



Eating Better

IMPACT REPORT

2018-19



Chair's statement

This year has been a turning point in the discussion about the need to change the way we eat and produce our food for the health of our planet. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published 'Global Warming of 1.5 °C,' setting the backdrop to the 10 years we have to avoid dangerous levels of global warming. Addressing diets and land use are critical to reducing global heating and helping to address the biodiversity crisis.

The authoritative Eat Lancet Commission published its findings in 2019 bringing together health and sustainability into a reference diet for the first time. The results of the extensive modelling point to a need for a transition to low meat and dairy diets to free up land and feed more people as the population increases.

This year we've welcomed evidence of changing public attitudes and retailer responses to the growth in demand for plant-based options. One indicator is plant based product launches which soared to one fifth of all retail food new product development. Tesco's Wicked Kitchen range is among its most successful launches ever.

While public awareness of livestock's environmental impact is growing, people don't always feel able to act upon this. Creating the right food environment with greater options so people can act on their increased understanding is incredibly important.

Our Better by Half: roadmap to less and better was launched to support people to eat better, mapping 24 actions to be taken by the 5 most influential sectors. This will create an enabling environment to drive calls for halving meat and dairy consumption in the UK by 2030, and for a transition to 'better' meat and dairy.

We will support alliance organisations and others to deliver against the actions set out in the roadmap over the next year.

Changes in diets will need to be matched by changes in production. The UK Government has committed to net zero UK carbon emissions by 2050. The RSA Food, Farming and Countryside Commission highlighted many of the excellent examples of leadership by British farmers, for health and environmental stewardship.

So, from commitment to action is where we need to move. Eating Better welcomed Michael Gove's announcement of the development of a new National Food Strategy. This will be led by Henry Dimbleby and offers a real opportunity to bring a joined up approach across food and farming in government.

It's a complex challenge and Eating Better is central to bringing together different perspectives. We welcomed 10 new supporting organisations to Eating Better, they bring with them exceptional experience in farming and health. The alliance is broader and more diverse than ever, providing a trusted space to navigate complex issues and provide solutions. Our messaging and positions develop common ground for the alliance. Alliance organisations have told us that we support them to be more confident in their own messaging, raise awareness of less and better, build common ground and provide thought leadership.

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 – the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation.

Carol McKenna • Chair of Eating Better

Leading farming and public health organisations join Eating Better

In the last year, 10 new influential organisations have joined Eating Better, particularly increasing our opportunities to learn from and engage farmers and public health experts. Sustainable healthy diets are central to these organisation's thinking and practice.

Biodynamic Association
vital soil, vital food



NEW
ECONOMICS
FOUNDATION



RSPH
ROYAL SOCIETY FOR PUBLIC HEALTH
VISION, VOICE AND PRACTICE



"We have followed Eating Better with interest over the years. We are pleased to be the first livestock farmer group to join the Eating Better alliance. Eating Better provides opportunities to engage and share learning and knowledge with environment, public health and animal welfare experts. We highly value working with Eating Better to build understanding around the benefits of better meat eating, what this looks like and in promoting this."

Fidelity Weston

Vice-Chair, Pasture-fed Livestock Association

"The Faculty for Public Health values being part of an organisation aimed at supporting population health through advocating for meat consumption patterns which are associated with improvements in both environmental and human health outcomes. I value the forward-thinking aspect of the organisation, in that the core messages associated with 'less and better' are often ahead of what public bodies will commit to, but which are nonetheless evidence-based and need to be presented with careful consideration in order to move the public and policy discussions forward."

Kristin Bash

Co-Chair of the Food Special Interest Group with the Faculty of Public Health



Eating Better progresses conversations about balanced diets and better meat

Despite the evidence, much needed conversations about eating less and better meat and dairy remain a challenge. Conversations about ‘less’ can feel negative as no one likes taking away something people like, and it remains challenging language for restaurants, retailers and others. Language has been a focus for the alliance as we know that if we don’t get it right important engagement with organisations and people is much more difficult.

We have worked with alliance organisations to provide a space through events and workshops to explore how to create a language which is appealing, which builds a positive narrative. Following this we have provided resources, which have been shared more widely to help identify messaging that resonates with the public and policy makers.

“The BDA has really ramped up our work on environmental sustainability, including through the launch of our One Blue Dot toolkit in November 2018, which has now been accessed over 9,500 times. The work of organisations like Eating Better, of which we are proud to be a member, has been a really big influence. The Eating Better roadmap is amongst our key recommended links as a source of evidence-based information on sustainable eating.”

Caroline Bovey BEM

Chair, The British Dietetic Association

TOP TIPS

At our ‘language takeaways’ workshop, we worked with alliance organisations to identify what works:



Talk about and deliver gorgeous delicious food in place of labels.



Don’t sound like you are taking things away from people.



Look for the co-benefits in your message (e.g. health, waste).

