

# Thoughtful Eating

## MEAT IN THE DIET

Meat can be part of a healthy balanced diet. Scotch Beef and Scotch Lamb come from cows and sheep that are good at **utilising grass**, making it a sustainable product.

The climate in Scotland means we are good at growing grass and preserving it as silage. In many areas of Scotland, **grass is the only crop we can grow**.

*Ruminants* like cows and sheep have 4 stomachs meaning **they are able to convert grass into protein rich meat**.

Meat from other countries like beef from Argentina comes from cows that eat maize and soya. **This is very resource intensive** as the crops have to be grown and brought to the cows to eat.

## THINK SEASONALITY

**Different foods ripen at different times of year** in different countries.

In Scotland strawberries are in season from mid March to late October, whilst parsnips are in season over the winter. To eat food when it is not in season in Scotland we either have **to store it or import it**.

**Potatoes, onions and apples store well in cool warehouses** where the temperature (and in the case of apples ripening gases) are controlled.

We import a vast variety of foods from around the world. **Eating seasonally and making the most of local foods when they are available** reduces our carbon footprint through a reduction in foodmiles and storage as well as maximises food nutrition.

## 5 A DAY

We all know **we need to eat a minimum of 5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day**.

The nutritional composition of many foods is changing. **Wild foods** often contain more beneficial nutrients than their supermarket versions. This means we need to consume more to gain the same nutritional benefits.

**Eating more raw fruit and vegetables is beneficial for health and the planet.** Processed vegetable meals are available and **those with a high fruit/vegetable content** can be part of a balanced diet. They can be high in salt and may utilise soya and palm oil, so always check the label to see what you are eating.

## BUY LOCAL



The distance food travels to reach the consumer are known as **food miles**.

Foods travel by road, rail, air and boat and **the method of travel chosen often depends on the perishability of the food**.

**Some foods are picked unripe** - like bananas so they can ripen on the journey to the consumer.



## LOOK AT LABELS

**Labels on food** give us information about where the product comes from and how it was produced.

**Eggs** are marked with a code as to tell what production system they come from: organic, free range, barn or cage and the SCO stamp denotes they are Scottish eggs.

**Meat** from animals born, reared and processed in Scotland has either a Scotch Beef, Scotch Lamb or Specially Selected Pork logo. The saltire flag can also be seen on a range of products like raspberries and flour.

**Fruit and vegetables** provide country of origin information.

**Labels on processed vegetable products** let you see the % of raw fruit or vegetable in the product.



**RHET**

The Royal Highland Education Trust

Patron HRH The Princess Royal

## DON'T WASTE IT

**Producing food** requires time and energy and wasting it means we throw away much more than just the piece of food.

Currently in the UK **we waste one third of all the food we produce**. Most of this is wasted by the consumer at home. By **making shopping lists** to buy only what you need, freezing food, storing properly and making the most of leftovers we can all help reduce food waste.

**By composting inedible food waste**, for example apple cores, we are creating a circular economy. A circular economy involves ensuring nothing is seen as waste and so in the apple core example, the apple core nutrients, form compost, to feed new plants.

Food waste put in landfill, where it is squashed with no oxygen, produces **methane** which is a greenhouse gas. This is an example of a linear economy, where any beneficial use of the food waste is lost.