

# Less and Better Takes Off





# Chair's statement

Eating Better is working to catalyse action for healthy, sustainable diets with less and better meat and dairy. This shift in eating patterns is essential to safeguard the environment and stay within safe climate limits, improve health and animal welfare and secure social justice. This year we have increased momentum both within and outside the alliance, incorporated Eating Better as a charity, carried out and launched new research and addressed challenging issues like defining 'better' meat and dairy. All this has taken place in a policy environment dominated by Brexit.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Sue Dibb who has retired after leading Eating Better since its launch in 2013, and welcome Simon Billing who we have announced as Executive Director.

---

## Less and better

There is an irrefutable and urgent need to produce and eat less meat and dairy in order to stay within safe climate limits. **14.5% of global climate changing gases are due to meat and dairy production.**

The remaining meat and dairy we eat should be 'better'. Better for: farm animals; nature; feeding the world fairly; our health; responsible antibiotic use; cutting waste; and for farming livelihoods. The evidence for this is set out in our report '**Principles for eating meat and dairy more sustainably: the 'less and better' approach.**'

---

## A turbulent policy environment

Brexit uncertainties continue to dominate the UK food policy environment. The year began shortly after the general election with a weakened Government and the appointment of Michael Gove as Secretary of State for DEFRA. Although a controversial character, his willingness to challenge the dominant 'trade at all costs' agenda within government has largely been welcomed by Eating Better's alliance organisations, arguing for future trade policies that do not undermine UK standards for food safety and quality, animal welfare and the environment – highly relevant to Eating Better's 'less and better' approach to livestock.

Gove has spoken about the need for a better integrated food and agriculture policy. However, the publication of DEFRA's Health and Harmony White Paper (April 2018) to which Eating Better responded and the Agriculture Bill (September 2018) are very narrowly focused on production and productivity. While we welcome the focus on ensuring public money is targeted at farmers delivering environmental goods, there is a feeling that this is a missed opportunity to take a joined up approach to food, health, environment and farming.

We continue to work directly and with alliance organisations, including Sustain and the UK Health Forum, to ensure that government ministers, parliamentarians and civil servants are hearing Eating Better's policy messages.

## Growing Momentum

The Eating Better Alliance has grown and strengthened. We welcomed new members the Royal Academy of Culinary Arts and Greenpeace International.

Eating Better supporting organisations made powerful commitments to meat reduction:

- Compassion In World Farming – launched their campaign 'why we need to reduce consumption of livestock products by 50% by 2050' in December 2017.
- Greenpeace International – launched 'Less is More' in March 2017.
- RSPCA Assured – launched 'Eat less, eat better' in May 2018.

There is change on the high street, although more needs to be done.

This year saw supermarkets launch more plant-based ranges (including Tesco's Wicked Kitchen range, Sainsbury's Naturli products and Waitrose with The Happy Pear), increased investment into meat and dairy alternatives and investor action towards highlighting the risks for companies that are heavily invested in intensive meat and dairy supply chains.

---

## Less and better receiving support

Eating Better's less and better narrative is now being supported by **progressive farming interests, academics, civil society organisations, assurance and certification bodies, vets and health experts.**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the people we have worked with over the last year, including: alliance members, trustees, staff and our main funder – Esmée Fairbairn. Over the next year Eating Better is committed to driving a step-change in the action needed to make #lessandbetter meat and dairy a reality, and we look forward to working with you all to further grow our impact to reduce meat and dairy consumption by 50% by 2030.

---

## Clare Oxborrow

Friends of the Earth  
Chair, Eating Better





## Informing and inspiring

Together with the Eating Better alliance organisations we have dealt with some tricky issues head on this year, helping to bring together experts, and offer leadership.

