

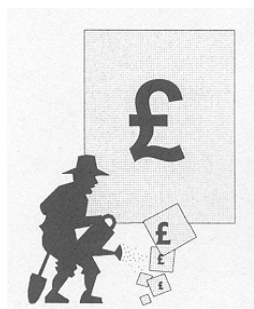
Fare Choice

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SCOTTISH COMMUNITY DIET PROJECT

“Local initiatives such as these have enormous potential to encourage and support people on low incomes to eat more healthily ...

... in our efforts to tackle inequality these are important first steps.”

Minister for Health, the Arts and Children
Sam Galbraith, commenting on the Scottish Office funding distributed to community food initiatives through the Scottish Community Diet Project



The steering group at the Scottish Community Diet Project had the unenviable task of deciding which of the numerous applications for grant funding were to be successful. With a

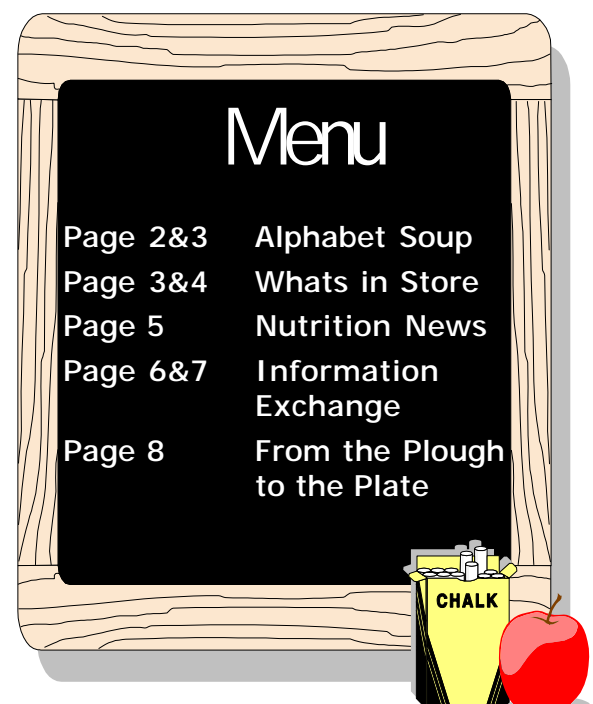
total of £60,000 from the Scottish Office to distribute, and over a quarter of a million pounds worth of applications, it was never going to be a straightforward selection but the committee endeavoured to at least come to a *fair choice*.

In the end the committee recommended awarding all or part of the money requested by 23 community food initiatives from around the country, both urban and rural, who were seen to be involved in practical schemes with high levels of community involvement and in line with the recommendations of the Scottish Diet

Action Plan. Applications were also favoured that displayed an indication of the future sustainability of the initiative, and where there was a potential for the work to be adopted as a model of good practice by other communities.

This is not to say that all those projects who have been turned down did not meet these criteria. In fact, the steering group found it an impossible task to fund all the applications they would have liked to and very reluctantly had to disappoint some very good applicants.

It is to be hoped that the undoubted energy, understanding and enthusiasm of community food initiatives continues to be recognised by local and national funders to enable local communities to play their key role in tackling food poverty, health inequalities and social exclusion in Scotland today.





If you are drowning in an alphabet soup of organisational acronyms and do not know your SFCFI from your SCOFF, *Fare Choice* has come

to your rescue. The following are brief descriptions in their own words as well as contact numbers.

Food for Health Network (FHN)

“The network’s aim, ultimately, is to help people in the UK improve their health through food. It will do this through a membership organisation for individuals who are interested in food for health. It will take a lead in (a) better education and training about food for health issues, (b) helping improve people’s access to healthier food, (c) developing and promoting initiatives to give people control over the way food and health affects their lives, (d) supporting more research into food and health behaviour.”

