



PLANTING
VALUE **IN THE**
FOOD SYSTEM

Part One: Our Vision



This report presents **our vision** for a vegan food system, how this intersects with other issues relating to health, environment, economy, and cultural values, and how we can get there.

plantingvalueinfood.org


One world. Many lives. Our choice.

Acknowledgements

These proposals have been shaped through a research process that includes over thirty interviews with individuals from the farming, land management, food production, health, policy and academic communities. We have heard from 'livestock' farmers, pea growers, mixed farmers and organic experts, as well as nature-friendly farming authorities. We spoke to many policy experts, most of whom advocate for a 'less and better' framework for food policy. We have listened, learnt and agreed with much of what was shared. This investigation has been supported by a thorough review of the existing literature, including more than 50 reports on the state of the UK food environment.

Rather than add to a polarized debate – an unfair and unhelpful 'vegans vs. farmers' narrative found in some quarters of the media – our goal was, literally and metaphorically, to sit at the table with others to find common ground. It is on this ground that we can work together to bring about a resilient and fairer food system. In this we feel we have been successful and are grateful to those who sat at that table with us. We thank them for their time and expertise. They have helped us formulate what we believe is the urgent yet pragmatic agenda we need to build a fair and sustainable food system.

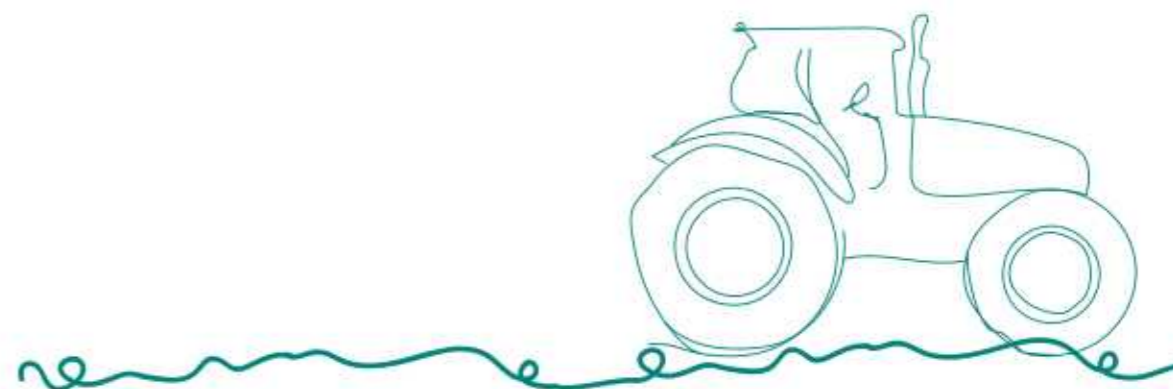
For The Vegan Society, that fairer food system could only ever be a fully ethical plant-based system. We make it clear in our proposals and supporting research where we agree with those we heard from, and where our policies go further. We are now more certain than ever that a plant-based food system is not only the fairest option, but also the most likely to stand up to the climate, ecological, health and social challenges we face. We urge others to work with us to establish a set of multi-criteria principles to help policymakers legislate or fairness for farmers, to recognise the intrinsic value of food in and of itself, and to follow our lead in pioneering the transition to a plant-based food system, by implementing the legislative proposals presented in this paper.

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Foreword



Calling for policy change to support a vegan future can be a difficult and lonely task. For some years The Vegan Society has engaged with policy makers and politicians, making the case for plant-based food and farming for environmental, ethical and public health reasons. For some years our ideas have been side-lined as extreme, niche or unnecessary. It has been difficult for many to see how our food system could adapt to accommodate a vegan philosophy, or how we can respect the rights and freedoms of animals alongside other vital objectives.

We realised we needed to present a holistic approach which covers off the multiple needs of our food system. We must create a system that is socially and economically just, respects climate and ecological boundaries, supports healthy and nutritious diets and gives food the value it deserves in our society. We're not calling for just any vegan food system, but a specific, fair and equitable food system and we needed to think through how to make it so. That's why this report was commissioned, to help to move vegan issues out of an insular space, and to continue The Vegan Society's role as leaders in providing solutions and policy to support transition to plant-based agriculture.

In an increasingly fractured and dislocated world, food is one thing that should bring us all together. We all need to eat. Instead, it has become a contentious issue, with implications for our climate change goals, freight systems, public institutions and the way we use land

here in the UK and abroad. Food provokes strong reactions, and often ends up dividing communities into competing factions – farmer against conservationist, landowner against housing provider, politician against grassroots activist. We are all ultimately on the same side. We all need to eat.

It has therefore never been more important to reach across 'traditional' boundaries, to find common ground with everyone who has a stake in making our food system work for the future. Sometimes the most difficult first step is to sit down at the table with people you don't agree with.

Thanks to Dr Lockwood for making that difficult first move, and for bringing a wide spectrum of food systems thinkers together to contribute to this report. For The Vegan Society, this promises to be a seminal publication which will guide our policy work for years to come.

Louise Davies
Chief Executive (interim)



Finding and securing a regular supply of food has, quite literally, been a matter of life and death throughout human history. That remains the case today, even though food itself is now a major cultural phenomenon, with endless coverage in the media and more books about it than can be counted.

