

Promotion of British food and drink

I recently enquired about what the Government is doing to promote British food and drink and I received the enclosed response:

Question:

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to help promote UK food at home and abroad. (2852)

Tabled on: 18 May 2021

Answer:

Victoria Prentis:

The Government is stepping up delivery of its manifesto commitment to build demand and promote British food and drink both home and abroad.

We are working with the sector to raise domestic and international awareness of the UK's growing reputation for high-quality food and drink produced to high standards of food safety, animal welfare and sustainability. This will provide a catalyst for growth for all regions of the UK and increase global recognition of the UK as an innovative food nation.

We are supporting the UK's farmers and growers to increase domestic production through the Agriculture Act 2020, which offers financial assistance for producers who are starting to grow fruit and vegetables or are seeking to improve their productivity.

By showcasing the UK's excellent food and drink, we will encourage consumers to explore more of our local and regional products, including iconic geographical indications (GIs), such as Welsh lamb and Cornish clotted cream.

We are refreshing public sector food procurement to place a greater emphasis on local, seasonal and sustainable produce. This will support local business and can play a key role in promoting healthy diets and reducing environmental impacts of food supply. A consultation on strengthening the Government Buying Standards for Food and Catering Services (GBSF) will be launched later this year.

We have supported the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB), Seafish and other organisations as they develop consumer-facing marketing campaigns for the meat, dairy and seafood sectors. One example was our support for a campaign by VegPower that encouraged the public to buy local, seasonal vegetables. Additionally, we supported the Seafish 'Love Seafood' campaign to raise consumer awareness of fresh seafood caught in UK waters and connecting communities with local producers.

To support this range of domestic promotion initiatives we are also providing food and drink companies with advice and tools to build export capability. The Department for International Trade (DIT) recently launched their Open Doors campaign with a focus on the food and drink sector. This provides companies with access to online tutorials, webinars, mentoring and specialist

advice to help them capitalise on export opportunities across the world.

Defra works in tandem with the Department for International Trade to deliver the Food is GREAT campaign, which helps businesses to succeed in overseas markets by building global recognition of UK excellence in food and drink. Food is GREAT is a key element of the joint Defra and DIT agri-food 'bounce back' package of trade support and promotion measures announced last June to help support businesses that have been impacted by coronavirus.

The Food is GREAT campaign is focused on priority markets, including the USA, China, Japan and the UAE. Activity is being planned across all priority markets for the coming year, where we will work with UK businesses and UK overseas posts to promote the best of UK food and drink on the international stage.