

# Shoppers recognise the quality of Welsh produce and prefer to buy Welsh – research reveals

Welsh shoppers recognise the quality of food and drink from Wales and would prefer to buy Welsh if possible, according to new research which will be showcased at the TasteWales event later this month.

Headline figures from an initial survey investigating the “Value of Welshness” revealed:

- 85% of Welsh shoppers think food and drink from Wales is Great Quality and 80% think it is Great Tasting
- Eight out of ten shoppers would always buy Welsh if the price was right and 44% would pay more
- Shoppers outside Wales believe Wales is known for good quality food and drink and would like to support the sector; and
- 29% of shoppers outside Wales would like to see more Welsh food and drink produce in their shops

Responding to the new figures, the Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs Minister, Lesley Griffiths, said as we prepare to leave the European Union we must use every opportunity to showcase our quality food and drink produce at home and on a global scale.

On 21st and 22nd March, over 100 Welsh food and drink producers will meet over 150 buyers – a third of whom are international – at the BlasCymru/ TasteWales event at the Celtic Manor in Newport. In 2017, the last TasteWales event generated £16 million of new contracts for Welsh food and drink businesses.

The Minister said:

“Our food and drink industry is world renowned and a real Welsh success story. We know people increasingly want to find out more about where their food is from and want to buy Welsh as seen in the figures published today.

“In only 29 days’ time, we face the prospect of a disorderly exit from the European Union. With the current economic uncertainty created by the turmoil in Westminster it is more important than ever to build on the sector’s success and seize every opportunity available to showcase our quality Welsh food and drink at home and on a global stage.

“Already this year, we have been working with the industry to promote Welsh food and drink abroad at Gulfood in Dubai – the world’s largest annual food trade fair. At the end of the month, the Celtic Manor will once again play host to our biannual TasteWales. Events such as these have helped support the spectacular growth in the sector and are invaluable especially at this challenging time.

“Working with the sector, we must promote the Welsh brand as much as possible and do all we can to ensure our food and drink producers are able to thrive post-Brexit.”

In celebration of St David’s Day, commuters at London Paddington have this week been greeted by a Welsh choir and had the opportunity to sample quality Welsh food and drink. On the day itself, Welsh food and drink will also be showcased at London Borough Market and at Manchester Piccadilly station, where the Minister will meet with producers promoting their products to commuters.

The Minister added:

“It has become something of a tradition showcasing the very best of Welsh food and drink at London Paddington station on St David’s Day. This year commuters at Manchester Piccadilly will also be able to join the celebrations and sample a range of award winning products from Welsh Whisky, Black Bomber cheese, Bara Brith – and even take away some edible chocolate postcards. I look forward to visiting today and speaking to some of the producers to hear how events such as this are helping their businesses grow.”

One of the producers showcasing their products at both London Paddington and at this year’s Taste Wales event is Aberfalls Distillery.

James Wright, MD at Aber Falls Whisky Distillery:

“We’re delighted to be representing our home country in London this week, in celebration of St David’s Day. There is a thriving new wave of Welsh fare and this is a great opportunity for producers from the region to access a new audience and marketplace, which in turn may lead to even greater future possibilities for the sector.

“Furthermore, with Brexit approaching, we need to continue being ambitious for Wales, creating a strong and vibrant economy, long-term. With Wales’ reputation and provenance, we have a strong platform for further growth that will benefit everyone.”