Yet, we risk missing fundamental questions about food supply and sustainability. So, in this report for The Vegan Society, Dr Alex Lockwood – a colleague of mine at the University of Sunderland – lays out a compelling case for the action required now to ensure that we have a healthy, safe and more robust supply of food in the future. This is not just an argument advanced by those who support a plant-based food system. Rather, it demands attention from all of us.

The discussion contained in Part 2: The Research demonstrates that there is significant agreement on the part of many involved in food production, supply and distribution, even where there may be disagreement about the role played by a plant-based approach. Equally, for those unfamiliar with the case for freeing animals from the food system, there is much to ponder here.

We often talk about the interconnectedness of the world today, despite the pandemic. That is particularly true when it comes to food, and the report carefully articulates the costs and consequences of the approach that we take currently take. Helpfully, it also reminds us of the impact that our food choices have on the climate, as well as wider questions on how our economy works and the values that underpin it.

Unlike many policy papers, this report eloquently captures the perspective of those who work in the farming and food industries. Despite a tendency towards nostalgia when it comes to

'The Land', these are important voices to listen to, given that they are not always heard or taken seriously. As a former Whitehall policymaker, myself, I know how important such front-line views are in shaping thinking.

The report concludes with a series of interesting and provocative proposals. Most strikingly, there is a strong argument made for a more activist role on the part of government when it comes to food – a view shared by many people across all sections of society – as well as a focus on the long term. That is a helpful corrective when many decisions about food and farming tend to focus on the immediate requirements to satisfy demand.

The recommendations also highlight the need to give the policy debate around food matters a higher national profile, including an open debate about the desirability of moving to a plant-based system. Not everyone will necessarily support that direction of travel, but this report provides the basis for an intelligent discussion on the matter.

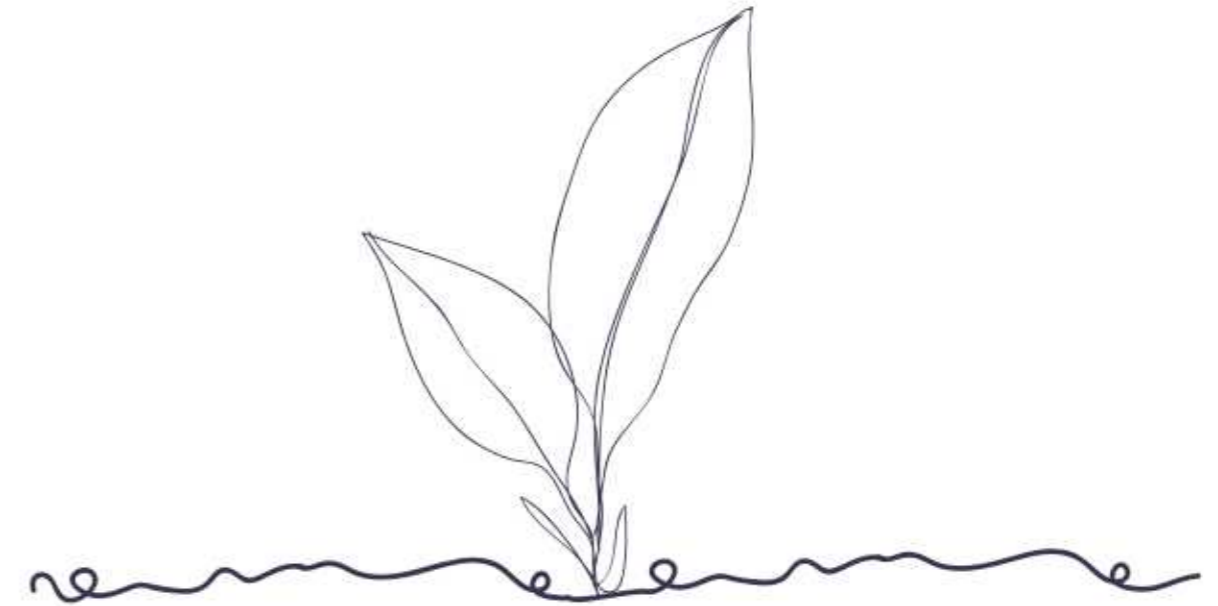
I commend The Vegan Society for its role in stimulating interesting and innovative thinking on such vital topics. I also pay tribute to Alex Lockwood who has exemplified the positive and constructive contribution that engaged academics – and universities – can play in public life, and in shaping society. So, I recommend this report warmly as an important contribution to a matter central to our health, wellbeing and, indeed, survival.

Sir David Bell KCB DL
Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive
University of Sunderland

Introduction

We are at a new stage for farming and one that needs a new agenda. The new Agriculture Act 2020 and the Environment Bill 2019-2021 introduced to Parliament, as well as the UK's departure from the EU, have begun this transition. Multiple organisations, individuals and farmers are rising to the challenges of food insecurity, climate change and the biodiversity crisis with renewed vigour.

