

## **Joint Statement in Support of a Good Food Bill**

As leaders from business, investment, civil society, academia and the health sector, we support the introduction of a Good Food Bill, placing Britain's food security, public health and resilience on a statutory long-term footing.

In his leadership speech in Manchester on 29 June 2026, the Prime Minister 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 in government. We need mechanisms to put food high on the priority list of every part of government, both national and local, so that decisions affecting health, farming, planning and trade secure better access to healthy and sustainable food for everyone.

The cost of doing nothing is already falling on those with the least resource, with food insecurity 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. High rates of diet-related ill health are the predictable result of a broken food system. Access to decent food is something government has a responsibility to help guarantee.

In a 2024 interview, the Prime Minister stated that food policy "is not a coherent whole". A Good Food Bill would provide that coherence, while also creating a stable policy environment for businesses 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 measures would leave Britain better able to withstand ongoing food system shocks from the climate and nature crisis, conflict and other threats. They would support more fruit and vegetables being grown at home, strengthen the horticulture sector, create investment and jobs, improve children's health, reduce food insecurity and help cut pressure on 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. This is a popular policy waiting for a government prepared to act.

For businesses and investors, legislation that sets out a clear direction of travel through targets, plans and duties helps create a level playing field and provides the certainty required for increased investment and good growth. Expanding UK horticulture and boosting UK fruit and vegetable 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.

The 2024 Labour manifesto recognised that "food security is national security". A Good Food Bill would turn that recognition into law.

### **Add your support**

We invite organisations, businesses, investors, trades unions, academics, health professionals, food partnerships, local authorities and members of the public who share these concerns to add their name to this statement and join the call for a Good Food Bill.