***The Climate Impacts of Pasture Farming*** (November 2017) was co-hosted with the **Food Climate Research Network (FCRN)** building on their report: ***Grazed and Confused***. The report had caused some controversy. We brought together organisations from across the alliance and sustainable farming to successfully develop how the 'less and better' approach works in practice. We also considered the implications for policy and research to shift livestock production and consumption onto more sustainable pathways. We published and shared learning from the event **here**. As a result, we have refined our messaging to policy makers, businesses and the public on less and better and published ***Principles for Eating Meat and Dairy More Sustainably: the 'less and better' approach***.

We hosted a discussion event in May 2018 in collaboration with alliance member **Forum for the Future** '*Transforming the Way Livestock Are Fed*.' At the event we **shone a spotlight on the devastating environmental and social consequences of the feed required to underpin modern industrial livestock production**. Eating Better alliance organisations discussed how civil society and others can collaborate and campaign to drive greater change. As a result, Eating Better is considering how to take forward engagement on animal feed and sustainability e.g. with retailers via our benchmarking projects.

On the international stage, we facilitated a workshop with alliance member – the **European Public Health Alliance** at the EAT Forum in Stockholm in June 2018. The workshop was called 'Leveraging Healthy and Sustainable Diets through Agricultural Policy Reform.' The outcomes have been shared **via the EAT Forum** and Eating Better's **website**. This has helped build support for Eating Better's 'less and better' approach to a wider international audience.





## Informing policy

With Brexit absorbing so much policy development energy, our '**Beyond the CAP: Policies to support better UK meat and dairy production post-Brexit**' in July 2017, was well timed. This had been funded and produced with the support of Eating Better alliance members. We shared our recommendations with ministers, selected parliamentarians including those on relevant select committees which resulted in a number of meetings. It was acknowledged as helpful by DEFRA civil servants and DEFRA Minister, George Eustice.

In May 2018, we published **Principles for Eating Meat and Dairy More Sustainably: the 'less and better' approach**.

This included practical advice to help policy makers, food companies and the public put this approach into practice. This received widespread interest from the farming press – *New Food* and *Food and Farming Futures* – and national press including the *Huffington Post* and *The Guardian*. We shared the research with policy makers and received a positive response from DEFRA Minister, George Eustice and met with DEFRA officials to influence the forthcoming Agriculture Bill.

In addition, the report is helping us build relationships with sustainable farming interests. This included a farm visit for Eating Better organisations to a Pasture Fed Livestock Association farm in June 2018 to share with Eating Better alliance members what 'better' farming looks like in practice.



**Choosing better for the climate** means shifting the balance of our diets towards more plant-based foods; while eating less meat. Choosing meat from 'pasture-fed' animals can help lock carbon into the soil, but only makes sense if consuming considerably less overall.



**Choosing better for animals** means choosing meat and dairy from well managed production systems that enable natural behaviour, support good health and provide a natural diet.



**Choosing better for nature** means choosing livestock products that have a diet based around local food sources and home-grown feedstuffs, using for example European native legumes, which can help reduce our reliance on unsustainable soy.



**Choosing better for feeding the world fairly** means shifting diets away from meat and dairy overconsumption. This would ensure resources are used more efficiently and fairly.



**Choosing better for health** means shifting towards more plant-based diets which would have health benefits for the majority of the population.



**Choosing better for responsible antibiotic use** means choosing products that require minimal antibiotic use in their production. In practice, this means avoiding products produced intensively.



**Choosing better for cutting waste** means valuing meat as a precious resource, making the most of each carcass and reducing the amount of wasted edible food.



**Choosing better for livelihoods** means choosing meat and dairy from smaller scale, higher standard producers. Choosing meat and dairy with a known provenance can reconnect producers and their customers such as through farm shops, box schemes, farmers markets and independent butchers.





## Tracking change

Eating Better is driving action for less and better meat and dairy consumption, for people and the planet.

We track and share progress across business, government and people to demonstrate positive movement and where more needs to be done.