With the momentum offered us by the National Food Strategy for England process, now is the time to confront the legacy of seven decades of food, agriculture and environmental policy. Generations of farmers in the UK have responded to government direction and did what they were asked to, and what market pressures demanded: which, since the 1940s, was to produce more food, cheaply. Farmers followed this productionist model, fitting on-farm processes to the ever-changing, complex picture of the food system. The last seven decades have seen supermarkets replace local retail, ultra-processed meals replace whole ingredients and cooking, and imports replace home-grown seasonal fruit and vegetables. Farming's use of chemical pesticides to boost crops has had deleterious impacts on the environment, but meant farmers met quotas and were 'feeding Britain' as requested. To blame farmers for doing what they were asked is a major barrier to progress; equally, to blame the policies of the past for not meeting the needs of today moves us no closer to the food system we need for tomorrow.



Yet, what we have today is an unhealthy, unsustainable and unfair UK food system, over-reliant on overseas producers – with poor health impacts spread unequally through society, a destructive environmental inheritance, a continued and unsustainable use of animals, and a system which does not fairly reward the majority of those who work within it.

Addressing these multiple issues through a new multi-criteria approach is critical. Such complex problems require systems thinking. Thinking holistically about the threats we face as a society is the only way to tackle these issues effectively. This is doubly important for The Vegan Society, our members, and all of those following vegan philosophy and lifestyle practices who want to see an end to animal use within the food system.

Finding ways to remove farmed animals from the food system will happen when the policies and mechanisms we propose lead to improved scenarios for *everyone* (human and non-human) when measured against the four criteria of health, economy and just work, environment, and social and cultural values. This is why it has been important for us to take a pragmatic look at all of these criteria. The legislation we propose

in this document seeks to address these multiple criteria together, demonstrating how fairness for non-human animals can be achieved alongside other objectives. These legislative proposals are supported by accompanying research, *Part Two: The Research* which reviews the literature and draws on interviews we conducted with stakeholders from across the food system to identify key themes and policy solutions across all four criteria.

The future we envision for the UK food system is one which respects all animals' rights to live free from exploitation, but also one which ensures fairness for workers, promotes good nutrition and health, remains within ecological limits, and is valued in our culture and society. This is ambitious, but we believe it is also achievable. Indeed, we are firm in our belief that the proposals articulated here are in fact best placed to tackle the collective climate, ecological, health and social challenges we face. Our proposals rest on the belief that we can act – and act quickly. They provide a vision of our imagined future – something to say yes to – and detail how this would come to pass in legislative terms.

Seeing Food Through a Multi-Criteria Lens

Food policy is a shared responsibility among the people of the UK including farmers and food producers, concerned organisations and the government. We understand food policy as “all the policies which influence the food system and what people eat”¹ and we view food policy as naturally complex – it needs to respond to the complexity of the food system. However, that does not mean policy has to be difficult to understand or complicated for stakeholders to interact with. Instead, it means that policy should not shy away from recognising the interrelations and varied contexts in which farming and food supply chains operate. And we do not shy away from them here.

Taking a systems-oriented approach to food policy is necessary for those policies to be coherent and implementable. A systems approach, in simple terms, means looking at how all parts of a system interact, and understanding that changes in one part will affect another. For something like our food system, this means taking into account not only its many layers – such as growing, production and consumption – but also how the food system interacts with other structures, such as the economy, healthcare and social institutions.



Any proposed legislation that affects the food system must also engage with frameworks of policy coherence, “examining how connected and coherent a government’s policies are” and “how policy-making processes operate, including the bodies which are involved and how well they work with one another.”

With all this in mind, our proposals to transform the food system are shaped in the context of **four key themes** inspired by a systems-led approach to policy development, food system challenges and on-farm transformations. These four themes are discussed in greater detail in the accompanying research document, *Part Two: The Research*. They are summarised here as:



A multi-criteria approach to food policy that embeds its principles within a coherent legislative environment

Most food policy practitioners advocate a multi-criteria, systems-led approach to food policy. It has been part of Defra thinking and planning for many years. “A multi-criteria food world is emerging where environmental, health, social and quality factors need to sit alongside price and not be subsumed by it,” writes Professor Tim Lang, co-founder of the City University Centre for Food Policy.

The legislative agenda we propose is based upon a sustainable food system model using such a multi-criteria approach, taking as our starting point four areas for assessment: **economics, health, social values and environment**, (also working towards improved **governance and quality** in the food system). This aligns our policy processes with those put forward in the interim *National Food Strategy for England*

report released in July 2020, the EAT-Lancet Commission’s *Great Food Transformation*, the RSA’s Food, Farming and Countryside Commission report *Our Common Ground* and the UN’s One Health agenda, as well as the UK Government’s analysis of the importance of joined-up policy across departments and policy-making bodies.

Our proposed legislation is also grounded within larger frameworks, such as the Planetary Boundaries limits, the Paris Climate Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals. This ensures the legislative agenda we propose is credible and actionable in respect to the UK’s global commitments. These frameworks are also outlined in the accompanying research publication in greater detail.



We need farmers and their voices to shape policy and practice

Food policy must support and improve the experiences of farmers and food producers in the UK. It is farmers and food producers who, situated in rural communities, following seasonal cycles and in touch with our soil systems, know what is working and what is not. Those occupied in land management and food production respect the complex nature of the systems involved in making food fair and sustainable; it is their voices that call for this to be matched by nuanced policies which do not try to oversimplify the system.