Contact: Kathy Cowbrough, The Cottage, Little Gringley, Retford DN22 0DU t 01777 706880 E-mail kathy.cowbrough@virgin.net

Foodworks

The Foodworks Enquiry was initiated by The Poverty Alliance’s Food and Poverty Working Group. *“The Enquiry seeks to identify ways of improving the supply of affordable, quality food to low income households. The Poverty Alliance has been supporting local agencies in developing Local Food Issues Groups and organising seminars and contacts with a range of national/district authorities and food industry representatives to explore the contribution they can make to combating food poverty in collaboration with local communities. The Enquiry aims to: a) Identify the problems experienced by low income households in accessing affordable, good quality food. b) Identify practical ways that communities, relevant agencies and the food industry can work together to address the problems faced by low income consumers. The principal outcome of the Foodworks Enquiry will be a published report setting out the issues contributing to inadequate food supply in low income areas, and a description of the practical ideas which have been identified as possible responses to the problem”.*

Contact: Damian Killeen (Director Poverty Alliance), Debbie Stewart (Development Worker), 162 Buchanan St, Glasgow G1 2LL t 0141 3530440

National Food Alliance (NFA)

Founded in 1985 the NFA sets itself the goal *“to enable the people of the UK to fulfil their potential through food policies and practices that enhance public health, improve the working and living environment, and enrich society.”* The NFA includes a Food Poverty Project which supports a Food Poverty Network as well as running a Food and Low Income Database jointly with the Health Education Authority (HEA - English equivalent of HEBS).

Contacts: Jeanette Longfield (Co-ordinator NFA) and Jacqui Webster (Project Worker Food Poverty Project) 5-11 Worship St, London EC2A 2BH t 0171 628 2442.

Scottish Colloquium on Food and Feeding (SCOFF)

Meets jointly with the Sociology of Food Group (part of the British Sociological Association) with the following aims: *“1. To encourage the sociological analysis, both theoretical and empirical, of all aspects of food productions and consumption; 2. To provide a network which facilitates the dissemination of information about current interests and research in this area; 3. To circulate a regular newsletter to ensure the passage of information within the group; 4. To provide a forum for the presentation and discussion of research findings and theoretical innovations in the area; 5. To encourage interdisciplinary links with researchers active in relevant related disciplines, for example, social anthropology, history, economics, nutrition.”*

Contact: Katheryn Milburn, Dept of Public Health Science, University of Edinburgh, t 0131 650 1000.

Scottish Community Diet Project (SCDP)

Set up in the autumn of 1996 as a direct result of *“Eating for Health: A diet action plan for Scotland”*. *“A national project officer should be appointed under the auspices of the Scottish Consumer Council to promote and focus dietary initiatives within low*



income communities and to bring these within a strategic framework. Resources should be made available by the Scottish Office to fund this post, to support innovative local projects and to sustain and extend successful effective initiatives. The role of the national project officer should be to pursue a strategic approach to tackling the problems of people living on a low income, including a responsibility to gather and disseminate information on community initiatives and good practice; to develop ideas for new initiatives; to identify the development potential of existing community action such as food co-operatives; to identify training needs; to work with the retail sector to identify opportunities for action; and to encourage dialogue between Health Boards and local authorities about a strategic approach to food within their areas.”

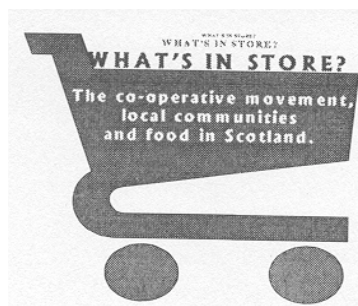
Contact: Bill Gray, National Project Officer (see back page for address/t/e-mail)

Scottish Federation of Community Food Initiatives (SFCFI)

“The Federation is a network of community food initiatives consisting of food co-ops, growers groups, associated health projects, various local authority departments, Health Boards and individuals with an interest in issues of health, diet, food poverty, food safety and food security...In brief the Federation aims to provide, (a) practical advice and support for food initiatives, (b) models of best practice, (c) training in skills relevant to the operation of such initiatives, (d) access to adequate funding for specific food initiatives, (e) good quality healthy foodstuffs at affordable prices, (f) a forum to enable and empower community groups to be part of decision making processes.”

Contact: Bill Emerson, c/o Money Matters, 986-988 Govan Rd, Glasgow G51

If the above hasn't confused you enough already, a future edition of *Fare Choice* will highlight networks in Europe and further afield whose experience, knowledge and skills may be of benefit to Scotland's community food initiatives.



In Britain today Co-operative Retail Societies have a turnover of almost eight billion pounds and employ almost seventy thousand people in over four and a half thousand stores. The Co-

operative Wholesale Society has a further three billion pounds turnover and thirty-five thousand staff. This doesn't include co-operative banking, insurance, chemists, opticians, shoe shops and even travel agents. There are also a further 1,500 workers co-operatives operating around the country.

