

What We Can Learn: A Review of Food Policy Innovations in Six Countries

Stephanie Walton and Corinna Hawkes
Centre for Food Policy, March 2020

Acknowledgements

This report was prepared by Stephanie Walton, Research Assistant at the Centre for Food Policy at City, University of London and Corinna Hawkes, Professor and Director, Centre for Food Policy at City, University of London. We would like to thank the country representatives who gave their time to check the information, which was largely drawn from published documents. Any remaining errors in the report are the sole responsibility of the authors. The report was prepared before the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic so does not include any food policy responses implemented since then.

Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION.....	5
2. INNOVATIVE POLICIES: HIGHLIGHTS.....	5
POLICIES ADDRESSING SPECIFIC FOOD CHALLENGES.....	5
POLICIES THAT WRITE PHILOSOPHIES INTO LAW.....	7
POLICIES THAT DELIVER CO-BENEFITS.....	8
POLICIES THAT MANAGE TRADE-OFFS.....	9
HEALTHY DIET OUTLIERS.....	11
GOVERNANCE AND A PARTICIPATORY APPROACH.....	11
INDUSTRY-LED SUCCESS STORIES.....	13
3. FOOD POLICIES IN SIX COUNTRIES.....	14
DENMARK.....	14
SUMMARY.....	15
FOOD SYSTEMS POLICIES.....	15
TRADE POLICIES.....	17
ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES.....	17
HEALTH POLICIES.....	18
PRIVATE SECTOR INNOVATIONS.....	20
FINLAND.....	20
SUMMARY.....	21
FOOD SYSTEMS POLICIES.....	22
TRADE POLICIES.....	24
ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES.....	25
HEALTH POLICIES.....	27
FRANCE.....	29
SUMMARY.....	30
FOOD SYSTEMS POLICIES.....	31
RETAIL POLICIES.....	36
ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES.....	37
HEALTH POLICIES.....	38
JAPAN.....	39
SUMMARY.....	40
HEALTH POLICIES.....	40
RETAIL POLICIES.....	42
AGRICULTURE & LAND USE POLICIES.....	43
ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY.....	45
THE NETHERLANDS.....	46
SUMMARY.....	47
FOOD SYSTEMS POLICIES.....	48
ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES.....	48
AGRICULTURE POLICIES.....	50
PRIVATE SECTOR INNOVATIONS.....	51
HEALTH POLICIES.....	53
SCOTLAND.....	55

SUMMARY.....	56
FOOD SYSTEMS POLICIES.....	57
FOOD INSECURITY POLICIES.....	58
LAND USE POLICIES.....	59
ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES.....	61
HEALTH POLICIES.....	62
4. FOOD SECURITY POLICIES IN THREE MIDDLE-INCOME COUNTRIES.....	62
BRAZIL: NATIONAL POLICY FOR FOOD AND NUTRITIONAL SECURITY (2006):.....	63
INDIA: NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY ACT (2013):.....	63
SOUTH AFRICA: NATIONAL POLICY ON FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY (2013):.....	64

1. Introduction

This report brings together examples of food policies from a select group of nations: Denmark, Finland, France, Japan, The Netherlands, and Scotland. It also briefly reviews overarching policies on food security in three middle-income countries: Brazil, India and South Africa. The purpose was to bring together innovative policy ideas from other nations to inform the independent review being conducted by Henry Dimbleby to support the development of a National Food Strategy for England. It includes policies designed to cover the whole food system (“food system policies”),¹ as well as those specific to key dimensions of the food system, such as health, environment, agriculture, food security and land-use. It also includes examples of private sector innovations and partnership approaches.

The report first highlights some notable examples of innovative policies from the six countries. It then describes the policies for each country, focusing on those which contain innovative aspects.

2. Innovative Policies: Highlights

This section provides some highlights of food policies notable for the innovative approaches they have taken. The measure of a policy’s ‘innovation’ is not whether it ‘delivered’ results given that major issues like rising obesity or soil nutrient depletion take decades to improve and cannot be resolved with a silver-bullet policy. Rather, the highlighted policies illustrate thoughtful and unique approaches for addressing specific issues and have been consistently supported and implemented over time. The policies have been classified into five categories:

- Policies addressing specific food challenges
- Policies that write philosophies into law
- Policies that deliver co-benefits
- Policies that manage trade-offs
- Healthy diet outliers
- Governance and a participatory approach
- Industry-led success stories

The full detail of each policy is set out in the next section, which collectively groups the different policies into the six different countries reviewed.

¹ Also see Centre for Food Policy. How to develop and deliver a national food policy: a global perspective. Report of the City Food Symposium 2019. London, Centre for Food Policy, 2020. https://www.city.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/537815/CFS2019-report_v.2.pdf

Policies Addressing Specific Food Challenges

Generating policy coherence through 'Health in All Policies' (HiAP) in Finland

Since 1972, Finland has pioneered a method for incorporating health objectives into the operations of various government ministries – transport, trade, employment, agriculture, housing, etc. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health encourages other sectors to consider Health Impact Assessments when evaluating policy decisions. HiAP is commonly credited for the health successes in North Karelia and Seinäjoki, although the latter was somewhat limited in scope. While HiAP provides a helpful model for policy coherence, it can struggle in circumstances where a ministry's objectives conflict with health outcomes (for example trade and economic outcomes).²

'Taste' rather than 'food' education in schools in Finland, France and Japan

A majority of countries have some food education in schools, typically in the form of health classes. But Finland, France and Japan consider food education to include fostering an appreciation of taste and a delight in trying food. It is a means by which to, not only improve public health, but nurture the countries' food culture and develop 'gastronomic citizens.' In Japan, based on the Law of *Shokuiku*, children participate in cooking, serving and cleaning up the meal for fellow students. In France, where the SAPERE method was developed, children practice describing the colour and texture of their food, learn about the *terroir* from which it came and are hardly ever served the same meal twice in a two-month period. This approach to taste education has also been adopted in schools in the other countries, including The Netherlands and Sweden.

Bespoke training programmes for staff in Denmark's public kitchens

To achieve its ambitious goals of 60% organic food procurement in public kitchens by 2020, Denmark has developed an elaborate transition programme that supports staff in the process of switching to organic products. Kitchens are provided with a dedicated conversion manager that develops a custom curriculum based on the budget limitations and size of the kitchen as well as the nutritional needs of its recipients. Kitchens that have gone through the process have been able to incorporate more organics without raising their operating budgets. Copenhagen has, impressively, achieved 90% organic food in all of its public kitchens without raising the cost of meals.

Community leadership for sustainable land use in Scotland

For the past twenty years Scotland has been facilitating a radical transition in land ownership and use through the *community right to buy* law. Through government funding and legal support mechanisms, a number of local groups have been able to purchase land

² Shankardass, K., Muntaner, C., Kokkinen, L., Shahidi, F., Freiler, A., Oneka, G., Bayoumi, A., O'Campo, P. (2018). [The Implementation of Health in All Policies initiatives: a systems framework for government action](#). *Health Research Policy and Systems*. 16(26).

and develop it for the social and environmental benefit of the community. Examples of how the land has been used include: the development of a community forest, renewable energy schemes, biodiversity and species management and peat restoration.³ This focus on community ownership is part of a wider reconsideration of land use ownership rights and responsibilities in light of sustainability. (Also covered below in *The Right to Land*.)

A communal approach to the agroecological transition in France

Efforts to facilitate the agroecological transition have mostly taken the form of direct payments to farmers through schemes like the European Union's *Rural Development Programme*. These direct payments assume individual decision-making on the part of the farmer. France, however, is pioneering a different approach through the designation and funding of Economic and Environmental Interest Groups (EIGS) – groups of farmers that begin multi-year projects to collectively transition to agroecological production practices designed to have measurable economic and environmental benefits. This communal rather than individualised approach is intended to both achieve greater scale in the agroecological transition and to provide case studies of the economic benefits of agroecology for other farmers. As of 2019, nearly 500 EIGSs have been created

Policies that Write Philosophies into Law

These policies represent the encoding of certain beliefs into the legal framework of a country. They set a foundation of collective operating values to which all other policies must adhere.

The Right to Land: The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016

Scotland's *community right to buy* laws represent a significant shift in perspective on land use, ownership, rights and responsibilities. The country has been reshaping land ownership since the *Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003* which gave a community pre-emptive rights to buy a piece of land which a landowner intends to sell if it can show that it will somehow use it for sustainable development. This evolved in the *Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016* to allow Ministers to compel owners of neglected or environmentally harmful land to sell to an interested community, even if the owner doesn't have an interest in selling the piece of land. Scotland aims to make 1 million acres of land community-owned by the end of 2020.

Embodied in this law is what Scotland calls a "human rights-based approach to land rights."⁴ Scotland no longer operates under the assumptions that private ownership is always the best way to manage land or that owners get exclusive say over what they do with their land. Considering Scotland's ambitious land use and forestry policies, the implication that landowners (including farmers) have communal responsibilities that, if

³ Local Government and Community Directorate. (2019). [Community Ownership: Case Studies](#). Edinburgh: Government of Scotland.

⁴ Environment and Forestry Directorate. (2017). [Scottish land rights and responsibilities statement](#). Edinburgh: The Scottish Government.

unmet, could mean the loss of their land, the *community right to buy* could have significant implications down the road.

The Right to Food: Food security in Brazil, India, South Africa, and (potentially) Scotland

Brazil, India and South Africa each have the right to food written into their constitution, but how they go about its implementation differs. In Brazil, where the right to food has largely been led by an active civil society movement, the National Council for Food Security is comprised of both civil society and government. South Africa has focused on building up the infrastructure of its food network and, while progress is being made on food security, divergent political objectives are beginning to fall along predictable lines of economic growth versus equitable food access. In India, the right to food is implemented through the direct distribution of highly-subsidised cereals and is overseen exclusively by the Department of Food & Public Distribution.

Scotland is considering incorporating the right to food into its *Good Food Nation Bill* that was scheduled to be introduced to Parliament in March 2020 but will not be introduced in the current Parliament. There has been a public campaign led by civil societies for its inclusion, culminating in a formal petition led by the Scottish Food Coalition in September 2019.

Policies that Deliver Co-Benefits

A policy that delivers co-benefits is one in which multiple objectives are achieved through one cohesive policy mechanism. The policies below illustrate a selection of systems-wide approaches to changing the food environment, involving a number of actors and mechanisms to meet different goals.

The environmental, economic and health benefits of Denmark's Organic Action Plan

Denmark has made organic agriculture the pillar of its entire food strategy. In addition to the anticipated (although somewhat contested) environmental benefits of organic agriculture for biodiversity, animal welfare and soil quality,⁵ the *Organic Action Plan* also created economic benefits for farmers through the government's investment in growing demand for organics among consumers and through public procurement. Increasing the amount of organic food in public kitchens not only created a pull-mechanism for organic products but delivered health benefits – kitchens with more organics serve more fruit and vegetables and less meat. The boom in Danish organics is now a centrepiece in government strategies for growing food diplomacy and international exports.

⁵ Jespersen, L., Baggesen, D., Fog, E., Halsnaes, J., Andraesen, L. (2017). Contribution of organic farming to public goods in Denmark. *Organic Agriculture*. 7(3): 243-266.

Tackling food security, emissions and health by solving food waste in France

France's *Food Waste Law* originated with a petition led by a local counsellor arguing that families struggle to get by while supermarkets waste so much food. In addition to the clear environmental benefits for decreasing food waste, tackling food security became a main feature of the law by emphasising food donations rather than other tactics for decreasing food waste (e.g. the circular economy). Supermarkets are now required to have a contract in place with a food bank to donate a certain amount of food. Food banks have reported that, in addition to an increase in the tonnage of donations, the quality of food has improved providing its recipients with more nutritious meals. Food banks are required to distribute the food with dignity – in a proper food centre where human conversation and community is fostered, rather than just handing it out on the street.

Policies that Manage Trade-Offs

There are typically many active policies in a country's food environment that require making trade-offs. Most common are policies that prioritise economic benefits at the expense of health and environmental outcomes. It is rare to find policies that are clearly intended to curb or limit the free flow of food goods in some way in service to other objectives. The policies below are specific examples of countries' attempting to operate by a different set of guiding principles and the challenges they face in doing so.

Limiting large retailers to preserve small businesses in Japan and France

Japan's *Large-Scale Retail Law* and France's *Raffarin Law* were intended to limit the influx and growth of supermarkets and hypermarkets in order to protect small retailers in a community. Both laws required that the opening of a supermarket gain approval by a community board of small business owners. The law in Japan originated in the 1930's and so largely blocked the influx of multinational retailers and, as a result, food manufacturers into the country. Japan was ultimately forced to rescind the law under pressure from the WTO and the US but simply replaced it with a different iteration. France's law was passed in 1996 after large supermarkets had already entered the market so was, in a sense, too little too late to fully upend the growth of retail chains. They also were forced to rescind the law under pressure from the European Commission and Germany.

The economic impact of limiting retail and trade in this way are complex, but the laws ultimately speak to divergent priorities from those of the free market. It is fascinating to note that protecting small businesses may have had significant health impacts – particularly in Japan where the influx of large processed food manufacturers was largely curtailed by the absence of large retailers. It is also important to note that pressure to rescind the laws was not domestic but international. The United States wanted access to Japan's booming market

in the 1990's and Aldi, the German supermarket discounter, wanted to expand into France.

Attempting the circular economy, one of the world's largest agricultural industries

The Netherlands has made the circular economy the touchstone of its environmental policy, with a special emphasis on food and biomass. As the agriculture industry in the Netherlands is such an important sector of the economy (its exports are the second largest in the world) changing the growth trajectories of farms – particularly in the pig, poultry and dairy sectors – is quite difficult. There is a recognition of the immense damage the highly-intensive agriculture sector is having on the environment and compliance is required with a range of European Union Directives to curb pollution and emissions. Circular economy policy statements attempt to highlight the market opportunity for sustainable food, arguing that changing production methods won't in the long term require an economic sacrifice from farmers. However, the same documents introduce policies for a protein transition away from dairy and an entirely grass-fed cattle industry.

Groups like the Green Protein Alliance and the Netherlands Agriculture and Horticulture Organisation have supported these policies but met strong resistance from farmers who run intensive pig, poultry and dairy operations. Recent protests over forced decreases in nitrates are the culmination of years of regulation and environmental pressures. Current protests are related to the conservation obligation in the Habitats Directive due to the designation of Natura 2000 areas.

The *Biomass and Food Transition Agenda* designates two essential pathways for guiding the agriculture sector into the circular economy – the protein transition and grass-fed dairy / beef. Government efforts to achieve these aims have been arguably not very proactive, but a few private organisations have begun to lead major changes within their industry. The Green Protein Alliance (GPA) is a private partnership network comprised of knowledge partners, major food producers and retailers including Unilever, Alpro and the two largest supermarket chains in the Netherlands. Their objective is to speed up the transition towards a Dutch diet with more vegetable protein. Their initiatives have included social media campaigns and recipes for the public;⁶ education and promotion events with industry and government stakeholders; the launch of a national advertising campaign⁷ and coordination with industry partners to increase the development of new products. Similar to Organic Denmark, supermarkets have been essential to increasing the availability of protein alternatives. In the first year, the GPA reported a 3.2% increase in legumes, nuts and meat/dairy substitutes, a 1.7% decrease in meat sales and a 1.3% decrease in dairy products, in addition 70 new vegetable protein products were introduced to supermarkets.⁸

⁶ <https://zokanhetook.nu/>

⁷ Green Protein Alliance. (2019). "[Press Release – That's How It Is! First National Campaign Launched to Promote a More Vegetable Based Diet.](#)" [Online]. Accessed: 21 Nov 2019.

⁸ Green Protein Alliance. (2018). [Impact Report: Year 1.](#) [Online]. Accessed: 21 Nov 2019.

While the Green Protein Alliance has seen some success, the Landbound Commission has seen more trouble in advocating for a grass-fed cattle industry. It was established by the Netherlands Agriculture and Horticulture Organisation (LTO) - the farmers' lobby association; and the Dutch Dairy Association (NZO) - the dairy farmers' lobby association, and released *Soil Structure as a basis for a future-proof dairy farm*.⁹ It set ambitious targets including, amongst other goals, for 65% of animal feed to come from the farm itself or a farm nearby and for grass to be the basis of a cow's diet, with no more than 10 cows per hectare of grazeable land by 2025. Even though these efforts have been led by the agriculture and dairy lobbies, the report itself was met with mixed responses from the rest of the industry¹⁰ and its implementation has stalled amid protests and internal conflicts regarding environmental regulation.

Healthy Diet Outliers

While there are no examples of countries that have managed to consistently reverse rising rates of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and overweight/obesity levels (the only successful cases can be found at a municipal or regional level), Japan is an interesting case of a country that, even while rates are rising, has largely managed to avoid an obesity epidemic on the same scale as Western countries.

Government monitoring of weight with Japan's Metabo Law

Japan has the lowest overweight/obesity rates in the developed world. While the factors that contribute to this are multi-faceted, there are three policies in particular that are important to note (although their direct impact on overweight/obesity rates is unclear). The first is their impressive school lunch programme and the *Law of Shokuiku*. The second is their Large-Scale Retail Law (both discussed above). The third is the Metabo Law which takes a much more direct approach. *Metabo* is the preferred term for 'overweight' in Japan, considered to sound more inclusive than 'obesity'.¹¹ It requires that everyone between the ages of 40 and 74 have their waist measured annually. If they do not meet standard guidelines for waist size, depending on severity, they either attend counselling for weight loss or receive motivational support. No official studies have been published on its success in curbing weight gain, but it is indicative of Japan's unique understanding of both the role of government in personal health and perhaps the impact of communal expectations and pressure regarding weight.

Governance and a Participatory Approach

⁹ Commissie Grondgebondenheid. (2018). [Grondgebondenheid als basis voor een toekomstbestendige melkveehouderij](#).

¹⁰ Smit, P. (2018). "Divided responses to advisory reports on land cover." *NieuweOogst*. [Online]. Accessed: 20 Nov 2019. [In Dutch].

¹¹ Onishi, N. (2008). "Japan, Seeking Trim Waists, Measures Millions." *The New York Times*. [Online]. Accessed: 23 Oct 2019.

Most countries in these studies employ some mixture of consultations, advisory committees and public reports in the development of new policy and a standard level of participatory governance is expected. The policies below are examples of where governments have attempted to exceed expectations in participation and transparency.

Developing a Food and Agriculture Law in the Estates General of Food in France (2017)

The Estates General of Food in France was an unprecedented attempt to bring all stakeholders to the table to discuss the future of food in France. It involved 700 people across 74 territories - agriculture, food industry, distribution, catering, politicians, NGOs, academics, food banks, finance, and retail – in a number of workshops, seminars, meetings and debates.

The agenda covered two 'sites': 1) "The Creation and Distribution of Value" with workshops focused on how to create and better distribute value and 2) "Healthy, Safe, Sustainable and Accessible to All" with workshops focused on a healthy diet, food waste, food insecurity, etc. A final workshop covered how to prepare for the future through investments, research and technical support. The direct outcome of the Estates General was the *Food and Agriculture Law* (2019).

In addition to the workshops, a public consultation was opened up online from July to November.¹² It had two functions – to solicit votes on proposals made by the government and to invite proposals and arguments on specific issues. The online platform was developed to allow for engagement with different opinions and debates to be visible and interactive.¹³ Registered members could publish their votes and proposals publicly.¹⁴ It received 163,000 votes and 18,000 contributions. The online contributions were used to form the agenda for the workshops.

Criticisms were that the half-day workshops were insufficient to address the real socio-economic and environmental difficulties of the agriculture and food sectors¹⁵ and that the government did not offer explanations as to how the outcomes from the workshops or submissions on the public platform would be integrated into final policy decisions.

Supporting grassroots movements to develop sustainable and just local food systems in France

¹² <https://www.egalimentation.gouv.fr/>

¹³ <https://www.egalimentation.gouv.fr/profile/florenta>

¹⁴ <https://www.egalimentation.gouv.fr/members>

¹⁵ Ducos, L. (2018). "State-Sanctioned Agro-ecological Transition? The State of Food in France." *Arc2020*. [Online]. Accessed: 22 Nov 2019.

