

The Rt Hon Andy Burnham MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
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30 July 2026

Dear Prime Minister

Securing a resilient, equitable food system with a Good Food Bill

As leaders from business, investment, civil society, academia and the health sector, we are writing to ask you to bring forward a Good Food Bill, placing Britain's food security, public health and resilience on a statutory, long-term footing.

In your leadership speech in Manchester on 29 June 2026, you identified food and farming as one of the UK's critical sectors alongside energy and defence and argued that growth "can only be nurtured from the bottom up". We strongly share that vision. A Good Food Bill would put food where it belongs: at the heart of national strategy. It would give successive governments clear responsibility to improve the food system over the long term to create healthier communities, thriving local economies and lower levels of food insecurity.

The UK faces three overlapping challenges:

- a food supply exposed to increasingly frequent environmental and geopolitical shocks
- food prices rising much quicker than people's incomes
- food-related ill health that worsens year on year

Each falls hardest on those with the least.

British farmers are struggling, as international conflict has already pushed fertiliser costs up by 40% since last year. UK food prices are on track to be 50% higher by November than at the start of the cost-of-living crisis. This summer's heat is a reminder that climate change is upon us, and the Government's own National Security Assessment concluded in January that global biodiversity loss now poses a direct threat to the UK's food supply.

Each new shock lands on a food system with less capacity to absorb it. British production of fruit and vegetables has fallen [16% since 2015](#), and we now import [78%](#) of our supply. The next food shock is not a question of if, but when. To meet it prepared, food has to stop being an afterthought for the Government: we need mechanisms to put food high on the priority list of every part of government, both national and local, so that any decisions that impact on health, farming, planning, and trade secure better access to healthy and sustainable food for everyone.

The cost of doing nothing on this issue is already falling on those with the least resource, with food insecurity already affecting [15% of households](#) with children. Economic pressures continue to push a healthy diet further out of reach for many, with the NHS then left to pick up the bill. As a former Health Secretary, you will understand that high rates of diet-related ill health are the

predictable result of a broken food system, and you have long argued that access to decent food is something government has a responsibility to guarantee.

In a 2024 interview, you stated that food policy “[is not a coherent whole](#)”. A Bill would give food policy that coherence, as well as provide a stable policy environment for business and investors. Inspired by the Climate Change Act 2008, Labour legislation that has endured across successive governments, a Good Food Bill would put food policy on a statutory footing for the first time. It would:

- Set legally binding targets to reduce childhood obesity, increase the consumption of fruit and vegetables and the proportion grown in Britain, and reduce household food insecurity;
- Require the Government to publish a Reference Diet, so that policy across departments works towards the same goals;
- Place a duty on Ministers to consider food in decisions across health, education, farming, planning, environment and trade;
- Require five-year Good Food Action Plans setting out how the targets will be met;
- Empower local leaders to have regard to food across their work to support local economies and reduce inequalities;
- Establish independent oversight to report annual progress publicly, so that commitments cannot be quietly dropped when priorities change.

Taken together, these would leave Britain better able to withstand ongoing food system shocks from the climate and nature crisis, conflict and other threats; with more of our fruit and vegetables grown at home and a horticulture sector creating new investment and jobs. It would mean children growing up healthier, food insecurity falling rather than climbing, and less diet-related illness arriving at the door of the NHS.

Few policies command public support like this. Polling in April found the Good Food Bill has net public support of [+72](#), consistent across every political affiliation and highest among older women who feel rising food costs most acutely and vote in the greatest numbers. This is a popular policy waiting for a government prepared to act.

For businesses and investors, legislation which sets out a clear direction of travel with targets, plans and duties helps to create a level playing field and creates the certainty required for increased investment and good growth: Expanding UK horticulture and boosting UK fruit and veg production could add [£2.3 billion to the UK economy](#).

The Climate Change Act showed that a Labour government can lock long-term change into law and see it endure; a Good Food Bill would do the same for food. We ask you to bring a Good Food Bill forward to Parliament as early as possible, and we would welcome the opportunity to discuss with you or your team how it could be shaped.

The 2024 Labour election manifesto recognised that ‘food security is national security’ – a Bill would turn that recognition into a law, demonstrating your commitment beyond just words.

We stand ready to support your Government in delivering it.

Yours sincerely

National NGOs and civil society organisations

- Kath Dalmeny, Chief Executive, Sustain: the alliance for better food and farming
- Dame Anna Taylor, Chief Executive, The Food Foundation
- Blanche Shackleton, Interim CEO, Green Alliance
- Tanya Steele, CEO, WWF-UK
- Lynn Perry, CEO, Barnardo's
- Dr Lindsey MacDonald, Chief Executive, Magic Breakfast
- Mike Childs, Interim Director of Policy and Campaigns, Friends of the Earth
- Jen Clark, Economic and Social Rights Lead, Amnesty International UK
- Katharine Jenner, Executive Director, Obesity Health Alliance
- Naomi Duncan, Chief Executive, Chefs in Schools
- Anthony Field, Head of Compassion in World Farming UK
- Shane Holland, Executive Chairman, Slow Food in the UK
- Richard McIlwain, Chief Executive, The Vegetarian Society
- Alex Mayers, Managing Director, The Good Food Institute Europe
- Rebecca Sunter, Interim Executive Director, Eating Better
- Sara Ayech, UK Director, Madre Brava
- D'Arcy Williams, CEO, Bite Back
- Stephanie Slater MBE, Chief Executive, School Food Matters
- Elta Smith, Co-founder and Director, Root and Reason
- Heather Poore and Gavin Ellis, Co-CEOs, Hubbub
- Libby Peppiatt, CEO, The Vegan Society
- Carina Millstone, Executive Director, Foodrise
- Catherine Howarth OBE, Chief Executive, ShareAction
- Julia Kirby-Smith, Executive Director, Better Food Traders
- Anna Chworow, Deputy Director, Nourish (Scotland)
- Beth Bell, Deputy Director, Food Ethics Council
- Jonathan Worthy-Pauling, Director, Pesticide Action Network UK
- Tom Wills, Director, Trade Justice Movement

