

Gloucestershire Food Vision Consultation Response

RESPONSE TO THE FSA'S APPROACH TO REGULATORY DECISION MAKING CONSULTATION

GFV represents, via the County Strategic Partnership, a co ordination of consumers and stakeholders' across the county responsible for health, education, access, production and food safety.

Engagement

What might be more effective means of ensuring we hear the views of these stakeholders?

- Ensure there is a local organisation that is trusted, accountable and able to take the lead and responsibility of coordinating a response.
- Better use of trade media, with local contacts able to make responses.
- Support the development of a localised email network for better communication with local stakeholders.
- Better links with government office in the regions
- Be able to present forward look of forthcoming issues that may require consultation

What more could we do to ensure that stakeholders are informed of our decisions and how can we improve the transparency of those decisions are made?

- Much wider circulation of the FSA newsletter. Regular short one page newsletter with local emphasis.
- Have a more local presence with a voice rather than national picture. Perhaps not only consideration of positions within Government Offices 's but also on a sub regional level.
- Bring the EHO and TSO responsibilities for food and drink together in a single local organisation.
- Engage better within local events so FSA presence can be trusted and understood.
- Involve smaller businesses and lifestyle businesses earlier in the process so that they no what questions to ask and how to ask them.

Protecting consumers' 'other interests' in relation to food and drink

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Are there other relevant criteria?

- The long-term benefit of consumers has to be a priority. Protecting their interests in being able to obtain healthy, safe and affordable food. All legislation and regulation around production, packaging, labelling and retailing should have this at its core.
- Sustainability has to be a joint priority. For example, selling products below cost/at cost is unsustainable in the long term, but allows some retailers to benefit. UK needs to bring itself in line with the rest of Europe and cease allowing the practice.
- There has to be a better understanding and evidence base to social science and “yuk” factors

Do you agree that these factors should be considered and what additional issues should be taken into account?

- We agree that these factors should be used, but there has to be an open policy on how decisions were come to. For example, whilst we all agree the good labelling is vital for consumer interests, if implemented poorly using a simple traffic light system, then it will impact long term on consumer choice and business.

Regulation and alternatives to regulation

Are there other steps, not listed in Box 1, that we might take to help achieve our primary objectives of protecting and improving public health, and protecting consumers’ other interests in relation to food and drink?

- A strong local presence that can make decisions based on local information on how to implement the necessary enforcement. When there is a national problem such as Sudan I, the risk can be considered at local authority level before implementation of its valuable resources, are redistributed away from its current workload.

Do you agree that we should publish the results of surveys showing the extent to which best practice is being followed?

- We would strongly support the publishing of the results showing the extent to which best practice is being followed.
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- We would also requested that they need to be published in a manner that can be understood by all.

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Is this information useful to consumers?

- The information is useful providing it can be disseminated into a local and informative format that is consumer friendly.

Costs and Benefits

Are there other types of costs and benefits that should be taken into account?

- The environmental and social costs and benefits must be considered and aligned with financial costs in order to meet the sustainability and environmental agendas.