

WWF BASKET DIETS METRIC GUIDE



1: INTRODUCTION

The way we produce and consume food is the single biggest threat to nature today. It is responsible for 80% of global deforestation and 70% of terrestrial biodiversity loss as well as being linked to approximately a third of global greenhouse gas emissions. Action is needed across the food system if we are to meet global climate commitments, stem biodiversity loss, and ensure food and nutrition security for a growing population.

Achieving a 1.5-degree aligned pathway and restoring nature will only be possible if we improve the way we produce food, reduce food loss and waste and shift to healthier, more sustainable diets. Current consumption patterns in high income countries, like the UK, are associated with the greatest diet-related environmental impacts, primarily due to the high consumption of animal-based foods.^{1,2}

Since 2021, the WWF Basket has sought to assess the UK food retail sector's progress towards halving the environmental impact of UK shopping baskets by 2030; enabling healthy, sustainable diets is a core part of achieving this. For reporting from 2024 onwards, we are updating how we monitor the sector's progress towards rebalancing animal and plant protein food sales, and introducing additional metrics to support a a food sales shift aligned with the WWF-UK Livewell diet³ between now and 2030.

Protein food type disclosure is an important step on a company's journey to mitigating climate and nature risks and supporting consumers to adopt healthier and more sustainable diets. It provides a mechanism for monitoring progress toward publicly stated net zero targets and can inform target-setting. It also demonstrates commitment to transparency and accountability in an area of increasing interest to internal and external stakeholders including investors, civil society groups, policymakers, the media and consumers.

Initiatives such as FAIRR's Sustainable Proteins Engagement⁴ and The Food Foundation's Plating Up Progress⁵ are already monitoring the performance of companies on protein disclosure and diversification, while mandatory disclosure of food sales by protein type is one of the policy recommendations in the National Food Strategy.⁶

This document provides an update to WWF's guidance⁷ for food retailers on protein disclosure, published in 2022, to align with WWF's latest scientific report on sustainable diets: 'Eating for Net Zero. How diet shift can enable a nature positive, net zero transition in the UK'. It is intended to support companies regardless of what stage they're at in the disclosure journey. Existing examples of disclosure in the retail sector serve to demonstrate the journey organisations have taken and how they have overcome commonly faced challenges such as what products to include, constraints of existing data systems and limited resources. This guide will support retailers as they continue this journey.

¹ WWF, (2020) Bending the Curve: The Restorative Power of Planet-Based Diets. Available at: https://www.worldwildlife.org/publications/bending-the-curve-the-restorative-power-of-planet-based-diets

² Poore, J and Nemecek, T, (2018) Reducing food's environmental impacts through producers and consumers. Science 360 (6392):987-992. Available at: doi.org/10.1126/science.aag0216

³ Halevy, S, Trewern, J, (2023). Eating for Net Zero. How diet shift can enable a nature positive, net zero transition in the UK. Available at: https://www.wwf.org.uk/sites/default/files/2023-05/Eating_For_Net_Zero_Full_Report.pdf

⁴ FAIRR, (n.d.). Sustainable Proteins Engagement. Available at: https://www.fairr.org/engagements/sustainable-proteins

⁵ The Food Foundation, (n.d.). Plating Up Progress. Available at: https://foodfoundation.org.uk/initiatives/plating-up-progress

⁶ Dimbleby, H, (2021). National Food Strategy Independent Review: The Plan. Available at: https://www.nationalfoodstrategy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/National-Food-Strategy-Recommendations-in-Full.pdf

⁷ WWF, (2022). The Journey to Corporate Disclosure. Available at: https://www.wwf.org.uk/sites/default/files/2022-03/Protein-Disclosure-Guide.pdf

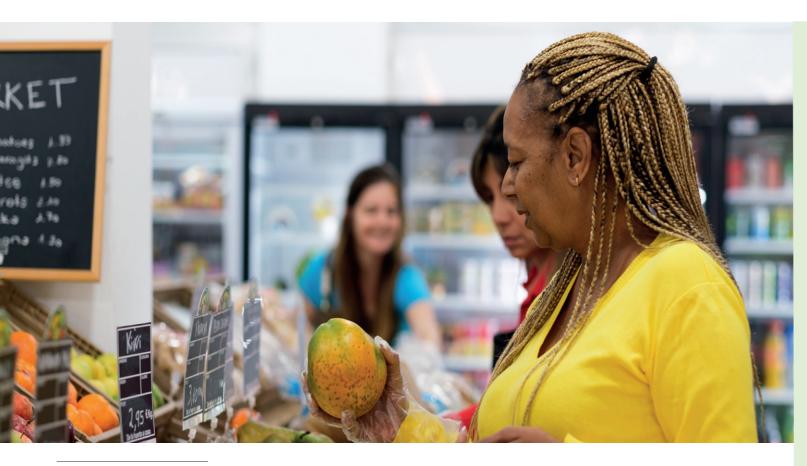
THE ROLE OF RETAIL TO ENCOURAGE AND ENABLE HEALTHY, SUSTAINABLE DIET SHIFT

Individual preferences and circumstances play a role in informing food choices, but decisions are highly shaped by our food environments and factors beyond the consumer's control, such as what's available, affordable, accessible and how it's marketed. Food retailers are crucial gatekeepers on both sides of the supply chain, working with suppliers and interacting directly with consumers, and so have great influence on the food we buy.