In European terms, it is estimated that there are almost ten thousand co-operatives, with over one hundred and fifty million members and over two and a half million employees. Co-operatives therefore make up a sizeable part of the European economy.

World-wide, the Co-operative Movement brings together over 750 million people in a range of different activities as broad as the global economy itself.

What significance can a movement operating on such a scale have for community food initiatives in Scotland today?

One answer may lie in the origins of the co-operative movement. In December 1844 the Rochdale Equitable Pioneers Society was set up by only 28 people with capital of £28. Their aim was to sell wholesome unadulterated food at fair prices, using honest weights and measures. Any profits accrued were returned to members, the famous co-op 'dividend'. The first co-op therefore was a community response at a scale not dissimilar to many community food initiatives today.

Very significantly in the light of the proposed Food Standards Agency, the first co-op tackled not only the cost but also the quality of the food available to working people.

Scotland's contribution to the early history of the co-operative movement comes in the form of the work and ideas of Welsh industrialist and utopian socialist Robert Owen whose co-operative store, can still be seen today at the 'living museum' of New Lanark (well worth a visit).





WHAT'S IN STORE?
continued

Another way to examine whether the co-operative movement holds any significance for Scotland's community food initiatives is to examine its basic principles. At the

1995 congress of the International Co-operative Alliance the following definition and values were adopted. *"A co-operative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically-controlled enterprise....Co-operatives are based on the values of self help, self responsibility, democracy, equality, equity, and solidarity. In the tradition of their founders, co-operative members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility, and caring for others."*

It is difficult to imagine any community food initiatives who would not subscribe to a similar set of values. Martin Meteyard a member of the Green City Wholefoods Workers Co-operative in Glasgow, believes there is a gradual coming together of old and new forms of co-operative organisation. *"While many community groups are reinventing the spirit of the Rochdale Pioneers, the co-operative movement nationally is rediscovering its community roots."*

Despite its industrial origins, it is often rural communities, particularly on the islands, that rely heavily on co-operative stores operating in a commercial environment that would not attract a major supermarket chain.

There are also nine "community co-ops" in rural Scotland, again many serving island communities, where the co-op has helped local communities refurbish and stock premises. These are then run by local committees either as corporate members of the Scottish Co-op or as a company limited by guarantee. Again this provides a much needed service in a commercial environment that would not appeal to a company or individual entrepreneur.

A 'co-operative partnership' has recently been developed between the Scottish Federation of Community Food Initiatives and the Scottish Co-op. They intend running a national "Lets shop and cook in Scotland" aimed at redressing skill deficiencies in disadvantaged groups.

Bill Emerson, Secretary of the Scottish Federation of Community Food Initiatives, told **Fare Choice**

how delighted his organisation was to be working jointly with Scottish Co-op. *"It seems a very appropriate collaboration"* he said *"and I'm sure it will also be a successful one"*

"We were delighted to become involved in this initiative" agreed Angela Meechan, Scottish Co-ops Member Relations Officer. *"We are committed to supporting local collective responses to the problems faced by some communities. We are also currently negotiating corporate membership for Scottish community food co-ops allowing access to our wholesale facilities."*

In the past some Scottish community food initiatives benefited from Co-op Community Care Grants. This has now been overtaken by their new Community Dividend. This is allocated by local Divisional Committees to local groups and projects whose aims and objectives match those of the co-operative movement.

Funding is available to voluntary groups and charities carrying out projects that will benefit the community. In reaching their decision on funding the co-op will be looking at organisations with a genuine involvement in the community which have a special project in mind or an ongoing project that requires further funding. It is worth being aware however, that awards are not given to groups for running costs or staff wages.

"Application forms are available in local stores and we would be delighted to receive appropriate and well thought through proposals from community food initiatives" added Angela.

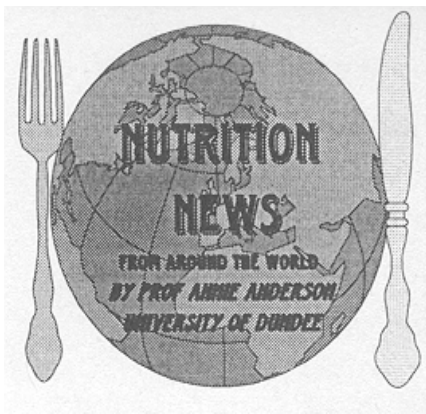
In the last edition of **Fare Choice** we encouraged community food initiatives to knock on the door of their nearest supermarket or corner grocer. It would appear that the co-operative movement has doors crying out to be knocked and Fare Choice would be pleased to hear of future or existing relationships between local communities and the co-operative movement.

