

Government Food Strategy accountability table

The Government published its [food strategy](#) on 13 June 2022. It was originally billed as a white paper in response to the independent [National Food Strategy](#) led by Henry Dimbleby, but became a ‘strategy’. None of its measures are underpinned by legislation. This table is to illustrate what measures are in the document and how the Government say they are being taken forward.

NB It is not always clear which department is supposed to be leading or which other agencies might be involved. The Government will need to confirm this. The numbers refer to the paragraph of the strategy.

For more resources, please visit <https://www.sustainweb.org/national-food-strategy/>, which will be updated in due course.

Colour key

Blue = Review/consult/consider

Green = Action that creates something not in existence now

Peach = Work with or support

White = adjustments to current policy

Accountability Mechanism	Topic	Department/Owner	Timeframe	Strategy words and location
“Call for Evidence”	Understand challenges of reducing methane	DEFRA	None	1.3.5 “To support this, we will launch a Call for Evidence to better understand the challenges associated with the use of feed additives and materials that can reduce methane emissions from livestock. This will explore how we can work with farmers and agribusinesses to increase adoption of this technology to support more sustainable protein production.”
Commission an independent review	Labour shortages in food chain	DEFRA Home Office	“shortly”	1.4.3 “the government will also in the coming weeks commission an independent review to tackle labour shortages in the food supply chain. This will consider the roles of automation, domestic labour, and migration in the labour market, the last of these with reference to the wider work

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				by the MAC, to ensure UK businesses can access the labour they require”
“Consider”	Support for consumers on health	DEFRA DHSC FSA	None	2.3.5. On health: we will build upon learnings from existing methods of consumer information, such as front of pack traffic light nutrition labelling, and will consider how the current regime could be strengthened to support consumers to make informed and healthier choices. The Government will set out further detail in the Health Disparities White Paper.
“Consult”	Mandatory business reporting on health	DEFRA/DHSC/OHID (Might BEIS or Cabinet be involved here?)	By the end of 2023	2.3.4. “By the end of 2023, in England, we will streamline for industry all reporting requirements relating to the production and sale of food and drink. We will consult on implementing mandatory public reporting against a set of health metrics and explore a similar approach to sustainability and animal welfare. These will initially be targeted at large companies across retail, manufacturing, out of home, food to go and online delivery businesses, and we will consult fully on changes prior to implementation. In most cases large food businesses already collect information on health, sustainability and animal welfare, but it is not captured consistently or transparently. We will work with industry to minimise costs by using existing data and reporting systems as far as possible.”
“Consult”	Consult on supply chain fairness in the pig sector	DEFRA	None	1.2.6 “We will shortly consult on the need for similar action [<i>as per “actions” they have taken in dairy sector to combat unfair supply chains</i>] in the pig sector and have already begun engagement to identify key issues in the pork supply chain. Any interventions will be designed to ensure farm businesses can engage in smart business planning and risk

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				management, supporting a competitive and resilient sector that delivers benefits for producers, consumers, and taxpayers.”
“Consult”	Food waste	DEFRA	From now until 5 September 2022	“We are therefore consulting on improved food waste reporting for large food businesses”
“Consult”	Animal welfare labelling	DEFRA FSA	In 2023	2.3.5 On animal welfare: in 2023, we will consult on proposals to improve and expand current mandatory labelling requirements, and to introduce equivalent measures in the foodservice sector. Building on responses to government’s recent call for evidence on food labelling for animal welfare, proposals will cover domestic and imported products, considering our international trade obligations, and will help consumers identify when products meet or exceed our high UK animal welfare standards. Any changes will work in conjunction with existing assurance schemes, account for the specific circumstances of each sector, and draw upon any pre-existing standards as well as the set of standards and metrics developed in the first phase with industry. In the poultry sector, for example, there is already an agreed set of differentiated welfare standards that labelling could build on.”
“Consult”	Public Sector Procurement	DEFRA with possible involvement of DHSC which leads on nutritional part of GBS	Now – until September 4th	2.4.2 “To deliver this vision, we are consulting on public sector food and catering policy, including the Government Buying Standards for Food and Catering Services (GBSF). We will consider widening the scope of the policy to be mandatory across the whole public sector. Within the consultation we will propose that the public sector reports on progress towards an aspiration that 50% of its food expenditure is on food produced locally or to higher environmental

