to do so.

And we're reliant on a wide range of partners outside the sector. In some cases, the technology to allow progress may not yet be available or affordable.

There are wider challenges too, such as the longer-term sustainability of our food systems and management of resources.

But there are also reasons to be positive. Beyond the commercial imperative to maintain production in Scotland and protect our markets, we have an opportunity to sell on the basis of sustainability. After all, our natural resources are ideally suited to this.

We also have businesses and research organisations that are already forging ahead in developing climate-friendly approaches, solutions and technologies – approaches that can be accelerated and disseminated.

And we are uniquely placed to work along the supply chain within Scotland to make a just Net Zero transition. The sector's collaboration model – bringing in the Scotland Food & Drink Partnership, our science base, our regulators and the Scottish Government – is our difference.

With these strengths, we can do more than meet targets and help businesses manage change. By reinforcing Scotland as a leader and exemplar in low-carbon food and drink production, we can sharpen our competitive edge in the marketplace, selling not just food and drink but also our knowledge and solutions.

The Net Zero challenge is huge, but so is the opportunity. We can – and must – make it ours.

THE SCOTLAND FOOD & DRINK PARTNERSHIP APPROACH

The journey to Net Zero is well underway in Scotland's food and drink sector, with our partners embarking on their own sectoral Net Zero strategies:

**FOOD & DRINK FEDERATION SCOTLAND:
NET ZERO AMBITION**

**SCOTCH WHISKY ASSOCIATION:
SCOTCH WHISKY INDUSTRY SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY**

**SALMON SCOTLAND:
A BETTER FUTURE FOR US ALL**

**DAIRY UK:
UPDATED DAIRY ROAD MAP UNDER DEVELOPMENT**

**NATIONAL FARMERS UNION SCOTLAND:
FARMING 1.5 FROM HERE TO 2045**

**SEAFOOD SCOTLAND:
NET ZERO TOOLKIT**

**SCOTTISH WHOLESALE ASSOCIATION:
DECARBONISATION OF THE WHOLESALE INDUSTRY**

**SCOTTISH RED MEAT RESILIENCE GROUP:
COP26 'OUR STEAK IN THE GROUND'
POSITION PAPER FOLLOWED BY SECTOR ROADMAP IN DUE COURSE.**



On Net Zero, as on all our activity, we are working together to:



Do the right things well, driving progress and sharing knowledge across the Partnership, rather than duplicating effort or taking on 'everything, everywhere'.



Resource priority areas with people and financial support, even where this may require tough decisions.



Operate as a true partnership, taking collective responsibility for our journey to Net Zero, and joining up our work, sector strategies and insights.



Be mindful of commercial realities for businesses, looking for profitable and sustainable market opportunities for the whole sector.



Value the people who power the sector, looking to build skills, opportunities and a pipeline of talent and ambition along the whole supply chain.

1 CLEAR COMMITMENTS

Five long-term commitments will steer every stage of our Net Zero journey and set the direction for our interventions and support:



WE WILL PUT NET ZERO AT THE HEART OF OUR SECTOR STRATEGIES.

The growth of the sector is inseparable from the transition to Net Zero and wider issues around sustainable food and drink production. Our activity will reflect that and evolve in response to new learning.



WE WILL SUPPORT SCOTLAND'S FOOD AND DRINK BUSINESSES ON THE NET ZERO JOURNEY.

Our planning and interventions will cater for businesses' identified needs and opportunities, with a particular focus on SMEs since they represent over 90% of food and drink businesses.



WE WILL TACKLE OUR KEY SHARED CHALLENGES THROUGH COLLABORATION.

We will extend collaboration beyond our existing full supply chain approach, working with other sectors to share solutions and best practice in addressing asset lifecycle planning, energy, packaging, waste and carbon sequestration.



WE WILL USE DATA TO DRIVE OUR ACTIVITY.

A priority is to share data more effectively and fill current data gaps on emissions and sequestration in order to clarify progress needed, set benchmarks and interim targets, and design interventions and opportunities in different subsectors. We will measure and report on our progress.



WE WILL MAKE OUR NET ZERO TRANSITION A JUST ONE.

Our sector is a major employer in Scotland and an anchor in many communities. In designing routes to Net Zero, we will take people and communities with us, looking to support green skills, fair work and lifelong careers in rural and urban areas of Scotland.

2 TARGETED INTERVENTIONS

To deliver on our five commitments on Net Zero, we will continually design and deliver targeted interventions. Each will help Scotland's food and drink sector address key Net Zero challenges and opportunities; each will help us as a nation to make a just Net Zero transition by 2045.

The interventions described below are already in train and will be delivered by 2023. Others will be developed continually as we learn lessons, incorporate new science and innovation and build on the exemplary progress already being achieved by food and drink businesses.

With all these interventions, our ask of food and drink businesses is that they grasp the support available, accepting that climate change affects – and needs urgent action from – every business, and telling us what's working and what else they need.



PUTTING NET ZERO AT THE HEART OF OUR SECTOR STRATEGIES

- Revise our Ambition 2030, export and UK market development strategies, to embed the just transition to Net Zero and sustainable food production in everything we do.
- Build on current work in the Recovery Plan, funded by the Scottish Government, which is already supporting Net Zero activity.
- Set up SF&D Partnership Net Zero team to coordinate and deliver our Net Zero Commitment and support the Partnership to prioritise shared challenges.