Contacts:

Scottish Co-op

Angela Meechan, Member Relations Officer, Co-operative House, 95 Morrison St, Glasgow G5 8LP Tel: 0141 420 7341

Scottish Federation of Community Food Initiatives
c/o Money Matters, 986-988 Govan Rd, Glasgow G51



“Diet affects the health of socially disadvantaged people from the cradle to the grave”

“The potential for health gain through improved diet is enormous”

“A poor quality diet, physical inactivity, and smoking are a lethal triad for the lower social classes, leading to an intergenerational spiral of ill health and handicap”

Not new research, but a very succinct review of the contribution of nutrition to inequalities in health is presented by Professor Philip James and colleagues in the British Medical Journal (1997; 314:1545-9). The relationship between excess disease (eg anaemia, low birth weight, eczema, diabetes, cataracts, bone disease rates) and diet in socially disadvantaged people is set out. Specific examples of the widening gap between rich and poor in fruit and vegetable consumption and intakes of carotene between 1980 and 1995 remind us of the increasing health divide. Increasing accessibility of a diet rich in vegetables, fruit, unrefined cereals, fish and small quantities of vegetable oil offer much in terms of health gains.

Of the many healthy eating publications available, few tackle issues of domestic and catering problems which might be faced by people trying hard to afford a healthy varied diet. *Eating well at work* doesn't only provide sound information on dietary issues but practical options to look for at staff canteens (and presumably school and college dining rooms) and the home front. Its main virtue is in being able to provide some basic healthy suggestions for caterers (from sandwiches to banquets).

Eating well at work by Miriam Polunin. Published by The Health Education Authority.

For anybody doing food work with kids, a look at The British Heart Foundation's* new fruit and vegetable pack (Artie Beat's fruit and veg) for children is to be recommended. Using "pogs" in a fridge magnet chart, a self-monitoring diary and good clear photographs of portion sizes for the "five a day" could be a novel and practical guide to helping kids get to grips with current recommendations.

* BHF, 14 Fitzhardinge Street, London W1H 4DH

The Scottish Health Survey reveals some very interesting facts about the health and habits of adult Scots. This survey undertaken in 1995 reports data obtained from interviews with 7932 persons and blood samples from 6184. The data is presented by 7 regions allowing some comparisons to be made although the overall picture is probably most interesting.

A few findings:

50% of Scottish men add sugar to tea

40% of Scottish men eat biscuits more than once a day

24% of Scottish men eat sweets/chocolates at least once a day

In women there were some notable differences between those from manual and non-manual backgrounds:

Food	Non	
	Manual %	Manual %
eats poultry 2+ days per wk	61	48
eats wholemeal bread	29	18
eats fruit every day	60	45
adds sugar to tea	20	33
rarely eats oily fish	29	40
drinks soft drinks 1+ per day	17	27

In the Highlands and Islands 48% of men reported eating fruit at least once per day compared to 31% in Greater Glasgow.

In the Highlands and Islands 19% of women add salt to their food without tasting first compared to 33% in greater Glasgow.

Overall

26% of women and 15% of men took dietary supplements.

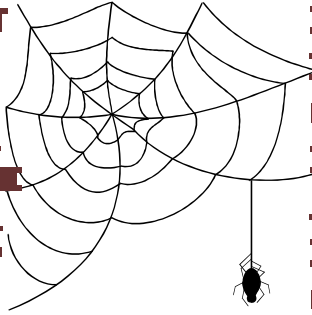
53% of men and 41% of women add salt to food at the table.

A recent report on Retailing and Small shops (Scottish Office Central Research Unit, 1997, price £5) reviews a wide range of issues. A reported consumer study suggests that consumers identified local authorities as being mainly responsible for the small shop sector, although consumers bore most responsibility in rural villages and isolated shops. Food for thought although there are gaps in describing issues for low income consumers.



INFORMATION

EXCHANGE



At the **Food for Thought** conferences organised by SCDP, the rural workshop concluded that "the best hope for the future lay with working at all levels to

produce 'local' solutions involving consumers, retailers and producers. It was agreed that sensitivity and understanding when dealing with rural food issues was the best guarantee of appropriate and effective solutions."