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				production standards such as organic, Linking Environment and Farming (LEAF) Marque or equivalent, while maintaining value for money for taxpayers. We will also support the sector to work with more small and local suppliers, implement new policy measures, and explore using an assurance scheme to drive continuous improvement on a local level and recognise high performing institutions. To improve accountability and inform future policy changes, we will require public organisations to report on the food they buy, serve and waste in a similar way as we will expect large companies to report on food sales under the Food Data Transparency Partnership.”
“Create”	Simpler Regulatory Regime (for gene editing)	DEFRA with possible involvement of BEIS which leads on science and research BEIS	None	1.5.1 “We have already acted by removing burdens from field trials and, through the Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill, we will create a new simpler regulatory regime to allow researchers and breeders to unlock the benefits of technologies such as gene editing. Reforming EU regulations on wine will also allow us to support our businesses, whilst we will make things easier for consumers by reviewing regulations around low and no alcohol products.
“Develop”	What Works Centre for sharing best practice for farmers	DEFRA and ADHB	None	1.2.4 “The Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB) will play an important role in developing a What Works Centre to share best practice across the industry, which was recommended by Henry Dimbleby to improve the quality of advice on the practical implications for agriculture of goals such as net zero.”
“Develop”	Mandatory methodology for	DEFRA FSA	None	2.3.5

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	eco labels to stop green washing			On sustainability: “we will develop a mandatory methodology that must be used by those who want to produce eco labels or make claims about the sustainability of their products. This will drive integrity in the food system by preventing ‘green washing’ claims whilst we work with industry to improve environmental information for consumers. Working with the sector and existing assurance schemes, we will consider the role of Earned Recognition to acknowledge environmentally sustainable farming and look at how sustainable practices can be communicated to consumers
“Consider”	Food labelling	DEFRA DHSC FSA	None	2.3.5 The (Data) partnership will also consider consumer information across the range of metrics for both retail and the out of home sectors. Clear information can help consumers make choices that reflect their values while enabling producers who meet high, accredited standards to market their products accordingly. In England, we will ensure that food information (such as labels, online information, QR codes) is optimised and based upon a set of established overarching principles which will be defined by government, working with industry and other key actors in partnership. These principles will include ensuring that information is consistent, accessible, easy to understand and does not mislead. We will build on what we have learnt from existing methods of consumer information and work closely with the DAs to minimise divergence across the UK.
“Explore”	Country of origin labelling	DEFRA	None	2.3.5 On country-of-origin: we will explore whether existing country-of-origin rules can be strengthened by mandating

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				how and where origin information is displayed, for example, on the front of packs
“Extend”	Visas to poultry workers	Home Office and DEFRA	2022	1.4.3 The government will extend 2,000 visas from the newly released 10,000 visas for the Seasonal Worker Visa Route to include poultry”.
“Incentivise”	Use of surplus heat and renewable energy	DEFRA BEIS (energy and industrial strategy)	None	1.3.2 “We will also incentivise the [horticulture] sector to make use of surplus heat and CO2 from industrial processes, and renewable sources of energy.
Work with	Horticulture in energy policy	BEIS	None	1.3.2 “we will include industrial horticulture alongside other manufacturing sectors in decisions on industrial energy policy”
“Keep Under Review”	FSM eligibility	DfE	None	2.2.6 “We will continue to keep free school meal eligibility under review, to ensure that these meals are supporting those who most need them”
“Launch”	New Institute for Agriculture and Horticulture	DEFRA	Due to launch in 2023	1.2.4 “This [the What Works Centre mentioned above] will be complemented by the new Institute for Agriculture and Horticulture (TIAH), due to launch in 2023, which will help farmers and growers to access the right skills to run professional, sustainable, and profitable businesses.”
Launch	Food Data Transparency Partnership – with FSA, Das, DHSC, industry	DEFRA FSA DHSC	None	2.3.2. “To drive positive change through better information, transparency, and accountability, we are launching a transformational Food Data Transparency Partnership. The partnership will champion consumer interests, providing people with the information they need to make more sustainable, ethical, and healthier food choices, and incentivise industry to produce healthier and more ethical

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				<p>and sustainable food.</p> <p>2.3.3. “The partnership will therefore provide a framework with the ambition to bring together government departments and agencies in England and the DAs, including DHSC, the FSA and Food Standards Scotland (FSS), with representatives from across the whole food supply chain and civil society, to at first look at the development of consistent and defined metrics to objectively measure the health, environmental sustainability, and animal welfare impacts of food. These metrics will provide the foundation upon which the partnership’s activities and any future interventions will be built, seeking to minimise burdens on businesses and considering the effects of policy choices across the UK. We will consider the most appropriate mechanisms to both monitor the programme and provide assurance on any outcomes or requirements that it produces</p>
“Publish”	A Land Use Framework	DEFRA and BEIS (with involvement of the Committee on Climate Change)	“In 2023”	<p>1.2.3</p> <p>In 2023, we will publish a land use framework that will reflect all our objectives for English Agriculture, the environment and net zero. It will also reflect and respond to the work of the House of Lords special inquiry committee into land use in England. This framework will inform incentives we build into our agri-environment schemes and should be a valuable resource for responsible authorities as they prepare their Local Nature Recovery Strategies</p>
Respond	Response to the automation in horticulture review	DEFRA	None	<p>1.3.3.</p> <p>We will also lead and publish the government response to the automation in horticulture review that was co-chaired by Professor Simon Pearson</p>

