**Annex 2: The action plan content**

Please see below the draft content for the six core content pillars of the action plan.

The three pillars:

* Climate change and the path to net zero
* Sustainable packaging and the circular economy
* Nutrition and healthier living

The three drivers:

* Investment to finance the change
* Innovation to speed the change
* Partnerships to scale the change

**Climate change and the path to net zero**

**To avoid irreversible and disastrous consequences for generations to come, we must work together around the world and across every sector to fight the climate emergency.**

Food production from farm-to-fork represents [30% of total carbon emissions within the EU, with the food manufacturing process accounting for 3%](https://www.fooddrinkeurope.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Decarbonising-the-European-food-and-drink-manufacturing-sector_v2.pdf) of total EU emissions.

With this in mind, the food and drink sector is well placed to not only reduce greenhouse gas emissions from its own operations, but also to work in partnership to cut emissions along the entire food value chain.

At the same time our industry must work to tackle interrelated challenges around food waste, deforestation and unsustainable sourcing.

**The targets:**

* Carbon neutral food chain by 2050, contribute to a 55% reduction of EU food chain emissions by 2030
* A 50% reduction of per capita food waste at the retail and consumer level by 2030 and reduced food losses along EU food supply chains
* Transformed commodity supply chains which do not contribute to deforestation, forest degradation and destruction of natural habitat
* All commodities sourced from sustainable agriculture

**Our commitments:**

* Launch a Climate Action Project to help businesses with concrete measures to move to net zero

The Climate Action Project will identify activities and partnerships to help food and drink businesses meet carbon reduction and wider environmental targets.

The work has already begun. In July 2021, we commissioned a study, by the leading environmental consultancy Ricardo, to develop recommendations and [a roadmap to decarbonise the food and drink industry](https://www.fooddrinkeurope.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Decarbonising-the-European-food-and-drink-manufacturing-sector_v2.pdf).

We are now working with Ricardo to develop a practical toolkit and training to help food and drink businesses plot a path towards net-zero emissions.

The Climate Action Project will also identify concrete measures, including industry guidelines and training, to help food and drink businesses tackle food waste and deforestation.

* Establish a sustainable farming partnership platform

Given the food manufacturing industry buys 70% of EU farm produce, as well as produce from around the world, FoodDrinkEurope has established a sustainable farming partnership platform to develop initiatives with farmer organisations towards more sustainable farming and sourcing.

Partners *[TBC]* include Copa-Cogeca (representing European farmers), CEJA (representing young farmers), the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation and carbon farming experts at Soil Capital.

* Inspire businesses through our SME Greener Planet Award

One of the best ways to inspire businesses to take effective action to tackle environmental challenges is to show them that it’s not only possible, but also good for business.

2022 is the second year of The Foodies – FoodDrinkEurope’s SME sustainability competition – where we showcase some incredible initiatives.

The Greener Planet Award is for an SME committed to reducing its environmental impact and the finalists and winners are being held up as an example for other companies to learn from.

**Our asks:**

To ensure a swift transition towards net zero, the food and drink industry urges policymakers to prioritise the following areas:

* Access to renewable energy: Ensure pan-European infrastructure and access to renewable energy for manufacturing businesses of all sizes.
* Support for innovation: Develop a predictable policy environment that encourages investments into low carbon technology and food and drink products that can help tackle and mitigate climate change.
* Competitiveness of SMEs: Consult SMEs, which make up 99% of the food manufacturing sector, to ensure environmental policy takes their capacity and needs into account.
* Consumer engagement: Guide consumers to play their part by creating a harmonised approach to provide environmental information on products, prevent misleading claims and avoid food waste.
* Sustainable farming: Use the Common Agricultural Policy, as well as Green Deal and Farm to Fork initiatives, to support sustainable farming practices that lead to healthier soils and carbon sequestration, and that also secure farmer livelihoods.
* Trade and sustainable development: Include Trade and Sustainable Development chapters in all EU Free Trade Agreements to ensure trade partners agree on shared sustainability principles, such as the protection of biodiversity and climate change mitigation.

**Member case studies:**

By integrating climate change in their business strategies, European food and drink manufacturers have achieved a [21% reduction in carbon emissions per unit of value added](https://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/submitViewTableAction.do) between 2008 and 2018, that is to say, the industry is getting more carbon efficient when producing food and drink products. Here are some examples of how members are reducing their [carbon emissions](https://www.fooddrinkeurope.eu/industry-actions/?search=climate+change).