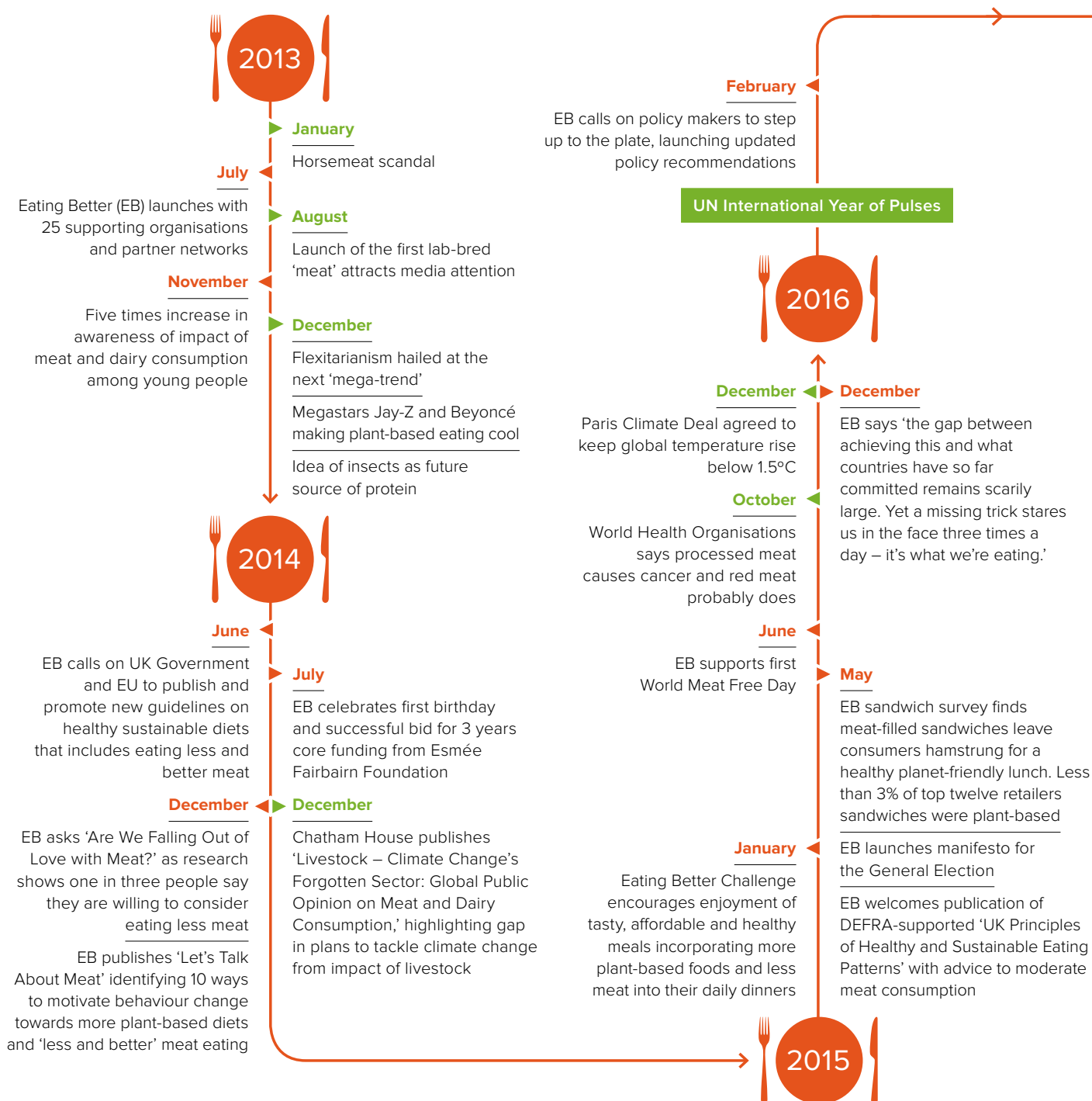
This year we surveyed 1,350 different ready meals from 10 retailers to assess the provision of vegetarian, flexitarian and plant-based (vegan) ready meal options.

