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Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog ac Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet  
dros Newid Hinsawdd a Materion Gwledig  
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for  
Climate Change and Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Our ref: HID/ARTDavies/PO/594/2025

Andrew R T Davies MS  
Chair  
Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee  
Welsh Parliament  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1SN

18 November 2025

Dear Andrew,

Thank you for your letter of 20 October, following my evidence to Committee on 24 September in response to your Inquiry into Food Processing in Wales. In addressing your further questions, responses are set out below:

### **Public Procurement of Welsh Food and Drink**

The Welsh Government is progressing the implementation of Part 3 of the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023. This introduces new socially responsible procurement duties on contracting authorities to pursue economic, social, environmental, and cultural well-being when undertaking all procurement.

The Welsh Government is working on the draft Statutory Guidance required to support implementation of the Act and intend to publish for public consultation later this autumn. The Statutory Guidance will support public bodies who are covered by the Act to discharge their new socially responsible procurement duties. It will provide practical guidance on achieving wellbeing outcomes through the procurement process. We will work with public bodies, social partners, procurement professionals and others to support its effective implementation and delivery.

The **Community Food Strategy** promotes local food production and community resilience, through strengthening shorter supply chains. It commits to delivering on the outlined objectives and to increase the opportunities for the procurement of locally sourced food. This is supported by a cross-portfolio funding package of over £2 million for Local Food Partnerships for the financial year 2025-2026. These Local Food Partnerships have now been established in every Local Authority in Wales and will provide strategic co-ordination of local food projects 'on the ground'. They will create new supply opportunities by connecting local food stakeholders including producers, businesses, wholesalers, and public sector

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

services. By joining farmers with wider organisations along the supply chain, this will also complement the objectives of the **Sustainable Farming Scheme**.

## **Welsh Food on School Menus**

In addition to the initiatives in Anglesey and Caerphilly referred to in our evidence paper, the Welsh Government is increasing the amount of Welsh food on school menus, through the **Foundational Economy Food Community of Practice (CoP)**.

This joined up approach was established to support collaboration and innovation across Foundational Economy food projects. It has now expanded to include food buyers and caterers from councils, health boards, and academia.

It is pleasing to see that many of the Foundational Economy projects have scaled up and expanded to other parts of Wales. Key initiatives include:

- The **'Welsh Veg in Schools'** project. Its success now being expanded into North Wales to include additional growers/wholesalers, and Local Authorities. It is currently operated through thirteen Local Authorities, fifteen growers and four wholesalers. The project has already contributed towards a 20% increase in land used to grow vegetables in Wales, while the rest of the UK has seen a decline. Further funding will support the ambition to source sixty tonnes of Welsh vegetables to produce one million portions of vegetables for school meals in Wales. The overarching objective is to ensure that 25% of all vegetables in Welsh schools is local and organic by 2030.
- **Larder Cymru** has successfully supported eight Local Authorities across Wales, exceeding its original target, to develop new, seasonally compliant school menus that feature Welsh produce at its core. A tailored, in-person support package was developed for each Local Authority, considering their specific challenges and to align with local objectives. Key achievements included revised menus that increased the use of local ingredients, strengthened local supply chains, and increased free school meals uptake. A revised menu in Caerphilly resulted in the Local Authority almost doubling their spend on Welsh food. In Wrexham, product sourcing moved to Harlech Foodservice to improve the local sourcing offer.
- Further to the revised menus **Larder Cymru** is trialling street food themed salad bars in secondary schools in three Local Authorities, using locally grown, seasonable vegetables. This supports food supply chains with the new Healthy Eating Regulations to identify opportunities for reformulation and new product development.
- In Monmouthshire, the **'Give Chickpeas a Chance'** campaign was designed by primary school children and taken up by Monmouthshire council. The **'Cookalong Clwb'** primary school children were able to enact change with their Chickpea Korma recipe and has been added to all school menus in Monmouthshire. This innovative initiative has now been rolled out further in Wales now working towards the same goal. In Crosshands, primary school children have created a brownie recipe using aquafaba (chickpea water) and taken their recipe to Castell Howell for development.
- The **'Future Generations School Menu'** is a pioneering initiative aimed at transforming school meals to better reflect the values of the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**. In Carmarthenshire, the revised school menu incorporated fresh, seasonal Welsh produce. The project is now scaling up to serve all primary schools in Carmarthenshire, with plans to deliver 2.1 million meals annually. It introduced the UK's first 'Public Land to Public Plate' model, serving food

from the county farm to local schools, directly employing horticultural staff, and collaborating with organisations including Food Sense Wales and Farming Connect.

- Further to the new Future Generations school menu a roll out of '**Food Sustainability Training**' has taken place for catering staff and management, within Carmarthenshire County Council. The key outcomes and a cultural shift in mindset with catering staff, the Local Authority, who share a collective purpose and mission for further development. The project is seen as a scalable model for other Local Authorities in Wales.

## **Meat Consumption**

The Welsh Government recognises that a stable and sufficient supply of livestock is essential to the viability of the red meat and dairy processing sectors in Wales. The June 2024 Agricultural and Horticultural Survey for Wales revealed notable changes for livestock numbers, with a decline in cattle, sheep, and pigs, but an increase in poultry. These trends are significant in the context of climate change goals and projections for future livestock populations.

In its latest advice to the Welsh Government, the UK Climate Change Committee (UKCCC), an Independent Statutory Body, recommends a 19% reduction in ruminant livestock numbers (particularly cattle and sheep) by 2033. This is to cut methane emissions, a major contributor to the agriculture greenhouse gas inventory.

The outlined reductions are part of an economy wide '**Balanced Pathway**,' which the UKCCC forecast to be cost-effective to balance the need to decarbonise across all sectors of our economy, at different rates. The UKCCC observe that the decline in livestock numbers is for the most part driven by market forces.

The latest published June Survey statistics for 2024 confirm that livestock numbers in Wales are already lower than the UKCCC estimation for 2025. The reduction in livestock numbers is a UK-wide trend, and my officials will continue to monitor the next iteration of the Agricultural and Horticultural Survey for Wales and liaise with the other governments across the UK through the UK Market Monitoring Group.

The Sustainable Farming Scheme is designed to incentivise responsible production, which in turn supports the supply chain to meet sustainability standards. This is inclusive of livestock production and will look to add value to red meat production and its Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) status.

Thank you for writing to me on these important matters and I hope you find my response helpful.

Yours sincerely,



**Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS**

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