“Partnering with the Eating Better team has supported us to speak with authority on some extremely complex issues. Eating Better’s robust research alongside the expertise of the alliance members have helped us to have the confidence to do so. Consequently our campaigns and messaging have managed to get significant cut-through with a mainstream audience. The Better by half: roadmap will help us to navigate what is often seen as a contentious and ‘un-touchable’ issue.”

Tessa Tricks

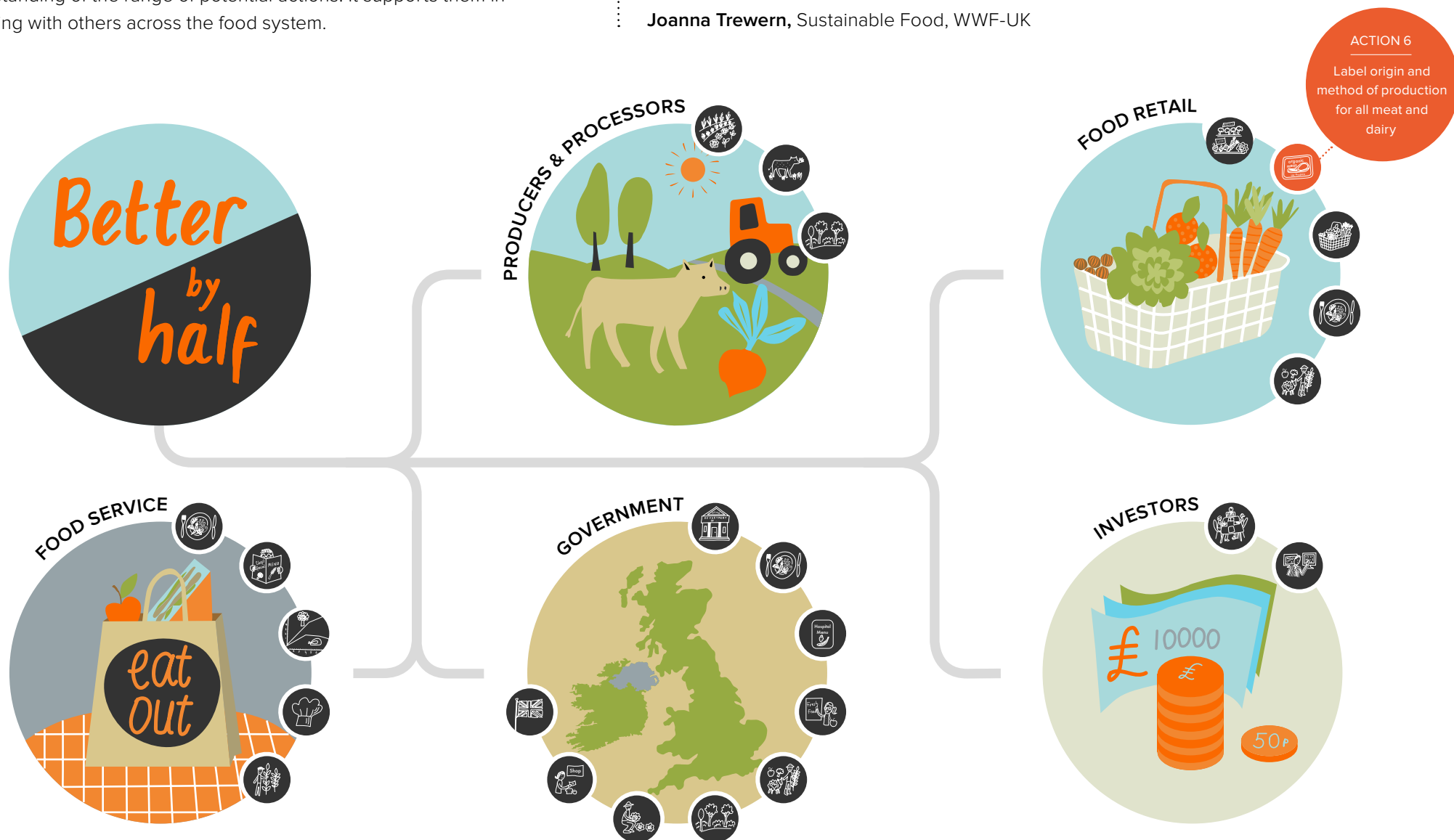
Head of Food, Environmental Charity, Hubbub

Better by half: roadmap

We have set out 24 actions with examples of leadership to stimulate a 50% reduction in meat and dairy consumption in the UK by 2030, and for a transition to 'better' meat and dairy as standard. Eating Better alliance organisations are using the roadmap to build understanding of the range of potential actions. It supports them in engaging with others across the food system.

