

Powering the everyday economy

- the role of the food system

Britain's farmers, processors, manufacturers, retailers, foodservice providers and restaurateurs play the most vital role of feeding the nation safe, high-quality, nutritious food.

With a presence in every community across the breadth of the country the food system is central to every one of our local economies.

It shapes our national landscape, with 70% of land dedicated to agriculture.

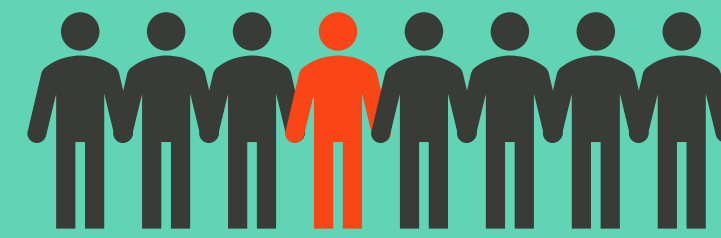
And collectively it powers the everyday economy –

- It is the largest private sector employer, providing 1 in 8 UK jobs
- It represents the largest manufacturing sector
- It accounts for over 40% of retail sales

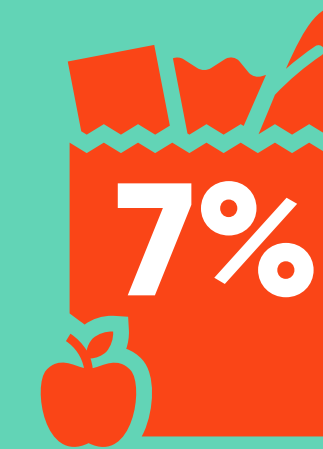
It quite literally gets Britain working, employing over 4 million people and providing the most diverse range of opportunities and career paths.

It is also central to some of our biggest national challenges – it will be essential to delivering net zero and tackling the obesity epidemic.

Only when we recognise the whole food system, from farm to fork can we appreciate how critical it is to a thriving UK, in an ever-challenging global landscape.



Food and consumer goods businesses employ over **4 million** people, providing **1 in 8** of all UK jobs



Food and consumer goods businesses contribute around **7%** to the **UK economy**



Since 1957 the proportion of **household income** spent on food and drink has fallen from **31%** to **12%**



British farmers grow over **60%** of all the food we eat



Food and consumer goods is the biggest manufacturing sector, worth c. **£26bn**



Food and consumer goods stores account for over **40%** of all retail activity



Eating out makes up nearly **40%** of all food sales

Source: [Viewpoint: Powering the everyday economy – the role of the food system](#)