As part of the *National Food Programme* (PNA), each year the national government releases a call for projects to participate in the *Regional Food Projects* programme. This programme provides grants that support the local development of initiatives that deliver on the objectives of the PNA which, in its latest iteration, focuses on social justice, food waste and food education. Community groups comprised of farmers, food businesses, local government and consumers are formed and submit proposals for their local projects. As of 2018, more than 120 projects have been funded through the programme. The projects include initiatives to develop community gardens among disenfranchised local populations and developing online e-learning tools to education children on sustainable and local nutrition.

Driving action through 'covenants' in The Netherlands

The Netherlands uses a combination of different instruments in their approach to food policy. This includes the development of 'covenants' between relevant actors on a certain issue – most commonly the government and private industry. These covenants are non-binding but closely monitored for progress and the government reserves the right to take stronger action if necessary. Examples of these covenants are the *Agrocovenant* intended to facilitate an energy transition in agriculture, the *Grazing Covenant* to increase the amount of pasture-raised beef and dairy cows and the *National Prevention Agreement* on improving overweight/obesity rates and decreasing alcohol and tobacco consumption. All of these covenants were developed through discussion and debate with the various stakeholders from which action is required.

This form of consensus policymaking has faced a mixed reception. On some issues, it provides the opportunity to private enterprise to take the lead in creating innovative solutions to certain challenges (see below). In other cases, it is criticised for softening the required actions from industry and thus not truly requiring change, such as with the *National Prevention Agreement*.

Industry-Led Success Stories

Organic Denmark and mobilising a food cluster towards the organic market

Organic Denmark¹⁶ is a membership association that represents the organic food industry. As an organisation, it is a non-profit partly funded by the government, but it is comprised of companies, farmers and consumers and is largely responsible for the adoption of organic food as official policy in Denmark. Now their priority is advocating for an increased supply of organics in retail chains by connecting organic producers with retailers. Their work has been essential to getting supermarkets to add new products on shelves, actively promoting organics and instituting price reductions.

¹⁶ <https://www.organicdenmark.com>

They also work with producers to expand organic product ranges. They connect specialists with farmers and SMEs to launch value-added organic processed foods and provide training for local organic producers on how to increase their exports.

The success of Denmark's *Organic Action Plan* (discussed above) is largely credited to its support of both push and pull mechanisms for generating supply and demand. Organic Denmark has played a crucial role in helping producers find a market for their product and positioning Denmark as a leader in organic food.

3. Food policies in six countries

This section describes the food policies in six countries. While it provides substantial detail about a range of policies in each country, it does not aim to be comprehensive. Rather, it serves to highlight the more innovative aspects of the policies in each country from which lessons could be learned.

DENMARK

- **Organic food** made up 12% of the food retail market in 2018 (compared to 1.5% in the UK)¹⁷ and 10.5% of agricultural land area is used for organic farming¹⁸ (the UK uses 2.7%¹⁹). The **Organic Action Plan for Denmark** emphasises growing overall market demand rather than only funding farmers to convert to organic.
- **Public procurement** is considered essential to providing market for organics. Public kitchens are supported with a personalised curriculum and a dedicated conversion manager. **Municipalities** have largely led the way - 90% of food in Copenhagen's public kitchens is organic. Evidence indicates that such public procurement policies have also led to healthier food environments in schools and worksites.^{20,21}
- Denmark's economy benefits from its **sustainable gastronomy** brand. In 2019, the government launched **Gastro 2025**, a plan to develop culinary diplomacy. The plan emerged from the recommendations of Team Gastro, a government-appointment board of 19 government-appointed industry executives and chefs.

¹⁷ Soil Association. (2019). *Organic Market 2019*.

¹⁸ W., Christian. (2019). "Over a tenth of Danish agricultural land now organic." *CPH Post Online*. [Online]. Accessed: 7 Nov 2019.

¹⁹ Defra. (2019). *Organic farming statistics 2018*. London.

²⁰ Mikkelsen, B., Bruselius-Jensen, M., Andersen, J., Lassen, A. (2006). Are green caterers more likely to serve healthy meals than non-green caterers? Results from a quantitative study in Danish worksite catering. *Public Health Nutrition*. 9(7): 846-850.

²¹ He, C., Mikkelsen, B. (2014). The association between organic school food policy and school food environment: results from an observational study in Danish schools. *Perspectives in Public Health*. 134(2): 110-116.

- While the agricultural sector benefits from these approaches internationally, there are conflicts regarding the strict environmental regulations it entails. The 2015 **Food and Agriculture Package** sought to reduce the regulatory burden on farmers but was criticised for catering to the agricultural lobby and losing environmental gains. The current government is attempting to re-implement these past regulations.

Summary

Denmark has worked hard to develop its organic and sustainable food sector, beginning with the world's first legislation on organic farming in 1987.²² The success of the most recent *Organic Action Plan for Denmark* has been credited to its push-pull approach²³ – stimulating market demand for organic items while funding farmers' transitions to organic. With a goal to make public kitchens 60% organic by 2020, municipalities and public procurement are considered an important source of stimulating increased demand and are provided with resources and support on transitioning their kitchens to organics.

The government has taken full advantage of its sustainability credentials. The *Gastro 2025* plan and groups like Food Nation have advanced Denmark as a gastronomic “brand” to inspire food sustainability and increase exports and economic growth. While the agricultural sector benefits from this growth, the strict environmental regulations that come with it are not always well received domestically. The same groups that promote Denmark's organic agriculture credentials abroad simultaneously lobby for decreased environmental regulation domestically.^{24,25} The 2015 Food and Agricultural Package, heavily influenced by industry groups, sought to ease the regulatory burden, particularly through lifting restrictions on the use of nitrogen fertilizer. The plan has been criticized both domestically and abroad and the government elected in June 2019, is attempting to reinstate some of the stricter regulations that were lost in the package in early 2020.

With regard to food and health, Denmark has innovated new restrictions (for example on trans-fats), taxes (the now eliminated fat tax) and partnerships (the Wholegrain Partnership). A considerable amount of action on this topic has been at the city level – the 2016 Health Act requires municipalities to create food and health plans. National action is now increasing with the new *Strategy on food, meals and health* and a DKK 40 million (£4.6million) budget. As with the organic food strategy, public kitchens are a central feature.

²² Padel, S., Lampkin, N. (2007). Development of Governmental Support in Europe in ed. Lockeretz, W. *Organic Farming: An International History*. Wallingford and Cambridge: CAB International.

²³ Danish Agriculture & Food Council. (2019). *The Organic Way – The Danish Model*. Copenhagen.

²⁴ Danish Agriculture & Food Council. (2017). “[The Food and Agriculture package has an impact on farmers' economy.](#)” [Online]. Accessed: 10 Nov 2019. [In Danish].

²⁵ Danish Agriculture & Food Council. (2017). “[Criticism of the Food and Agriculture Package is without substance.](#)” [Online]. Accessed: 10 Nov 2019. [In Danish].

Organic Action Plan for Denmark, 2020 (2011 / 2015 / 2018)

Rather than relying solely on funding to farmers, the *Organic Action Plan for Denmark* prioritises stimulating market demand for organic food, thus creating a market incentive for farmers to switch to organic production. A major source of this new market demand is from public procurement and €11 million was dedicated from 2015-2018 to support conversion projects for public kitchens. €3.3 million was also devoted to promotional campaigns. This is in addition to the €267 million in funding from the Rural Development Programme²⁶ as part of the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) to support farmers in the 2-year conversion.

The movement originated in the 1980's with co-op dairy farmers and has been primarily industry-led.²⁷ The Danish Agricultural Food Council which represents industry encourages farmers and retailers to go organic. Food Nation, a public-private partnership for advancing the Danish food cluster, promotes Denmark's organic credentials abroad. The Ministry for Food, Agriculture and Fisheries (MFAF) collaborated extensively with industry to develop the plan through three workshops held with 200 stakeholders. Interest groups played a key role in prioritising initiatives.²⁸

The plan also includes a robust monitoring framework. Statistics Denmark keeps track of domestic trade and imports/exports²⁹ and the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and the Environment publishes annual reports on the amount of organically farmed land.³⁰ The *Plan* has been successful in doubling the size of organic agricultural area by 2020 from the 2007 level. As of May 2018, 10.5% of agricultural land is organic,³¹ up from 6.8% in 2015.³²

Consumer demand for organic food has grown faster than farmers' ability to produce it and now more organic food is imported into Denmark than is produced.³³ As a result, farmers' interest in converting has grown since 2015³⁴ and DKK 1.1 billion (€134 million) has been dedicated to organic conversion in 2018 and 2019.³⁵

Public Organic Procurement Policy (POPP) (ongoing)

The government set a goal in the *Organic Action Plan* to reach 60% organic procurement in public kitchens. Dedicated funding and a wide-ranging suite of educational programmes

²⁶ European Commission. (2019). [Factsheet on 2014-2020 Rural Development Programme for Denmark](#).

²⁷ Food Nation. (2019). [Organic: A vision and a mindset in the Danish food cluster](#).

²⁸ Schmid, O., Padel, S., Lampkin, N., Meredith, S. (2015). [Organic Action Plans: A Guide for Stakeholders](#). Brussels: IFOAM – EU Group.

²⁹ Statistics Denmark. (2018). ["Organic Production and Trade."](#) [Online]. Accessed: 7 Nov 2019.

³⁰ The Danish Agricultural Agency. (2018). ["Ecology Statistics."](#) [Online]. Accessed: 7 Nov 2019.

³¹ W., Christian. (2019). ["Over a tenth of Danish agricultural land now organic."](#) *CPH Post Online*. [Online]. Accessed: 7 Nov 2019.

³² The Danish Agrifish Agency. (2016). [Denmark's Report for the State of the World's Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture](#). Copenhagen: Ministry of Environment and Food of Denmark.

³³ Danish Agriculture & Food Council. (2019). [The Organic Way – The Danish Model](#). Copenhagen.

³⁴ Danish Ministry of Environment and Food. (2018). [Growth Plan for Danish Organic Agriculture](#). Copenhagen: Government of Denmark.

³⁵ The Local Denmark. (2018). ["Denmark's government to spend billions on organic farming."](#) *The Local*. [Online]. Accessed: 7 Nov 2019.

and support curriculums are facilitating the transition. Funding is only provided to support the transitions, not for the price premium of organics except subsidies for schools that use organic fruit and vegetables.

Public kitchens are guided through a transition process led by a dedicated conversion manager. They start with foods with a small price premium (potatoes, milk, etc.) and progress up to more expensive items like meat. Local and seasonal items are used to offset increasing costs and menus include less meat and produce less waste. Classes are provided on preparing organic meals and curriculums are highly tailored to the budget limitations and size of the kitchen as well as the nutritional needs of its recipients.

Baseline and endpoint measurements are used to assign the Organic Cuisine Label that rewards a kitchen for reaching a certain percentage of organic food. While no recent reports could be found in English on the total increase across all public kitchens, a 2016 study found an average 24% increase in organic food procurement in participating public kitchens.³⁶ Regional and city governments have played a major role in delivering on the plan and some cities have seen remarkable success. 90% of food purchased by the City of Copenhagen is organic without increases in meal prices.³⁷

Trade Policies

Gastro 2025 (2019)

In March 2019, the Ministry of Environment and Food of Denmark launched *Gastro 2025*. Gastro 2025 aimed to use the role of gastronomy to inspire a more sustainable food system in Denmark while also focusing on gastronomy in branding, tourism and exports as a means of strengthening the restaurant and catering industry and cementing the “country’s reputation as a food and gastronomy powerhouse.”³⁸ Gastro 2025 was established as a result of recommendations published in 2018 by Team Gastro, a group of 19 government-appointed industry executives and chefs.³⁹ The Gastro 2025 plan allocated DKK 40 million (£3.4 million) (2019-2022) in addition to DKK 9.5 million (£1 million) to support further culinary and gastronomic development.⁴⁰ The plan includes the development of a gastronomy academy with the purpose of empowering the gastronomic sector to address

³⁶ Sørensen, N., Tetens, I., Løje, H., Lassen, A. (2016). The effectiveness of the Danish Organic Action Plan 2020 to increase the level of organic public procurement in Danish public kitchens. *Public Health Nutrition*. 19(18): 3428-3435.

³⁷ Soldi, R. (2018). *Sustainable public procurement of food*. European Committee of the Regions.

³⁸ Michail, N. (2017) “[Gastro2025: Industry giants to advise Danish government on boosting food industry potential.](#)” *Food Navigator*. [Online]. Accessed: 9 Nov 2019.

³⁹ TEAM GASTRO. *Anbefalinger*. Miljø- og Fødevareministeriet, February 2018.

https://mfvm.dk/fileadmin/user_upload/MFVM/Nyheder/Bilag_2_Team_Gastros_anbefalinger.pdf. Accessed: 9 Nov 2019 [In Danish].

⁴⁰ Ministry of Environment and Food. (2019). “[Danish government should create mouth-watering experiences around the world.](#)” [Online]. Accessed: 9 Nov 2019

the climate and sustainability agenda, more investment in branding of Danish food abroad, export promotion through alliances and simplification and support for culinary diplomacy.⁴¹

Environmental Policies

The Food and Agriculture Package (2015)

The promotion of organic farming goes hand-in-hand with strict environmental regulations. Of particular concern is water pollution from the application of nitrogen on farms. Historically, the dialogue on environmental regulations between farming and government has been constructive as the economic benefits of sustainable farming were clear. But this began to break down in 2013 in the face of market difficulties and financial burdens on farmers. A group that controls roughly half of Denmark's agricultural land began a legal and media fight against environmental regulations. With close ties to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and the Environment, they had significant input into the 2015 Food and Agriculture Package. Regulation on nitrogen had, up to that point, been blanketed across the entire country. The new package took a targeted approach based on the unique soil and water makeup of a region.⁴² While this aspect was generally welcomed, the package was criticised by academics and the EU for allowing an *increase* in the use of nitrogen, making prevention measures voluntary, and shifting the financial burden of pollution abatement from industry to the government.^{43,44}

The government elected in 2019 plans to strengthen regulations on nitrogen emissions in early 2020, saying the voluntary instruments did not do enough to curb emissions.⁴⁵ DKK 190 million has been allocated for farmers in targeted areas who will be affected, but legal battles are still being waged.⁴⁶

Health Policies

Targeted policies

Denmark was the first country worldwide to prohibit the sale of products containing trans-fats (2003).^{47,48} They were also innovators of the use of food taxes. In 2011, a law requiring a tax on saturated fats was passed with almost unanimous Parliamentary support. By June

⁴¹ Ministry of Environment and Food. (2019). [Gastro2025](#). Copenhagen: Government of Denmark.

⁴² Ministry of Environment and Food. (2017). [Overview of the Danish regulation of nutrients in agriculture and the Danish Nitrate Action Programme](#). Copenhagen: Government of Denmark. [In Danish].

⁴³ Olesen, J., Schultz, E. (2019). "[The Food and Agriculture Package is surrounded by myths](#)." *Berlingske*. [Online]. Accessed: 10 Nov 2019. [In Danish].

⁴⁴ Jacobsen, H. (2016). "[Commission warns Denmark over new agriculture package](#)." *Euractiv*. [Online]. Accessed: 10 Nov 2019.

⁴⁵ Ministry of Environment and Food. (2019). "[The government is intensifying its efforts to combat nitrogen emissions significantly](#)." [Online]. Accessed: 10 Nov 2019. [In Danish].

⁴⁶ Danish Agriculture & Food Council. (2019). "[Agriculture and Food goes to court in case of Beder](#)." [Online]. Accessed: 10 Nov 2019. [In Danish].

⁴⁷ Astrup, A. (2006). The *trans* fatty acid story in Denmark. *Atherosclerosis Supplements*. 7(2): 43-46.

⁴⁸ WHO. (2018). "[Denmark, trans fat ban pioneer: lessons from other countries](#)." *World Health Organization*. [Online]. Accessed: 7 Nov 2019.

2012, however, businesses had formed a coalition lobbying against the tax, saying it was causing job losses and the tax was revoked. Evidence indicates it was associated with a 10 - 15% fall in fat consumption.⁴⁹ Critics of the tax said that, rather than consuming less fat, Danes simply went over the border to Sweden or Germany to shop (these reports are unconfirmed).⁵⁰

Denmark has a unique public-private partnership designed to promote wholegrain consumption. The Danish Whole Grain Partnership was established in 2008 between government (Danish Veterinary and Food Administration), health NGOs, and the food and retail industries.⁵¹ It was originally hosted by the Danish Cancer Society but later moved to the Confederation of Danish Industry's offices. It involved making wholegrain products more available and promoting them through a logo and public awareness. It is reported that the Danish Whole Grain Logo helped Danes to increase their daily wholegrain intake to 63g in 2014 compared with 36g in 2007.

In 2009, Denmark adopted the Nordic Keyhole, a green 'keyhole' mark that companies can use voluntarily on foods that meet set nutritional criteria.⁵² Originally developed in Sweden it is supported by the Nordic Council of Ministers. The number of products with the Keyhole label increased from 1,900 in 2012 to more than 3,000 in 2017.

The Health Act (2016) and the Executive Order on the Food Act (2017)

The 2016 Health Act states it is the duty of municipalities to develop, implement and monitor health programmes. Following this legislation the Board of Health provided a series of "prevention packages" intended to support municipalities in the development of their local preventative health plans.⁵³ The packages for *Overweight*⁵⁴ and *Food & Meals*⁵⁵ encourages municipalities and public kitchens to develop obesity prevention plans and food strategies.

Strategy for Food, Meals and Health (2018) and the Healthy Food Council

In 2017, the Minister for the Environment and Food, the Minister for Health, the Minister of Social Affairs, the Minister of Education set up an Advisory Board for Food, Meals and Health to provide recommendations on how to improve eating habits and overall health in Denmark.⁵⁶ Composed of a mixture of industry, healthcare, food communicators and

⁴⁹ World Health Organisation. (2015). [Using price policies to promote healthier diets](#). Copenhagen: WHO – Europe.

⁵⁰ Snowdon, C. (2013). [The Proof of the Pudding: Denmark's fat tax fiasco](#). IEA Current Controversies Papers. London: Institute of Economic Affairs.

⁵¹ Greve C, Neess RI. The Evolution of the Whole Grain Partnership in Denmark. Copenhagen Business School & the Danish Whole Grain Partnership. December 2014. https://www.cbs.dk/files/cbs.dk/the_evolution_of_the_whole_grain_partnership_in_denmark.pdf

⁵² Norden. The Keyhole: Healthy choices made easy. 2010. <http://norden.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:700822/FULLTEXT01.pdf>

⁵³ The Board of Health. (2018). [The Municipality's Work with Prevention Packages](#). Copenhagen: Government of Denmark. [In Danish].

⁵⁴ The Board of Health. (2018). [Prevention Package: Overweight](#). Copenhagen: Government of Denmark. [In Danish].

⁵⁵ The Board of Health. (2018). [Prevention Package: Food & Meals](#). Copenhagen: Government of Denmark. [In Danish].

⁵⁶ Advisory Board for mad, måltider og sundhed. Anbefalinger til regeringen og en invitation til hele Danmark. April 2018. https://mfvm.dk/fileadmin/user_upload/MFVM/Nyheder/FVST_ABRapport_210x297_web.pdf. [In Danish].

academia, in 2018 they published a report with ten recommendations addressed to all actors in society. The recommendations include changing the culture of food marketing, especially to children, focusing on nutrition in day cares and schools and the importance of skills and cooperation across sectors.⁵⁷

In August 2018, the Danish Government released the *Strategy for Food, Meals and Health*⁵⁸ based on the recommendations of the Advisory Board for Food, Meals and Health. DKK 40 million from 2018-2021⁵⁹ was allocated to a series of new initiatives including education programmes and organisation of partnerships with stakeholders and NGOs.

