



## **Consultation: Food (Wales) Bill**

The British Association for Shooting and Conservation (BASC) is the largest shooting organisations in the UK with approximately 150,000 members. Our mission is to promote and protect sporting shooting and advocate its conservation role throughout Great Britain and Northern Ireland; and that includes promoting the benefits of game as a nutritious and sustainable food source.

Shooting in Wales contributes £75 million to the UK economy directly supporting the equivalent of 2,400 full-time jobs. Shooting is involved in the management of 380,000 hectares in Wales (19% of its land mass). The management practices associated with shooting play a pivotal role in protecting ecosystems and helping wildlife to thrive. Across Wales, shooting contributes to an annual spend of £7.4m on conservation, which is the equivalent of 490 full-time jobs or 120,000 conservation workdays.

We welcome the Food (Wales) Bill and support its objectives to establish a more sustainable food system in Wales.

BASC recommends that the Welsh Government includes game meat as a required element of its food goals in the National Food Strategy and local food plans as an action arising from this consultation.

The information below evidences that game meat consumption and promotion aligns with many of the Welsh Government's objectives.

## **Sustainability**

Game meat has a lower carbon footprint relative to many other types of meat sold in Wales. Most game meat is sourced locally and therefore transport emissions are much lower than with commercially produced meats.

BASC is compiling data to assess the carbon footprint of game meat production, including pheasant, partridge, venison, and pigeon. Once completed, carbon zero targets will be set for the game meat industry.

According to recent studies, consumers perceive game meat to be 'greener' when compared to farmed meat. Furthermore, for the animals to be 'free roaming' and 'following their natural grazing behaviour' is often associated with meaningful life for the animals (see Matilainen et al. 2021).

Flourishing populations can provide a harvestable surplus of wild game when managed appropriately, it is that which underpins the conservation work and generates more environmental benefits. It is necessary to control expanding game populations such as deer

to prevent negative environmental impacts on fields and woodlands as well as to prevent deer wandering and causing road traffic collisions. To some extent shot game meat is a side product of wildlife management aiming to control damage. This is very evident in the UK with the deer population which has now reached 2 million.

Grey squirrels and woodpigeon cause significant damage to woodland and agricultural crops respectively. The control of these pests has many economic and environmental benefits alongside providing a nutritional meat source.

People that shoot undertake 119,000 days of conservation work across the Welsh countryside annually and this benefits rare songbirds, geese, and waders, providing them with shelter, food and protection from predators (PACEC 2017).

## **Nutrition**

### **Healthy Eating – healthier shopping baskets**

Game meat is a healthy option for meat eaters because it is high in protein and low in fat, low in cholesterol whilst remaining high in nutrients. Game meat can be a strong contributor to any low-fat/calorie diet and the fight against obesity.

Table 1. Nutritional data comparators for a range of game and farmed meat

	<b>Partridge</b>	<b>Pheasant</b>	<b>Venison</b>	<b>Lamb</b>	<b>Beef</b>	<b>Turkey</b>	<b>Chicken</b>
Energy (Kcal/100g)	112	119	104	172	191	111	105
Energy (Kj/100g)	476	505	442	720	800	469	443
Protein (g/100g)	25.8	27.1	23.4	20.8	23.1	25.2	20.1
Fat (g/100g)	1	1.2	1	9.9	11	1.1	1.5
Cholesterol (mg/100g)	85	66	85	90	99	65	90
Saturated fatty acid (g/100g)	0	0.39	0	4.75	4.39	0	0.50
monounsaturated fats (g/100g)	0	0.54	0	3.76	5.31	0	0.58
polyunsaturated fats (g/100g)	0	0.21	0	0.96	0.81	0	0.35
Vit B1 (mg/100g)	0.03	0.023	0.021	0.052	0.039	0.073	0.15
Vit B2 (mg/100g)	0.015	0.019	0.011	0.022	0.033	0.013	0.012
Vit B3 (mg/100g)	2.67	3.77	1.64	7.62	9.34	5.75	6.3
Vit B6 (mg/100g)	0.13	0.061	0.061	0.053	0.074	0.11	0.11
Iron (mg/100g)	0.7	1	2.4	1.6	1.4	0.2	0.2
Sodium (mg/100g)	37	40	44	43	49	64	37
Zinc (mg/100g)	0.7	0.8	1.8	2.5	3.5	1.2	0.5
Selenium (mg/kg)	0.43	0.37	0.04	0.08	0.04	0.1	0.1
Ash (g/100g)	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.1	1	1.2	1.2
Total solids (g/100g)	27.1	28.8	26	31.5	34.7	26.6	25.5

\*Source: [www.countryside-alliance.org/our-work/campaigns/gametoeat/nutritional-facts](http://www.countryside-alliance.org/our-work/campaigns/gametoeat/nutritional-facts)

Wild game animals eat a natural diet and roam freely which contributes to the lower fat content of the meat. Additionally, eating vegetation in the wild contributes to a lower content of pro-inflammatory omega-6 fatty acids and a higher content of anti-inflammatory omega-3 fatty acids in game meat. Furthermore, wild game meat is a good source of protein and minerals such as iron and zinc.

Industrially produced and packaged meats often contain additives and preservatives to prolong shelf life and improve appearance and may contain significant amounts of antibiotics.

The shooting sector has committed to a voluntary transition away from lead shot and single-use plastics for live quarry shooting and has ambitions to source shot game from lead-free supply chains.

(<https://basc.org.uk/basc-position-uk-reach-lead-ammunition-restriction-proposals/>).

