



Spear House
51 Victoria Street
Bristol
BS1 6AD
18/05/25

Wes Streeting, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care

The Department of Health and Social Care
39 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0EU

CC: Tazeem Bhatia, Department of Health and Social Care

CC: Rachel Fisher, Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs

Dear Secretary of State,

We write to urge you to act with haste, *“to make healthier, largely unprocessed and minimally processed foods more accessible and affordable”* to the British population, as recommended by the House of Lords Committee on Diet, Health and Obesity.

British citizens are concerned about the potential harms of ultra-processed foods and eager for a government response. We recognise that the science is complex, and further research will surely help illuminate how ultra-processed diets influence diverse health outcomes. But as the Lords Committee has stated: *“The need for further research into ultra-processed foods must not be an excuse for inaction.”*

In the near term, we urge you to harness the upcoming cross-departmental Government Food Strategy to ensure everyone – especially infants and children, and those from vulnerable and marginalised communities – can enjoy a diet based on more whole and minimally processed food.

There are numerous policy options already on the table which could begin to shift the balance of Britain’s diet. By increasing your support for breastfeeding women, expanding the Healthy Start scheme, expanding eligibility for Free School Meals, procuring fresh produce from farms that deliver measurable benefits to climate and nature, devising a horticulture strategy, ending unhealthy advertising across all media, and introducing new fiscal measures informed by the Soft Drinks Industry Levy, you can begin to support increased consumption of healthy, minimally processed produce, such as fruits, vegetables, pulses and wholegrains.

We urge you to act swiftly and decisively. The Lords Committee described the evidence linking ultra-processed diets to poor health outcomes as “*alarming*”. Please heed their warning and position whole foods at the centre of the government’s food strategy.

You have our support.

Helen Browning OBE, Chief Executive, Soil Association

Katharine Jenner, Director, Obesity Health Alliance

Greg Fell, President, Association of Directors of Public Health

Liz Stockley, Chief Executive Officer, British Dietetic Association

Kath Dalmeny, Chief Executive, Sustain

Vicky Sibson, Director, First Steps Nutrition Trust

Hannah Brinsden, Head of Policy and Advocacy, The Food Foundation

James Toop, Chief Executive, Bite Back

Stephanie Slater, Chief Executive, School Food Matters

Naomi Duncan, Chief Executive, Chefs in Schools

Myles Bremner, Director, Bremner & Co

Carina Millstone, Executive Director, Feedback

Pete Ritchie, Executive Director, Nourish Scotland

Katie Palmer, Programme Manager, Food Sense Wales

Fran Box, Director, TastEd

Dolly van Tulleken, Director, Dolitics

Kawther Hashem, Head of Research and Impact, Action on Sugar

Angelina Sanderson Bellamy, Professor of Food Systems, Co-Lead AFN Network+

Jonathan Pauling, Chief Executive, Alexandra Rose Charity

Matthew Philpott, Executive Director, Health Equalities Group

Adele Jones, Executive Director, Sustainable Food Trust

Martin Lines, Chief Executive, Nature Friendly Farming Network

Rebecca Laughton, Horticulture Coordinator, Landworkers’ Alliance

Christopher Stopes, Co-chair, English Organic Forum