In 2018, a new national forum for food, meals and health named the *Healthy Food Council* was established, with the purpose to promoting healthy food habits among the Danish people and implementing the recommendations from the Advisory Board for Food, Meals and Health. The *Healthy Food Council* comprised of 30 participating organisations from government, civil society, academia and government.⁶⁰ In September 2019, it released its 3-year action plan⁶¹ which prioritises building up its membership and ensuring healthy food is on the political agenda. Areas of focus will be on schools and day cares and on changing Danish food habits, particularly around portion sizes.

Private Sector Innovations

Organic Denmark

Organic Denmark is a membership association that represents the organic food industry. They lobbied centre-left parties for 18 months to gain support for increasing organic public procurement goals to 60%. After the *Organic Action Plan* was in place, they led a mobilisation of industry across the supply chain – farmers, food companies and food service – to increase supply and expand product ranges.⁶² The relative consistency of Denmark's organic action plans across governmental changes can, in large part, be traced to the momentum Organic Denmark created. About 40% of funding comes from government – primarily levy funds generated through a tax on pesticides. The rest is from sector contributions.

Supermarkets in Denmark have been especially important in increasing the supply of organics by adding new products, actively promoting organics and instituting price

⁵⁷ Advisory Board for mad, måltider og sundhed. Anbefalinger til regeringen og en invitation til hele Danmark. April 2018. https://mfvm.dk/fileadmin/user_upload/MFVM/Nyheder/FVST_ABRapport_210x297_web.pdf. [In Danish].

⁵⁸ Ministry of Environment and Food. (2018). *Strategy for food, meals and health*. Copenhagen The Danish Government. <https://mfvm.dk/publikationer/publikation/pub/hent-fil/publication/strategy-for-food-meals-and-health/>

⁵⁹ Ministry of the Environment and Food. (2017). "The government will promote better and healthier food and meal habits." [Online]. Accessed: 7 Nov 2019. [In Danish].

⁶⁰ The Meal Partnership. (2018). "New national forum for food, meals and health." [Online]. Accessed: 7 Nov 2019. [In Danish].

⁶¹ Healthy Food Council. (2019). *National indsats for sund mad*.

⁶² Katto-Andrighetto, J., Bowen, D., Varini, F., D'Amico, S., Kirchner, C. (2017). *Guidelines for Public Support to Organic Agriculture*. IFOAM – Organics International.

reductions. New products ranges are considered essential to this growth. The Ministry of Growth and Business funds a team of product development specialists to meet with farmers and SMEs to launch value-added organic processed foods. Organic Denmark also provides training for local organic producers on how to increase their exports. Seminars are offered on foreign supermarkets, certification requirements and product tailoring.

FINLAND

- In 2017, Finland's main food policy was Food2030, which set the government's agenda for addressing the structural problems inhibiting growth. In December 2019 the new government initiated a new government programme which reportedly has placed food higher up the national agenda by threading it through the eight strategic themes of the programme. The details are still being articulated – it is scheduled to be completed in 2020.
- In 2015 €90 million was allocated to farming investments as agreed in **Government Programme 2015**. Food exports have been promoted through key project funding (5 million euros) by opening new export markets for Finnish foodstuffs outside the EU.
- The **bio-economy** is a means to both position Finland as experts on sustainable resource innovation and to take advantage of the green economy. The **National Blue Economy Development Plan** is focused on economic opportunities in fisheries and aquaculture.
- Finland takes a community-led and integrative approach to tackling obesity and NCDs, guided by the principles of **Health in All Policies (HiAP)**, alongside a range of national programmes. The law requires **municipalities** to create local health policies using HiAP. North Karelia and the city of Seinäjoki have been praised as examples of how HiAP facilitates collaboration.
- **Public procurement** is a key mechanism for delivering on economic, health and environmental goals – particularly the **school meals system**. However, it has been difficult for kitchens to integrate more organic and local food for lack of supply, training and sector infrastructure.

Summary

Finland's food sector has struggled to keep up with the globalised food economy. Only 6% of the land is arable and production capabilities vary greatly by region. Some communities in Lapland have only 0.16 – 0.79 people p/ km² (Finland total: 18 people p/km²; EU 117

people p/km²) and it has been difficult to develop a strong food infrastructure. 55% of funding from the Rural Development Programme goes to areas facing natural constraints. When the Centre Party, tied closely with agrarianism, took power in 2015, boosting the food economy became a top priority.

In 2015, the government began to revive new initiatives to revive the food sector, providing an extra €90 million to farming investments and €5 million for promoting food export. In 2017 they launched Food2030 (with no additional funding). As part of Food2030, and anticipating substantial economic growth, Finland positioned itself as innovation experts on sustainable resources use. The *National Blue Economy Development Plan* is currently underway, focused on growing Finland's fisheries and aquaculture from €983 million to €2 billion by 2025. (As of 2017, growth was flat.)⁶³ Most efforts towards climate change mitigation have been subsumed within the bio-economy strategy.⁶⁴

A new government came to power in December 2019, led by Prime Minister Sanna Marin, who initiated a new Government Programme - "*Inclusive and competent Finland – a socially, economically and ecologically sustainable society.*" The programme incorporates eight strategic themes including: "a carbon neutral Finland that protects biodiversity" and "a dynamic and thriving Finland - transport networks and agriculture."⁶⁵ While there is no strategic theme on food, it is reported to be threaded through the programme, further raising food up the national agenda.

Promoting better diets to address obesity and NCDs in Finland is the subject of municipal-led initiatives using Health in All Policies (HiAP). HiAP facilitates the integration of different government departments in promoting health outcomes (education, transport, planning, etc.) Under the Health Act (2010), municipalities are required to develop health policies using HiAP. North Karelia and the city of Seinäjoki illustrate the success of HiAP in facilitating collaboration.

Similar to Japan and Sweden, Finland has an impressive school lunch programme with free meals to all pupils during school days. Schools follow strict nutritional guidelines and children are involved in cooking meals and take classes on how food relates to health, the environment and economy. However, compared to countries like Denmark in which public procurement plays a major role in driving food systems change, Finland's public kitchens have struggled to transition to organic and local food. Lack of funding and training is a problem, but more difficult is the limited size of production that cannot meet the scale or

⁶³ Natural Resources Institute Finland. (2019). "[Profitability of fishery.](#)" [Online]. Accessed: 13 Nov 2019.

⁶⁴ Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. (2019). "[Urgent action already needed to adapt to climate change.](#)" [Online]. Accessed: 14 Nov 2019. [In Finnish].

⁶⁵ Finnish Government. *Inclusive and competent Finland – a socially, economically and ecologically sustainable society.* <https://valtioneuvosto.fi/en/marin/government-programme>.

pre-processing requirements of most kitchens. As the food economy grows, the expectation is that these problems will be overcome.

Food Systems Policies

Government Programme (2019)⁶⁶

While the new Government Programme in Finland does not include a specific strategic theme on food, it is reported to be threaded through the different themes. The food elements are currently being prepared by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, scheduled to be completed later in 2020. The programme will include various different aspects of food, which are reported to include:

- **Local food** - promoting short supply chains and community supported agriculture through revising the Local Food Programme (described below).
- An update to the **organic strategy** (described below).
- An update of the **Climate Food Programme** (see below)
- **Promoting food export** with extra-funding, and special consideration for organic food and fish.
- **Public procurement** with plans to increase the amount of domestic food, fish and vegetarian food in public kitchens.
- **Fish sector** – there will be substantial detail on the fish sector
- **Profitability in agriculture** – there will be a range of proposals to address the profitability problems of agriculture and improve the farmers' position in the food chain.
- **Governance** – a proposal for “a dining table” (a working group) to improve internal dialogue in food chain.
- **Taxation** – it will set out how to improve public health taxation.
- **Grocery stores** will be obliged to provide food consumption data while also ensuring consumers' data protection.
- A new **School Food Program** will be prepared.

This new programme essentially replaces Food2030.

Food2030 (2017)

Food2030 preceded the current government food plan, and was initiated by a different political party. It emerged in the context of the Finnish food sector's decline since the early 2000s. A key platform of the 2015 Government Action Plan was to make Finnish food production profitable by promoting domestic use and exports. €90 million was allocated for 2016-2018 and a Food Policy Committee was created within the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MMM) to develop a food policy report on the competitiveness, market and

⁶⁶ Finnish Government. Inclusive and competent Finland – a socially, economically and ecologically sustainable society. <https://valtioneuvosto.fi/en/marin/government-programme>.

consumer orientation of domestic food production and food security.⁶⁷ After a series of consultations, seminars and surveys, *Food2030* was presented in March 2017.

Of primary concern in *Food2030* is production. Green efforts like renewable energy, animal welfare, resource efficiency and recycled nutrients are considered the foundations of a competitive agri-industry and essential to improving food security. Other priorities are increasing the availability of local food, expanding opportunities for SMEs, improving food culture and promoting food citizenship. Following further surveys and seminars, an implementation plan for *Food2030* was developed. A series of action items were established covering primary production; the diversification of food routes and infrastructure; research, advice and training; food culture and appreciation; food and public health; and food security and competitiveness.⁶⁸

Along with the roll back of regulations and new trade agreements outside of the EU, one of the first initiatives underway is a *Close to Better Food Valuation Campaign* for promoting knowledge among consumers of a foods' origins and production methods.⁶⁹ Research is also underway on potential legislation to cut down on food waste⁷⁰ and a Food Export Expert Training Programme was launched.⁷¹ Tax breaks for farmers were delivered under an Agricultural Crisis Package, a Food Agency was established and a new Food Market Act protects primary producers from unfair business practices.⁷²

It remains to be seen if these actions can reverse the decline of Finnish food, but the *Government Action Plan, 2018-2019*⁷³ maintains food sector development as a key priority.

Local Food – But of Course! (2013)⁷⁴

Local Food – But of Course! was the government programme on local food and development to 2020. It was one of two separate programmes for local and organic food approved by a government resolution in 2013, the other being the organic food programme (see below). In the Local Food - But of Course! Programme, local food is defined as locally-produced food that promotes the local economy, employment and food culture of the region concerned which have been produced and processed from raw material of that region, and is marketed and consumed in that region. In so being, the Programme promotes short supply chains (defined as chains with a small number of actors in the chain; close

⁶⁷ The Government Office. (2015). [An action plan to implement the flagship initiatives and reforms of the Strategic Government Programme](#). Helsinki: Government of Finland. [In Finnish.]

⁶⁸ Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. (2019). [Food Policy Report Implementation Plan](#). Helsinki: Government of Finland. [In Finnish.]

⁶⁹ Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. (2018). ["Where does your food come from?"](#) Helsinki: Government of Finland. [In Finnish.]

⁷⁰ Government Clearing and Research. (2018). ["Food waste can be reduced by developing legislation."](#) Helsinki: Government of Finland. [In Finnish.]

⁷¹ Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. (2018). ["Food Export Expert Training Programme."](#) Helsinki: Government of Finland. [In Finnish.]

⁷² Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. (2018). ["Food Market Act approved."](#) Helsinki: Government of Finland. [In Finnish.]

⁷³ The Government Office. (2018). [Solutions Finland: the Government Action Plan, 2018-2019](#). Helsinki: Government of Finland. [In Finnish.]

⁷⁴ Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. (2013). Local food – but of course! https://mmm.fi/documents/1410837/1890227/LocalFood_ButOfCourse.pdf/ef43072b-6700-47ad-af7e-5972e7fe046f/LocalFood_ButOfCourse.pdf

cooperation between the actors; growth of the local economy; and geographical and social contacts between producers and consumers). The Programme had the following objectives:

- To diversify and increase local food production to meet demand and to raise the value added of local food production
- To improve the opportunities of small-scale food processing and sale through legislation and advice
- To increase the share of local food in public kitchens through better procurement skills and quality criteria
- To improve the opportunities in primary production
- To have a closer cooperation between actors in the local food sector
- To raise the appreciation of food and actors in the food chain

The Local Food - But of Course! Programme will be updated in 2020.

Trade Policies

Finnish Bio-economy Strategy (2014) and the Blue Economic Development Plan (2016)

*The Finnish Bio-economy Strategy*⁷⁵ presents Finland's ambitions to become a model of green growth. Bio-economy refers to "an economy that relies on renewable natural resources" and "new operating models" to create economic growth. It is intended to both position Finland as an expert in sustainable resource management and exploit business opportunities from the demands of a growing population.

There are four sub-strategies - food, water, forests and energy. However, in relation to food, the *National Blue Economy Development Plan*⁷⁶ a flagship project of the Prime Minister focused on water, fisheries and aquaculture, is the only one that has moved forward. The strategy set a goal to grow the fisheries value chain from €983 million in 2014 to €1.2 billion by 2019 and €2 billion by 2025. (As of 2017, the value was ~€948 million.)⁷⁷

The strategy outlines growth opportunities such as promoting under-utilised fish like sprat and sturgeon; using all parts of the fish (using herring by-products for supplements); developing new value-added products and building technologically-advanced industrial aquaculture farms (an expertise that is particularly exportable). The strategy outlines no details regarding *how* these resources would be managed efficiently and sets no measures for ensuring their sustainable use.

⁷⁵ Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Employment and the Economy. (2014). [The Finnish Bioeconomy Strategy](#). Helsinki: Government of Finland.

⁷⁶ Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. (2016). [National Blue Economy Development Plan, 2025](#). Helsinki: Government of Finland.

⁷⁷ Natural Resources Institute Finland. (2019). "[Profitability of fishery](#)." [Online]. Accessed: 13 Nov 2019.

In 2018, €5 million was allocated to various projects that contribute to the “internationalisation of the water sector”, the sustainable use of water nutrients, and digital innovations. €125,000 was given to study how to bring low-value, underused fish to market and €1.8 million to a research on a new recirculation fish farming concept.⁷⁸ In 2019, Finland held the European Bio-economy Conference in 2019 and the city of Oulu is currently serving as a ‘biovillage’ pilot for the blue bio-economy.⁷⁹

Environmental Policies

Climate Programme for Finnish Agriculture – steps towards climate friendly food (2014) and Finland’s National Climate Change Adaptation Plan, 2022 (2014)

This *Climate Programme for Finnish Agriculture*⁸⁰ focuses on reducing the carbon emissions of Finnish agriculture and presents a collection of quite detailed actions such as incentivising increases in plant protein production; crop diversification; maintaining grassland; plant cover during the winter etc. Funding for the programme is from the *Rural Development Programme* for which 25% of the funding was dedicated to agri-environmental schemes through 2020.⁸¹ A range of other projects are also underway such as the BlueAdapt (sustainable aquatic economy) and a range of forest management strategies.⁸²

The *Climate Change Adaptation Plan*⁸³ was developed to increase Finland’s ability to adapt to coming changes. While food security is mentioned as a concern, no specific actions are outlined aside from research, communication, local action plans and support for future business opportunities. A monitoring group was set up in 2015 to oversee the implementation of the programme.⁸⁴ A 2018 mid-term review⁸⁵ reported that, while awareness of climate change is growing, risk management is still deficient and in need of more funding. The review says clarification is needed on the roles and responsibilities on climate change adaptation and more sector and region specific guidance and training is essential.

More Organic! Government development programme for the organic product sector and objectives to 2020 (2013)

Finland has made similar efforts to other Nordic countries to develop its organic sector but has struggled to see substantial gains. In 2012, the MMM appointed a committee of

⁷⁸ Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. (2019). “[Blue Bio-Economy Projects](#).” [Online]. Accessed: 13 Nov 2019.

⁷⁹ Lex, E. (2019). [Oulu Biovillage: Exploring Blue Bioeconomy Ecosystem Opportunities in Oulu, Finland](#). Lund University.

⁸⁰ Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. (2014). [Climate Programme for Finnish Agriculture – Steps Towards Climate Friendly Food](#). Helsinki: Government of Finland.

⁸¹ European Commission. (2019). [Factsheet on 2014-2020 Rural Development Programme for Finland](#).

⁸² Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. (2019). “[Adapting to climate change](#).” [Online]. Accessed: 14 Nov 2019. [In Finnish.]

⁸³ Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. (2014). [Finland’s National Climate Change Adaptation Plan, 2022](#). Helsinki: Government of Finland.

⁸⁴ Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. (2019). “[Adaption plan monitoring group](#).” Helsinki: Government of Finland. [In Finnish].

⁸⁵ Mäkinen, K., Sorval, J., Lipsanen, A., Hilden, M. (2018). [Mid-term review of the implementation of the National Climate Change Adaptation Plan, 2022](#). Helsinki: Government of Finland. [In Finnish].

representatives from seven government ministries to outline a development programme for the organic sector. *More Organic!* set targets to make 20% of arable land organic by 2020 up from 9% in 2012. However, as of 2018, they have achieved only 13% and are unlikely to make further gains due to budget limitations for farmer subsidies.⁸⁶ The strategy aimed to use public procurement as a driver of demand and sets a goal for 20% of food in public kitchens to be organic by 2020, but has only achieved 10%, (compared to 38% in Sweden).⁸⁷

The difficulty in developing organics is partially due to the poorly developed infrastructure for bringing organic products to market. Farms can be widely dispersed across sparsely populated regions that lack the centralised processing capabilities necessary to achieve certain levels of scale. Even though the market demand for organics has outpaced production, only 3% (€198 million) of the Rural Development Programme has gone towards organic production payments⁸⁸ compared to Denmark's 22%.⁸⁹

Act on Public Procurement and Concession Contracts (2016)

Even though government has been promoting public procurement as a 'path-driver' for the growth of sustainable food since 2009, adoption has been slow. There are programmes in place to support kitchens that choose to prioritise environmental factors,⁹⁰ but a combination of regulatory confusion, the lack of supply to meet demand, a poorly-developed food infrastructure and limited training for staff has meant even the most ambitious kitchens quickly hit a ceiling.^{91, 92}

In 2016, the Public Procurement Act⁹³ stipulated for the first time that environmental and social aspects can and should be considered when granting public contracts. Following this new law, in 2017, the *Guide for Responsible Procurement of Food*⁹⁴ was commissioned by the government to assist municipalities in making decisions about their procurement contracts. Explicit factors regarding animal welfare and health, food security, organic farming, packing and other environmental indicators are included. However, barriers in significant uptake still remain in regard to both wide-ranging and in-depth access to education and training for staff and the infrastructure developments of the sector.

⁸⁶ Pro Luomo. (2018). "[The expansion of organic production must be safeguarded.](#)" [Online]. Accessed: 11 Nov 2019. [In Finnish].

⁸⁷ Kononen, H. (2019). "[Central kitchens would like more organic food, but the good stuff goes abroad.](#)" *Yle*. [Online]. Accessed: 11 Nov 2019. [In Finnish].

⁸⁸ Niemi, J., Väire, M. (2018). [Agriculture and food sector in Finland 2018](#). Natural Resources Institute Finland.

⁸⁹ European Commission. (2019). [Factsheet on 2014-2020 Rural Development Programme for Denmark](#).

⁹⁰ <http://www.ekocentria.fi/etusivu>

⁹¹ Risku-Norja, H., Løes, A. (2016). Organic food in food policy and in public catering: lessons learned in Finland. *Organic Agriculture*. 7(2): 111-124.

⁹² Risku-Norja, H., Muukka, E. (2013). Food and sustainability: local and organic food in Finnish food policy and in institutional kitchens. *Acta Agriculturae Scandinavica, Section B – Soil and Plant Science*. 63:sup1, 8-18.

⁹³ Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment. (2016). [Act on Public Procurement and Concession Contracts](#). Helsinki: Government of Finland.

⁹⁴ Motiva. (2017). [Guide for Responsible Procurement of Food – recommendations for requirements and evaluation criteria](#).

Health in All Policies (HiAP) and the Health Care Act (2010)

HiAP is Finland's policy framework for the inclusion of health outcomes in the decision-making of various ministries – transport, planning, employment, etc.⁹⁵ It operates by incorporating health impact assessments into social impact assessments⁹⁶ to ensure consideration is given to health outcomes in policymaking. Consistently measuring health determinants and the links between health outcomes and policies is also crucial to gaining buy-in, driving collaboration and aligning the objectives of various departments.

The Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare offers resources and support, but the implementation of HiAP takes place at a municipal level. The *Health Care Act (2010)* gave legal credibility to HiAP in requiring 1) recognition by municipalities of the health impacts of any policy decisions and the use of health impact assessments; 2) inter-sectoral collaboration in health-related matters between the various municipal departments, NGOs and private enterprise; and 3) consistent health monitoring and analysis of health determinants with special attention paid to health inequalities.⁹⁷

Because of the delegation to municipalities, the population-wide impacts of HiAP are difficult to assess. The North Karelia project to reduce coronary heart disease is often cited as an example of the success of HiAP in driving inter-sectoral collaborations that improve health outcomes^{98,99} - the project involved the Ministries of Social Affairs and Health, Finance, Agriculture, Education and Trade and Industry. While North Karelia provides an interesting example of aligning economic and health outcomes through new product development by local manufacturers, there are other instances where competing objectives could not be resolved - for example, the divergent goals of the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health regarding a reduction in alcohol taxes. In this case, the negative results of the tax reported in the health impact assessment made little impact on the outcome.¹⁰⁰

The National Obesity Programme, 2012-2018 (2012) and the Municipality Act (1995)

The role of the national government on health issue has been primarily to provide tools for municipalities to use HiAP. In 2011, the National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL)

⁹⁵ Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare. (2016). "[Health in All Policies](#)." [Online]. Accessed: 14 Nov 2019.

⁹⁶ Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare. (2016). "[Tools & Mechanisms](#)." [Online]. Accessed: 22 Nov 2019.

⁹⁷ Ståhl, T. (2018). Health in All Policies: From rhetoric to implementation and evaluation—the Finnish experience. *Scandinavian Journal of Public Health*. 46(20_suppl): 38-46.

⁹⁸ Puska, P. (2002). Successful prevention of non-communicable diseases: 25 year experiences with North Karelia Project in Finland. *Public Health Medicine*. 4(1): 5-7.

⁹⁹ Puska, P. (2016). Why did North Karelia – Finland work? Is it transferrable? *Global Heart*. 11(4): 387-391.

¹⁰⁰ Shankardass, K., Muntaner, C., Kokkinen, L., Shahidi, F., Freiler, A., Oneka, G., Bayoumi, A., O'Campo, P. (2018). [The Implementation of Health in All Policies initiatives: a systems framework for government action](#). *Health Research Policy and Systems*. 16(26).

launched the *National Obesity Programme* which, rather than pursuing national-level policies, coordinates with municipalities, schools, day cares, healthcare workers, industry, planning and others to implement their own policies. The role of THL has primarily been as a network facilitator and to provide resources and support for key actors.

The first phase from 2012-2015 focused on promoting obesity prevention at training events and seminars, building the stakeholder network and disseminating information.¹⁰¹ The second phase, 2016-2018, focused specifically on preventing childhood obesity, primarily through guidance and education. Implementing limitations on food marketing and the sale of energy drinks to children was discussed but there is no evidence in English that this has been progressed.¹⁰² While THL (and Ministry of Social Affairs and Health) has promoted the use of health-based tax measures, in 2017, the excise duty on ice cream, sweets and chocolate was abolished.

The Municipality Act (1995) states that municipal governments are responsible for promoting the health and wellbeing of their residents. The Health Care Act (2010) further implements the HiAP approach and requires municipalities to monitor the health of their population; set objectives for health promotion; and implement and measure the outcomes of policy.¹⁰³ They are the main actors on obesity prevention as community-led action is considered to lead to deeper change.¹⁰⁴ Seinäjoki's plan¹⁰⁵ involved various departments, including zoning and civil engineering, to address the issue and is known internationally as a success in reversing childhood obesity trends, although in 2018, rates began to rise again.¹⁰⁶

The Basic Education Act (1998) and the School Meals System

The School lunch programme in Finland is a central delivery mechanism for food and health goals in the country. Finland is one of the very small number of countries in the world in which school meals are universal and free. Protected by the Basic Education Act (1998) which legally requires that every child be provided with a free and nutritionally balanced meal daily at school, meals must follow nutritional standards as established by the National Nutrition Council in 2017. Termed: *Eating and learning together - recommendations for school meals*,¹⁰⁷ these recommendations cover the provision of school meals as well as setting standards for foods and nutrients. Milk products entitled to EU subsidies under the

¹⁰¹ Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare. (2016). [The National Obesity Programme: Interim Report, 2012-2015](#). Helsinki. [In Finnish].

¹⁰² Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare. (2016). [The National Obesity Programme: Action Plan and Implementation Plan, 2016-2018](#). Helsinki. [In Finnish].

¹⁰³ Finlex. (2010). [Health Care Law](#). Helsinki: Government of Finland. [In Finnish].

¹⁰⁴ National Nutrition Council. (2012). [Well-Being Through Nutrition: A guide for municipal decision-makers](#). Helsinki

¹⁰⁵ World Health Organisation. (2015). "[Finland curbs childhood obesity by integrating health in all policies](#)." [Online]. Accessed: 14 Nov 2019.

¹⁰⁶ YLE. (2018). "[Despite reversal, Seinäjoki still believes in childhood anti-obesity programme](#)." [Online]. Accessed: 12 Nov 2019.

¹⁰⁷ National Nutrition Council. *Eating and learning together - recommendations for school meals*. 2017.

http://www.julkari.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/134867/URN_ISBN_978-952-302-844-9.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

School Milk Scheme also have to adhere to limits on fat and/or salt content.¹⁰⁸ The recommendations also provide guidance on cooperation between school and parents and monitoring and evaluation. As part of the programme, teachers participate in school meals and food education is a major part of the curriculum. Children learn to cook and join in the preparation of the meal and take courses on the effects of food on health, the environment, the economy and culture.

FRANCE

- The **National Food Programme**, established in 2010 and iterated every four years, sets the course for food policy in France and is overseen by the National Food Council. Its priorities are solving social food issues like food security and food waste. The key delivery levers of the programme are public procurement and, most notably, **Regional Food Projects**. The national government provides grants to local grassroots initiatives that deliver on the priorities of the National Food Programme such as community gardens and food redistribution programmes.
- The 2019 **Food and Agriculture Law** caused a stir for imposing a new price floor on certain processed foods in supermarkets in an attempt to redistribute margins in favour of farmers, which farmers' unions say it has failed to do. The law also bans discounts on the sale of pesticides, requires slaughterhouses to hire an animal protection officer and set a goal for 20% of food in public kitchens to be organic by 2022. Organics are currently 2.9%.
- France set a goal to cut food waste in half by 2025. The 2016 **Food Waste Law** requires supermarkets to sign a contract with a food bank to donate food. While it is unclear if food waste has decreased, tonnage donated to food banks has increased and the quality of the food has improved.
- **Agroecology** is France's key strategy for improving agriculture's economic and environmental performance. The transition programme, begun in 2012, includes CAP and domestic farming for crop diversification, organic farming, agroforestry, etc. A focus unique to France is the creation of **farmers' collectives** who receive funding for committing to a communal transition to agroecology. As of 2019, there were 492 cooperatives with 10,000 farmers.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁸ World Cancer Research Fund International/NCD Alliance. (2016). [Ambitious, SMART commitments to address NCDs, overweight and obesity](#). London and Geneva.

¹⁰⁹ Ministère de L'Agriculture et de L'Alimentation. (2017). "[Nearly 10,000 farmers engaged in economic and environmental interest groups](#)." [Online]. Accessed: 15 Nov 2019. [In French].

Summary

France has a large collection of ambitious laws and programmes intended to create a more equitable and environmental food system. A 2010 law requires the development of a *National Food Programme* every four years wherein a clear plan is set for food policy. Agroecology, food waste, food security and farmers' welfare have been at the top of the agenda. Since 2014, the *National Food Programme* has overseen *Regional Food Projects*. Multi-stakeholder organisations comprised of actors from industry, farming and civil society come together to design programmes that meet the social food needs of local populations. Each year, a call for projects is opened and national grant money is allocated to those projects that achieve the goals of the national programme at a local scale. Governments at the city-region level are also taking steps to facilitate food systems change.¹¹⁰

The 2019 *Food and Agriculture Law*, the most recent of sweeping reforms to the food system, introduced new environmental and animal welfare laws and health objectives. Most covered by the media, however, was the price floor imposed on major supermarkets on the reselling of processed foods. The law is intended to redistribute supermarkets' margins so more income goes to farmers, although critics say it has actually exacerbated the power differential and raised prices for consumers.

The 2016 *Food Waste Law* was met with a more positive response. It requires supermarkets to sign a contract with a charity to which it will donate an unspecified amount of food. Critics have said the law avoids the issue of overproduction and places burdens on food banks to manage the transportation and food storage. A 2019 report said that, while it is difficult to measure changes in food waste, the tonnage of donations and the number of contracts has increased, as has the quality and nutritional value of the food donated.

The government has promoted agroecology since 2012¹¹¹ and have in place a series of well-funded biodiversity, organic¹¹² and agroforestry plans.¹¹³ The 2014 *Law for the Future* introduced a unique method for encouraging agroecological transitions with the funding of Economic and Environmental Interest Groups (EIGS)¹¹⁴ – farmer groups that collectively transition to agroecology production methods that can show positive economic and environmental outcomes. There are currently 492 active EIGS, although it is unclear how these contribute to wider agroecological or environmental objectives.

¹¹⁰ Régions de France. (2018). [Le Livre Blanc des Régions: pour une agriculture durable et un alimentation responsable](#). [Online]. Accessed: 9 March 2020. [In French].

¹¹¹ Ministère de L'Agriculture et de L'Alimentation. (2017). [The Global Action Plan for Agroecology](#). [Online]. Accessed: 15 Nov 2019. [In French].

¹¹² Ministère de L'Agriculture et de L'Alimentation. (2017). *Organic Ambition 2022*. République Française. [In French].

¹¹³ Larbodiére, L. (2016). [The French Agro-Ecological Project](#).

¹¹⁴ Gonzalez, R., Thomas, J., Chang, M. (2018). Translating Agroecology to Policy: The Case of France and the United Kingdom. *Sustainability*. 10: 2930.

The National Nutrition Programme, 2019-2023 aims to address obesity in France through a wide range of measures.

Food Systems Policies

The National Food Programme (2010 / 2014 / 2019) and Regional Food Projects

The *National Food Programme (PNA)* was established in 2010 as part of the *Law for the Modernization of Agriculture and Fisheries* and is closely linked to the *National Nutrition and Health Programme* (see below). The programme is run by the National Food Council (defining itself as the ‘Parliament of food’)¹¹⁵ which brings together representatives for the food industry, agriculture and consumers to debate and tackle social issues related to food. In the 2014 *Law for the Future*, the focus of the PNA was placed on four primary issues – social justice, youth food education, the fight against food waste and strengthening the territorial anchoring of food.¹¹⁶

The emphasis on territorial anchoring led to the development of the *Regional Food Projects* programme as part of the 2015 PNA. The programme brings together producers, processors, distributors, local authorities and consumers to develop a region’s local food system through grassroots actions.¹¹⁷ In addition to providing training resources and measurement indicators, the programme pools the funding of several national ministries including the Departments of Agriculture and Food, Environment, Health and Social Affairs. They distribute grants to projects which bring together stakeholders from various sectors to deliver on the priorities of the PNA. Every year, a call for projects is announced and winners selected. As of 2018, more than 120 projects had been funded through the programme.¹¹⁸ Examples of past projects that have received grants through *Regional Food Projects* are initiatives to develop infrastructure for redistributing unused bread from shops; launching taste education programmes among children in disadvantaged populations; the development of community vegetable gardens; and the creation of online digital learning tools to educate youth on sustainable food and health.¹¹⁹

The *National Food Programme* is now launching its third iteration for 2019-2023 focused on social justice, food waste and food education.¹²⁰ It sets quantifiable goals for food and nutrition such as reducing salt consumption by 30% by 2025 and to achieve 50% organic

¹¹⁵ [Conseil National de l’Alimentation](#)

¹¹⁶ Ministère de L’Agriculture et de L’Alimentation. (2014). “[Breathing new life into the National Food Programme.](#)” [Online]. Accessed: 8 March 2020. [In French].

¹¹⁷ Government of France. (2014). [Law n° 2014-1170 of 13 October 2014 for the future for agriculture, food and forestry.](#) [Online]. Accessed: 8 March 2020. [In French].

¹¹⁸ Ministère de L’Agriculture et de L’Alimentation. (2018). “[The PNA calls for projects: supporting the implementation of the National Food Programme in the regions.](#)” [Online]. Accessed: 8 March 2020. [In French].

¹¹⁹ Ministère de L’Agriculture et de L’Alimentation. (2017). [National Food Programme: 33 Project Laureats, 2017 – 2018.](#) [Online]. Accessed: 8 March 2020. [In French].

¹²⁰ Ministère de L’Agriculture et de L’Alimentation. (2019). “[National Food Programme, 2019-2023 – territories in action.](#)” [Online]. Accessed: 17 Nov 2019. [In French].

food in public kitchens by 2022. Each priority is followed by a number of actions such as supporting local governments in developing food poverty strategies, limiting children's exposure to advertising for non-recommended foods, extension of the Food Waste Law and many others.

Institutional catering and *Regional Food Projects* are the levers through which targeted actions will be delivered. In March 2019, a French National Institutional Catering Council (CNRC) was created to see to the implementation and delivery of all objectives set out for public kitchens. A new round of projects is also currently under selection for the *Regional Food Projects* programme and will be announced in Spring 2020.

Food and Agriculture Law (2019)

The Food and Agriculture Law, also known as the EGalim law or the "Law for the Balance of Commercial Relations in the Agricultural Sector and Healthy and Sustainable Food"¹²¹, is a sweeping set of environmental, animal welfare, trade and health initiatives¹²² that originated from the Estates General on Food held in 2017 (described in "Highlights"). Key elements are as follows:

Retail: This heavily-debated piece of the law is intended to redistribute power among producers, manufacturers and retailers. It has three elements: 1) For two years, promotions on certain products cannot be more than 34% of the original price; 2) certain products must be sold for at least 10% more than the wholesale price; and 3) the volume of promotions is limited to 25% of retailers' total projected sales. It also strengthens the contractualisation requirements between producers and retailers and gives farmers stronger legal recourse if they are paid improperly low prices.

The law applies to 4% of food products, mostly those created by large food manufacturers.¹²³ It is meant to end the price wars between supermarkets that sell certain products at cost or at a loss to attract customers but then cover the loss with premiums on other products like agricultural commodities. These higher margins on agricultural products do not go back to producers though, because they are covering losses from other products. The idea behind the law is that by ending losses on processed foods, margins will shift and more will go back to farmers although there are no mechanisms in the law that ensure this. (Prior to this, there were reports that this portion of the law reflected a request made by industry groups at the Estates General of Food.)¹²⁴

¹²¹ National Assembly. (2018). "LAW No. 2018-938 of 30 October 2018 for the balance of commercial relations in the agricultural and food sector and a healthy, sustainable and accessible to all." Paris: République Française. [In French].

¹²² Ministère de L'Agriculture et de L'Alimentation. (2019). "[#EGalim: What is contained in the Food and Agriculture Law?](#)" [Online]. Accessed: 15 Nov 2019. [In French].

¹²³ Cassel, B., Cazes, S., Plichon, O. (2019). "[Food law: Price increases from .5% to 9.9%.](#)" *Le Parisien*. [Online]. Accessed: Nov 15 2019.

¹²⁴ Cassel, B. (2018). "[Rising food prices: 'It's a scam!' Says Michel-Edouard Leclerc.](#)" *LeParisien*. [Online]. Accessed: 18 Nov 2019.

An October 2019 impact study by Parliament indicated that the law has not resulted in price increases for consumers¹²⁵ and the retail federation has said it led to more peaceful negotiations and better outcomes for farmers.¹²⁶ However, a joint report from a consumer group and the farmer's union says that prices have gone up, but profits have not been passed along to farmers and farmers' prices were never taken into account in negotiations.¹²⁷ The Ministry of Agriculture and Food confirms that 300 establishments were audited in 2019 followed by legal proceedings where 3,573 controls were carried out to ensure compliance.¹²⁸ As the law has only been in effect for a few months, it will take more time to assess the real economic outcome of the law.

(A similar law was passed in 1996 known as the 'Galland Law' that restricted resale at a loss in supermarkets. The law was partially withdrawn in 2005 after it failed to ensure a balance between suppliers and distributors.)¹²⁹

Health: After the failure of voluntary measures to drive increases in the use of organics in public kitchens, the Food and Agriculture Law requires that these use 20% organic products by 2022 (currently only 2.9%).¹³⁰ Also, for two years, all school meal programmes must serve at least one vegetarian meal per week and establish a protein diversification plan that includes plant protein alternatives. To support these efforts, school kitchens will be provided with training on how to use new ingredients and create vegetarian meals that meet nutrition requirements.¹³¹ The purpose is to identify obstacles to implementing new catering rules so there is no penalty for noncompliance.

Environment: Building on existing pesticide reduction plans, the new law prohibits the use of neonicotinoids and titanium dioxide and prohibits those that are selling pesticides from providing advice on plant protection to farmers. Rather farmers must work with consultants who are not associated with pesticide sales. Discounts and rebates are also no longer permitted on the sale of pesticides. The 2016 Food Waste Law was also extended to collective catering.

Animal Welfare: The definition of animal abuse offenses now applies not only to breeding but also to transport and slaughterhouse practices. Every slaughterhouse must employ an

¹²⁵ National Assembly. (2019). "[Impact Study for the balance of commercial relations in the agricultural and food sector and a healthy and sustainable food.](#)" Paris: République Française. [In French.]

¹²⁶ Fédération du Commerce et de la Distribution. (2019). "[The Egalim Law, a Year Later: What assessment?](#)" [Online]. Accessed: 16 Nov 2019. [In French].

¹²⁷ Confédération Paysanne. (2019). "[One year of the EGAlim law: 21 organizations bang their fist on the table and questions the government on the lack of effectiveness of the law.](#)" [Online]. Accessed: Nov 16 2019. [In French].

¹²⁸ Ministère de L'Agriculture et de L'Alimentation. (2019). "[#EGAlim: 1 year after its promulgation, the report of the Agriculture and Food Law.](#)" [Online]. Accessed: 15 Nov 2019. [In French].

¹²⁹ Ashenazy, P. Weidenfeld, K. (2007). *The Balances of the Raffarin Law: The control of the big food trade*. Paris: Cepremap. [In French].

¹³⁰ National Assembly. (2019). "[Impact Study for the balance of commercial relations in the agricultural and food sector and a healthy and sustainable food.](#)" Paris: République Française. [In French.]

¹³¹ Ministère de L'Agriculture et de L'Alimentation. (2019). "[#EGAlim: since 1 November, a vegetarian menu per week in all school canteens.](#)" [Online]. Accessed: 15 Nov 2019. [In French].

animal protection officer responsible for ensuring that slaughterhouses are complying with the law and confirms the status of employees that report animal abuse as whistle-blowers. The use of video surveillance is under experimentation and the production of new buildings for putting hens in cages is banned.

Food Waste Law (2016)

Food waste has been high on France's agenda since setting a goal in the 2013 *National Pact Against Food Waste* (renewed in 2018)¹³² to reduce waste by 50% by 2025. It was championed by the former Minister of Agri-food Industries who led the development of *Fighting Food Waste: Proposals for a Public Policy*¹³³ in 2015 and ultimately the Food Waste Law. It was passed unanimously by Parliament in 2016. The Law obligates supermarkets to sign a contract with a charity to donate food that would otherwise be wasted. There is no rule on how much must be donated so if a store only donates 1% of their waste, they meet the law.¹³⁴ This was actually advocated for by food banks who lack the resources to take on so much food. They report that the law has been successful in increasing the amount and quality donated, with more fresh meat and produce. However, even in limited amounts, it has placed a burden on non-profits to find the labour and the means to transport, refrigerate and store all of the new food.

The law also bans supermarkets from making food inedible so that it cannot be foraged – for example, by pouring bleach over it.

