



The National Procurement Policy Statement Survey The Vegan Society Response

1. Maximising value for money: How can mission-driven procurement help us achieve greater value for money for the taxpayer in the delivery of public services? [2000 character limit].

The Vegan Society sees 'the mission' as environmentally, socially, economically sustainable public services across all sectors for maximum public good. UK public sector procurement, c. £407bn in 2023/24, is vital investment for system change for long-term public health payoffs.

Food-related ill health remains high. So, all public catering must be sustainable, healthy, tasty & culturally appropriate, to reduce disease, & stimulate food system improvement. Plant-based catering also cuts costs by up to one third.

The Office of Health Economics estimates NHS England will save c. £6.7bn/yr if we all adopt fully plant-based diets (we thus project c. £8bn/yr UK-wide). We will also gain c. 173,000 Quality-Adjusted Life Years (QALYs), raising savings to £18.8bn/yr (£70k/QALY; we project c. £22bn/yr UK-wide). About 1 in 4 of us eat publicly catered food & will be thus influenced to normalise sustainable, healthy plant-based food.

Environmentally sustainable procurement also saves large climate mitigation costs. The Grantham Institute estimate climate change now costs us c. 1.1% of UK GDP, c. £25bn, rising to 7.4% of GDP by 2100 without action. Plant-based procurement choices will greatly reduce this. Industrial farming of animals for meat, egg & milk products causes the majority of UK food system emissions. A key 'super-leverage' policy for Net Zero highlighted at the World Economic Forum 2023 is plant-based protein in public procurement. WRAP estimate c. 35% of UK emissions (inc. imports) are from our food system, but we can reduce this to c. 17.5% by 2030. Public procurement prioritising plant-based protein, wholegrain, vegetable & fruit-based meals supports public health & can help avoid up to £4bn/yr of climate change costs by 2030.

Public procurement is a vital way for the UK Government to demonstrate national & global leadership & must prioritise environmental sustainability & public health with a focus on plant-based food as the default option.



2. Delivering social value: How can we use public procurement to achieve greater social value to support delivery of the missions? [2000 character limit].

Investing the £407bn (2023/24) procurement spend in sustainable supply is vital for the public good & positive system changes.

Too many UK residents live with food insecurity, so sustainable, healthy, tasty & culturally appropriate public catering is a must. The Office of Health Economics estimates that in England we will gain c. 173,000 Quality-Adjusted Life Years (QALY), if we all adopt fully plant-based diets (we thus project c. 214,000 QALY UK-wide). This means that people will enjoy more healthy years of life. A transition to a plant-based food system will also bring other social impacts such as more areas of rewilded land, increased biodiversity, cleaner rivers, better food security and the ability to use the freed-up land for public goods like housing.

Increased plant-based food in public settings will significantly increase uptake of vegetables, fruits, legumes & wholegrains – & thus vital nutrients such as dietary fibre & vitamin C – which we urgently need.

The Vegan Society 'Catering for Everyone' project calls for UK Public Procurement Policy to require excellent quality plant-based meals on every public sector menu, always, with plant-based defaults being the preferred approach. This meets the Public Sector Equality Duty for the increasing numbers of people who need food free of animal 'products' due philosophical or religious belief, or Disability.

About 1 in 4 of us in the UK eat publicly catered food, so as well as directly benefiting, everyone can be familiar with sustainable, healthy plant-based food. Procurement principles must therefore prioritise environmental sustainability and public health with a focus on plant-based food as the default option.

Public procurement is a vital way for the UK Government to demonstrate national & global leadership in how we can meet & exceed our public health goals, & our international Net Zero obligations.



3. Enabling collaboration: How can we accelerate collaboration in public procurement (between central and local government, between local anchor partners (e.g. in health and education) and in partnership with suppliers), to support delivery of the missions? [2000 character limit].

Investing the £407bn (2023/24) procurement spend in sustainable supply is vital for the public good & positive system changes.

