

Postcard from the Future

Food



Source: CAT (2017). Zero Carbon Britain - Making it Happen.



Food

The average diet in the UK is now healthier, more varied and sustainable owing to a mixture of legislation and education. The trend in obesity has been reversed and is no longer a health concern now that the consumption of foods high in fats, salt and sugar has fallen.

Restrictions on advertising, as well as the taxation of junk foods, have helped move the population as a whole to a much more balanced diet. There is a greater understanding of healthy food choices and the benefits of more nutrient-dense foods. This vastly increased awareness of what actually constitutes a diet healthy for both people and planet means people eat significantly less red meat – particularly beef and lamb, but also pork and chicken, and less cheese, milk and eggs. Many people enjoy high quality meat a couple of times a week, and while most still eat a certain amount of dairy produce, plant-based alternatives are everyday fare.

Publicly-funded organisations like schools and hospitals always provide sustainable diets. Restaurants and manufacturers have diversified significantly and the majority of meals on their menus are now non-meat or lower meat choices. Many popular dishes, such as spaghetti Bolognese, are now made by adding a small amount of meat to a plant-based mince. Nobody seems to have noticed the difference.

Farmers grow a wider range of crops, providing more food directly for human consumption, rather than for livestock. The UK grows much more of its own fruit and vegetables. Animal welfare and meat quality is also improved. Pigs and chickens are fed predominantly on food waste, with a small amount of crops still grown to feed livestock, to limit the need for these to be imported from elsewhere. The reduction in livestock farming has reduced water pollution and enabled better protection of the UK's green spaces and land around streams and rivers, helping wildlife and biodiversity.