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"Publish"	Statement on equivalence of standards	DEFRA FSA DIT	"Shortly"	3.4.2 "We will shortly be publishing a statement on our independent animal health and production regime to provide more detail. This will set out our requirement that those wishing to access the UK market must objectively demonstrate their approach continues to deliver an equivalent level of health protection to our domestic standards. It will also describe how our SPS regime will evolve based on evidence to face the modern global challenges of antimicrobial resistance and zoonotic diseases. This will include considering how animals are managed to prevent disease outbreaks, alongside a holistic consideration of the related matters of antimicrobial resistance, animal welfare and environmental protection"
"Remove"	EU regs	DEFRA	None	1.5.2 "we will remove any bureaucracy that stems from old EU rules and currently holds back our agri-food and fishing industries"
"Review"	New planning	DLHUC	None	1.3.2 [We will] "review the planning permission process to support new developments" [of industrial greenhouses].
"Review"	Border checks	DEFRA, FSA, Home Office (Border Force), HMT, DFT, DIT, BEIS	None	1.5.3 "We are reviewing legislation to enable a more flexible and dynamic approach to our border that is targeted according to risk. Going beyond the digitisation of current requirements, we will make the best use of data and technology to reduce the burden on businesses and improve the flow of goods."
"Review"	Fruit and Veg review	DEFRA DHSC DfE	None	2.2.4 Government will also review the current policy and delivery method of the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme.

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“Support new research”	UPFs and obesity	UKRI BEIS (sponsor of UKRI)	None	2.2.1 “The independent review highlighted that ultra-processed foods could be an important contributor to over consumption of higher calorie foods. However, to determine their exact role in driving obesity, further research is needed. A new £11 million UKRI/BBSRC (Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council) initiative, the Diet & Health Open Innovation Research Club, will help address this gap. It will support new research across businesses and academics to drive improvements in understanding the relationship between food and health, how we can improve the nutritional value of the food we eat and explore what underpins food choices.” [NB – it is not clear if this is new]
“Support”	Alternative protein research and innovation	“The government” BEIS (as sponsors of UKRI)	None	1.3.4. The government will keep the UK at the front of this growing and innovative sector by supporting alternative protein research and innovation, including as part of our partnership with UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) to invest over £120 million in research across the food system
“Work with FSA”	Guidance for new alt proteins	DEFRA FSA	None	1.5.1 “We will also work with the FSA to develop dedicated guidance materials for approval of new alternative protein products while reviewing our novel food regulations. This will ensure they are transparent for innovators and investors, whilst maintaining world-leading consumer safety standards.”
“Work with”	Work with growers on a Horticulture Strategy	DEFRA	None	1.3.3 “We will work with growers to develop a world leading horticulture strategy for England. This will examine the diverse roles of small, large, and emerging growing models,

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				and drive high tech, controlled environment horticulture to increase domestic production. We see an essential and increasing role for automation in horticulture and across the agri-food chain and will support growers through our Farming Innovation Programme.
"Work with"	Research with UKRI	DEFRA BEIS (sponsors of UKRI)	None	1.4.5 "We will work with UKRI, industry and consumer groups to develop joint priority areas for funding, including regional priorities, and proposals to access this, for example on industry automation and alternative proteins. We are also working with UKRI to maximise the reach of industry-led collaborative R&D to SMEs across the UK. This will drive development and uptake of innovation across the entire agrifood chain."
"Work with"	Local areas to spread insight from food partnerships	DEFRA	None	2.2.3 "Local Food Partnerships have already brought together councils and partners from the public sector, voluntary and community groups, and businesses to reduce diet-related ill health and inequality, while supporting a prosperous local food economy. We will learn from their approaches and work to understand and identify best practice in addressing food affordability and accessibility to healthy food. As part of our levelling up mission to narrow the gap in healthy life expectancy, government will identify the areas most in need of this insight, and Defra will work with local authorities and food charities in these priority areas."
Undertake	Programme of RCTs on interventions in food system	DEFRA	Three years	2.2.2 "Over the next three years, we will undertake a programme of randomised control trials of interventions in the food system to encourage and enable healthier and more sustainable diets for all. This programme will build a suite of evidence based and value for 24 of 33 money interventions

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				that can be developed into largescale and long-term policy. The findings will enable government to channel resources towards the most effective interventions.”