"The Better By Half: roadmap is a valuable asset for food system stakeholders, helping to distil complex food-related social and environmental issues into a set of implementable actions for different key sectors, and highlighting examples of leadership to guide future action. WWF welcomed the opportunity to contribute to the development of the roadmap, and is utilising it in engagements with food sector stakeholders to accelerate action in the areas most needed to bring about lasting food system transformation."

Joanna Trewern, Sustainable Food, WWF-UK



Eating Better survey shows movement on the high street...

Eating Better shines a spotlight on positive action by people, business and government. We highlight where more needs to be done, aiming to create the right environment for people to eat vegetables, wholegrains and plant proteins, with less and better meat and dairy.

These are complex issues but through our survey work tracking both public attitudes (annual survey commissioned by YouGov) and business action (high-street sandwich survey) we are seeing positive change. Our surveys have helped to improve understanding of changes in public awareness and the gap between intentions and actions.

Our latest survey of sandwiches in the UK high street showed some progress, but retailers still aren't serving the demand for healthier plant-based options. Much more could be done to improve the transparency of where meat comes from and how it is produced.

WHAT IS IN THE SANDWICH AISLE?

58% OF SANDWICHES ARE MEAT BASED

34% OF SANDWICHES HAVE RED OR PROCESSED MEAT

32% OF SANDWICHES HAVE CHICKEN

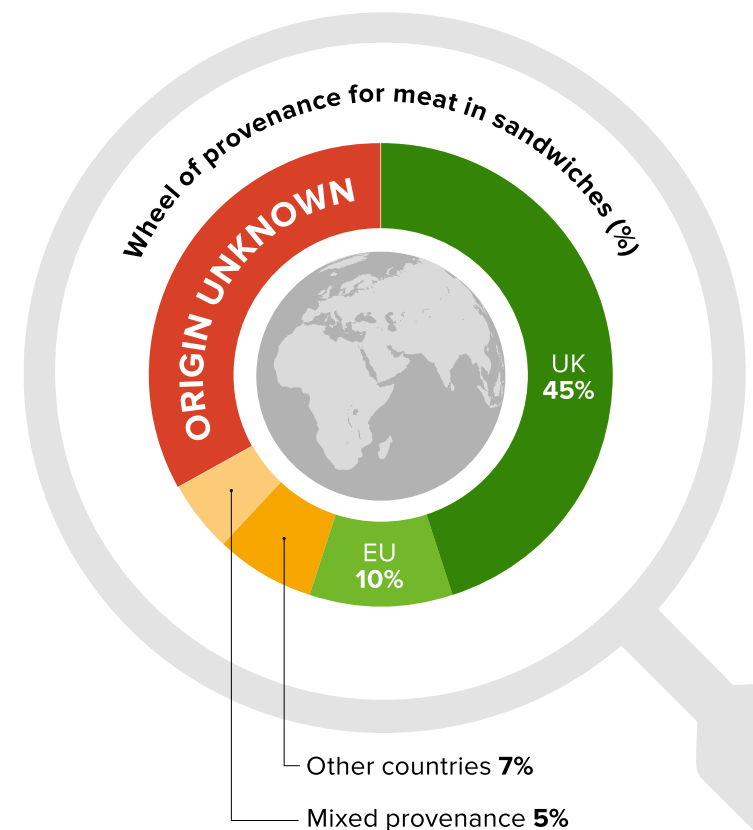
31% OF SANDWICHES CONTAIN CHEESE

9% OF SANDWICHES HAVE PLANTS AS A MAIN INGREDIENT

“Eating Better continue to lead the way on understanding the intersections between animal welfare, health and sustainability. There are no straight forward answers, so their work supports thinking across the industry in these areas.”

Sarah Wakefield

Sustainable Sourcing & Fairtrade Manager, Co-op



Eating Better survey shows changing public attitudes...

Food is a deeply social issue, with evident socio-political divides when it comes to meat consumption and the environmental impact of the food we eat.

PUBLIC AWARENESS OF LIVESTOCK'S ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS IS GROWING

23%

23% more people understood the impact in 2019 than did in 2017

33%

Younger people are talking the talk when it comes to eating healthily and sustainably but aren't walking the walk. 33% of 18-24 year olds are still eating meat daily.

38%

Animal welfare remains the principal driver of reducing meat consumption (38%), but climate impact is becoming increasingly important.


15%


65+ year olds are leading the way with just 15% eating meat every day, despite lower levels of awareness




Coming up...

OVER THE NEXT YEAR WE WILL

 support alliance organisations and others to deliver against the actions set out in the roadmap

 continue to support and champion nature friendly farming in the UK

 engage with emerging policy opportunities to support the UK Government's delivery of net zero carbon emissions by 2050 and the National Food Strategy

 track change through further survey work on public attitudes and business progress.

We will continue to effectively use digital media and face to face engagement with the alliance and others to make progress.

If you would like to support this, then please contact us: comms@eating-better.org



Supporting organisations and partners



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www.eating-better.org

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