The law has been criticised for doing little to change the buying habits of supermarkets who want to keep shelves full regardless of how much product they reasonably expect to sell. Contracts between producers and supermarkets sometimes include a high availability clause which requires producers to deliver a certain amount without guaranteeing purchase within the supermarket.¹³⁵ Direct action groups criticised the law for giving the impression of a 'miracle cure' and allowing supermarkets to pretend they don't waste food rather than tackling problems of overproduction and upstream waste.¹³⁶

The 1988 'Coluche Law' gives industry and retailers a 60% tax reduction on donated items so many supermarkets were already under contract with charities prior to the 2016 law. The Fédération du Commerce et de la Distribution, the body which represents supermarkets, criticised the new *Food Waste Law* for targeting retailers that already donate food under the Coluche Law and are responsible for a small percentage of total food waste.¹³⁷

¹³² Ministère de L'Agriculture et de L'Alimentation. (2018). "[National Pact for Fighting Food Waste: Partners Commit.](#)" [Online]. Accessed: 15 Nov 2019. [In French].

¹³³ Mourad, M. (2015). [France Moves Toward a National Policy Against Food Waste.](#) Washington DC: NRDC.

¹³⁴ European Court of Auditors. (2016). [Combatting Food Waste: an opportunity for the EU to improve the resource-efficiency of the food supply chain.](#) Luxembourg: EU.

¹³⁵ QueChoisir. (2017). "[Food waste – all concerned!](#)" [Online]. Accessed: 15 Nov 2019. [In French].

¹³⁶ Les Gars'pilleurs. (2015). "[Why we will not sign the petition of Mr. Arash Derambarsh.](#)" [Online]. Accessed: 15 Nov 2019. [In French].

¹³⁷ Chrisafis, A. (2015). "[France to for supermarkets to give unsold food to charity.](#)" *The Guardian.* [Online]. Accessed: 15 Nov 2019.

Even with these criticisms, the law has been praised for its symbolic role in raising awareness and paving the way for further change. It "*promotes responsible corporate behaviour and formalises the social expectation of donating food,*" making food waste reduction efforts the norm without requiring stringent regulation.¹³⁸ A 2019 report on the impacts of the law by the Economic Affairs Committee discussed the difficulty of measuring food waste and therefore limitations in assessing the effectiveness of the law in hitting the 2025 goal. However, it reports a 23% increase in tonnage of food donations to food banks and that 94% of stores practice donations, only 2/3s of which did before the 2016 law was implemented.¹³⁹ The law has also led to the launch of new food banks and start-ups that handle the logistical challenges of donations.¹⁴⁰ In 2018, the Food and Agriculture Law extended the law to include not only supermarkets but collective catering services and other parts of the food industry.

Law for the Modernization of Agriculture and Fisheries (2010) and the Law for the Future of Agriculture, Food and Forestry (2014)

In 2010, the *Law for the Modernization of Agriculture and Fisheries* established a framework for the development of a national food policy in France with the goal to make quality sustainable food accessible to all. It stipulated that the development of a *National Food Programme (PNA)* would be led by the National Food Council that was established in 2003. . It also required a progress report to be submitted to Parliament every three years on the status of the proposed actions of each programme.¹⁴¹

Then, in 2014, the *Law for the Future of Agriculture, Food and Forestry (2014)*¹⁴² built on the 2010 law, covering a wide range of issue and strengthening the position of the National Food Council. The law primarily focuses on facilitating the agroecological transition among farmers through methods that highlight both the environmental and economic opportunities agroecology presents for regional food systems.¹⁴³ It established protections for natural, agricultural and forest areas and set ambitious environmental goals. It also connects the benefits of agroecology to social issues like food safety, education and food waste and, most notably, launched *Regional Food Projects* (see below).¹⁴⁴

¹³⁸ Mourad, M. Finn, S. (2019). "[Opinion | France's Ban on Food Waste Three Years Later.](#)" *FoodTank*. [Online]. Accessed: 15 Nov 2019.

¹³⁹ Economic Affairs Committee. (2019). [Information Report on the evaluation of the law n°2016-183 on 11 February 2016 on the fight against food waste](#). Paris: National Assembly. [In French].

¹⁴⁰ Ministère de L'Agriculture et de L'Alimentation. (2019). "[France pioneers fight against food waste.](#)" [Online]. Accessed: 15 Nov 2019. [In French].

¹⁴¹ Ministère de L'Agriculture et de L'Alimentation. (2013). [Report to Parliament: The National Food Programme](#). Paris: République Française. [In French].

¹⁴² Government of France. (2014). [Law n° 2014-1170 of 13 October 2014 for the future for agriculture, food and forestry](#). [Online]. Accessed: 8 March 2020. [In French].

¹⁴³ Ministère de L'Agriculture et de L'Alimentation. (2019). "[Act of the Future of Agriculture, Food and Forestry.](#)" [Online]. Accessed: 15 Nov 2019. [In French].

¹⁴⁴ Ministère de L'Agriculture et de L'Alimentation. (2016). "[Title III – Food policy and health performance.](#)" [Online]. Accessed: 8 March 2020. [In French].

Title I of the legislation, subtitled “economic and environmental performance of the agriculture and food chains introduces a unique approach to encouraging farmers to transition to new agroecological methods by taking a “bottom-up” approach. It asks regional governments that are allocated CAP subsidies to prioritise farmers who create what are called Economic and Environmental Interest Groups (EIGS) – groups of farmers that begin multi-year projects to collectively transition to agroecological production practices that will have a measurable economic and environmental benefit.^{145,146} To receive funding, farmers must describe their current production practices, the new environmental practices they will all transition to and how they will benefit specific economic and environmental issues in their region. They must also prove how the new practices they intend to implement fit within ‘agroecology.’¹⁴⁷

As of 2019, near 500 EIGS had been created. There are no reports on how EIGSs contribute to the overall agroecological transition or wider environmental goals. However, the scheme is unique for its communal rather than individualised approach to transitions designed to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and innovation. It also was essential to legally incorporate economic indicators into the framing of agroecology in order to get buy-in from farmers’ unions.

Title III of the legislation, on “food policy and health performance” has the objective of linking up the agroecological transition to social food policies and local food systems by refocusing the *National Food Programme* towards social justice, youth education, food waste and territorial anchoring.¹⁴⁸ It launched the *Regional Food Projects* (see below) programme wherein local territories are positioned as the main delivery mechanism of this linkage. The law also placed limits on the use of pesticides on or near playgrounds and nurseries as well as in public parks, hospitals and elder care facilities. This portion of the bill and the perceived distortion of competition led to protests by farmers in Paris against the “multiplying constraints” on farmers saying they don’t want additional money but more freedom and a consistent budget.¹⁴⁹

Retail Policies

The ‘Raffarin’ Law (1996)

Quite similar to Japan’s Large Retail Law, the ‘Raffarin’ Law requires that stores bigger than 300m² must receive full planning consent to open, including approval by local artisans and

¹⁴⁵ National Assembly. (2014). *Law n°2014-1170 of October 13, 2014 of the future for agriculture, food and forests*. Paris: République Française. [In French].

¹⁴⁶ Hénin, F., Carpon, A. (2014). “[17 Factsheets to understand the essential](#).” *Terre-net*. [Online]. Accessed: 16 Nov 2019.

¹⁴⁷ National Assembly. (2014). *Decree No. 2014-1173 of October 13, 2014 relating to the economic and environmental interest groups*. Paris: République Française. [In French].

¹⁴⁸ Ministère de L’Agriculture et de L’Alimentation. (2016). [La Loi d’Avenir pour L’Agriculture, L’Alimentation et la Forêt – En Actes](#). [Online]. Accessed: 8 March 2020. [In French].

¹⁴⁹ Le Monde. (2014). “[Farmers mobilized to denounce ‘constraints’ on the profession](#).” [Online]. Accessed: 16 Nov 2019.

retailers. It was championed by Jean-Pierre Raffarin, the Minister of SMEs, Trade and Crafts, after the explosion of supermarkets in the 1970's and 1980's and the growth of German discount stores that were threatening distributors.¹⁵⁰

The law created a considerable amount of controversy, with some saying it didn't go far enough to protect small retailers and other saying it was incompatible with the freedom of establishment.¹⁵¹ While it did lead to a dramatic drop in store openings,¹⁵² the law ultimately did not prevent the consolidation of hypermarkets. In 1999, the two largest retailers, Carrefour and Promodès, merged to create the second largest retail group in the world and multiple strategies to circumvent the law led to a moderate resumption of large retailer growth in the 2000s.

In 2006, the European Commission, joined by the German retailer Aldi, forced France to amend the law. As of 2011, planning permission is no longer required in towns over 20,000 for stores under 1000m².

Environmental Policies

The Animal Welfare Strategy (2016 / 2018)

Animal welfare is considered a key piece of agroecological farming and the 2016 *Animal Welfare Strategy*,¹⁵³ later strengthened in 2018,¹⁵⁴ led to new laws regarding animal abuse offenses in the 2019 *Food and Agriculture Law*. In addition to the 2019 laws, better training for investigators and prosecutors is in development as well as methods for strengthening the enforcement powers against animal abuse offenses (the *Food and Agriculture Law* doubled fines and prison sentences). Sanctions can now be imposed on employers whereas previously only fines would be imposed on employees under the assumption the employers could not be responsible for employees' behaviour.

Many of the initiatives, however, are voluntary. The Minister is working with poultry, beef and pork companies to encourage certain practices¹⁵⁵ and after the Estates General on Food, each production sector was required to develop a plan on how it would incorporate more environmental practices, animal welfare being key among them. €4.3 million has also been provided for research into alternatives to grinding male chicks. It remains to see how these voluntary measures will drive change but, after French President Emmanuel Macron

¹⁵⁰ <http://www.linternaute.com/actualite/politique/document/rapport-attali/grande-distribution/loi-raffarin.shtml>

¹⁵¹ Ashenazy, P. Weidenfeld, K. (2007). *The Balances of the Raffarin Law: The control of the big food trade*. Paris: Cepremap. [In French].

¹⁵² Caroli, E., Gautié, J. (2008). *Low-wage work in France*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation

¹⁵³ Ministère de L'Agriculture et de L'Alimentation. (2016). "[2016-2020: a strategy for the welfare of animals in France.](#)" [Online]. Accessed: 16 Nov 2019. [In French].

¹⁵⁴ Ministère de L'Agriculture et de L'Alimentation. (2016). "[Animal Welfare: Strengthening the Priority Action Plan.](#)" [Online]. Accessed: 16 Nov 2019. [In French].

¹⁵⁵ BL. (2018). "[Agriculture: What is the government's action plan for animal welfare?](#)" *Franceinfo*. [Online]. Accessed: 16 Nov 2019. [In French].

and the Minister of Agriculture promised to end the production of eggs by battery breeding by 2022, 51.8% of eggs sold in supermarkets were raised on the ground or in open air,¹⁵⁶ mostly led by voluntary commitments from agri-food groups.

Animal rights groups have said the new 2019 laws are “disappointing” because of the lack of funding and because the presence of an animal inspection officer has been required for large slaughterhouses since 2013. This new law only extends it to small slaughterhouses.¹⁵⁷

Health Policies

The School Lunch, Taste Education and the SAPERE Method

Unlike some of the other well-known school lunch programmes in Japan and Finland, municipalities in France are not required to offer school lunches, but most do and uptake is high.¹⁵⁸ The Ministry of National Education recommends lunches to include 4-5 components - an appetizer; a protein and accompanying vegetable; cheese, yogurt or milk; dessert and bread.¹⁵⁹ Salt and sauces are not allowed to be freely available on the table, but bread must be.¹⁶⁰ Unlike Japan, students are allowed to bring in packed lunches but if a nursery or a primary school provides lunch, there is only one option for everyone. Vending machines are also not allowed in schools.

Since schools meals are not mandatory and represent a small portion of the meals that students eat, “taste” education is considered essential not only for public health and nutrition, but for nurturing a collective food culture, fostering a delight in food, teaching children manners and *savoir vivre*, exploring the tastes of different regions and “building them up as a citizen.”¹⁶¹ Many of the tenants of the SAPERE method, developed in France in the 1970's as a method for ‘sensory food education’, have made their way into the *National Food Programme*, championed by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food.¹⁶² Students are actively encouraged to learn how to use new vocabulary to describe the tastes, textures and smells of new foods in “discovery workshops.”¹⁶³ Resources and classes for educators on *les classes du gout* teach them how to guide children through incorporating the five senses into mealtimes, giving children the ability to verbalise their experiences of food and develop an appreciation of French gastronomy.^{164,165}

¹⁵⁶ Vie publique. (2019). “[Animal Welfare: A Growing Concern](#).” [Online]. Accessed: 16 Nov 2019. [In French].

¹⁵⁷ La Croix. (2016). “[France adopts a strategy for animal welfare](#).” [Online]. Accessed: 16 Nov 2019. [In French].

¹⁵⁸ CNESCO. (2017). [School Catering in France](#). [Online]. Accessed: 17 Nov 2019. [In French.]

¹⁵⁹ Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, Ministère de la Recherche. (2001). [Circulaire n°2001-118 de 25 juin 2001](#). Paris: République Française. [In French].

¹⁶⁰ National Assembly. (2019). [Order of 30 September 2011 on the nutritional quality of meals served as part of school meals](#). Paris: République Française. [In French].

¹⁶¹ Conseil National de l'Alimentation. (2017). [The challenges of school community catering, Opinion n°77](#). Paris. [In French].

¹⁶² Ministry of Agriculture and Food. (2019). “[Teachers, train in taste classes!](#)” [Online]. Accessed: 22 Nov 2019. [In French].

¹⁶³ Ministère de l'Éducation. (2019). “[Student Health – Education for food and taste](#).” [Online]. Accessed: 17 Nov 2019. [In French].

¹⁶⁴ Ministère de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation. (2018). “[National Catalogue of Teaching Tools in Taste Education](#).” [Online]. Accessed: 16 Nov 2019. [In French].

¹⁶⁵ Ministry of Education and Children. (2019). “[Discover food and eat well](#).” [Online]. Accessed: 22 Nov 2019. [In French].

The SAPERE method has been also been adopted in Finland, the Netherlands and Japan.¹⁶⁶

The National Food and Nutrition Programme

France has had a series of National Nutrition and Health Programmes (PNNS) since 2001, implemented in blocks: 2001-2005, 2006-2010, 2011-2018, and 2019-2023.¹⁶⁷¹⁶⁸

Between them, these programmes have involved a wide range of different measures including education and campaigns (including through the website and brand mangerbouger.fr); a voluntary reformulation programme; a sugary drinks (2012) and energy drinks (2014) tax; setting standards for nutritional quality of school meals; prohibition of vending machines in schools; the requirement for health messaging on all food advertising; and the adoption of the 'Nutri-Score' front-of-pack nutritional labelling scheme that food companies can use on a voluntary basis. The most recent iteration (2019-2023) is supported by €75 million in funding, €35 million of which will go exclusively to schools.

JAPAN

- Even though trends are going up, Japan has the **lowest overweight/obesity rates** of any developed country. The reasons for this are multi-faceted, but much credit is given to their comprehensive **school lunch programme** which includes extensive in-class education. **The Metabo Law** which requires the waist of everyone between ages 40-74 to be measured annually may also contribute.
- Japan has lagged behind other nations in the development of supermarkets and mass food processors due to the **Large-Scale Retail Law** which required retail outlets over 1000m² that wanted to open in an area to be approved by a board of small local retailers. The law was revoked in 2000 under pressure from the WTO but the effect has been to stall the influx of Westernised processed foods while maintaining a diverse and fragmented food network.
- Japan produces only 39% of its own food. Efforts to increase the sectors competitiveness have been slow however, partly due to the **Agricultural Land Law** which, until 2009, required that land be worked by its owner. Similar to retail, the effect has been a sector of small-scale and part-time farmers and fragmented land network.

¹⁶⁶ Sapere Associatin <https://www.sapere-association.com/about-us>

¹⁶⁷ Chauliac M. The French National Nutrition and health Programme (PNNS). <http://www.wphna.org/Oxford2014/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/1-oxfordV2.pdf>

¹⁶⁸ Chauliac M. The French National Nutrition and Health Programme. 2019. <https://european-nutrition.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Michel-Chauliac.pdf>

The government is now actively promoting land consolidation.

Summary

Japan's food system presents a complex mix of liberal and protectionist policies, strong but worsening health indicators and a growing but struggling food industry. It is interesting both for having the lowest obesity rates of any developed country and for its famously regulated agriculture and trade policies. It is a wealthy nation that has, up to a point, maintained a stand against a more liberalised food system.

An important frame that has shaped Japan's policies is the importance of protecting small local and family businesses. The government has given preferential treatment to small farmers and retailers over incoming multinationals through a mix of direct financial support and stringent regulation. A series of agriculture and retail laws have historically limited the consolidation of businesses and the influx of imports, food processors and retailers.

These policies are starting to slowly give way however, becoming increasingly difficult to withstand pressure from the WTO and the US to liberalise its policies, intense critiques from the OECD for its inefficient agricultural output and, most important nationally, the worrying state of its food security. Japan only produces 39% of its own food and only 12% of its land is arable. Thus the past two decades have seen significant policy reforms designed to boost production, domestic consumption and exports. Reform has proven difficult, however, due to small agriculture and retail co-operatives that wield enormous political power and are not keen to relinquish protections, subsidies and import tariffs.

These policies have created something of a relative 'healthy food bubble.' Japan is a rare example of a developed and wealthy country that has progressed towards an increasingly Western diet while managing to largely avoid the obesity epidemic of other countries. This may be due to a combination of the relative absence of Western producers and retailers^{169,170}, a famous school lunch programme and a proactive and concerted effort by government to limit weight gain¹⁷¹ and promote the 'traditional Japanese diet'. While staples like fish, soy (tofu/miso), vegetables and rice have seen a bit of a decline in conjunction with an uptick in preferences for Western foods like red meat and dairy, these foods are still consumed in significantly higher amounts than in the typical Western diet and are actively promoted by government. In light of slow but steadily increasing rates of obesity, however,

¹⁶⁹ Monteiro, C., Moubarac, J., Levy, R., Canella, D., Louzada, M., Cannon, G. (2018). Household availability of ultra-processed foods and obesity in nineteen European countries. *Public Health Nutrition*. 21(1): 18-26.

¹⁷⁰ Baker, P., Friel, S. (2016). Food systems transformations, ultra-processed food markets and the nutrition transition in Asia. *Globalization and Health*. 12(80).

¹⁷¹ Borovoy, A., Roberto, C. (2015). Japanese and American public health approaches to preventing population weight gain: a role for paternalism? *Social Science and Medicine*. 143: 62-70.

it remains to be seen if Shokuiku – the food education programme – and other efforts will be able to reverse the trend.

Health Policies

The School Lunch Act (1954 / 2008) and The Basic Law of Shokuiku (2005)

Japan's school lunch programme, written into law in 1954 with the School Lunch Act, has contributed to the low rates of obesity in Japanese children.^{172,173} It is overseen by the Ministry of Education (MEXT) rather than the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF)¹⁷⁴. Parents cover the cost of ingredients while municipalities bear the cost of labour and facilities. Lunch is subsidized for families that cannot cover the cost¹⁷⁵ and the overall price comes to about \$3 per/meal.

In the post-war years, lunches were built around imported goods from the US, mostly surplus grain and skim milk, and people were encouraged to shift eating habits towards a Western diet¹⁷⁶. As malnourishment declined and awareness of problems with the Western diet grew,¹⁷⁷ a review of the programme advocated reverting back to Japan's traditional rice staple. Now a meal is made up of a staple (usually rice), a main dish (like pork and vegetables), a side dish (like miso soup), a drink and dessert (usually fruit and yogurt). The same meal is served to everyone and children are not allowed to bring their own lunch until high school. Meals are eaten in classrooms instead of in a group lunchroom and daily menus are overseen by a local nutritionist.

The 2005 Basic Law of Shokuiku (led by MAFF) made food education a part of school curriculums. *Shokuiku* is "the acquisition of knowledge about food and nutrition and the ability to make appropriate food choices through various experiences related to food."¹⁷⁸ While many countries have basic education in health and nutrition, *Shokuiku* intentionally tries to instil cultural food values and traditions in children. Cooking, table manners, gratitude, community dining and recycling are considered essential parts of 'teaching food' and children participate in cooking, serving and cleaning up the meal. In 2007, MEXT started a programme that places a certified nutritionist in each school to teach *Shokuiku* in

¹⁷² Fisher, M. (2013). "[How Japan's revolutionary school lunches helped slow the rise of child obesity.](#)" *Washington Post*. [Online]. Accessed: 22 Oct 2019

¹⁷³ Miyawaki, A., Kobayashi, L. (2018). Impact of the school lunch program on overweight and obesity among junior high school students: a nationwide study of Japan. *Journal of Public Health*. 1-9.