To this end, SCDP and the National Rural Partnership are jointly organising a rural seminar.

This will take the form of a practical examination of locally determined responses, involving both consumers and producers, to the problem of food availability and choice in Scotland's rural communities.

The seminar is planned for January at a venue in Dumfries and Galloway. Details of how to book your place will be distributed shortly.



Copies of **Food for Thought**, a report from the national conferences on food, health and poverty held in Edinburgh and Paisley last spring, including a piece specially written by Tim Lang, are still available free from SCDP (address/telephone on back page) while stocks last.



Are you one of the projects who have recently set up a Milk Token Initiative (MTI)? Are you considering setting one up? Are you completely in the dark as to what an MTI is? Whichever category you come under, it would be worth your while reading the evaluation of the MTI supported by the Govan Healthy Eating Project in Glasgow.

The report summarises the findings of two evaluations of the initiative, the first conducted by the project themselves and a further qualitative study carried out by consultants 'Communicable Health', both funded by the Health Education Board for Scotland.

You can get a copy from SCDP or directly from the project or HEBS.



Govan Healthy Eating Project will also shortly be completing the evaluation of their "Pam Pam Fruit Game", an early intervention strategy linking healthy eating with literacy and numeracy. Copies of the evaluation will be available shortly from GHEP for the price of a stamp.

GHEP, c/o Concierge, 59 Iona Court, Govan, Glasgow ☎ 0141 445 5221.



Two of Glasgow's community food initiatives recently picked up prestigious awards from the BBC's Good Food Magazine. Possilpark Breakfast Club was named "Best Children's Educational Project" while Healthy Castlemilk's work on cooking skills, particularly with men, was named "Best Adult Educational Project". Both groups were in London last month to receive engraved bowls in recognition of their achievements.



HEBS have recently distributed their latest "HEBS on CD" including updated details on community food initiatives. If you are not included or your details have changed, you can make sure your projects work is recognised the next time by contacting Information Services t 0645 708010. The information on the CD is updated quarterly and there are numerous "access points" to view the databases. Just ask your Health Promotion Unit where your nearest "access point" is or if you have the technology you can ask to become an "access point" yourself.



You will soon be receiving a questionnaire from the Scottish Community Diet Project. It will be a short series of questions (2 sides of A4) designed to help us better understand who is doing what. We will use the information to encourage networking and improve the flow of information, advice and good practice between local groups, professional staff and policy makers. We hope everyone will co-operate in this exercise.



A common problem experienced when conducting surveys about diet is ensuring accurate responses. Kings College, London, with funding from MAFF, have produced an atlas of photographs of foods in a range of portion sizes



that make it easier to collect more accurate results. The atlas (£12) comes with a users guide (£6) and associated software. SCDP has a copy of the atlas and you can buy a copy direct from MAFF Publications, London, SE99 7TP



The Scottish Community Diet Project recently visited the annual Islay Show to join in the activities at the "Best by Miles, Food from the Isles" tent, a fascinating collaboration between the Islay and Jura Health Promotion Project and the local branch of the National Farmers Union (see picture below). The tent also included work by local school children, a herb stall and mouth watering cookery displays of Islay produce by a local restaurateur.

The collaboration was not a one-off but an ongoing local food partnership that is constantly developing. The most recent addition is a walled gardening project.

Further information on the work on Islay can be obtained from Carol Muir, Islay and Jura Health Promotion Project, The Surgery, Port Ellen, Isle of Islay t 01496 302683.



"Health Issues in the Community: a community development approach", is a learning pack devised as part of a project based at Moray House Institute and supported by HEBS and Lothian Health. It was written and compiled by Jane Jones, well known to many community food initiatives. Alongside a lot of very relevant and interesting material there are also sections specifically relating diet, health and inequality. More information on the learning pack can be obtained from Emma Witney, Programmes Manager, Health Education Board for Scotland, Woodburn House, Canaan Lane, Edinburgh, EH10 4SG t 0131 536 5500.



If you are doing something you think is worth sharing, or are looking for advice or practical assistance, or simply want to declare your existence, then *Fare Choice* will be glad to hear from you. The next edition is due out in early January and the deadline for contributions is Wednesday 17 December.