Farmers and farming are at the heart of both our proposals and the research that supports them. The experiences they shared with us shape our thinking. In particular, we found that:

- Farming will be more profitable, healthful and fulfilling for farmers when policy changes are implemented to help shift farming from the one-dimensional productionist system of the post-war period (to 'produce more food, cheaply') toward a multi-dimensional system where the **real value** of food and land stewardship is measured and rewarded.
- Farmers need to be listened to if on-farm improvements are to be made to last.
- Farmers want to be connected to the people who buy their food.

The food system we need is one in which farmers – those we spoke to and all those we did not – can run profitable enterprises, on resilient land, supported by a joined-up food environment across the UK. This food system will trade via secure, sustainable, sustainable and healthful relationships with the world.



A plant-based food system provides fairness for all

For The Vegan Society there can be no fairer food system unless it is fair for everyone, regardless of species. We do not overlook the rights and freedoms that all animals deserve. These rights and freedoms go beyond narrowly conceived ideas of animal welfare and cannot be respected in a food system which is built on their bodies, reproduction cycles and deaths.

Therefore, the food system we are working towards is plant-based. In addition to the criteria outlined earlier – economics, health, social values and environment – we add the **lens of equity that extends fairness to our fellow animal beings.**

It is a necessary lens, because farmed animals in this system are *not* invisible. Yet collectively most people have chosen to focus their gaze elsewhere. In fact, right now, if you care to refocus and see our food system clearly, you will see animals *everywhere*. Around one billion land animals (and many more fish) are killed every year in the UK food system. This impacts human health, our economy, the environment and particularly the climate, and shapes our social and cultural values. Our goal is to bring into force policies that make visible every individual animal, so we can recognise them and change the way we interact with them. But we cannot do that until we all see clearly, together. As such, this lens frames our analysis – we ask you to look through it with us.



A plant-based food system provides real 'public value'

With a nod to the RSA's *Common Ground* report, we agree that we must take a step beyond 'public money for public goods' when it comes to food. We believe it is essential for us collectively to communicate an understanding of a plant-based food system measured in 'public value'.

The concept of 'public value' was laid out in the Barber Review and adopted by the Civil Service, as a framework to maximise the benefits of public spending and to achieve better outcomes. For our food and farming system, this approach opens up opportunities for more visionary and radical changes. As the RSA notes, a 'public value' approach to food provides scope "not just for subsidies, but also taxes and reliefs, procurement, regulations and more." This allows us to reframe our understanding of the food system:

- From stable, to complex and continuously changing.
- From broadly homogenous populations, to increasingly diverse communities
- From problems largely defined by professionals to being negotiated by engaged 'food citizens' and communities
- From strategies produced by the state, to co-produced by civil society.

This framework of understanding, and the systems-oriented approach to food policy it implies, are essential if we are to commit to the "Great Food Transformation" required.

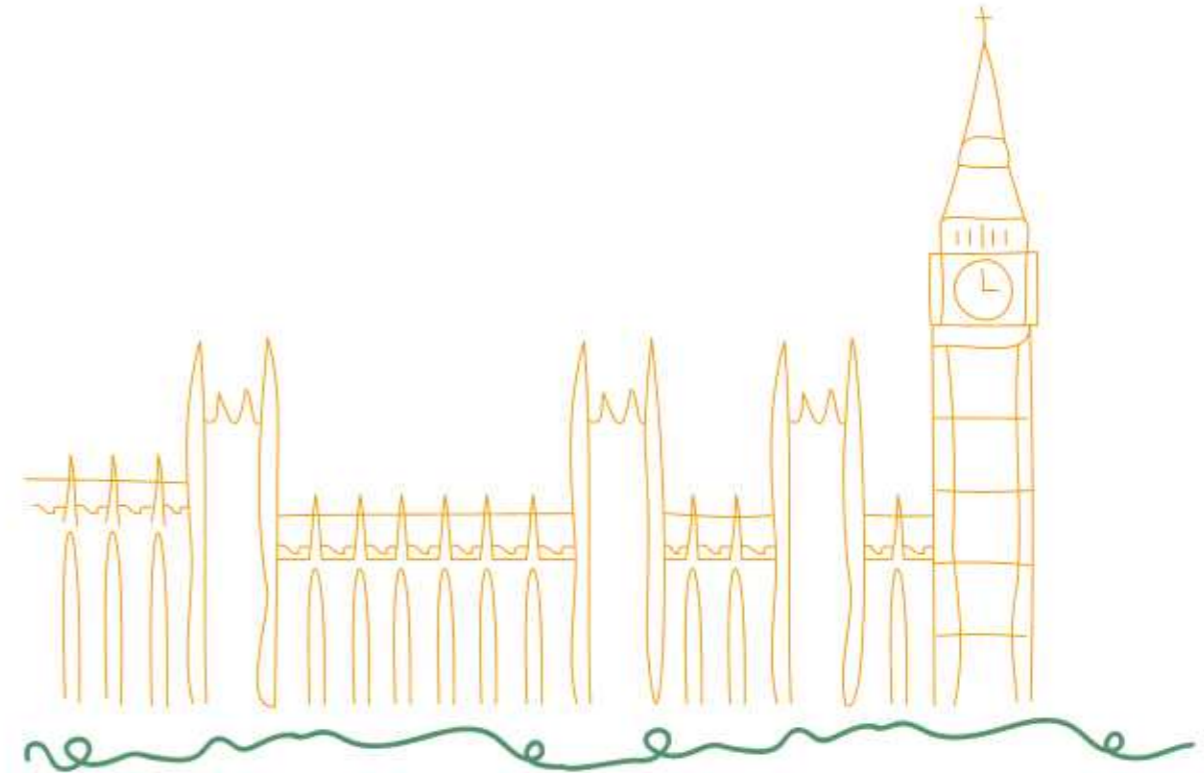
our ideas for the monies that would need to be spent on implementing such changes, we lay out the detail to achieve this **fair food sustainability** in our policy proposals on following pages.