In addition, our members have developed a range of initiatives to tackle [food waste](https://www.fooddrinkeurope.eu/industry-actions/?search=food+waste), end [deforestation](https://www.fooddrinkeurope.eu/industry-actions/?search=deforestation+) and improve their [sustainable sourcing](https://www.fooddrinkeurope.eu/industry-actions/?search=sustainable+sourcing+). And you will find more pledges and [commitments to the Code of Conduct](https://ec.europa.eu/food/horizontal-topics/farm-fork-strategy/sustainable-food-processing/code-conduct/individual-pledges_en) here.

*This workstream will help deliver on the Code of Conduct objectives 1, 2, 6, 7*

**Sustainable packaging and the circular economy**

**Packaging plays a vital role in protecting, preserving and transporting food and drink products to consumers.**

**However, the production and use of packaging, such as plastic, can have adverse environmental impacts. When packaging is overused, littered or incinerated, rather than minimised, re-used or recycled, the environmental damage to our planet is exacerbated.**

As a major user of packaging the food and drink industry has an important role to improve the circularity of packaging for food and drink products and to drive future innovation.

**The targets:**

* All food and drink packaging recyclable or reusable by 2030
* 10m tonnes of recycled plastic are used in new products by 2025

**Our commitments:**

* Launch a Packaging Action Project to help businesses with concrete measures to have more circular packaging

The Packaging Action Project will identify activities and partnerships to help food and drink businesses meet sustainable packaging and circular economy targets.

As an important link to the circular economy and wider sustainability agenda, FoodDrinkEurope is also focused on resource efficiency. We will publish guidelines to help food and drink businesses use product environmental footprint (PEF) methodology to evaluate the environmental footprint of a product and provide product environmental information to consumers.

* Work with Circular Plastics Alliance to tackle plastic use

As a member of the [Circular Plastics Alliance](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5CWSU%5CDownloads%5CCircular%2520Plastics%2520Alliance%2520-%2520Declaration%2520%282%29.pdf), FoodDrinkEurope will continue to play its part to promote the use of more recycled plastics in Europe, as well as improving design, collection and sorting, and innovations for new, more sustainable packaging materials.

* Inspire businesses through best practices on sustainable packaging

FoodDrinkEurope has developed an [industry action online tool](https://www.fooddrinkeurope.eu/industry-actions/?search=packaging) which is a library of member activities on sustainable packaging. There are currently more than 50 examples which are used to teach best practice and inspire companies to learn from.

**Our asks:**

To ensure a swift transition to a circular economy, the food and drink industry urges policymakers to prioritise the following areas:

* Improved infrastructure: Increase EU and Member State investment into waste management infrastructure and recycling technologies, such as chemical recycling.
* Safe recycling: Establish rules for the safe recycling of plastic materials into food contact materials, going beyond PET which is already well regulated. Coordination and alignment between the Circular Economy Action Plan and the food contact materials regulations will be key.
* Recycled materials: Develop and strengthen the Single Market for recycled packaging materials and guarantee priority access to food quality recycled materials for the food and drink industry.
* Collection and sorting: Enhance ‘Extended Producer Responsibility’ schemes and introduce deposit return schemes where needed to increase packaging waste collection and sorting.
* Better information: Support the development of EU information on proper sorting of packaging waste and zero littering to empower consumers to play a role in the green transition and increase recycling rates through the EU.

**Member case studies:**

Our members have developed [a range of initiatives](https://www.fooddrinkeurope.eu/industry-actions/?search=packaging) to deliver more sustainable packaging and a [circular economy](https://www.fooddrinkeurope.eu/industry-actions/?search=circular+economy). In addition, many food and drink companies have made circular economy [commitments to the Code of Conduct](https://ec.europa.eu/food/horizontal-topics/farm-fork-strategy/sustainable-food-processing/code-conduct/individual-pledges_en).

*This workstream will help deliver on the Code of Conduct objectives 2, 3, 4, 6*

**Nutrition and healthier living**

**Food and drink has a very practical role – providing nutrition to look after our bodies and energy to power us through the day. Good food and drink are also woven into the fabric of European culture, with eating and drinking central to our time with friends and family.**

However, today the nutritional balance has been lost. More than half of the European adult population and a third of children are overweight or obese and malnutrition, in all of its forms, remains a major challenge.

Given the food and drink manufacturing industry helps provide 1.5 billion meals in Europe every day, it also has an important role to help consumers achieve a balanced, healthy and sustainable diet.