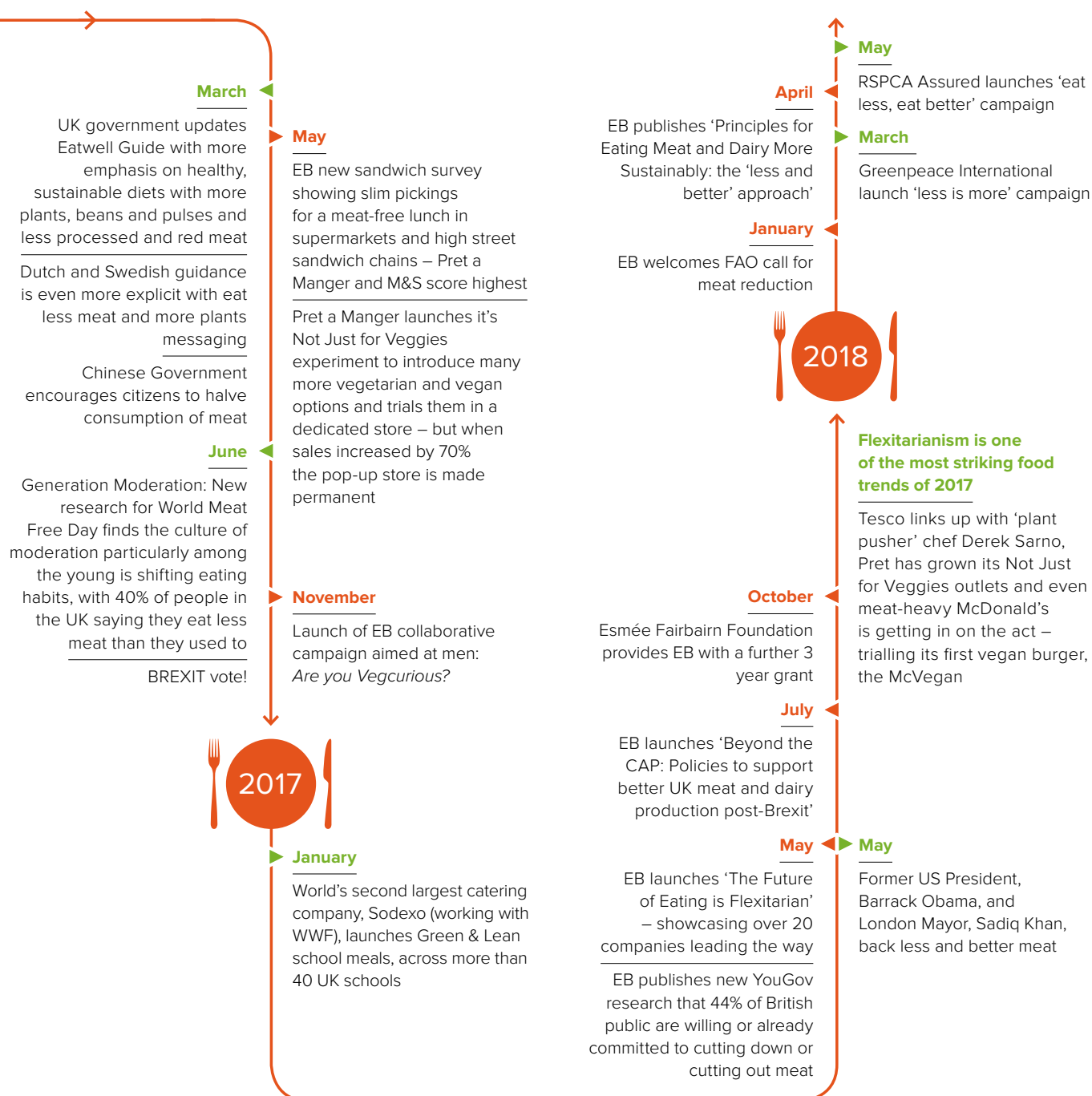
As part of this research we examined how meat in ready meals is sourced and the extent to which this includes 'better' meat produced to higher animal welfare or sustainability standards.

