

Food Bill Joint Statement 2026

A Food Strategy White Paper would be a once-in-a-generation opportunity for the UK Government to set out a single visionary plan to transform England's food system for our health, the economy, and the planet. Recent global shocks and ongoing extreme climatic events, concomitant food price inflation and the impact this is having on British farmers and the wider population have shown how important a coordinated approach to the food system is.

It is only by taking an integrated, cross-government approach, building on its policy paper published in July 2025, that the Government can lead the food system reform necessary to achieve food security, its net zero and nature positive commitments, tackle obesity and reduce inequalities. The central role which good food plays in supporting health must be harnessed in order to secure economic productivity and growth.

To do this, a White Paper must commit first and foremost to new primary legislation, demonstrating the Government's ambition in this space by putting in place the food system impact targets and long-term duties that will support the cross-government action that is needed to transform the food system for present and future generations. Through smart investment, aligned trade policy, standards and the right targets and laws in food, the Government can unlock innovation, opportunities for growth and build resilient, sustainable supply chains and progressive partnerships with the best producers.

A White Paper, building directly on Labour's policy commitments in its first year of office, would open the path to primary legislation. If realised, this could secure the durable policy bedrock needed for long-term food system transformation. A term of government can deliver important wins; but only legislation can lock in change and long-term stability, shielding progress from political cycles. With food system strategies and legislation underway in all the devolved nations, this is an excellent opportunity to consider how legislation introduced in Westminster could be of benefit to all.

We are calling on the Government to deliver on this opportunity by committing to new primary legislation and championing transformational food system change.

Signed by:

<i>Marks and Spencer</i>	<i>Sustain: the alliance for food and farming</i>	<i>The Food Foundation</i>
<i>The Co-operative Group</i>	<i>Green Alliance</i>	<i>Friends of the Earth</i>
<i>Sodexo</i>	<i>WWF-UK</i>	<i>RSPCA</i>
<i>Bidfood</i>	<i>CPRE, Campaign to Protect Rural England</i>	<i>Soil Association</i>
<i>Danone</i>	<i>The University of Reading</i>	<i>British Medical Association</i>
<i>Elior</i>	<i>British Dental Association</i>	<i>Wildlife & Countryside Link</i>
<i>The Compleat Food Group</i>	<i>Barnardo's</i>	<i>UK Faculty of Public Health</i>
<i>Rathbones Group</i>	<i>Diabetes UK</i>	<i>British Heart Foundation</i>
<i>Regenerate Asset Management</i>	<i>Food Ethics Council</i>	<i>Centre for Food Policy, City St George's, University of London</i>
<i>The First Thirty (TFT) Ventures</i>	<i>Oral Health Foundation</i>	<i>Association of Directors of Public Health</i>
<i>CCLA Investment Management</i>	<i>British Dietetic Association</i>	<i>World Cancer Research Fund</i>
<i>Riverford Organic Farmers</i>	<i>Food Matters</i>	<i>ShareAction</i>
<i>Obesity Health Alliance</i>	<i>Cucumber and Pepper Growers' Association</i>	<i>Pasture for Life</i>
<i>UK Fruit and Vegetable Coalition</i>	<i>Alexandra Rose Charity</i>	<i>Action on Salt & Sugar</i>
<i>Foodrise</i>	<i>Nature Friendly Farming Network</i>	<i>British Apples and Pears</i>
<i>Plantlife</i>	<i>Trade Justice Movement</i>	<i>AFN Network+</i>
<i>Growing Communities</i>	<i>Magic Breakfast</i>	<i>ZG Nutrition</i>
<i>The Country Trust</i>	<i>Landworkers' Alliance</i>	<i>British Tomato Growers Association</i>
<i>Eating Better</i>	<i>Women's Environmental Network</i>	<i>Compassion in World Farming</i>
<i>The Vegan Society</i>	<i>School Food Matters</i>	<i>Beyond GM</i>
<i>Bite Back</i>	<i>Co-operatives Wales</i>	<i>Shared Assets CIC</i>

<i>Nourish Scotland</i>	<i>The Community Supported Agriculture Network UK</i>	<i>PAN UK</i>
<i>Campaign for National Parks</i>	<i>Regather</i>	<i>Hubbub</i>
<i>Think Through Nutrition</i>	<i>Madre Brava</i>	<i>The Gaia Foundation</i>
<i>The Orchard Project</i>	<i>Vegetarian Society</i>	<i>Garden Organic</i>
<i>Permaculture Association (Britain)</i>	<i>Bremner & Co</i>	<i>Pesticide Action Network UK</i>
<i>The Scottish Pantry Network</i>	<i>The School of Artisan Food</i>	<i>Organic Growers Alliance</i>
<i>Independent Food Aid Network</i>	<i>Slow Food in the UK</i>	<i>Chefs in Schools</i>
<i>Stockfree Farming</i>	<i>Health Equalities Group</i>	<i>Better Food Traders</i>
<i>Open Food Network</i>	<i>Health Education Trust</i>	<i>People Need Nature</i>
<i>FOUR PAWS UK</i>	<i>GM Freeze</i>	<i>Biodynamic Agricultural College</i>
<i>Humane World for Animals</i>	<i>Food Cycle</i>	<i>Green Christian</i>
Mike Rayner, Professor of Population Health, University of Oxford	Maria Bryant, Professor of Public Health Nutrition, University of York	Tim Cooper, Emeritus Professor of Sustainable Design and Consumption, Nottingham Trent University
Tim Lang, Professor Emeritus of Food Policy, City St George's University	Pete Smith, Professor of Soils and Global Change, University of Aberdeen	Bob Doherty, Professor and Principal Investigator of FixOurFood at the University of York
Peter Jackson, Emeritus Professor, University of Sheffield	Professor Tom MacMillan	Peter Ball, Professor of Operations Management, University of York
Kate Pickett OBE, Professor of Epidemiology, University of York	Martin White, Professor of Population Health Research, University of Cambridge	Kevin Morgan, Professor of Governance & Development, Cardiff University

Dr Kerry Ann Brown, University of Exeter	Professor Tim Benton, University of Leeds	Chris Hilson, Professor of Law, University of Reading
Rosemary Green, Professor of Environment, Food and Health, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine	Professor Greta Defeyter, Dean of Social Mobility Policy Engagement, Northumbria University	Professor Lisa Methven, Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research (Agriculture, Food and Health), University of Reading
Carol Wagstaff, Professor of Crop Quality for Health, University of Reading	Dr John Ingram, Senior Researcher, Food System Transformation Research Group, University of Oxford	Amandine Garde, Professor and Director of the Law & NCD Research Unit, University of Liverpool
Isabel Fletcher, Senior Research Fellow in Food Policy & Systems Thinking, University of Edinburgh Business School	Dr Kawther Hashem, Senior Lecturer in Public Health Nutrition, Queen Mary University of London	Katherine Denby, Professor of Sustainable Crop Production, University of York
Amelia Lake, Professor of Public Health Nutrition, Teesside University	Dr Mark Borthwick	