Together, these four themes suggest to us a unifying idea of **fair food sustainability**. Based on our research seen through the lens of equity for all beings, and with this framework guiding

Our Legislative Proposals

The food system we currently have – unsustainable, unhealthy, unfair – must change. Evidence accumulates every day pointing us towards plant foods as the best option for healthy diets in a food system the planet can support. Here, we join the dots to reveal how this transformation of our food system can be supported and guided in the right direction. It is, after all, a “Great Food Transformation” that we need; as the *EAT-Lancet Commission* put it, “humanity has never aimed to change the global food system on the scale envisioned.”¹¹

And yet, despite the challenge, there is much good news. Change in our food system is already happening. Our proposals offer some next steps on this transformative path.



We offer **two new Bills, intended to lead to Acts of Parliament**, and supported by effective governance mechanisms. These should be implemented in the **next six years** to bring UK food policy into alignment with existing legal commitments to tackle climate change and achieve the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, while also improving population health and farm conditions.

We believe these Bills are two interconnected parts to solve the same puzzle and will bring about what others have already called for in this “Great Food Transformation.”¹¹

Our proposals are for the UK only. But we believe such a transformation will pioneer fair, sustainable practices that will benefit the global food community.

These two proposals are:



1. A Food Sustainability Bill, backed by legally binding targets and new governance mechanisms, that will recalibrate our relationship with food and its production and consumption to underpin social, cultural and planetary well-being.



2. A Well-being of Future Generations Bill for England, Scotland and Northern Ireland, to align the rest of the UK with Wales, so that together the four nations can frame and action decisions from all the governments in relation to sustainable development, environment, food, land use, climate and health, in terms of future needs.

The section which follows provides more detail about the mechanisms and timing of each Bill.

1. A Food Sustainability Bill

The Agriculture Act 2020 was originally proposed in Defra's *Health and Harmony* report published in 2018 and is intended to fill the gap left by withdrawal of the UK from the Common Agricultural Policy. It carries the promise to transform British farming for the next generation. While the Agriculture Act offers a renewed relationship between farming and land under the Environmental Land Management scheme (ELMs), there is the risk it becomes fixated on simplified economics within farming now the UK has left the EU. We welcome Defra's November 2020 *Agricultural Transition Plan* and its commitment not to lose sight of the multi-criteria lens through which the food system must be viewed if it is to be fair and sustainable.

A Food Sustainability Bill will go further and be fairer. It should be the central pillar of the Government's white paper that has been promised within six months of publication of the final *National Food Strategy* report (Part 2), due in 2021. This Food Sustainability Bill will draw up and enforce "a new set of multi-criteria principles for the UK food system"⁶ across the key areas outlined above: **health; economy and just work; environment and climate; social and cultural values; governance; and food quality.** (In the accompanying research we have explored the first four of these, but not the questions of governance or food quality; we agree they are vital criteria for measuring food system transformation but were beyond the remit of this research project.) These are overlapping criteria and principles in one area will naturally help facilitate achievement of targets in other areas.



These **new multi-criteria principles for the food system** will give us the chance to operate the food system with a different philosophy from the productionist model that has driven food supply for the last seven decades. Rather than 'more food, cheaply' these multi-criteria principles will recognise the true cost and value of food, and a 'right to food with fairness' that will be enshrined in the Food Sustainability Bill. Viewed through the lens of equity for all animals, this right to food with fairness will lead to the eventual elimination of animal products from our food system.

Those involved in the making of laws often talk of mechanisms rather than policies as the levers of change. Good governance mechanisms are critical to ensure that multi-criteria principles are legally binding and enforceable. Many of the current failures in our food system are not due to a lack of binding targets or good legislation, but the ability to enforce them. To reflect this, we propose two new governance mechanisms to ensure the nuance of policy is translated into the pioneering fairer and sustainable food system we need. These are:

1. **A National Food Sustainability Council** with legal powers and oversight to ensure both the principles (above) and legally binding metrics (below) are followed and met in transforming the food system; there should also be a central Government and devolved powers committee into which the Council reports directly. This Council could be the new independent body described in Henry Dimbleby's *National Food Strategy: Part 1*, which was suggested to report on and scrutinize post-Brexit trade

agreements with other trading nations. Its scope would then also include oversight of UK food system transformation in terms of "economic productivity; food safety and public health; the environment and climate change; society and labour; human rights" as well as a future legal framework of 'animal freedoms' that shapes animal welfare and protection outcomes.