¹⁷⁴ Harlan, C. (2013). "[On Japan's school lunch menu: A healthy meal, made from scratch.](#)" *Washington Post*. [Online]. Accessed: 22 Oct 2019

¹⁷⁵ Tanaka, N., Miyoshi, M. (2012). School lunch program for health promotion among children in Japan. *Asia Pacific Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. 12(1): 155-158.

¹⁷⁶ Nakamura, T. (2008). The integration of school nutrition program into health promotion and prevention of lifestyle-related diseases in Japan. *Asia Pacific Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. 17(S1): 349-351.

¹⁷⁷ Kagawa, Y. (1978). Impact of Westernization on the Nutrition of Japanese: Changes in Physique, Cancer, Longevity and Centenarians. *Preventative Medicine*. 7, 205-217.

¹⁷⁸ Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. (2005). "[What is 'Shokuiku \(Food Education\)'](#)". Tokyo: Government of Japan.

classrooms and meals are often accompanied with talks on how the meal was prepared, where the ingredients were from, etc.

The implementation of the Basic Law of Shokuiku has required coordination across MAFF, the Food Safety Commission, the Consumer Affairs Agency, MEXT, and the Ministry for Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW). While the programme is continuing into 2020, the direct impact of *Shokuiku* on obesity rates is difficult to measure, although a 2015 white paper showed great interest in a sound dietary lifestyle among those that have a greater interest in *Shokuiku*.¹⁷⁹ While there was a slight increase in childhood obesity between 2005 (3.1%) and 2010 (3.3%), rates have remained constant at 3.3% through 2016. The current focus of the programme is now on encouraging family and community dining to reverse the growing trend of eating alone¹⁸⁰.

The Metabo Law (2008)

Metabo is the preferred term for 'overweight' in Japan, considered to sound more inclusive than 'obesity'.¹⁸¹ Led by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW), the Metabo Law designated that everyone between the ages of 40 and 74 must have their waist measured annually. If they do not meet standard guidelines for waist size, depending on severity, they either attend counselling for weight loss or receive motivational support.

Particularly interesting is the role that private companies play in the health of their employees. Companies are required to ensure a minimum of 65% participation and, if they and municipalities do not meet national goals on decreasing overweight rates, they will be fined. As a result, companies keep a constant watch on employees' health. While there are no enforcement mechanisms on individuals for losing weight, the cost burden and accountability of the programme is on private companies.¹⁸²

No official studies have been published on the Metabo Law's success in curbing weight gain.

Retail Policies

Large-Scale Retail Law (1970s) and the Large-Scale Retail Location Law (2000)

Until 2000, the Large-Scale Retail Law limited the establishment of stores larger than 1000m. According to this law overseen by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), if a large-scale supermarket wanted to locate in an area, it had to be approved by a

¹⁷⁹ Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. (2014). "[Shokuiku Promotion Policies: FY2015 \(White Paper on Shokuiku\)](#)." Tokyo: Government of Japan.

¹⁸⁰ Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. (2016). "[Shokuiku Promotion Policies: FY2017 \(White Paper on Shokuiku\)](#)." Tokyo: Government of Japan.

¹⁸¹ Onishi, N. (2008). "Japan, Seeking Trim Waists, Measures Millions." *The New York Times*. [Online]. Accessed: 23 Oct 2019.

¹⁸² Oda, B. (2010). An *Alternative Perspective to Battling the Bulge: The Social and Legal Fallout of Japan's Anti-Obesity Legislation*. *Asia-Pacific Law and Policy Journal*. 1: 249-294.

local committee of small retail owners. In the 1990s, under considerable pressure from the WTO and the US¹⁸³, this law was replaced by the Large-Scale Retail Location Law which now simply 'screens' large stores based on environment criteria like traffic. This deregulation led to an immediate rise in new retail formats like convenience stores and supermarkets, but the industry is still quite fragmented and large supermarkets in particular struggle to maintain a competitive foothold.¹⁸⁴

The impact of the lack of dominant large-scale retailers in Japan is a lack of large-scale producers.

“...the evolution of the food processing industry is dependent on retail consolidation. If the retail sector consolidates, food processing would have no choice but to consolidate because large retailers prefer to be supplied by large processors who provide national coverage and marketing. However, since the retail industry is fragmented, small processors can survive by supplying small local retailers.”¹⁸⁵

While the packaged goods market is quite active and there are large national manufacturers in Japan, just like the retail market, the food processing market is diverse and fragmented, predominately made up of small plants producing for their regional market. There are relatively few cases of the consolidation that is so common in the US and UK. In 2016, SMEs accounted for 73% of total employment.¹⁸⁶ Family-owned businesses are typically quite reluctant to sell and the market fragmentation means that no major multinationals are interested in gaining a market foothold by acquiring a national business. As a result, four of the top five largest packaged food firms are local Japanese companies.¹⁸⁷

Small retailers represent a powerful constituency in Japan and METI has struggled between the competing interests of voters and international market forces. METI ultimately gave way under pressure from major trading partners eager to break into the Japanese market, particularly the US who filed a case against Japan with the WTO which led to the repeal of the Large-Scale Retail Law. The diversity of Japan's retail market is evidence of the ongoing political conflict. While policies that have catered to small businesses are commonly criticised as the reason for Japan's stagnant economy¹⁸⁸, there are trade-offs. The limitation of multinational food corporations and highly processed food may be a contributing factor to Japan's low obesity rates.

¹⁸³ Grier, J.H. (2001). Japan's Regulation of Large Retail Stores: Political Demands Versus Economic Interests. *University of Pennsylvania Journal of International Law*. 22: 1-60.

¹⁸⁴ Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. (2015). "Modern Grocery Retailing in Japan: Market Access Secretariat – Global Analysis Report." Government of Canada.

¹⁸⁵ McKinsey Global Institute. (2000). "[Why the Japanese Economy is not Growing: micro barriers to productivity growth](#)." Washington: McKinsey & Company.

¹⁸⁶ OECD. (2019). "[Innovation, Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability in Japan](#)." *OECD Food and Agriculture Reviews*. Paris: OECD Publishing.

¹⁸⁷ Scattergood, G. (2018). "International challenge: Japan's top five packaged food firms revealed...and all but one is home grown." *Food Navigator Asia*. [Online]. Accessed: 23 Oct 2019.

¹⁸⁸ McKinsey Global Institute. (2015). "[The Future of Japan: Reigniting Productivity and Growth](#)." Tokyo: McKinsey & Company.

The Basic Law for Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas (1999)

The agriculture sector has remarkable political power in Japan. Since the post-war period, farmers have enjoyed protections beyond the standards of most other countries despite only 13% of land being used for agriculture and the continuous decline of its economic and social significance. Laws that protect farmers from foreign imports, particularly rice, have been in place for decades.

“Agricultural producers and their organisations have successfully extracted preferential treatment from government almost without regard to the impact of relentlessly high food prices on consumers and the ire of Japan’s trading partners.”¹⁸⁹

This began to change after Japan joined the WTO and passed the 1999 Basic Law on Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas¹⁹⁰ which embodied a shift away from protectionist policies for farmers to a more market-driven approach. For the first time, the market would determine food prices but farmers would still receive direct compensation from the government and significant tariffs on food imports remained. This law is revised every five years and is still the major driving force of agriculture policy in Japan.

Agriculture Land Law (1970 / 2009) and the Law Concerning Construction of Agricultural Promotion Areas

The Agriculture Land Law (ALL) was put in place to limit farmland losses from increasing urbanisation and promote ownership of land by farmers. Similar to retail, farming is heavily protected from consolidation. Until recently, the Agriculture Land Law stipulated that a farm had to be farmed by its owner, effectively excluding large agribusiness from accumulating land.¹⁹¹ As a result, the sector and the land is highly fragmented, made up of small or part-time producers working on disjointed plots. A 2009 revision to the law abolished restrictions on corporations investing in land. Then the 2015 Basic Plan¹⁹² set a clear agenda for the promotion of farmland consolidation to business farmers and corporations in an effort to increase efficiency and outputs¹⁹³. This trajectory was solidified with the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) which set goals for increasing quantities of rice production, which will likely result in even more

¹⁸⁹ Mulgan, A.G. (2000). *The politics of agriculture in Japan*. London & New York: Routledge.

¹⁹⁰ Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. (2009). *The Basic Law on Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas*. Tokyo: Government of Japan.

¹⁹¹ Homna, M. (2000). “[The New Agricultural Basic Law and Trade Policy Reform in Japan](#).” Canberra: The Australian National University.

¹⁹² Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. (2015). *Summary of The Basic Plan for Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas*. Tokyo: Government of Japan.

¹⁹³ Jentsch, H. (2016). Abandoned land, corporate farming, and farmland banks: a local perspective on the process of deregulating and redistributing farmland in Japan. *Contemporary Japan*. 29(1): 31-46.

consolidation.¹⁹⁴ But tariffs and quotas still remain in place on extra-sensitive crops like rice.¹⁹⁵

Regarding land conversion, the Law Concerning the Construction of Agricultural Promotion Areas stipulates that municipal governments designate zones of Exclusively Agricultural Areas (EAAs) that are permanently protected from conversion and receive subsidies and lower tax rates.¹⁹⁶ EAAs comprise 80% of the farmland in Japan. Because of concerns over food security and increased efforts to consolidate farmland, rates of farmland conversion are low but there is increasing pressure and financial incentives for farmers to convert, particularly in areas near cities.¹⁹⁷

Revised Agricultural Co-Operative Act (2015)

This was a major piece of legislation that had a significant impact on the power held by the central agricultural co-operative. The Japan Agricultural Cooperatives (JA) -also known as Nōkyō - has exerted powerful influence over both government policy and local farming. Almost every farmer in Japan is a member and is dependent on the financial services, support and insurance they receive from the JA.

Prime Minister Shinzō Abe took major steps through the revision of the Agricultural Co-Operative Act to begin limiting the power of the JA in order to make structural reforms to the agriculture sector. A major change was a requirement that a majority of directors within the JA have to be business farmers and professional salespeople rather than part-time or smallholder farmers. Perhaps the most dramatic change, it stripped the central office – JA Zenchu – of its ability to audit local offices.

The Plan to Create Dynamism through Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and Local Communities (2013 / 2016 / 2017 / 2018)

This Plan was designed to make major improvement in the competitiveness of Japanese agriculture. It set clear quantitative goals on growing agricultural income and exports, farmland concentration, and new business entrants. Led by the Prime Minister, it is indicative of the continued efforts to improve the productivity and efficiency of the sector while wresting power away from the co-ops. Continued revisions and additional policies show the priority of this plan to the government and the continued efforts to reform the sector.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁴ Worldview. (2015). "[Assessing the Power of Japan's Agriculture Lobby](#)." *Stratfor*. [Online]. Accessed: 30 Oct 2019.

¹⁹⁵ Worldview. (2018). "Japan Strives to Prune Its Agricultural Sector." *Stratfor*. [Online]. Accessed: 30 Oct 2019.

¹⁹⁶ Godo, Y. (2013). "[Regulation of Farmland Conversion in Japan](#)." *FFTC*. [Online]. Accessed: 31 Oct 2019

¹⁹⁷ Godo, G. (2007). "[The Puzzle of Small Farming in Japan](#)." *Australia-Japan Research Centre*. Asia Pacific Economic Papers, No 365.

¹⁹⁸ Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet. (2019). "[Headquarters on Creating Dynamism in Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery Industries and Local Communities](#)." [Online]. Accessed: 31 Oct 2019.

A major part of this package was a mandated shift in the JA's resources away from financial services (which propped up inefficient farms) towards farming and marketing support that would boost the productivity and sales of business farms. Combined with decreasing producer support funds and the opening up of domestic crops to international competition through the CPTPP, it is clear that Japan is moving quickly to liberalise its agricultural production and address the criticisms it has sustained from trading partners and the OECD.

Environmental Policy

Promoting the Introduction of Sustainable Agriculture Practices (1999) & Principles of Agriculture Product Practice Harmonised with the Environment (2005)

The Basic Law stipulates that a plan must be put in place to promote sustainable agriculture. Promoting the Introduction of Sustainable Agriculture Practices¹⁹⁹ (1999) led to an 'Eco-Farmer' certification scheme that provides financial incentives and technical support to farmers who meet certain criteria like using compost to improve soil quality and reducing the use of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides. The programme has resulted in a significant increase in the number of farmers adhering to the scheme but, as of 2017, the total was still less than 10% of total farmers.

The Principles of Agriculture (2005) laid out practices that farmers are expected to follow like, keeping the soil in good condition, and cross-compliance is required to receive payments from the Farm Income Stabilization Programme. Improving the sustainability of agriculture is a stated goal in the most recent Basic Plan, but no targets have been set and there is no consistent monitoring of progress.

¹⁹⁹ OECD. (2009). [Evaluation of Agricultural Policy Reforms in Japan](#). Paris: OECD Publishing.

THE NETHERLANDS

- Policymaking in the Netherlands includes **covenants** between government, industry and CSOs. These covenants serve as a non-binding course of action that all partners agree to, typically through **public-private partnership**.
- The Netherlands has made the **circular economy** the centre of its sustainability transition agenda, a significant portion of which relates to food and biomass. The **protein transition** has made impressive headway led by a public-private partnership. Efforts to improve air **quality** through limiting nitrate / ammonia pollution, however, have led to farmer protests.
- The 2018 **National Prevention Agreement** set a goal to return obesity rates to 1995 levels by 2040. The actions against obesity were found by the National Institute for Public Health to be too weak to achieve this goal which some critics say is due to the lack of the political will in the current government.
- Some municipalities in The Netherlands have seen improvements in child overweight/obesity by working with **JOGG** – a public-private partnership focused on integrated approaches to creating a healthy food environment. It is a main feature of the national Government's decentralised approach to obesity. A goal has been set for 75 municipalities to report positive results, currently at 28.

Summary

Dutch policymaking on food operates through a combination of regulation, laws and 'covenants.' Covenants employ consensus decision-making to bring all parts of society to the table to agree to a common course of action.-

The hallmark sustainability policy is the circular economy. The government set a goal for the country to be entirely "circular" by 2050.²⁰⁰ As the food industry is one of the largest industries in the Netherlands, food and biomass play a significant role. A major focus is managing the problematic nitrogen and phosphate cycles from the country's intensive livestock and dairy industries. One method set forth in the *Biomass and Food Transition Agenda* is a protein transition to more vegetable proteins. The Green Protein Alliance has

²⁰⁰ The Government of the Netherlands. (2016). [A Circular Economy in the Netherlands by 2050](#). The Hague.

been developed as a public-private partnership comprised of retailers and food producers to implement it.

However, attempts to implement a circular and regenerative soil and nutrient system have proven quite contentious. As outlined in the *Transition Agenda*, industry groups developed a report on *Soil Structure as a Basis for a Future-Proof Dairy Farm* which set ambitious targets for all cows to be land-based by 2025. This was released one year after farmers were forced to cull 100,000 cows in order to stay within phosphate limits. Then, one year later, livestock expansion was forced to a halt in order to stay within nitrate limits. Factions within the farming industry emerged and protested.

Regarding health, some municipalities have reported improvements in child overweight/obesity rates through the implementation of JOGG – a public-private partnership that works with communities on integrated approaches to creating a healthy food environment. The success of JOGG at a community-level made it a central feature in the 2018 National Prevention Agreement. This covenant between government, industry, CSOs and public health advocates also introduced a collection of research projects and voluntary programmes, but no hard regulation. A review by an independent agency found the tactics to be too weak to meet its goal of returning obesity rates to their 1995 level. The 2014 *Agreement on Product Composition* led to a substantial reduction in salt content for bread but overall salt, sugar and fat content has still not been brought within recommended amounts.

Food Systems Policies

Towards a Food Policy (2015) and Food Agenda for Safe, Healthy and Sustainable Food (2015)

In 2015, the Government commissioned *Towards a Food Policy*²⁰¹ from the Netherlands Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR), an independent advisory body for policy. This report encourages a shift from an agricultural and exports-driven policy to an integrated food policy that addresses sustainability, public health and the robustness of the food system. Unique to this report is a call to acknowledge different values and “the trade-offs and the choices that have to be made” in developing food policy.

In response to the report, the cabinet wrote a letter to Parliament with a *Food Agenda for Safe, Healthy and Sustainable Food*,²⁰² later followed by a progress letter.²⁰³ The agenda

²⁰¹ de Vries, G., de Hoog, J., Stellinga, B., Dijkstra, H. (2016). [“Towards a Food Policy.”](#) The Hague: The Netherlands Scientific Council for Government Policy

²⁰² Directorate-General for Agro and Nature Policy. (2015). [“Letter to Parliament on the food agenda for safe, healthy and sustainable food.”](#) The Hague: Government of the Netherlands. [In Dutch].

²⁰³ Directorate-General for Agro and Nature Policy. (2016). “Progress on Food Agenda for Safe, Healthy and Sustainable Food.”

addresses health (labelling, reformulation), production and the circular economy. According to the views of the Dutch Food Transition Coalition, the initiatives are either quite weak or refer to other larger ongoing projects and no further progress has been made specifically on a food policy.

Environmental Policies

The Circular Netherlands in 2050 (2016) and the Biomass and Food Transition Agenda (2018)

The circular economy is the Netherlands' response to the 'challenges of the 21st century.'²⁰⁴ Circular food and biomass in particular are considered necessary to reduce pressures on natural agriculture resources.²⁰⁵ With a goal to become "fully circular" by 2050, their strategy involves increasing the production of biomass, promoting the growth of alternative proteins, reducing reliance on foreign imports of raw materials like animal feed and peat and improving soil quality through fertilizer regulation.

Fostering the transition to the circular economy requires navigating some interesting system-wide legislative and regulatory challenges. The government sees its role as creating a legislative framework within which industry can drive the transition. This has involved rolling back regulations that limit entrepreneur's ability to innovate - for example changing the legal definition of 'waste' - as well as tax incentive schemes and financial investments.

The biomass and food transition will require significant changes from the agriculture sector as described in the *Biomass and Food Transition Agenda*, for which implementation involves a covenant.²⁰⁶ For example, initiatives to improve soil quality and nutrients in the midst of highly intensive farming practices is a difficult subject for farmers who already feel over-regulated (see below). The focus on the 'protein transition' is also particularly interesting as the intensive livestock industry is one of the largest in the country. The transition agenda aims to flip protein consumption from 60% animal: 40% plant to the inverse and to decrease overall protein consumption and the footprint of protein production by 50% by 2050. Investments in insect protein and algae are a key focus.

Progress is slow, however, and a 2019 letter to Parliament on the transition mentioned progress on plastics, waste reduction and water stations, but mentioned nothing about food or biomass.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁴ Ministry of Economic Affairs. (2016). [Strategic Biomass Vision for the Netherlands towards 2030](#). The Hague: Government of the Netherlands.

²⁰⁵ Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality. (2018). "[Vision Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality](#)." The Hague: Government of the Netherlands.

²⁰⁶ The Government of the Netherlands. (2018). *Biomass and Food Transition Agenda*. The Hague.

²⁰⁷ Ministry of Infrastructure and Waste Management. (2019). [Letter to Parliament on the progress of various circular economy initiatives](#). The Hague: Government of the Netherlands.

The Greenhouse Horticulture and Environment Agreement, 1997-2010 (1997) and the Agro covenant, 2008-2020 (2008)

A key priority of agriculture has been reducing the greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) of the food system. Energy usage is of particular concern because greenhouses are so prevalent in the Netherlands and account for 85% of energy consumption from the sector. The *Greenhouse Horticulture and Environment Agreement* was signed in 1997 between the government and greenhouse horticulturists to begin an energy transition for greenhouses. This evolved into the 2008 *Agro covenant* to include the entire sector – not only production, but also transport, materials flow, industrial producers, etc.

