



# NATIONAL FOOD SERVICE

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GREEN  
NEW DEAL



## Demand 6: National Food Service

The UK's food system has long required ambitious political action to address both its inequalities and its harmful environmental and public health consequences - further illuminated by the coronavirus pandemic. In April 2020 as [British dairy farmers were dumping thousands of litres of milk](#), Tesco paid out [£635 million in dividends to shareholders](#) despite receiving a £585 million business rate holiday from the government. But the crisis could also be the catalyst for meaningful solutions. Labour must call for:

### 1. Right to healthy, low-environmental impact food:

- Government funding for food businesses that become part of a new National Food Service. These would offer affordable, healthy and environmentally sourced meals aligned with the [Eat-Lancet Planetary Health Diet](#), as well as cooking classes and employment and training opportunities. Inspired by the [National Kitchens](#) of the Second World War, this initiative would help the hospitality industry recover and adapt in the context of coronavirus, whilst improving the health of local communities.
- New public procurement rules, aligned with the [Eat-Lancet Diet](#) through a phased transition, ensuring local, sustainable producers are prioritised. Unharvested or unsold food could also be procured and distributed through the National Food Service, reducing waste and mitigating pandemic disruptions.
- Free [fruit and veg vouchers](#) (or cards with credit) for all households - these could be used at National Food Service establishments, or spent with the food cooperatives mentioned below. Citizens could be given more democratic control over their food system through [Beetroot Bond](#)-style shares.
- Regulate large retailers to include a maximum percentage of floorspace for meat and dairy, and minimum percentage of floorspace for meat and

dairy alternatives, increased over time - to [expand choice](#) and ensure tasty, nutritious, low-emissions food is accessible and affordable for all.

## 2. Better farming:

- Incentivise greater domestic agro-ecological production and shorter supply chains to improve the UK's food security and resilience.
- Recognise smaller farmers as part of the National Food Service, offering financial incentives and training to shift towards producing more plant-based food agro-ecologically.
- Foster the establishment of farmers cooperatives selling directly to the public and National Food Service - building on the boosted demand for veg box schemes during the COVID-19 pandemic, which [benefits smaller operations](#) most.
- Disincentivise factory farming, which is environmentally destructive, increases the likelihood of future pandemics through [zoonotic disease](#) transmission and contributes to worldwide [antimicrobial resistance](#). Potential measures include import tariffs on animal feed and industrially produced meat, removing subsidies, taxation and more stringent environmental standards to gain planning permission. This should be done while ensuring that the cheapest food is not made more expensive for working-class people.

## 3. Reduced waste:

- Mandatory food waste reporting and participation in waste reduction agreements for all large food businesses, the introduction of binding national targets to halve UK food waste from farm to fork by 2030 (against 2015 baselines), increased taxes on landfill and incineration, and increased funding for food waste measurement and prevention.

## 4. International justice:

- Oppose a damaging trade deal with the USA that will undercut British producers on both cost and standards.

- With finance and technology, support food-insecure countries to move away from neo-colonial export-oriented agriculture towards a model based on food sovereignty, agro-ecology and fair trade.