FOODLINKS CONFERENCE

A two day conference organised by:
Highland Health Board
 20-21 November 1997
 Jarvis Caledonian Hotel, Inverness

Speakers:

Broth, Brose and Tatties : Tradition and change in the Diet of the Scots

Professor Sandy Fenton, Director, European Research Centre, Edinburgh

End of the Road? Food Access and Availability in Selected Locations within Highland

Sally Amor, Health Promotion Strategy Adviser, Highland Health Board

Food and Drink in the Highland and Islands, An Economic Development Perspective

Kevin Gruer, Senior Marketing Manager, Highlands and Islands Enterprise

Can we have a food policy?

Suzi Leather, Consumer Policy Consultant

The Retail Perspective - A Responsible Retailer

Jackie Hall, National Manager and Angela Meechan, Members Relations Manager, The Scottish Co-op

Back to Basics - The growing of fruit and vegetables in Skye and Lochalsh

Catriona McLean, Economic Development Service Manager, The Highland Council

Eating for Health : influencing consumer choice

Graham Robertson, Deputy Chief Executive, Health Education Board for Scotland

The 21st Century - Food Science and Society

Professor Annie Anderson, Research Professor of Food Choice, Centre for Applied Nutrition, University of Dundee

Same Problem, Same Opportunity

Iain Scott, Development Director, The Robert Owen Foundation

Cost: From £45-£180

Futher Details and Application Forms:

Gill MacLennan

Campaigns Co-ordinator

Health Promotion Department

Royal Northern Infirmary

Ness Walk

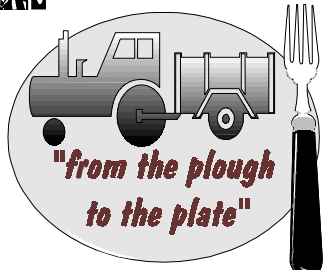
Inverness IV3 5SF

Telephone 01463 704648 Fax 01463 713944

STOP PRESS ** STOP PRESS ** STOP PRESS

A limited number of FREE PLACES are available to those working at community level whose projects could not afford to attend otherwise. The FREE PLACES are being funded by HEBS and SCDP as their contribution to this very important event.

Application for these places should be made to the organisers at Highland Health Board (at above address) **not** to HEBS or SCDP.



"There is a need to explore further mechanisms of widening public involvement in food policy which is currently very 'top down'. There are

extensive networks of people involved in food initiatives who could usefully become involved in a dialogue with the Agency on food issues. This network could feed concerns and ideas into the agency and could be a source for disseminating information" (Prof James, Author of the interim proposals for an independent Food Standards Agency, 30 April 1997)

"We will benefit from a powerful Food Standards Agency. We need to create a structure that is open and transparent, and which acts – and is seen to act – in the interests of consumers" (Tony Blair 8 May)

"The new independent Food Standards Agency will belong to the public, so it is vital that people tell us what they want. The agency will work with consumers, for consumers, and be answerable to consumers." (Jeff Rooker, Minister for Food Safety)

As you may have heard, a **White Paper** is about to be published outlining the Government's proposals for the setting up of an independent **Food Standards Agency**.

On 8 May as delegates from around the country were gathered in Paisley Town Hall for SCDP's second "Food for Thought" conference, the Prime Minister launched in London the interim proposals for an independent Food Standards Agency drawn up by Prof Philip James from the Rowett Research Institute in Aberdeen.

At the Paisley conference, the Scottish Community Diet Project gave a commitment to those operating at community level that they would be kept informed and encouraged to have their say. A summary of Prof James'

proposals has already gone out to anyone on the SCDP mailing list active at a local level.

SCDP are planning to arrange an event in Glasgow as soon as is feasible after the publication of the White Paper to give those operating at community level the chance to hear what is being proposed and to have their say on the proposed structures and responsibilities of the new agency.

Guest speakers are being invited to give a breakdown of what is being proposed and the role everyone can play in shaping what will eventually be passed by parliament.

A special edition of **Fare Choice** is being produced, which will announce the date, time and place of the proposed event. It hopes to demystify the subject by giving some historical background, highlighting key themes and providing a glossary

Watch out for further details and don't miss this opportunity to have your say on the most significant development in many years for everyone concerned with food in Scotland.

If this copy of *Fare Choice* has been sent to the wrong address, or you wish a copy to be sent to another agency, or a different part of your own organisation, or you no longer wish to receive a copy, please let us know.

Bill Gray
National Project
Officer



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