SUPPORTING SCOTLAND'S FOOD AND DRINK BUSINESSES ON THE NET ZERO JOURNEY

- Develop resources for businesses of all sizes, showing the support and activity underway to guide their Net Zero transition and adding to resources such as the SF&D / Zero Waste Scotland Greening Your Business toolkit and the FDF Net Zero handbook.
- Provide actionable customer insights on Net Zero through the Knowledge Bank.
- Launch ONE/SF&D dedicated Net Zero Advisor pilot to test the value of one-to-one support for businesses and build collaborative networks and activity.
- Partner with Interface on Net Zero challenge fund for businesses to work with academia to develop bespoke solutions for their business.
- Identify where intervention can best accelerate improvement and effective mitigation – for example, ONE will commission research on major food chains in northeast Scotland such as sea food, bakery and meat.

TACKLING OUR KEY SHARED CHALLENGES THROUGH COLLABORATION

- Work with partners on a programme of ongoing learning events, including a Scottish Nordic Knowledge Exchange conference for 2022.
- Create an active ‘community of interest’ in Scotland of first-mover businesses on Net Zero transition to collaborate on and progress ideas and solutions.
- Build on that community of interest and our other Net Zero interventions to help develop investible propositions in climate-friendly food and drink production, and seek out those willing to invest.

USING DATA TO DRIVE OUR ACTIVITY

- Set up an SF&D Partnership technical group to harness subsector activity on data, build on existing data projects and methodologies, and improve data collection on greenhouse gas emissions and sequestration.
- Coordinate wider collaboration with relevant organisations on how best to use existing data, fill gaps, and explore solutions to operationalise better data collection from businesses, in order to produce an emissions baseline for the food and drink industry and set interim targets on a pathway to achieve net zero by 2045.

MAKING OUR NET ZERO TRANSITION A JUST ONE

- Support the delivery of the Skills Development Scotland Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan 2020-2025.
- Support development of climate literacy project for SF&D Regional Food Groups.
- Further develop Net Zero objectives and practical guidance in the SF&D Partnership Academy curriculum.

COLLABORATION WILL POWER OUR JOURNEY

Collaboration has already worked well for Scotland’s food and drink sector, fuelling our growth and reputation. In the journey to Net Zero, we must also collaborate beyond the SF&D Partnership, for example:

On specific programmes and solutions, such as partnering with NatureScot on its Natural Capital Pilot Programme, and with ScotlandIS to develop solutions to help businesses monitor emissions reduction

With organisations that can provide relevant expertise, such as the Carbon Trust, Climate Change Committee, Energy Savings Trust, Innovation Centres, Keep Scotland Beautiful, National Manufacturing Institute Scotland (NMIS) and Zero Waste Scotland, and other supply chain organisations, such as Scottish Grocers Federation and Scottish Wholesale Association.

SETTING AN ENVIRONMENT FOR SUCCESS

We've outlined our own commitments and planned activity to support the food and drink sector on a successful journey to Net Zero. We also need to work with others, including the UK and Scottish Governments to ensure that Scotland's food and drink industry has the best environment in which to achieve this.

This will include:

- Developing resources for businesses of all sizes, showing the support and activity underway to guide their Net Zero transition and adding to resources such as the SF&D / Zero Waste Scotland Greening Your Business toolkit and the FDF Net Zero handbook.
- A coherent support and funding infrastructure that aligns with industry need, invests in the collaborative work set out in this document and supports the wider roll-out of successful pilots and approaches; that can be accessed with ease by all businesses, especially SMEs (including through known services like **FindBusinessSupport.gov.scot**); and that

assists businesses of all sizes to make long-term investments in low-carbon technologies.

- Ensuring any mandatory reporting framework on Net Zero is integrated, wherever possible with existing voluntary requirements recognised across the industry and the UK
- A carbon accounting system that utilises the latest research, supporting the Scottish food and drink supply chain to make the most effective investment and management decisions to reach Net Zero.
- Holistic long-term legal and support frameworks, which are implemented consistently and pragmatically to ensure that greenhouse gas strategies and supply chain led decarbonisation approaches can be delivered without unintended consequences.

NEXT STEPS

Over the coming months, we'll work across the SF&D Partnership to implement the interventions in this document, share knowledge and report on progress.

We'll also do more – working within and beyond the sector on other market-focused events, pilots and initiatives that can maximise progress, deliver our commitments, bring businesses of all sizes and in all subsectors with us, and reinforce Scotland as a leader in sustainable food and drink production.

As we do this, collaboration will be more critical than ever and on a scale not seen before. If you think your own organisation could join forces with the SF&D Partnership to accelerate a just transition to Net Zero for Scotland's critical food and drink sector, we would love to hear from you.

Please get in touch at strategyteam@foodanddrink.scot

SCOTLAND FOOD & DRINK PARTNERSHIP



This Net Zero Commitment was developed with the input of all partners in the Scotland Food & Drink Partnership, building on their previous work to make a just transition to Net Zero and deliver the Scottish Government's 2045 targets. Our thanks go to all who contributed.