Industry- facing

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“Engage with Industry”	Farm business and insurance, develop CO2 and fertilizer plans	DEFRA	None	Para 1.1.3 “Going forward, we will engage with industry to understand and address barriers to uptake of risk management or other farming insurance products, recognising that effective business planning is a key enabler of resilience at the individual farm level... We will work with industry to develop plans to bolster resilience of critical inputs such as carbon dioxide (CO2) and fertiliser. This will include a specific long-term plan on CO2 in 2022 and a focus on pioneering more organic-based fertilisers, to ensure continued certainty and availability for all inputs which underpin our food production”
“Streamline”	Creating a more transparent food system	DEFRA	End of 2023	2.3.4 “By the end of 2023, in England, we will streamline for industry all reporting requirements relating to the production and sale of food and drink.”

"Work with"	Boosting food production in sectors where there is opportunity – horticulture and seafood	Assume 'we' means DEFRA and DLUHC if linked to Levelling Up agenda	None	<p>1.3.1</p> <p>The UK agri-food and seafood sectors employ over 4 million people all over the country, making an important contribution to the government's vision to level up the UK. Government will work with these sectors to spread economic growth across the country in line with our levelling up missions on pay and productivity. We will do this by supporting new industries and boosting production in sectors where there are growth opportunities, recognising the advantages this can bring to less prosperous areas. Brexit also provides opportunities for these sectors which we outline in a later section</p>
"Work with"	Food manufacturing	"The Government"	None	<p>1.4.1</p> <p>"As part of our levelling up missions on employment and skills, government will continue to work with the food manufacturing sector as well as other parts of the food chain to spread opportunities across the country and move towards a high wage, high skill economy"</p>
"Work with"	Industry on skills	DEFRA BEIS	None	<p>1.4.2</p> <p>We will now work with industry to ensure that our offer is clear and coherent, to identify gaps and understand barriers to uptake, particularly amongst small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). We will increase the focus on skills with respect to the food sector, including boosting their representation on expert skills groups and helping them articulate where there are gaps in existing provision and new skills requirements, including green skills.</p>
"Work With"	Addressing workforce shortages	DEFRA with Home Office		<p>We will work with industry to articulate key food industry shortages to inform the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) upcoming review of the Shortage Occupation List.</p>
"Work with"	Food Transport	Assume we means DEFRA	None	<p>1.4.4</p> <p>"We will work with industry to increase use of other transport options where possible to reduce reliance on HGV drivers and improve food security.</p>

Global

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"Work with international partners"		FCDO		Para 1.1.4 "As well as strengthening the resilience of domestic supply chains, we will continue to work with international partners to support worldwide action to mitigate the impacts of food crises on the most vulnerable countries and people"
"Taking forward"		BEIS		3.1.3 "For example, as COP26 presidents we are taking forward the Agriculture Breakthrough to make sustainable agriculture the most attractive and widely adopted option for farmers by 2030, as well as the sustainable agriculture Policy Dialogue, which is raising international ambition to transform our agriculture and food systems.

Included but have been previously announced

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“We plan to spend”	Innovation funding	DEFRA and possibly BEIS	“to 2029”	1.2.4 “To ensure the farming that underpins our resilient food production is sustainable, and maintains output, we plan to spend over £270 million across our farming innovation programmes to 2029 and have bolstered funding for farmers to invest in new equipment where there is scope to boost their productivity. This will also help farmers to identify and develop low carbon farming practices and carbon storage opportunities. Farmers and growers should be at the heart of innovation, with research driven by demand to boost production and profitability and reduce environmental harms”
“Invest”	Community Eatwell pilots	DHSC and OHID	Detail in June/July HDWP	2.2.2 “As announced in the levelling up white paper, we will invest in enabling primary care to undertake a pilot programme to improve diets through the Community Eatwell programme. This will build on the growth of social prescribing within primary care networks, the additional roles available via the Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme and consider the role of those staff in primary care who have completed the Healthy Weight Coaches training. Further details will be published in the health disparities white paper”
“Promote”		DfE		2.2.4 “As recently announced in our levelling up white paper, we will promote a ‘whole school’ approach to food, with governors, teachers and caterers committed and empowered to work together towards a healthier food culture. School leaders and governors will be required to publish a school food vision on their websites and schools

				will have greater support in procuring high quality and value for money food, through the 'Get Help Buying for Schools' service.
Launch		DFE and FSA		<p>2.2.4</p> <p>The recent launch of the joint Department for Education (DfE) and Food Standards Agency (FSA) pilot for local authorities to assure and support compliance with the school food standards will help ensure progress is aligned with our ambition</p>
"Deliver"	School cooking	DFE and DLUHC		<p>2.2.5</p> <p>"Building on this, we have recently announced up to £5 million to deliver a school cooking revolution with an ambition that children leaving secondary school know at least 6 healthy recipes. This includes developing brand new materials for the curriculum and finding opportunities for children and young people to better understand sustainable food and its connection to nature. We will support teachers and school leadership, recognising their crucial role in teaching the value of healthy and sustainable diets, and we will consider insights from Ofsted's forthcoming research review into design and technology to support the teaching of cooking and nutrition.</p>