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## **Accessibility**

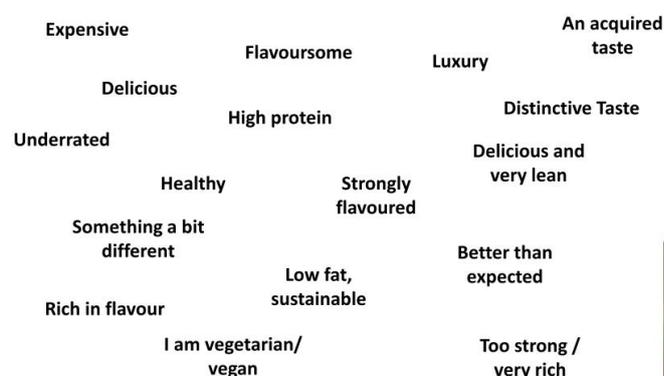
BASC manages the Eat Game campaign, which aims to change and influence behaviours to increase the consumption of game meat in the UK.

The Eat Game website ([www.eatgame.co.uk](http://www.eatgame.co.uk)) is a dedicated game meat website which features recipes, promotes chef and restaurant profiles as well as information for consumers about where to buy game meat. The game meat supply chain is supported by BASC through business support, information sharing and promotion. The campaign has a strong social media presence and attendance at shows and events including the BBC Good Food Show.

The post-show survey below (November 2022) evidences customer perceptions of game meat and the likelihood of them purchasing game meat after attending our stand and watching the live game meat demonstrations.

### **Post-show survey**

**“What is your perception of Game Meat?”**



source: BBC Good Food Show Winter 2022, Post-show Visitor Survey



## Post-show survey

Before attending BBC Good Food Show Winter have you previously tried or purchased Game Meat?

50%

Responded yes

Would you now be more likely to order Game Meat in a restaurant?

32%

Responded yes

Would you now be more likely to purchase Game Meat?

30%

Responded yes

Source: BBC Good Food Show Winter 2022, Post-show Visitor Survey

Eat Game has also been a partner in the creation of the Welsh Game Guide (launched at the 2022 Welsh Royal Show) which promotes restaurants who serve game meat as standard on their menus. It also runs the annual Eat Game Awards which champions game meat suppliers and hospitality businesses across the UK.

In addition, BASC runs a future chefs project in conjunction with the Game Meat Wales project which teaches trainee chefs the 'field to fork' journey of game meat including how to butcher and cook game to ensure game appears on menus in restaurants, hotels, and pubs throughout Wales.

Supermarkets are increasingly embracing game meat and especially venison. Stockists include Waitrose, Sainsbury's, Aldi, Budgens, Tesco, Asda, Morrisons and Ocado.

Throughout the Covid pandemic we saw increased development of the online sales of game meat, especially food boxes specialising in venison, thereby improving its accessibility to consumers thanks to the ease of ordering online and prompt delivery to the door.

Consumer research by Mintel (2017 & 2018) has shown consistent growth in game meat sales since 2013.

Research has evidenced significant opportunities in the game meat market as follows:

- British origin is important to 40% of consumers. Game meat is very much a local/British market (Mintel 2017 & 2018).
- 72% of people do not eat game meat – this shows the huge opportunities in the game meat market (Kantar 2017).
- 67% of meat eaters/buyers agree that recipe suggestions are a good way to learn how to experiment with different types of meat (Mintel 2017 & 2018).
- 72% of meat eaters/buyers agree there should be more environmentally friendly packaging for meat (Mintel 2017 & 2018).
- 33% of UK adults say they look for new foods/flavours to try all or most of the time (Mintel 2017 & 2018)
- 28% of meat buyers look for low fat varieties (Mintel 2017 & 2018).
- 42% of meat eaters/buyers say they buy premium cuts at the weekend (Mintel 2017 & 2018).
- 25-34-year-olds have the widest meat repertoires (Mintel 2017 & 2018).

A significant barrier to game meat consumption is the lack of familiarity with its preparation and cooking. Mintel's correspondence analysis shows that game is the meat that is most closely associated with "difficult to cook safely". Emphasising easy-to-cook formats and providing easy-to-follow instructions remain important here (Mintel 2017 & 2018).

Online game meat sales are up 133% and this is due to accessibility but shows the strength of the growing market.

BASC's Eat Game website includes a locator function ([www.eatgame.co.uk/location/](http://www.eatgame.co.uk/location/)) on where to buy game to help consumers buy game within their locality or online.

### Understanding where your food comes from

It is important for the consumer to understand where their food comes from, and the shooting sector has improved its communication with the consumer over the past few years with key messages.

Game is harvested from the diverse and beautiful Welsh countryside. Many game animals must be managed to maintain biodiversity, and this increases the amount of conservation that is undertaken by shoot managers, wildfowlers and stalkers. Through effective conservation practices shooters work to ensure plentiful quarry species whilst benefiting the wider environment.

Ninety seven percent of all the edible quarry shot is destined for human consumption.

### Local food supply

BASC wants to enhance the resilience of regional and local food systems, and to create shorter supply chains which will support reducing dependence on long-haul transportation. Most of the game sold in Wales is British, with the exception of imports of New Zealand venison.

Local food supplies are thought to improve consumers' access to healthy food, and consumers are believed to be willing to pay a higher price for local over non-local food.

It is said that participating in local food supply chains provides farmers/shoots with a high sense of social recognition whilst fostering social ties and boosting local economies.