

## Food Facts – for Activity 2

### Access to Food

There are [enough calories grown](#) in the world to feed everyone.

Global food production of calories has generally kept pace with population growth, but more than [820 million people](#) still lack sufficient food, and many more consume either low-quality diets or too much food.

There are [over 200 food banks](#) in Scotland.

People of all ages in Scotland, including young [people aged 16 – 24 years](#), are worried that they would run out of food because of a lack of money or other resources.

### Diet-related ill health

Obesity is the [2<sup>nd</sup> biggest](#) preventable cause of cancer and is linked to 13 common forms of cancer.

Diabetes accounts for [10% of NHS Scotland's budget](#). 5.4% of Scotland's population is diagnosed with the condition.

The [UK has the fastest rising levels of obesity](#) of the 35 countries in the OECD. This group includes America.

The average Scot eats only 3 portions of fruit and veg. a day.

### Climate Change

Climate change is already affecting the food we produce around the world. Changing patterns of weather as well as extreme weather such as flooding make it increasingly difficult to grow food. Climate change will mean more unpredictable weather and more extreme weather.

[26.1% of Scotland's greenhouse gas emissions were from agriculture and related land use, 2016.](#)

Remember that this figure is counting what we produce (not what we consume) so it includes emissions for crops grown for export, such as barley, (grown for whisky) and lamb. It doesn't include all the emissions from food we eat that is imported from around the world, which is considerable – think of all that transport and refrigeration.

Greenhouse gas emissions from Scottish agriculture in 2016 were from [methane mostly from cows and sheep \(44%\)](#), nitrous oxide from fertilisers (29%), and burning fossil fuels (27%)

[21% of Scottish households' greenhouse gas emissions are from the food they consume.](#)

A switch to the Eatwell guide would cut the UK's food related GHG emissions by [17%](#)

## Biodiversity loss

We depend on healthy populations of lots of different creatures for our ecosystems (including the soil) to work well and help us to survive and thrive. There are more people in the world than ever before, but the populations of many other creatures are rapidly declining because of what people are doing. Some are going extinct. Extinction is forever.

There are only [half](#) as many farmland birds in the UK today than there were in 1970.

The [single largest cause](#) of the decline in the populations of plants and animals in the UK is conventional agriculture.

In Scotland, the economic value of pollinators is about [£43 million per year](#) for agricultural and horticultural crops, and honey.

In Scotland only [2.2%](#) of our agricultural land is farmed organically.

## Food and work

[1 in 10](#) of all Scottish jobs depend on agricultural activity and primary produce.

Food and drink is the [largest](#) industry for Scotland's international exports.

[48%](#) of people working in the food sector in the UK are paid below the Living Wage.

Retail and hospitality alone account for a [third](#) of workers in poverty.

## Soil loss

It takes [thousands of years](#) to create just a couple of centimetres of new soil. Around the world we are losing soil faster than it can be replaced.

Deforestation, climate change and areas growing just one crop (monoculture) are damaging the soil and eroding it away.

[20%](#) of Scotland's topsoils surveyed in 2015/16 had severe structural degradation. This means that we can't grow as much food in them. It also means that they don't store water very well and this increases the risk of flooding and losing the soil itself.

## Food and food packaging waste

In 2018, food and drink related litter amounted to an average of [35% of the total count of litter items](#) on Scottish beaches.

It takes a land mass [larger than China](#) and 25% of all fresh water consumption globally to grow the food each year that is never eaten.

[56%](#) of Scottish people report that they separate their food waste from their general waste. This is an increase from 26% in 2012.