2. **New Legally Binding Metrics** tied to commitments such as the Paris Agreement, the Sustainable Development Goals, and UK-wide health, economic, ecosystem and social measurements. These should include obesity, food insecurity and child poverty-related malnutrition, as well as ensuring animal and climate justice.

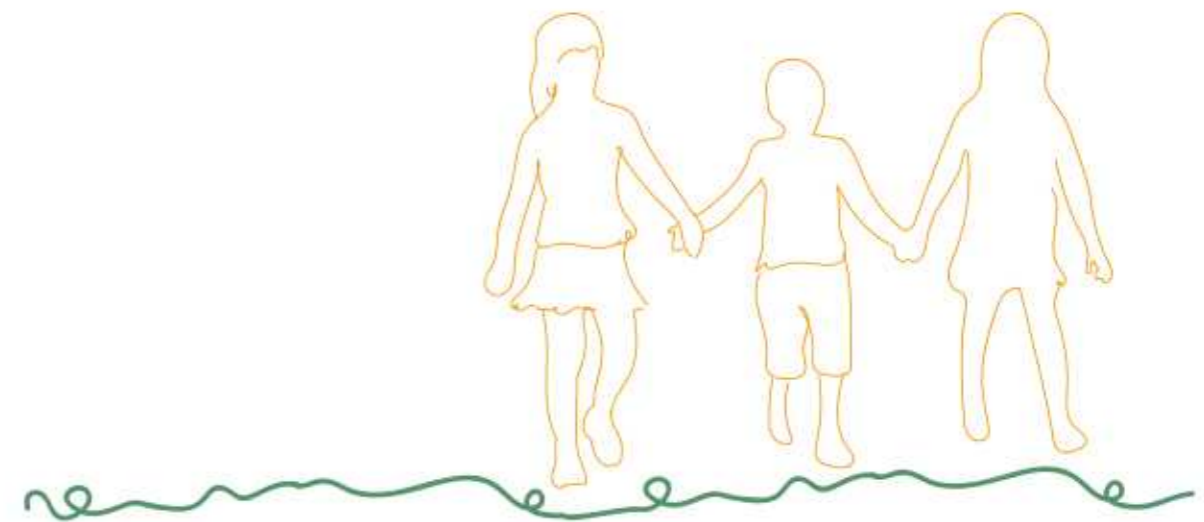
We have gathered together a range of ideas, including possible metrics, in the accompanying research report, *Part Two: The Research*. These have been articulated through interviews with farmers and experts in the production, land use and food policy spheres.

We understand food policy does and will continue to interact with other pieces of legislation. This is why we propose the next Bill, which we feel is necessary to achieve the fairer, sustainable system we need. These two interconnected Bills, alongside the existing Environment Bill and Agriculture Act, will catalyse our ambitions to combat the climate and ecological crises and bring about the beginnings of an effective change in our relationship with other animals for our collective physical and moral health.

2. A Well-being of Future Generations Bill (England, Scotland and N.I.)



Wales already has its Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015) which frames Government decisions, particularly in relation to a sustainable environment, in terms of future impacts. Bodies listed in the Act must “think about the long-term impact of their decisions, to work better with people, communities and each other and to prevent persistent problems such as poverty, health inequalities and climate change.”



Inspired by this successful legislation, in March 2020, Green Party MP Caroline Lucas introduced a Well-being of Future Generations (No. 2) Bill to the Houses of Parliament under the Ten Minute Rule. It has received its first reading but there is no scheduled second reading and at present the Bill does not have parliamentary support to come into law. It has been supplanted to some extent by the text of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill. But we applaud Lucas's early efforts and believe well-being legislation like this is vital to meet the challenges of the 21st century, supported by practicable and actionable mechanisms. We support the current text of the Bill, which in outline:

- Defines 'sustainable development' as the measurable process for improving the social, economic, environmental and well-being of the UK.
- Establishes the 'future generations principle' that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.
- Introduces the idea of a Citizens' Assembly to recommend well-being goals.
- Obliges all public bodies to set and publish "well-being objectives" designed to maximise their contribution.

The text of the proposed UK-wide Bill provides a legal right, exercisable by 'a person', to bring proceedings against a public body on the grounds that it has acted (or proposes to act) in a way which breaches its 'future generations' obligations. This differs from the powers in the 2015 Act. There, the Welsh Senedd appointed a Future Generations Commissioner, who has overseen interventions in changes to land use planning, transport and housing, but has no legal right to exercise other than to institute reviews of public body activities.

