

## Fork to Farm South West Scotland Dialogue

### Notes from Info Session 17<sup>th</sup> Feb 2021

A good first session with 27 attendees and several apologies, mainly from farmers caught up in outdoor work. Good representation from across the 4 participating local authorities.

After the welcome and introduction, participants headed to breakout rooms to share with others in a 'speed networking' session their responses to:

- What make you hopeful about our food system?
- What makes you worried?
- If you had a magic wand, what would you change?

Some of these responses were shared in short feedback, along with responses to the question posed before the session:

- What are your hopes for being involved in this project?

Answers to this have been summarised in a Wordcloud which has been shared with participants and those on the distribution list.

Sofie (Nourish) and Abi (Propagate) then presented slides which went into detail about the global context, COP26, and information about the structure of the local SW Dialogue. These slides have been shared on the distribution list.

The slides were followed by questions and discussion, some of which are captured below:

1. How are you going to connect farmers with the people in cities (ie consumers, communities...) I only see policymakers on this call? -  
*- Answer: The dialogue begins with bringing farmers (the individuals) and city/municipal policymakers together, rather than consumers/citizens at first but that consumers/schools/citizens/community groups etc. may be relevant 'witnesses' as the dialogue develops.*
2. (Teresa, NFU) The negative framing of food systems' contribution to GHG emissions is not going to get farmers involved. What achieves that is peer - to - peer learning and elevating examples of good practice. We need to work hard to reverse the negative narrative.  
*- Answer: That is exactly what we want to do, but it's helpful feedback to ensure that we get this across more clearly in the past. The dialogues are all about showing the textured and diverse examples of sustainable farming and transformative local partnerships and show that farmers and cities are part of the solution.*
3. Are we attempting to represent farmers at COP26?  
*- Answer: We do not intend to represent farmers as a constituency at COP26 formally (a role that NFU and WFO occupy). But rather to showcase diversity and good practices while building a social movement.*

4. I was hoping this would be about local producers connected to local markets / I wrote down 'local food, local markets, fair price' but this all feels very high level. That's important too but not relevant for individual farmers (as opposed to NFU).

- Answer: I clarified that there are several dimensions of impact to the Fork to Farm dialogues, local collaboration (local food, supply chains, markets) being a central one.

Following this, participants headed into breakout rooms again to discuss:

- What makes you excited about this project?
- What makes you worried or concerned?

Excited:

- How many people are interested in changing food policy
- Collectively tackling the issues and finding solutions together
- Hope that this project will effect local issues
- Potential to engage the grassroots
- How food can support biodiversity
- We can produce a lot of food in a small area with co-benefits for biodiversity
- We (farmers) hold a lot of the solutions to climate change
- Glasgow City has seen a huge increase in demand for space to grow food (allotments etc)

Concerns

- Temptation to think small is beautiful, but lots of people can't afford 'good local food', the solution is producing food at scale.
- Lack of transparency in supermarket supply chains
- Increase in food insecurity and foodbank use – farmers respond to the market
- Unfit agricultural policies
- Various sectors place demands on land-use for different purposes - how do we navigate?
- To what extent (and how) do we direct questions to politicians?
- We all need to take responsibility
- The power of the corporate lobby to influence food policy

We then had a quick poll: Based on what you have seen and heard today, do you think you will continue to be involved?

Yes 73%

No 0%

Still not sure 27%

Abi closed the session by letting everyone know that notes would be shared and everyone would receive a follow up phone call over the coming weeks.