**The targets:**

* Healthy, balanced and sustainable diets for all European consumers
* Reverse malnutrition and diet-related health conditions
* A food environment that makes it easier to choose healthy and sustainable diets

**Our commitments:**

Launch a Nutrition Action Project to help businesses with concrete measures to support healthier living

The Nutrition Action Project will identify activities and partnerships to help food and drink businesses meet targets on nutrition, safety and healthier living. Specifically:

* FoodDrinkEurope will publish new guidelines on food innovation and reformulation to help manufacturers, particularly SMEs, with practical tools to reformulate and innovate their products.
* FoodDrinkEurope will publish updated guidelines on legibility of labelling to help manufacturers to comply with the legal requirement to provide legible information on packs.

The Nutrition Action Project will also focus on other important topics including food environment, food information, portions and advertising.

* Update and disseminate food safety guidelines

Food cannot be healthy if it is not safe. EU food safety standards are the highest in the world and FoodDrinkEurope will continue to guide businesses to reach ever higher standards. We recently published new guidelines on [food allergen management](https://www.fooddrinkeurope.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/FoodDrinkEuropes-Guidance-on-Food-Allergen-Management-for-Food-Manufacturers-2022.pdf) and we continue to update and promote our [acrylamide toolbox](https://www.fooddrinkeurope.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/FoodDrinkEurope_Acrylamide_Toolbox_2019.pdf) and guidance on [food contamination](https://www.fooddrinkeurope.eu/resource/preventing-transfer-of-undesired-mineral-oil-hydrocarbons-into-food/).

* Inspire businesses through our SME Healthier Living Award

One of the best ways to inspire businesses to take effective action to deliver healthier living initiatives is to show them that it’s not only possible, but also good for business.

2022 is the second year of [The Foodies](http://www.thefoodies.eu) – FoodDrinkEurope’s SME sustainability competition – where we showcase some incredible initiatives.

The Healthier Living Award is for an SME committed to helping consumers achieve a more balanced and healthier diet. The finalists and winners are being held up as an example for other companies to learn from.

**Our asks:**

To help food and drink businesses support healthy and sustainable diets, policymakers should prioritise the following areas:

* Improve food information to consumers: Consumers need clear and transparent information to choose a healthy and sustainable diet.
* Support innovation: The European regulatory process should inspire consumer confidence for business investment in new products for healthier diets. At the same time, regulatory bottlenecks to innovation should be identified and eliminated in order to ensure that innovative processes, technologies and products can be introduced onto the market as soon as possible.
* Maintain Single Market: Policy measures around nutrition and health should respect the single market to avoid consumer confusion and additional financial and logistical burdens on business, particularly SMEs.
* Ensure evidence-based policy: Avoid unfounded discrimination of products, ingredients, methods and processes. Invest in reliable, comparable, up-to-date pan-European dietary consumption intake data.
* Recognise the benefits: While challenges exist, acknowledge that processed food and drinks are one essential tool to deliver sustainable food systems, providing all consumers – from vegan to meat eater and everything in between – with products to suit their lifestyle and meet their dietary needs.

**Member case studies:**

Our members have developed a range of initiatives to deliver on healthier living on topics including [nutrition](https://www.fooddrinkeurope.eu/industry-actions/?policy=734), [labelling](https://www.fooddrinkeurope.eu/industry-actions/?policy=716), [lifestyles](https://www.fooddrinkeurope.eu/industry-actions/?policy=735) and [advertising](https://www.fooddrinkeurope.eu/industry-actions/?policy=736). In addition, many food and drink companies have made healthier living [commitments to the Code of Conduct](https://ec.europa.eu/food/horizontal-topics/farm-fork-strategy/sustainable-food-processing/code-conduct/individual-pledges_en).

*This workstream will help deliver on the Code of Conduct objective 1*

**Investment to finance the change**

**The transition to sustainable food systems will require significant investment to support the practices and innovations needed to transform the way we grow, manufacture and consume food and drink.**

The private sector has a major role to help finance the change. Europe’s food and drink manufacturing sector is made up of 290,000 businesses of all shapes and sizes and together they employ 4.5 million people and contribute around €1.2 trillion into the economy. The EU is also the world’s largest exporter and second largest importer of food and drink.

All EU food and drink businesses will need to be economically sustainable if they are to invest in a more sustainable future for their employees, for their consumers and for the planet.

The goal for FoodDrinkEurope is to help business to thrive *because* of their commitment to sustainable food systems, not despite it.