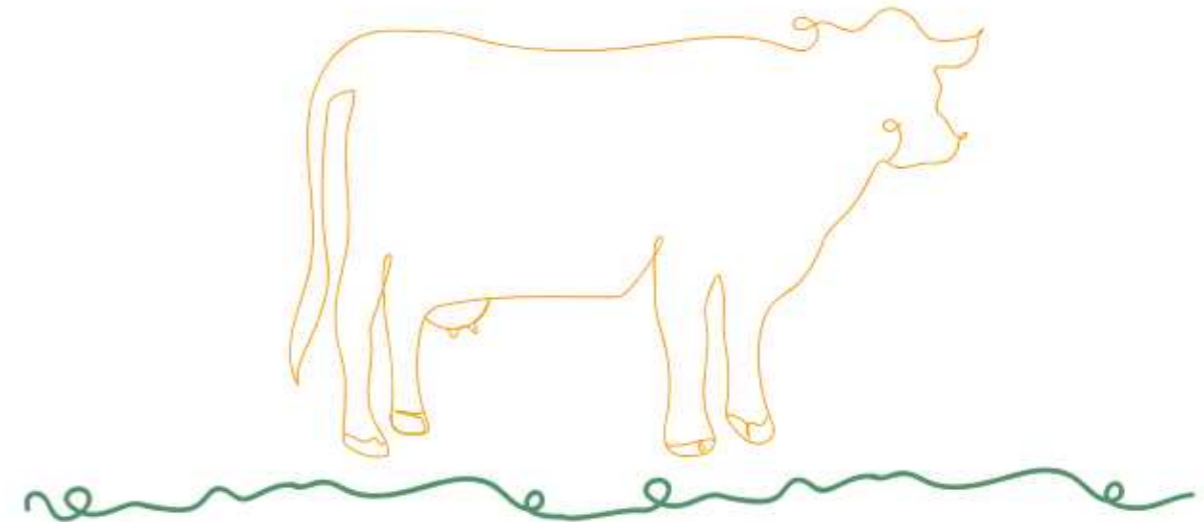
Although Wales's Act has so far not been directed towards food system improvements, in our accompanying research, *Part Two: The Research*, there was a high level of support for systems-led legislation helping governments to think long-term about food. Seeing the food system through our lens of equity, we propose additional legislative mechanisms to the existing text of the Bill to include:

- **A Plant-Based Transition Commissioner** to oversee joined-up and fair thinking to help farmers, producers and users make necessary social, cultural and economic shifts towards an arable and horticulture-led, plant-based food system over time.
- An obligation placed on the Secretary of State to produce a **"future food system risk assessment"** that stands alongside the more generic "national future risk assessment" outlined as an obligation in the text of Lucas's proposed bill.

Future Legislation: An End to Animal Slaughter Bill

In nearly every report and publication adopting a multi-criteria food systems approach, a plant-based food system is the direction of travel offered to achieve a fair, sustainable future. The EAT-Lancet Commission, the Committee on Climate Change, Chatham House's *Food Systems Impact* paper, the RSA's *Common Ground* report and Eating Better's *Better by Half* roadmap all advocate a shift in this direction. They all stop short of calling for a fully plant-based food system, but the direction of travel is the same.

We are committed to the advancement of a vegan world where all beings, regardless of species, maintain bodily autonomy and their birthright to flourish in species-specific ways. This includes currently domesticated animals used in the production of food products. As you would expect of The Vegan Society, we foreground – from already commonly held social values – this lens of equity for the fair treatment of farmed animals in our proposed legislation.



We believe that a courageous and pioneering programme that asks policymakers and the people of the UK to be as fair as possible, while addressing the multiple criteria, would need to go one step further in this direction of travel. Our vision is for a specific, practical and achievable fully plant-based food system and the research we carried out in this phase of our policy work has helped us articulate specific legislative steps to bring about that vision. This leads us to raise the possibility of one further Bill that will, in the future, build on the first two. It will become practicable when shifts in consumer behaviours and public attitudes reach a certain tipping point towards the fairer and equal treatment of non-human animals.

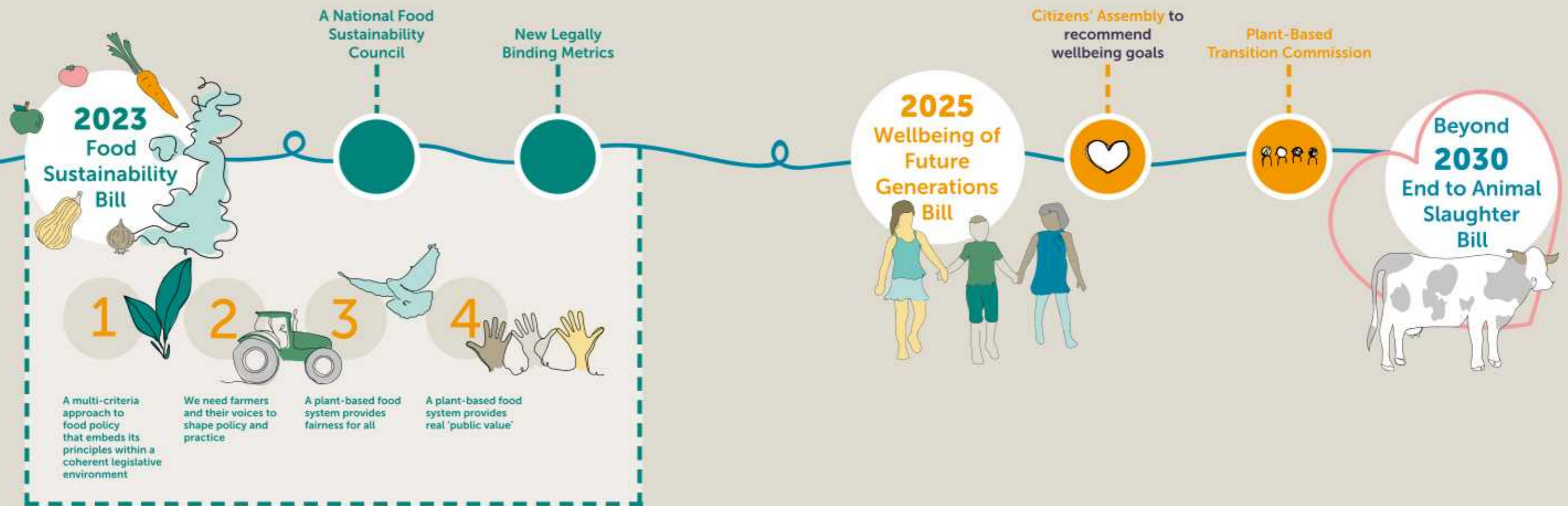
An **End to Animal Slaughter Bill** to bring about a phased end to historic property rights over our fellow animals and allow them full, supported and stewarded lifespans free from pre-determined deaths. The Bill also proposes medium- and long-term mechanisms and financial support – an "ELMs for animals", if you will – put into place to help any remaining 'livestock' farmers transition away from animal production, while providing end of life care for the animals they have farmed for generations.