Cooking from scratch is almost always the best option yet 9 out of 10 of us in the UK eat ready meals. Startlingly, only 14% of ready meals have no meat. Ninety percent of the vegetarian ready meals were cheese-based and on average higher in calories, saturated fats and salt than the meat-based options. Knowing the origin of the meat fell short with Tesco, Asda and Iceland not even labelling the source of their meat ingredients in all of their own-brand products.

# How Eating Better has built the movement for 'less and better' meat and dairy over its first five years

► Eating Better initiatives    ► Wider events related to the 'less and better' issue









# 25,000

Our website received 25,000 visits over the year – our major report publications being the main focus

# 5,400

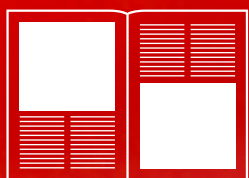
We have 5,400 Twitter followers



We have used our full range of communication channels – website, blogs, social media platforms (**#lessandbetter**) e-newsletter, internal alliance communications – to support this consistency of message and build our reach.

# 43

We had 43 mentions in the media and published 41 blogs this year (9 from guest contributors)



# 1,000

We have 1,000 Facebook followers





# Our supporting organisations and partner networks

## Supporting Organisations

- Alliance of Religions and Conservation
- Behaviour Change
- British Dietetic Association
- Changing Markets
- Compassion in World Farming
- Consensus Action on Salt and Health
- Fairfood International
- Farms Not Factories
- Feedback
- First Steps Nutrition Trust
- The Food Assembly
- Foodcycle
- Food Ethics Council
- The Food Foundation
- Forum for the Future
- Friends of the Earth
- Greenpeace
- Hubbub Foundation UK
- Humane Society International
- LEAF
- Medact
- Oxfam
- Part-Time Carnivore
- People & Planet
- ProVeg
- Royal Academy of Culinary Arts
- RSPB
- Send A Cow
- ShareAction
- Slow Food UK
- Soil Association
- Sustainable Restaurant Association
- UK Health Forum
- Vegetarian for Life
- Vegetarian Society
- Waste Watch
- World Animal Protection
- World Resources Institute
- WWF-UK

## Partner Networks

- Alliance to Save Our Antibiotics
- European Public Health Alliance
- Food Climate Research Network
- Food Research Collaboration
- Food Trade
- Love Food Hate Waste
- Meat Free Monday
- Network of Wellbeing
- Nourish Scotland
- Sustain: the alliance for better food and farming
- Sustainable Food Cities Network
- UK Food Group





## Our Board of Trustees

**Clare Oxborrow** (Chair)

Friends of the Earth

**Jane Landon**

UK Health Forum

**Duncan Williamson**

WWF-UK

**Sofia Parente**

Sustain: the alliance for better food and farming

**Carol McKenna**

Compassion in World Farming

## Our staff

**Sue Dibb**

Executive Director  
(retired in July 2018)

**Simon Billing**

Executive Director  
(started in July 2018)

**Elena Salazar**

Communications and  
Campaigns Manager  
(maternity leave from  
March 2018)

**Mark Breen**

Communications and  
Campaigns Manager  
(from February 2018)

**Aileen Corrieri**

Campaign and Office  
Co-ordinator

**Heidi Spurrell**

Consultant  
(January – February 2018)

**Heather Alford**

Paid Internship  
(April – May 2018)

## Our funders

Our main core funder is the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation.

Click [here](#) to view the financial statement for this year.



Eating Better: [www.eating-better.org](http://www.eating-better.org) • Company registration number: 9772128 • Charity registered number: 1175669  
Registered office: Eating Better, c/o Medact, The Grayston Centre, 28 Charles Square, London N1 6HT