**Our commitments:**

* Support sustainable economic growth and investment

FoodDrinkEurope will continue to work on behalf of its members to call for an EU policy environment where social, environmental *and* economic sustainability are not only compatible, but absolutely necessary to transition to sustainable food systems.

* Provide quality, skilled jobs and an inclusive workplace for all

Employing more than 4.5 million people, the food and drink manufacturing sector is Europe’s leading employer.

FoodDrinkEurope has partnered with the EU farmer association Copa-Cogeca and a range of other stakeholders to develop a skills partnership for the agri-food industry. The aim of the ‘[Pact for Skills’](https://www.fooddrinkeurope.eu/resource/joint-press-release-a-skills-partnership-for-the-agri-food-ecosystem/), which was launched on 18 February 2022, is to upskill and reskill the current workforce, and make agri-food more attractive to young people.

As part of a European Social Dialogue, FoodDrinkEurope has partners with trade union EFFAT, to identify bottlenecks in recruiting new and skilled employees and to tackle challenges arising when companies have an ageing workforce.

*This workstream will help deliver on the Code of Conduct objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7*

**Innovation to speed the change**

**Research and innovation are key to making food systems more sustainable, resilient, inclusive and healthy.**

While the food and drink industry is actively engaged in R&I, it cannot claim to have all the answers for a sustainable food future. Public investment in collaborative R&I is essential to find new solutions to the challenges we are facing – such as tackling climate change, biodiversity loss and supporting more healthy and sustainable diets.

The goal for FoodDrinkEurope is to work collaboratively, and to contribute our expertise, to leave no stone unturned when it comes to finding innovations to ensure sustainable food systems.

**Our commitments:**

* Invest €250k into Food for Life R&I project up to 2027

FoodDrinkEurope has committed €250,000 over the next five years to support the European Technology Platform (ETP) “[Food for Life](https://etp.fooddrinkeurope.eu/)”. The platform, led by academic and industry experts, will work on a pre-competitive research agenda to speed the transition to sustainable food systems. This investment is part of longstanding support of the ETP and is in addition to the food and drink industry’s R&I spend, which topped €2.9 billion in 2017/18.

* Provide expertise to multi-stakeholder platform partnerships

FoodDrinkEurope has committed to provide expertise as a partner on the [European Commission Sustainable Food System Partnership project](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/research_and_innovation/funding/documents/ec_rtd_he-partnership-sustainable-food-systems-april_2022.pdf) to collectively develop and implement an EU-wide research and innovation agenda around sustainable food systems.

In addition, FoodDrinkEurope has committed to:

* Work alongside [23 partners](https://foodsafety4.eu/consortium/) on the European Commission’s [FoodSafety4EU](https://foodsafety4.eu/) project to shape the food safety system of the future.
* Participate in FIELDS, a collaborative ERASMUS+ project run by a consortium of [31 partners](https://www.erasmus-fields.eu/partners/) to identify existing and emerging skills needs in sustainability.

*This workstream will help deliver on the Code of Conduct objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7*

**Partnerships to scale the change**

**It is said that if you want to go quickly, go alone. If you want to go far, go together. The EU’s ambitious sustainability goals can only be met if all actors work together.**

The global food chain is a long and complex system with multiple players involved long before a farmer puts a seed in the ground and long after a consumer takes a bite of food. The food manufacturing industry is right in the middle, and therefore has a vital coordinating role with players both up and down the food chain.

To make the food systems fit for the future, we need transformative partnerships between farmers, civil society, policymakers and businesses across multiple industries.

The goal for FoodDrinkEurope is to find and nurture partnerships that will help scale the change needed to move to sustainable food systems.

**Our commitments:**

* Establish a sustainable food systems partnerships program

The partnerships program is an open call for organisations that share our common goal for more sustainable food systems and a mindset for collaboration.

We have kicked off the program with new partnerships established around sustainable farming and FoodDrinkEurope continues to take a lead role in the signatories’ group to the Code of Conduct.

Partnerships will be a central element of our climate, packaging and nutrition action projects (see pages x, x and x).

* Begin #FoodFuture dialogue project: part 2

In 2021 FoodDrinkEurope launched its #FoodFuture project, a listening exercise to engage with all stakeholders on their vision for the future of food. This exercise engaged with more than 2,000 stakeholders and helped us build this action plan for sustainable food systems.

The listening does not stop. With #FoodFuture part 2 we will engage with critical, as well as supportive, voices to build on the action plan and ensure it truly delivers on its objective for more sustainable food systems.

*This workstream will help deliver on the Code of Conduct objectives 6*