Plants First Healthcare is a major campaign across the 4 UK nations. Over 20 healthcare organisations (with over 1 million total members), & 1200+ individual healthcare professionals, signed the letter to all NHS leaders, for default plant-based menus in all NHS settings and some hospitals in the UK have begun to trial a plant-based default option. A 2022 pilot in 11 New York City hospitals, gained 95% support, cut food-related emissions by 36%, & cut each meal cost by up to 46p. This demonstrates that plant-based defaults can be supported by service users, cut costs and emissions. Procurement principles must therefore prioritise environmental sustainability and public health with a focus on plant-based food as the default option.

Nottingham University Hospitals (NUH) NHS Trust has focused on sustainability since 2006. In 2014, their Procurement carbon footprint was c. 275,000 tCO₂e, & 80% came from Scope 3 emissions, typical of UK organisations. Scope 3 emissions are key for catering, up to 95% of the total, mostly from farming & land use change. The Independent Review of NHS Hospital Food 2019 found key NUH sustainable food procurement elements are:

- (1) Seasonal food;
- (2) Local farms & suppliers sourcing;
- (3) High veg & fruit content
- (3) A 'Memory Menu' system, involving patients & the public, to maintain sustainability;
- (4) Explicit environmental & social responsibility standards in all food tenders/agreements/contracts;
- (5) Pro-active support for smaller local businesses to hold contracts;
- (6) A multidisciplinary governance structure with long-term commitment to sustainable food;
- (7) Own kitchen & chefs.

We call on all public procurement to exceed the NUH's sustainable food model. We need default plant-based procurement including food to reduce Scope 3 GHG emissions, so UK Government shows national & global leadership.



4. Fostering innovation: How can we help policy-makers/commissioners identify challenges that can be put to the market to support mission outcomes through innovation, and improve commercial capability to deliver mission-driven procurement? [2000 character limit].

Investing the £407bn (2023/24) procurement spend in sustainable supply is vital for the public good & positive system changes.

Nottingham University Hospitals (NUH) NHS Trust ensure long-term sustainability by innovation in management. They pro-actively support local smaller suppliers to innovate for a guaranteed market. They have multidisciplinary, service-user & public governance to monitor, maintain & develop their sustainability. All public procurement needs to exceed this NUH's model.

Public Procurement needs the Plant-Based Transition in biosphere management for food, fuel, construction materials, fibre, pharmaceuticals etc. to reduce Scope 3 emissions. The 2014 NUH Procurement carbon footprint included c. 220,000 tCO₂e (about 80%) from Scope 3 emissions, which is typical of UK organisations. Farming & land use change create up to 95% of Scope 3 emissions (catering).

So, we need to regenerate UK farming, forestry, fishing etc. towards plant-based methods. UK biosphere managers have huge opportunities to diversify, as c. 90% of UK crop production is dominated by only 7 crops. We have successful pilots that moving from unsustainable industrial animal farms to sustainable methods, & we need more. A former chicken farm in Norfolk now grows high-value, versatile oyster mushrooms. The project is led by Chef Derek Sarno (Wicked Kitchen in Tesco & ASDA), with UK smaller businesses, The Little Mushroom Co., & Smithy Mushrooms. Thus, farmers, chefs, communities could collaborate with the public sector for sustainable value chains.

Public procurement investment is vital to support UK-based food manufacturers to transition to sustainable protein directly made from legumes & grains, including by fermentation into high-protein foods such as QUORN™. The National Alternative Protein Innovation Centre should support this. Procurement principles must therefore prioritise default plant-based including food for environmental sustainability & public health.



5. Please tell us about yourself. *

First name: Claire

Last name: Ogley

Job title: Head of Campaigns, Policy and Research, The Vegan Society

6. What is your email address? policy@vegansociety.com

7. Are you responding as a private individual or do you work for an organisation concerned with public procurement? Organisation

8. What is the name of your organisation? *

The Vegan Society

9. What nation or region does your organisation cover/ represent? *

Other (please specify): World wide

10. Is your organisation primarily interested as: *

'Another interested party (legal firm, academic, trade group/professional body, regulator, campaign group/ think tank, charity/ voluntary sector organisation, other)?'

11. Please specify what other type of organisation *

Charity/ voluntary sector

12. Please indicate whether you are happy for the relevant points and comments you have made to be published in any summary report. *

'I am happy for my responses to be published alongside my name and organisation'

END