

# NEWS RELEASE

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## CROFTING FOUNDATION CONDEMNS HIGHLAND COUNCIL ON FOOD SUPPLY CONTRACTS

The decision of Highland Council to award the vast majority of its food supply contract to mass catering suppliers based in the south of England has been condemned by the Scottish Crofting Foundation (SCF). As a result of the award, only a tiny proportion of the Council's supplies will be sourced from farmers and crofters in the Highlands. This is in spite of an unprecedented tendering effort by local producers organised by Highlands and Islands Local Food Network.

SCF's Land Use Project Manager Donald Murdie said, "The Highlands produce some of the healthiest, best quality and most natural food in the world and the Highlands and Islands Local Food network has put forward robust tendering proposals to make some of that produce available in Highland schools, care homes and other establishments. Yet the Council intends to award the contracts to the usual purveyors of poor quality, highly processed, mass catering supplies. This so-called food might come from production systems anywhere in the world that are intensive, low on welfare and high on artificial inputs. It beggars belief that an authority that pays lip-service to provision of healthy meals and to the well-being of the Highlands' agricultural sector and the environment should have reached such a decision. The Scottish Executive must force the Council to look at this again, as it appears to fly in the face of the Executive's stated policy on local procurement."

SCF Chairman Norman Leask asked, "What is the environmental or economic sense in trucking school dinners from the south of England to the Highlands of Scotland? The Highland Council seems to consider a small cost saving more important than giving good, fresh, healthy food to its bairns."

Ends.

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### Notes to editors

Picture can be found at:

[http://www.croftingfoundation.co.uk/index.php/contact\\_headoffice](http://www.croftingfoundation.co.uk/index.php/contact_headoffice)