The covenant is sponsored by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy. Its role in achieving these goals is explicitly to reduce regulatory barriers and to subsidise the research and deployment of sustainable technology. While collective schemes have been prioritised (biogas, CHP, etc.) and various subsidy programmes and financial instruments were made available to industry, decisions about how exactly to bring down emissions is left to private actors, as long as the emissions reduction targets are met. Knowledge networks have been developed to provide resources and advice to producers on how to reduce energy in their specific sector (beef, poultry, horticulture, etc.).²⁰⁸

The *Agro covenant* set clear goals to achieve 30% fewer GHGs by 2030 based on 1995 levels and use 20% renewable energy by 2020. Individual goals were set for each sector with committees to oversee progress. A 2018 update reported that overall the programme is on track to reach its goals.²⁰⁹ CO₂, nitrogen and methane emissions have been in decline since the 1990s (aside from a recent uptick after the EU withdrew the milk quota) so it is unclear how much can be attributed to the *Agro covenant* versus other policy measures. Still, the covenant is considered an essential mechanism for normalising the prioritisation of reducing GHGs and driving investments in sustainable agriculture.²¹⁰

Some of the sectors are not making the necessary progress, however. Emissions from the dairy farming industry, which is the largest emitter in the sector, have decreased since 1990 due to the decrease in the number of cows.

Agriculture Policies

The Fertilizers Act (1986), The Dairy Act (2015) and Ruling on Nitrogen Emissions (2019)

The Netherlands has the highest livestock density in Europe. This results in high levels of

²⁰⁸ <https://agroenergiek.nl/>

²⁰⁹ Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy. (2018). *Ten Years of Energy and Climate in Agri-Sectors, 2008-2018 – Progress Report on Agro covenant*. The Hague – Government of the Netherlands. [In Dutch].

²¹⁰ Eden, A. (2018). The Agro covenant in the Netherlands: Factsheet. *Adelphi*.

nitrogen and phosphates per/hectare through the excretion of manure. An EU quota on milk production, in place since 1984, kept a ceiling on nitrogen and phosphate to protect the soil and groundwater. When the quota was abolished in 2015, the Dutch government passed the Dairy Act designed to support the growth of the dairy sector while setting a limit on phosphate production based on the number of cattle in a herd.²¹¹

Due to the derogation in the Nitrate Directive, there was an agreement with the European Commission to respect a limit on the phosphate production. However, the number of cows rose so quickly that phosphate levels were surpassed by 2017. In an attempt to circumvent the Fertilizer Act which dictates how farmers must transport or destroy excess manure,²¹² farmers began incorrectly reporting the amount of manure and the phosphate and nitrogen levels their farms were producing.²¹³ The government then introduced a phosphate trading scheme²¹⁴ but farmers were still required to cull 100,000 cows in 2018.²¹⁵

In 2019, a court ruling in the Netherlands based on advice from the European courts, ruled that Dutch policies for construction and farming permits were in breach of EU law (Habitats Directive / conservation obligation) owing to water pollution from excess ammonia.²¹⁶ All new farm building and livestock expansion thus has to cease. In response to the implication that farmers were responsible, a faction of farmer formed the Farmers Defence Force (FCF) that protested around the country.²¹⁷ The protests were supported by large companies like Vion, a meat processor, and For Farmers, an animal feed producer who pays for a communications agency for the FCF.²¹⁸ A more centrist splinter group, Agracie,²¹⁹ and the farmers' lobby association (LTO), which was accused of failing to represent farmers' interests,²²⁰ have been tentative to support the protests, preferring rather to enter into discussions with the government. Attempts are currently underway within the dairy and intensive animal production sector to negotiate a collective response.²²¹

Private Sector Innovations

²¹¹ Klootwijk, C., Van Middelaar, C.E., Berentsen, P., Boer, I.J.M. (2016.) Dutch dairy farms after milk quota abolition: Economic and environmental consequences of a new manure policy. *Journal of Dairy Science*. 99(10): 8384-8396.

²¹² Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety. (2019). "[Regulations about manure.](#)" [Online]. Accessed: 21 Nov 2019.

²¹³ Dohmen, J., Rosenberg, E. (2017). "[The Manure Plot.](#)" *NRC*. [Online]. Accessed: 21 Nov 2019

²¹⁴ Cornall, J. (2018). "[Tradable phosphate rights introduced in the Netherlands for dairy cattle.](#)" *DairyReporter.com*. [Online]. Accessed: 21 Nov 2019.

²¹⁵ McCullough, C. (2018). "[The Dutch dairy dilemma – How dairy farmers in the Netherlands are coping with new phosphates regulations.](#)" *Farming Independently*. [Online]. Accessed: 20 Nov 2019.

²¹⁶ Directorate-General for Environment, European Commission. (2019). [The Environmental Implementation Review 2019](#). European Union.

²¹⁷ Schaart, E. (2019). "[Angry Dutch farmers swarm The Hague to protest green rules.](#)" *Politico*. [Online]. Accessed: 20 Nov 2019.

²¹⁸ Hakkenes, E. (2019). "[The Hague awaits grim farmers' protest: 'City dwellers are putting us in a damn corner.'](#)" *Trouw*. [Online]. Accessed: 20 Nov 2019. [In Dutch].

²¹⁹ Smouter, K. (2019). "[Farmers divided: harsh action or diplomacy?](#)" *NRC*. [Online]. Accessed: 20 Nov 2019.

²²⁰ Smit, P. (2019). "[More and more groups are taking the state, but who is who in peasant action land?](#)" *deVolksrant*. [Online]. Accessed: 21 Nov 2019.

²²¹ Farmers Defence Force. (2019). "[Letter from the Agricultural Sector to ZuiveNL / NZO.](#)" [Online]. Accessed: 20 Nov 2019. [In Dutch].

Grazing Covenant (2012) and Soil Structure as a basis for a future-proof dairy farms (2018)

In 2012, industry and government signed a *Grazing Covenant* to increase the amount of land used for pasture.²²² Industry took the lead and, along with a number of initiatives, a Landbound Commission was established in 2017 by Netherlands Agriculture and Horticulture Organisation (LTO) - the farmers' lobby association- and the Dutch Dairy Association (NZO) - the dairy farmers' lobby association. The belief of the committee was that producing more milk at a lower cost had run its course and that Dutch dairy farmers could not compete with farmers elsewhere producing at a lower cost. An entirely grass-fed dairy industry was proposed as a means of distinguishing Dutch dairy on the international market.²²³

In 2018, aligned with the *Food and Biomass Transition Agenda*, the Commission released *Soil Structure as a basis for a future-proof dairy farm*²²⁴ which set ambitious targets for dairy farmers to achieve, by 2025: 1) 65% of animal feed will come from the farm itself or a farm nearby; 2) farmers will develop neighbourhood feed and manure contracts with other farms within 20 km; 3) grass will be the basis of a cow's diet, a farm must have enough land to support it and stocking density at a dairy farm will not exceed 10 cows per hectare of grazable land; and 4) the industry will be less dependent on foreign imports of corn and soy for animal feed.²²⁵ Implementation is expected to be privately-led and based on existing legislation. Recommendations are made on how government can financially support the efforts.

The report itself was met with a mixed response from the rest of the industry²²⁶ and action has been slow to materialise. Livestock farmers in intensive cattle areas considered the goals impossible to reach both in terms of affordability and the availability of land. In October 2019, at the same time as the farmer protests, a number of dairy farmers who run intensive business operations united against the report.²²⁷

The Green Protein Alliance and the Protein Transition

A key piece of the transition to the circular economy in food and biomass is a shift away from beef, poultry and pig meat towards vegetable protein – a difficult tasks in a country with the highest density of beef and dairy cows in Europe. The *Food and Biomass Transition Agenda* set a goal for a shift from 60% animal: 40% vegetable protein to 60% vegetables: 40% animal by 2050, a goal that was re-iterated in the 2019 National Climate Agreement. The Green Protein Alliance has taken charge in driving this transition, citing a lack of

²²² [Grazing Pasture Covenant](#). [In Dutch].

²²³ Smit, P. (2018). "[Seven questions about advice from the Landbound Commission](#)." *NieuweOogst*. [Online]. Accessed: 20 Nov 2019. [In Dutch].

²²⁴ Commissie Grondgebondenheid. (2018). [Grondgebondenheid als basis voor een toekomstbestendige melkveehouderij](#).

²²⁵ NZO. (2018). "[Land-bound dairy farming](#)." [Online]. Accessed: 20 Nov 2019. [In Dutch].

²²⁶ Smit, P. (2018). "[Divided responses to advisory reports on land cover](#)." *NieuweOogst*. [Online]. Accessed: 20 Nov 2019. [In Dutch].

²²⁷ ZLTO. (2019). "[ZLTO Maps out the consequences of soil-relatedness](#)." [Online]. Accessed: 20 Nov 2019.

government initiative in following through with the plan. It is a part-publicly-funded partnership of retailers (including the two largest supermarket chains in the Netherlands), producers (including Unilever and Alpro) and knowledge partners like Green Food Lab designed to increase consumer demand and retail availability of alternative proteins. They set more ambitious targets to achieve a 50:50 balance between vegetable and animal protein by 2025.²²⁸

Their initiatives have included social media campaigns and recipes for the public;²²⁹ education and promotion events with industry and government stakeholders; the launch of a national advertising campaign²³⁰ and coordination with industry partners to increase the development and availability of new products. While working in conjunction with the Minister for the Environment and they are also applying public pressure on government to support policy statements with action and speed up the transition.^{231,232}

In the first year, the GPA reported a 3.2% increase in legumes, nuts and meat/dairy substitutes, a 1.7% decrease in meat sales and a 1.3% decrease in dairy products. In addition 70 new vegetable protein products were introduced to supermarkets.²³³

Health Policies

The Covenant on Healthy Weight (2005 / 2010) and Young People at a Healthy Weight (JOGG)

The original 2005 *Covenant*²³⁴ introduced the idea that, while an individual is responsible for their health choices, they are limited by their social environment and thus it is incumbent on food industry, catering organisations, trade unions, etc. to take responsibility for their part in the overweight/obesity epidemic. The Covenant launched a public-private partnership between local authorities and industry to contribute to a food environment where making healthy choices is easy for everyone.²³⁵ The Covenant was updated in 2010 with more specific goals aimed at children in schools through canteens and food education.²³⁶

This partnership ultimately evolved into the Young People at a Healthy Weight (JOGG) programme and is still the central nationally-supported scheme for childhood

²²⁸ Green Protein Alliance. (2017). [Green Protein Growth Plan](#). [Online]. Accessed: 21 Nov 2019.

²²⁹ <https://zokanhetook.nu/>

²³⁰ Green Protein Alliance. (2019). "[Press Release – That's How It Is! First National Campaign Launched to Promote a More Vegetable Based Diet](#)." [Online]. Accessed: 21 Nov 2019.

²³¹ Dagavos, H., Aiking, H. (2018). "[The protein transition: when will politics continue?](#)" *NRCLive*. [Online]. Accessed: 21 Nov 2019.

²³² Pols, M. (2018). "[Green Protein Alliance critical of government food policy plans](#)." *Evmi*. [Online]. Accessed: 21 Nov 2019.

²³³ Green Protein Alliance. (2018). [Impact Report: Year 1](#). [Online]. Accessed: 21 Nov 2019.

²³⁴ Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport. (2005). [Covenant on Overweight and Obesity](#). The Hague: Government of the Netherlands.

²³⁵ Renders, C., Halberstadt, J., Frenkel, C., Rosenmöller, P., Seidell, J., Hirasings, R. (2010). Tackling the Problem of Overweight and Obesity: The Dutch Approach. *Obesity Facts*. 3(4): 267-272.

²³⁶ Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport. (2009). [Covenant on Healthy Weight](#). The Hague: Government of the Netherlands.

overweight/obesity. It is based on the French EPODE approach which was formally adopted by the States General in 2009 as the Netherland's official model for integrated, locally-led programmes to combat overweight. JOGG consists of five pillars – political commitment, public-private co-operation, social marketing, scientific support and evaluation and linking prevention with healthcare. JOGG works with specific communities in a city that face the greatest socio-economic and health challenges. Cities sign up voluntarily and, as of the completion of the second *Covenant* in 2014, 75 municipalities were running JOGG with some reporting positive movement on child obesity trends.^{237,238} The 2018 *National Prevention Agreement* set a goal that half of the Netherland's municipalities – 190 in total – would be running JOGG in 2020 and 75 of them would be reporting positive results. As of 2019, JOGG has reports from 142 municipalities with 28 showing a decrease in BMI.²³⁹ Cities like Amsterdam have also developed far more wide-reaching programmes.²⁴⁰

National Agreement to Improve Product Composition (2014)

The *Agreement on Product Composition*²⁴¹ was signed by the Dutch Food Retail Organisation, the Federation of the Dutch Food Industry and other industry groups with the Minister of Health Welfare and Sport (VWS). Its goal was to reduce the salt, saturated fat, sugar and calorie content of food by 2020.

A 2018 progress report by the National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM) said that, while reductions have been made, they are not significant enough to meet recommendations. They recommend expansion and tightening of the agreement and a new and integrated system for product improvement.²⁴² The 2019 *National Prevention Agreement* said that additional efforts would be undertaken up to 2020 and the *Agreement to Improve Product Composition* will continue after 2020 but, aside from higher targets set for reductions (most notably a 30% decrease of sugar in soft drinks), there is no clarification on what new tactics will be used, how they will be enforced and if the reductions will fit within nutritional guidelines.

National Prevention Agreement: A Healthier Netherlands (2019)

The *National Prevention Agreement*²⁴³ was signed by 70 different organizations that agreed to take a series of actions on preventing obesity, smoking and alcohol abuse. It was developed through a negotiation process with CSOs, public health representatives,

²³⁷ Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport. (2015). [Report Note to the Government](#). The Hague: Government of the Netherlands.

²³⁸ JOGG. (2015). [Working Together! 2010-2014](#).

²³⁹ <https://jongerenopgezondgewicht.nl/>

²⁴⁰ Hawkes, C., Halliday, J. (2017). What makes urban food policy happen? Insights from five case studies. *iPES Food*.

²⁴¹ Minister of Health, Welfare and Sport. (2014). *National Agreement to Improve Product Composition*. The Hague: Government of the Netherlands.

²⁴² RIVM. (2018). "[National Agreement leads to small improvement in intake of salt and sugar](#)." [Online]. Accessed: 18 Nov 2019.

²⁴³ Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport. (2018). *The National Prevention Agreement*. The Hague: Government of the Netherlands.

municipalities and the food and alcohol industry. The approach was criticised for being too weak, lacking, for example, a soft-drink tax.²⁴⁴

With a time horizon of 2040, the agreement takes a long-term view. For overweight and obesity, it aims to reduce levels to where they were 22 years ago (1995) in the next 22 years (2040) – from 48.7% to 38% for adults and 13.5% to 9.1% for children. The report by RIVM said that the agreement is unlikely to meet these goals since most of the tactics in the agreement are awareness, training and research programmes and positive outcomes could not be estimated for most of the measure.²⁴⁵

The agreement includes further promoting the Wheel of Five – the Netherland’s nutritional guidelines – in supermarkets and in the media, developing an “Advertising Code for Food” and restricting the use of licenced media characters on product packaging for children based on nutritional criteria. New reformulation targets are set and a new ‘food-choice logo will be introduced in 2021. At least €19 million in public funds, matched by industry, will be given to the Agri & Food and the Horticulture & Parent Materials to develop healthy food products and on research but no further budgets allocations are mentioned. Little mention is made of public procurement. School lunches are managed at the individual level and reaching the goal of 50% healthy school canteens will be delivered through existing programmes.

SCOTLAND

- Scotland has had a form of national food strategy for more than 12 years, with **Recipe for Success** published in 2007, and **Towards a Good Food Nation** published in 2014. However, progress towards an integrated food policy has slowed since the 2016 election and the EU referendum. At the same time, policy in a number of broad areas which impact on the food system has continued to evolve, in particular land reform, human rights, climate change and social security. These broader policies may provide the basis for a deep-rooted change in Scotland’s food system over the coming decade.
- The **Community Right to Buy** law and the **Scottish Land Commission** represent a radically different understanding of land ownership, use and management in Scotland. Writing community ownership into law and setting protocol for land management solidifies a new philosophical stance, shifting understanding of land away from private property and closer to a public good.

²⁴⁴ Mascha, Hament, C. van Velpen, P. (2018). “[No sugar tax for the Netherlands: a missed opportunity.](#)” *Medisch Contact*. [Online]. Accessed: 18 Nov 2019. [In Dutch].

²⁴⁵ RIVM. (2018). “[National Prevention Agreement’s ambitions for smoking may be feasible, more measures necessary to reduce overweight and alcohol use.](#)” [Online]. The Hague: Government of the Netherlands.

- Scotland's 2019 **Climate Change Act** set a 2045 target for net zero and includes specific measures on agriculture, including a nitrogen budget for Scotland and the establishment of regional land use frameworks to agree indicative land uses (including afforestation). It requires Ministers to set out proposals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from farms through a range of specific measures including agroecology and agroforestry
- Scotland has set ambitious goals to increase **forest cover** from 18% to 21% and restore 250,000 hectares of the peatland that covers 20% of Scotland's land. Since 73% of land in Scotland is used for agriculture,²⁴⁶ meeting these goals will have a significant impact on farmers. Scotland's target of 10,000 ha per year of new planting was achieved in 2018, with 11,200 ha planted (84% of the UK total). This target will rise to 15,000 ha per year from 2024. In February 2020, the Scottish Government announced a substantial, multi-annual investment in peatland restoration of more than £250 million over the next 10 years.²⁴⁷
- A **Good Food Nation Bill** has been through consultation and drafting but will not now be introduced in the current Parliament (which runs until the next election in May 2021). The bill would require Scottish Ministers to write a food policy statement every 5 years that guides subsequent policies and legislation. It also would impose similar duties on other public bodies. While Ministers would be required to 'have regard' to international law including the Right to Food, whether the **Right to Food** is incorporated into the bill is currently under debate. Human rights legislation is devolved to the Scottish Parliament under the Scotland Act 1998. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child – which includes specific provisions on the right to food - will be incorporated into Scottish law during the current Parliamentary session. Scottish Government is committed to new Human Rights legislation in the first two years of the next Parliamentary session. This would include full incorporation of the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights – including the right to food.

Summary

Scotland presents a mix of ambitious environmental goals and powerful land reform laws combined with weak policy follow-ups. After the 2016 Scottish Parliamentary election the previous food portfolio (which included environment, climate change and land reform) was split, in part to respond to the likely impact of Brexit on Scotland's food, fishing and agriculture sector. Food policy has been the primary responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary

²⁴⁶ Scottish Government. (2019). "[Agricultural Land Use in Scotland](#)." [Online]. Accessed: 6 Nov 2019.

²⁴⁷ Scottish Budget 2020-2021 statement. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/budget-statement-2020-21/>

for Rural Economy and Tourism. While food governance is inevitably split across Government departments, this shift has slowed previous efforts on food policy coherence.

The 2018 *Climate Change Plan* set targets to reduce agricultural emissions by 9% and increase woodland cover from 18% to 21% by 2032. Good progress has been made on reforestation (primarily from public lands). Agroforestry and environmental farming practices are promoted through the *Scottish Rural Development Programme* as part of the CAP but with no specific goals and no assessments conducted on the success of funding schemes (studies on the impact of EU agri-environment schemes shows mixed results).^{248,249}

These developments are taking place alongside a dramatic rethinking of Scotland's approach to land ownership and management. Scotland's 2003 Right to Buy law gives communities the pre-emptive right to buy land for sustainable development. Based on a "human rights approach to land rights and responsibilities,"²⁵⁰ Scotland aims to make 1 million acres of land community-owned by the end of 2020. This law legalises the philosophy that 1) private ownership is not necessarily the best or only way to manage land and 2) landowners do not maintain exclusive say over how they manage their land.