We accept that this Bill would feel radical and abrupt if brought into law now. We offer this Bill as a conceptual piece of 'future ready legislation' that, by the time of its implementation, we believe, will come to be seen as necessary. This concept is laid out in more detail in the research paper, *Part Two: The Research*, that accompanies this report.

The transition to a vegan world is most often discussed as coming via individual lifestyle change on a mass scale. This is under way and is leading to reduced demand for animal products and an increase in the provision of plant-based food, clothing and other products. We continue to champion these changes, but we also believe it is wise to consider the legislation that would be needed to translate advancements in ethical, social and cultural values towards non-human animals into a legal framework.

Next, we outline a proposed timeline for the Bills described above.

Summary



Through the examination of existing research and interviews with farmers, food policy experts and those involved with land use and management, as well as the work The Vegan Society has been doing over the last decade (as evidenced in our *Grow Green I: Tackling climate change through plant protein agriculture* and *Grow Green II: Sustainable Solutions for the Farm of the Future* reports, and our *Future Normal* and *Plate up for the Planet* campaigns), we have put forward credible and practical legislative proposals. These proposals are aligned with a multi-criteria approach, in line with the current trajectory of much of the thinking on food systems.

Our vision offers policymakers a route to fairness and sustainability, not only for the food system we need but the society we share. Our society will continue to rely on the hard work and expertise of farmers and the farming community. That's why we set out to talk to many farmers and food producers, and their voices are gathered below alongside the food policy and health experts driving forward positive change.

Our vision for a fairer food system rests upon the belief that we can act – and act quickly. The policies and supporting mechanisms are simultaneously radical and realistic. Realistic in that they simply require a change in political will to initiate them; radical in their reach. We believe it is important to provide a vision of our imagined future – something to say yes to – and

how it would come to pass in legislative terms. Such work prepares the ground for the societal shifts that are under way and move us from the radical to the real.

As the COVID-19 pandemic has proven, we can find both the money and political will to change systems rapidly when deemed necessary. We call for the Food Sustainability Bill and the Well-being of Future Generations Bill to be made legislation in the next six years. We see these laying the groundwork for future legislation necessary to transition to a new fully plant-based system, supporting farmers, and fulfilling our ethical obligations to other animals and people in the UK and around the world. This may seem radical for some people today. Yet for a safe, secure tomorrow we see no other alternative that is both sustainable and fair.

Endorsements

"There are no straightforward solutions to the climate, nature and health emergencies, but it's clear that transformative change in the food system is required. It's refreshing to see policy proposals for such change developed on the basis of dialogue with key stakeholders, such as farmers. As the case for an agroecological future grows stronger, this report invites reflection on the role of animals on the land and in our diets. This is a conversation we should all engage in, regardless of our views or dietary orientation."

Rob Percival, The Soil Association

"We all face an enormous challenge, and if I was a vegan, I'm sure I would be intimidated by the nature and scale of the challenge that's required to arrive at the place that this report aims to be. There are differences in views between vegans and livestock farmers. We both have to 'park' those differences while we attend to the common ground that we do have. An alliance which does not denounce the other party's strongly held principles can benefit both parties. There is so much wrong with the current food industry, resulting in poor planetary and human health. On that we definitely agree."

Tim Strang, Farmer

"This report is a strong call to arms: we need a multi-criteria systems-led approach to food policy, and we need it now! It is great to see a vegan and plant-based perspective on a multi-criteria systems-led approach to food policy."

Christian Reynolds, Senior Lecturer, City University Centre for Food Policy

"Redesigning the UK's food system gives us the opportunity to tackle such diverse problems as climate change, biodiversity loss, food poverty, obesity animal welfare and falling farm incomes. To do this, far-reaching systemic change is required and this report is an important contribution to the debate around how this can be achieved."

Peter Tyldesley, Chief Executive, Centre for Alternative Technology

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