- Emily Wilson, Head of Programmes, FOUR PAWS UK
- Sabine Goodwin, Director, Independent Food Aid Network
- Pat Thomas, Director, Beyond GM
- Victoria Williams, Director, Food Matters
- Myles Bremner, CEO & Dayna Brackley, Partner, Bremner & Co
- Cat Jenkins, Board Member and Food Project Officer, Green Christian
- Jill Attenborough, CEO, The Country Trust
- Elle McAll, Programme Manager, WEN (Women's Environmental Network)

Food business leaders and investors

- Simon Roberts, Chief Executive, Sainsbury's
- Ashwin Prasad, CEO, Tesco UK
- Giles Hurley, CEO, Aldi UK and Ireland
- Charlotte di Cello, Chief Commercial Officer, Waitrose
- Kate Allum, Interim Chief Executive Officer, The Co-operative Group
- Dalton Philips, CEO, Greencore
- Simon Wookey, CEO, Samworth Brothers
- Andrew Selley, CEO, Bidfood UK
- Richard Hall, Vice-President, General Secretary, Danone North Europe
- Nigel Murray, Chief Executive Officer, Booths
- Amy Browne, Director of Stewardship, CCLA Investment Management
- Kate Elliot, Head of Responsible Investment Centre of Excellence, Rathbones Group
- Addy Windsor-Clive, Head of Ventures, Regenerate Asset Management
- Antony Yousefian, General Partner, The First Thirty Ventures
- Dean Brown, CEO, Little Dish
- Nigel Jeffery, Founder, Falcan Ltd.

Farming, horticulture and land-based organisations

- Rob Haward, CEO, Riverford
- Martin Lines, CEO, Nature Friendly Farming Network
- Brendan Costelloe, Director of Policy, Soil Association
- Steven Jacobs, Chair, UK Fruit & Vegetable Coalition and Coordinator, Organic Growers Alliance

- Professor Tom MacMillan, Chief Executive, Centre for Agricultural Research Impact
- Fiona Taylor, Chief Executive, Garden Organic & the Heritage Seed Library
- Ali Capper, Chairman, British Apples and Pears Ltd
- Rebecca Laughton, Horticulture Campaign Coordinator, Landworkers' Alliance
- Robert Fraser, CEO, Real Farming Trust
- Suzy Russell, Network Coordinator, Community Supported Agriculture Network UK
- Dr Philip Morley, Technical Executive Officer, British Tomato Growers' Association
- Kai Lange, CEO, Biodynamic Agricultural College

Health organisations and nutrition experts

- Liz Stockley, CEO, British Dietetic Association
- Martin Woodrow, CEO, British Dental Association
- Dr Shireen Kassam, Founder, Plant-Based Health Professionals UK
- Dr Matthew Philpott, Executive Director, Health Equalities Group
- Sonia Pombo, Head of Research & Impact, Action on Salt & Sugar
- Elaine Green, Head of Policy and Public Affairs, World Cancer Research Fund International
- Carrie Bolt, Public Health Nutrition Consultant
- Aliya Porter, Registered Nutritionist, Porter Nutrition
- Lynne Bowers, Former NHS Dietician and Nutritionist, Herefordshire Green Network
- Zoe Griffiths, Public Health Nutrition Consultant, ZG Nutrition

Community and local food organisations

- Corin Bell, CEO, Alexandra Rose Charity
- Mandy Morgan, CEO, Scottish Pantry Network
- Kath Rosen, CEO, The Orchard Project
- Melanie Vaxevanakis, Managing Director and Founder, The MAZI Project
- Jenny Paxman, CEO, The School of Artisan Food, home of Best Food Forward
- Matthew Thomson, Director, Sustainable Food Cornwall
- Alex Doyle, Co-ordinator, Birmingham Food Justice Network
- Ruth Soroko, CEO, Eat Club (food education charity)
- David Smith, Organiser, Co-operatives Wales
- Gareth Roberts, Director, Regather
- Daphne Lambert, CEO, Greencuisine Trust

- Graham Brown, Cheshire East Food Alliance, CVS Cheshire East
- Barbara Wilkinson, Chair, The Herb Society

Academics and researchers

- Tim Benton, Professor Emeritus, University of Leeds
- Professor Pete Smith FRS FRSE, University of Aberdeen
- Professor Kate Pickett OBE, University of York
- Associate Professor John Ingram, University of Oxford
- Professor Martin White, University of Cambridge
- Professor Rosie Green, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine
- Kevin Morgan, Professor of Governance and Development, Cardiff University
- Professor Parveen Yaqoob, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, University of Reading
- Professor Christina Vogel, Director, Centre for Food Policy, City St George's University of London
- Professor Greta Defeyter OBE, Dean of Social Mobility, Northumbria University
- Maria Bryant, Professor of Public Health Nutrition, University of York
- Professor Chris Hilson, University of Reading
- Professor Carol Wagstaff, University of Reading
- Professor Katherine Denby, University of York
- Professor Peter Ball, University of York
- Peter Jackson FBA, Emeritus Professor, University of Sheffield