The Right to Buy has been in place for tenant farmers since 1991 and was extended to crofters in 2003. But expectations are changing with a concerted effort underway by the newly-created Scottish Land Commission to create "robust codes of practice" for how landowners manage land sustainably.²⁵¹ While no new regulations or targets have been set, the focus on community involvement and owner responsibility in the *Scottish Land Rights and Responsibilities Statement* (2017) is notably progressive.

But huge health and social inequalities remain in Scotland. Scotland has the highest overweight/obesity rates of any OECD nation – 65%²⁵² - and has struggled to reverse the trend despite policies going back to 1996. In addition, instances of food insecurity have increased eleven-fold in five years.²⁵³ *A Healthier Future* (2018) has led to consultations on regulating food marketing and promotions and there is the potential for the Good Food National Bill to address these issues but it remains to be seen if the Right to Food will be included.

²⁴⁸ Batáry, P., Dicks, L., Kleijn, D., Sutherland, W. (2015). The role of agri-environment schemes in conservation and environmental management. *Conservation Biology*. 29(4): 1006-1016.

²⁴⁹ Riley, M., Sangster, H., Smith, H., Chiverell, R., Boyle, J. (2018). Will farmers work together for conservation? The potential limits of farmers' cooperation in agri-environment measures. *Land Use Policy*. 70: 635-646.

²⁵⁰ Environment and Forestry Directorate. (2017). [Scottish land rights and responsibilities statement](#). Edinburgh: The Scottish Government.

²⁵¹ Constitution and Cabinet Directorate. (2017). [A nation with ambition: The Government's Programme for Scotland 2017-2018](#). Edinburgh: The Scottish Government.

²⁵² Food Standards Scotland. (2018). [The Scottish Diet: It needs to change](#). Edinburgh: The Scottish Government.

²⁵³ Scottish Human Rights Commission. (2019). [Response to Scottish Government Consultation on Good Food Nation Proposals](#). Edinburgh.

Becoming a Good Food Nation (2014) and the Good Food Nation Bill

Becoming a Good Food Nation sets a strategic vision for Scotland's food system. Building on *Recipe for Success* (2009),²⁵⁴ it acknowledges that, while Scotland's food and drink industry has seen remarkable growth, other areas like health, food security and food waste remain quite poor. A number of funding projects and programmes have emerged out of the vision set in *Becoming a Good Food Nation* like the Fair Food Fund and *A Healthier Future*.²⁵⁵

The Good Food Nation Bill is to be presented to Parliament in the coming year and is intended to serve as a framework legislation term from which further targeted legislation would then follow and to focus the direction of food policy over the long-term. It would require a food policy to be written every five years but sets no quantitative goals and would make no new regulatory changes or requirements.²⁵⁶ Two notable findings from the recent public consultation on the bill are 1) a majority of respondent want the bill to establish a Food Commission, similar to the recently-created Scottish Land Commission and 2) around one third of respondents advocate for the right to food to be included in the legislation.²⁵⁷ In September 2019, a petition was submitted to Parliament for its inclusion,²⁵⁸ but it remains to be seen if and how it will be addressed.

Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014, Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015 and Procurement (Scotland) Regulations 2016

This suite of reforms requires public bodies to write procurement strategies and annual report, imposes a sustainable procurement duty with special attention given to community benefits and prioritizes consideration for SMEs in awarding contracting. It also requires public bodies to 'have regard' to the highest standards of animal welfare. Statutory guidance was published in 2016 which provides details and support tools on how contracts should be awarded.²⁵⁹

The sustainability duty requires consideration of the social, environmental and economic impact of public contracts and states that public procurement can deliver co-benefits with the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 and the Equality Act 2010. However, no baseline assessments were conducted on existing contracts' social and environmental impacts and no new targets were set on how public procurement will deliver on public health, inequality or climate change. This has left "sustainability" open to interpretation. For example, the

²⁵⁴ The Scottish Government. (2009). [Recipes for Success – Scotland's National Food and Drink Policy](#). Edinburgh.

²⁵⁵ The Scottish Government. (2018). [Good Food Nation Programme of Measures](#). Edinburgh.

²⁵⁶ The Scottish Government. (2018). [Consultation on Good Food Nation Proposals for Legislation](#). Edinburgh.

²⁵⁷ The Scottish Government. (2019). [Good Food Nation proposals for legislation: analysis of consultation responses](#). Edinburgh.

²⁵⁸ The Scottish Parliament. (2019). "[PE01733: Human right to adequate food](#)." [Online]. Accessed: 6 Nov 2019.

²⁵⁹ The Scottish Government. (2016). [Guidance under the Procurement Reform \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#). Edinburgh.

2019 NHS Scotland procurement report names the free supply of ice cream to children and the elderly as a community benefit.²⁶⁰ A national report on procurement strategies²⁶¹ measures community benefit economically through training, work placements, job creation, etc.

Food insecurity policies

Most social security powers are still reserved to the UK Government. However, since the 2016 Scotland Act, Social Security Scotland now has responsibility for a number of benefits and Scottish Government has used its powers to top up certain benefits such as the Carers Allowance and to mitigate the impact of other UK benefit changes.

In relation to food, the most significant developments are Best Start Food, which replaces Healthy Start vouchers. This has increased the value of the vouchers and provides people with a card rather than paper vouchers. From its introduction in August 2019 to March 2020, over 50,000 people successfully applied for Best Start Foods, and around £3 million was issued in funds. A new Child Payment of £10 per week per child living in a low income household will be introduced for children under 6 by the end of 2020.

In 2016, an Independent Working Group on Food Poverty published a report with a number of recommendations on how to tackle food poverty including a robust system of measurement, community food plans by local governments and initiatives that take a right-based approach.²⁶² From 2017, Scottish Government added questions from the Food Insecurity Experience Scale to the Scottish Health Survey to start measuring food insecurity. Household food insecurity is included as an indicator in the National Performance Framework <https://nationalperformance.gov.scot/food-insecurity>. The Scottish Welfare Fund which is administered by local authorities provides cash assistance to people in need. In the 2018-19 financial year, about £10 million was provided in crisis grants, and of this about 60% was used to buy food. As part of the Community Fund announced in response to COVID-19, the Scottish Welfare Fund budget was increased by £45m.

Between 2016 and 2018 Scotland had a Fair Food Transformation Fund a £3.5 million fund devoted to community organisations that tackle the root cause of food insecurity. Two types of projects were supported – existing food justice projects and traditional food banks that wanted to transition to a more justice- rather than crisis-based approach. Projects provided services beyond food aid like financial and job counselling. A review was conducted in 2019 of the fund which reported increased movement towards a holistic approach by fund recipients. However, it is difficult to quantitatively assess how the fund contributed to

²⁶⁰ NHS Scotland. (2019). *National Procurement Annual Report: April 2018 – March 2019*. Edinburgh.

²⁶¹ The Scottish Government. (2019). *Annual report on procurement activity in Scotland*. Edinburgh.

²⁶² Local Government and Community Directorate. (2016). *Dignity: Report of the Independent Working Group on Food Poverty*. Edinburgh: The Scottish Government.

decreasing food poverty because data collection on individuals who use these services is problematic. Increasing rates of food poverty in Scotland indicate the fund did little to reverse the trend, but it is still noteworthy for the emphasis from the government on making a concerted effort towards a progressive approach on food insecurity. This fund has now been rolled into the Investing in Communities Fund.

Several local authorities including Glasgow have extended free school meal eligibility beyond Primary 1-3, with some intending to extend this provision to all primary school pupils. While the Scottish Government has moved away from supporting food banks and has a policy to support cash-first responses, food bank use remains high in Scotland.

Land Use Policies

Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003, Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, and Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016

The original 2003 land reform act established what is known as the Community Right to Buy to encourage the community ownership and sustainable development of rural land. It allows communities to register an interest in land and gives it the pre-emptive right to buy it when the landowner decides to sell if it can show how they will benefit the land environmentally, socially and/or economically.

In 2015, the Community Right to Buy was expanded in the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act which introduced new powers to Scottish Ministers to compel owners of neglected or environmentally harmful land to sell their land to an interested community as well as requiring local authorities to prepare food growing strategies.²⁶³ The 2016 Land Reform (Scotland) Act, along with establishing a Scottish Land Commission, allows Scottish Ministers the power to force the sale of private land to a community bodies if it will advance sustainable development even if the owner is unwilling to sell. The Community Right to Buy Abandoned, Neglected or Detrimental Land (Part 3A of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003) was brought into force in June 2018.

The wider Community Right to Buy Land for Sustainable Development (Part 5 of the 2016 Act) has not yet been commenced as it requires secondary legislation. A Business Regulatory Impact Assessment in February 2020 which reviewed the costs of introducing the secondary legislation concludes that the benefits justify the costs and notes "The implementation of Part 5 is a key objective of Scottish Ministers and the option of doing nothing is not appropriate here."

²⁶³ Local Government and Communities Directorate. (2018). [Allotments: duty to prepare a food growing strategy – guidance for local authorities](#). Edinburgh: The Scottish Government.

Assessment reports have shown that, despite some organisational challenges, the amount of community-owned land has grown considerably and led to significant increases in economic output, not to mention community energy and revitalisation.²⁶⁴

Scottish Land Rights and Responsibilities Statement (2017)

Required by the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016, the *Scottish Land Rights and Responsibilities Statement* guides the agenda of the Scottish Land Commission (SLC). Further solidifying the shift in focus on land as a public good, it establishes the expectation that landowners will manage their land in a way that meets “high standards of land ownership, management and use.” The statement repeatedly expresses that land owners have a responsibility to manage their land in a sustainable way. These expectations for landowners will be further developing in forthcoming protocols written by the SLC. The first one, entitled “Community Engagement in Decisions Relating to Land,” has already been published.²⁶⁵

The statement also states a need to diversify access and ownership to land, especially for those who want to enter the agricultural industry. With high land prices and limited access for new entrants,²⁶⁶ there are concerted efforts underway to provide grants and public lands transfers to communities and individuals as well as expanding farming tenants’ and communities’ Rights to Buy.

Environmental Policies

Environment is a devolved competence of the Scottish Government, and Scotland is recognised for its progressive climate change policies and actions (although to date, food and agriculture have lagged behind other sectors). The Scottish Government wants to retain dynamic alignment with the EU on environmental regulation and to establish its own environmental governance mechanisms. The new ‘Continuity Bill’ being introduced into Parliament is designed to enable Scottish law to keep pace with EU law in devolved areas and to establish a new environmental governance body.

Scotland has two climate changes acts – one from 2009 and another in 2019. The Climate Change (Emissions Reductions Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019 includes specific measures on reducing greenhouse gas emissions from farming, notably through a national nitrogen balance sheet, whole farm plans and regional land use partnerships. The updated climate plan due at the end of 2020 is likely to see a tougher target for reducing emissions from agriculture. The current climate plan based on the original 2009 Climate Change (Scotland)

²⁶⁴ McMorran, R., Lawrence, A., Glass, J., Hollingdale, J., McKee, A., Campbell, D., Combe, M. (2018). [Review of the effectiveness of current community ownership mechanisms and of options for supporting the expansion of community ownership in Scotland](#). Scottish Land Commission, Commissioned Report.

²⁶⁵ Scottish Land Commission. (2019). [Community Engagement in Decisions Relating to Land](#). Edinburgh: The Scottish Government.

²⁶⁶ Scottish Farm Land Trust. (2017). [Wanted: Land for New Farmers](#).

Act has a target to reduce agricultural emissions by 9% and increase woodland cover to from 18% to 21% by 2032.²⁶⁷

The strategy for achieving the reduction in agricultural emissions is a set of incentives and services to help farmers transition to environmental practices funded primarily through the Scottish Rural Development Programme, Pillar 2 of the EU CAP. In addition to the Agri-Environment Climate Scheme (€363 million, 23% of funds), the SRDP also funds a Beef Efficiency Scheme (€30 million) aimed at reducing emissions from beef production. On top of promoting these programmes, the draft Climate Change Plan (RPP3) aims to increase the uptake of carbon audits and pH tests on farms through networks like Farming for a Better Climate.

Meeting reforestation goals relies on the Forestry Grant Scheme (€332 million, 21% of funds) of the SRDP. The government provides £2,500 p/ hectare of funding for replanting woodlands which is matched by the EU²⁶⁸ and provides other educational programmes on how farmers can integrate farming and woodland creation.²⁶⁹ While agroforestry was included as an option in the SRDP, uptake was minimal. There are no reports available on the impact of funds from the SRDP towards reducing agricultural emissions. A 2019 climate adaptation assessment²⁷⁰ expressed high concern over the lack of progress on land use, soil and agriculture, saying that “a number of key targets for...sustainable land management are not on track.”

Health Policies

A Healthier Future – Action and Ambitions on Diet, Activity and Healthy Weight (2018)

This is the fifth in a string of health policies going back to 1996, but overweight rates have stayed stubbornly between 60%-70% over the past ten years.²⁷¹ A comparison of these policies shows an evolution from a passive and educational stance in 2004 to a pro-active and regulatory approach in 2018.

For example, *Healthy Eating, Active Living* in 2004 focused primarily on a combination of consumer education and catering incentives programmes. *Preventing Overweight and Obesity in Scotland* (2010) went a bit further by supporting the procurement of healthier foods in public catering outlets and working with the Scottish Retailers Forum to move

²⁶⁷ The Scottish Government. (2019). [Climate Change Plan: The Third Report on Proposals and Policies, 2018-2032](#). Edinburgh.

²⁶⁸ Confor. (2017). “[All components in place for forestry success in Scotland](#).” [Online]. Accessed: 7 Nov 2019.

²⁶⁹ Scottish Forestry. (2019). [Farm Woodlands](#). [Online]. Accessed: 6 Nov 2019.

²⁷⁰ Committee on Climate Change. (2019). [Final Assessment: The first Scottish Climate Change Adaptation Programme](#).

²⁷¹ Health and Social Care. (2019). “[Diet and healthy weight statistics published](#).” Edinburgh: The Scottish Government.

confectionary away from tills. It insisted that “there need be no obstacle to marketing high-calorie meals, but consumers need to be informed.”²⁷²

A Healthier Future (2018) kick-started the process of exploring new regulations intended to change the food ecosystem. A consultation is currently underway on ending the sale of energy drinks to young people.²⁷³ A bill on restricting the promotion and marketing of foods high in fat, sugar and salt was scheduled to be introduced in next year’s legislative programme.²⁷⁴ The national government is also working with local governments to restrict advertisements on public transport and is urging the UK to ban pre-9pm advertising and ban the use of characters and branding in adverts.

The only explicit measure in *A Healthier Future* is to cut the childhood obesity rate in half by 2030. In 2015, free school meals were made available to all Primary 1-3 children and uptake has been growing. After a 2017 review of school nutrition guidelines,²⁷⁵ a maximum limit is expected to be set on consumption of red processed meat as well as reducing sugar and increasing fruit and veg. Research was also conducted to answer the question “How can the planning system best support the creation of an improved food environment in Scotland?” in order to explore limitations on unhealthy food retailers near schools.²⁷⁶

4. Food security policies in three middle-income countries

While food security has been treated in parallel to other dimensions of the food system in this report, it is also an issue that sits above the others, particularly for developing countries for whom food security has been the driving factor behind the development of food policy. Since food insecurity policies implicitly include economic, health, environmental and societal aspects, they offer insight into how governments attempt to solve a systemic problem through a single policy.²⁷⁷

Brazil: National Policy for Food and Nutritional Security (2006):²⁷⁸ Brazil has seen remarkable improvements in hunger and malnutrition as a result of their *National Policy* and is a unique example of an inter-sectoral approach that works across ministries and civil groups. Efforts to improve food and nutrition security have a deeply rooted history in civil

²⁷² The Scottish Government. (2010). [Preventing Overweight and Obesity in Scotland: A Route Map Towards Healthy Weight](#). Edinburgh.

²⁷³ Population and Health Directorate. (2019). [Ending the sale of energy drinks to children and young people: consultation](#). Edinburgh: The Scottish Government.

²⁷⁴ The Scottish Government. (2019). [Protecting Scotland's Future: the Government's Programme for Scotland, 2019-2020](#). Edinburgh.

²⁷⁵ Learning Directorate. (2018). [Food and drink in schools: nutrition requirements review](#). Edinburgh: The Scottish Government.

²⁷⁶ Local Government and Community Directorate. (2018). [Relationship between food environment and planning system: research summary](#). Edinburgh: The Scottish Government.

²⁷⁷ Also see Centre for Food Policy. How to develop and deliver a national food policy: a global perspective. Report of the City Food Symposium 2019. London, Centre for Food Policy, 2020. https://www.city.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/537815/CFS2019-report_v.2.pdf

²⁷⁸ Santarelli, M., Vieira, L.M., Constantine, J. (2018). [Learning from Brazil's Food and Nutrition Security Policies](#). Institute of Development Studies & The Food Foundation.

action. The National Council for Food Security is comprised of both civil society and government and the integration of the right to food into Brazil's constitution was led by a powerful civil-society-led campaign. Initiatives are distributed across various ministries and many require ongoing collaboration between different offices. In 2006, the National Food and Nutrition Security System was established in order to manage the delivery of decentralised policies surrounding the right to food.

The *National Policy* did not create new initiatives but brought together existing policies and actions into a cohesive framework. It is noteworthy that attention is not only paid to food access, but food *quality*. The addition of “nutrition” is an acknowledgement that simply increasing production and calorie intake will not solve the problem. Thus the *National Policy* addresses all aspects of the food system – composition, labelling, promotion, prices, provision, retail and trade.

India: National Food Security Act (2013):²⁷⁹ India takes a singular rather than integrated approach. The National Food Security Act ensures access to highly subsidised cereals through the Targeted Public Distribution Centre along with a free meal for all children between 6 months and 14 years. Other policies are in place that support increased agricultural production and economic development. The National Food Security Act is overseen by the Department of Food & Public Distribution but is implemented by individual states. States are responsible for identifying recipients while the purchase and delivery of cereals is handled by the central government. While there was early trouble in coordinating all of these tasks, the National Food Security Act has now been implemented and is still running,²⁸⁰ although significant changes have been recommended if the policy is to move forward.²⁸¹

South Africa: National Policy on Food and Nutrition Security (2013):²⁸² South Africa's *National Policy* builds on their original 2002 Integrated Food Security Strategy which laid the foundation for an integrated approach to solving food insecurity. Developed jointly between the Department of Social Development and Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, it calls for “well-managed inter-sectoral co-ordination and the genuine integration of existing policies.” It focuses on developing food assistance networks, nutrition education, local economic development, market participation for emerging producers and climate risk management. A National Food and Nutrition Advisory Committee is planned that will comprise a diverse range of representatives across agriculture, the environment,

²⁷⁹ Government of India. (2013). [The National Food Security Act, 2013](#). The Gazette of India: Extraordinary.

²⁸⁰ Puri, R. (2017). [India's National Food Security Act \(NFSA\): Early Experiences](#). *Lansa Working Paper Series*. 2017:4.

²⁸¹ Chakrobory, Sayan. (2018). India 2025: the public distribution system and National Food Security Act 2013. *Development in Practice*. 29:2, 230-249.

²⁸² Department of Social Development & Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. (2013). [National Policy on Food and Nutrition Security](#).

consumer bodies and food security. An implementation plan was drafted²⁸³ and a report and updated plan shows progress on implementation²⁸⁴. However, as is often the case with food security policies, South Africa's food policy landscape is splitting around divergent policy frames and emerging coalitions with tensions between increasing economic growth, land reform and ensuring equitable food access.²⁸⁵

²⁸³ Health-e News. (2015). "[Policy: Food and Nutrition Security for the Republic of South Africa.](#)" *Health-E News*. [Online] Accessed: 15 Oct 2019

²⁸⁴ Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development. (2017). "[National Food and Nutrition Security Policy Implementation Plan: Operation Phakisa for Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Reform: Progress Report.](#)" *Parliamentary Monitoring Group*. [Online]. Accessed: 15 Oct 2019.

²⁸⁵ Thow, A.M., Greenberg, S., Hara, M., Friel, S., duToit, A. Sanders, D. (2018). [Improving policy coherence for food security in South Africa: a qualitative policy analysis.](#) *Food Security*. 10:1105-1130.