Most UK retail customers shop around,⁸ so by combining efforts to support customers to adopt healthy and sustainable diets, alongside changes to their supply chains and efforts to reduce food loss and waste across the supply chain, retailers play a crucial role in significantly reducing the environmental impact of our food system.

It is also important for retailers to recognise that achieving sustainability targets, such as those outlined in the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) to limit global warming to 1.5-degrees, will necessitate significant shifts in dietary patterns, including a notable reduction in the consumption of animal-based foods. To enable diet shift at scale, healthy, sustainable products and meals need to be the most available, affordable, accessible and appealing options. Therefore retailers must be prepared to adapt their business strategies accordingly and utilise the available levers to enable and support healthy, more sustainable food purchases.

Setting goals and reporting against this diet metric, using food sales data, can provide a useful indicator of UK dietary patterns and evidence progress towards these strategies.¹⁰



- 8 Office for National Statistics (ONS), released 16 August 2024, ONS website, statistical bulletin, Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: July 2024. Available at: https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/bulletins/publicopinionsandsocialtrendsgreatbritain/july2024
- 9 Michael A Clark et al. (2020). Global food system emissions could preclude achieving the 1.5° and 2°C climate change targets. Science 370,705-708. Available at: https://www.science.org/doi/epdf/10.1126/science.aba7357
- 10 Victoria L Jenneson et al. (2022). A systematic review of supermarket automated electronic sales data for population dietary surveillance. Nutrition Reviews, Volume 80, Issue 6, Pages 1711–1722. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1093/nutrit/nuab089

WWF-UK LIVEWELL DIET

From 2024, we are aligning the WWF Basket diets outcomes and measures with the WWF Livewell diet. Livewell is WWF-UK's approach to illustrate an achievable healthy, balanced and sustainable diet for the UK population. It is modelled to reduce the environmental impact of diets in the UK while meeting UK government nutrition and diet recommendations (the Eatwell Guide) and remaining socially and culturally acceptable (by not deviating drastically from the current average UK diet and not costing more).

Compared to the current average UK diet, Livewell contains a greater proportion of fruit, vegetables, wholegrain cereals and plant proteins (such as beans and lentils), as well as lower-footprint seafood, potatoes and other starchy tubers. It includes less meat (red, white and processed), dairy and eggs, and fewer products high in fat, salt and sugar.

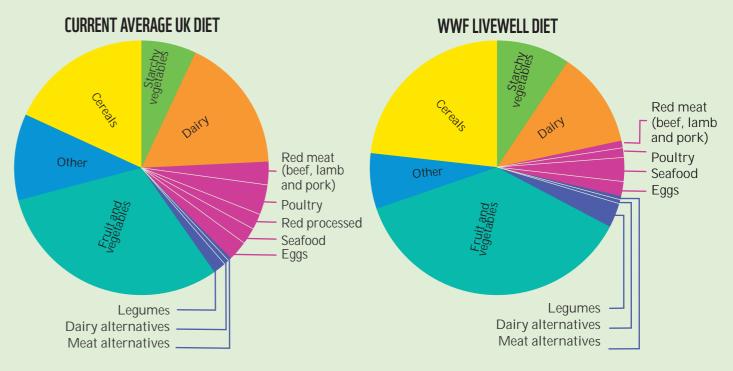
Shifting diets towards Livewell would deliver a 20% reduction in biodiversity loss and over half of the food emissions reductions needed by 2030. Read our report for more information about Livewell and it's environmental benefits.

The objective of the WWF Basket diet metrics are to increase the availability, accessibility and uptake of healthier and more sustainable foods. It therefore aims to promote retail sales aligned with Livewell, to help achieve the overarching goal of the WWF Basket to halve the environmental impact of UK shopping baskets by 2030.

The next section of this guide focuses on the reporting requirements of the updated WWF Basket diet metrics, while the rest of the report provides guidance on how to get started with disclosure, and what our updated gold standard disclosure looks like.

SHIFTING TO HEALTHIER, MORE SUSTAINABLE DIETS IN THE UK

Composition of the current average UK diet and the adult Livewell diet in percentage of total daily food intake (grams per day, excluding beverages)



- Cereals
- Starchy vegetables
- Dairy
- Animal protein (total meat, egg and seafood)
- Plant protein (legumes, meat and dairy alternatives, nuts and seeds)
- Fruit and vegetables
- Other (oils, fats, snacks, sugar, miscellaneous)

WWF BASKET DIETS METRIC GUIDE

2: METRICS

Identifying common metrics that all retailers can use is crucial to understand collective impact and progress when it comes to healthy and sustainable diets. Retailers can also use these metrics to systematically track their progress, make informed adjustments, and proactively drive sales that contribute to more sustainable and healthy diets for their customers. We recommend companies measure their performance in this area through a volume-based measure, as this allows the mapping of sales as a proxy for dietary intake, consumption patterns and environmental impact. It is therefore an effective way to assess performance against healthy, sustainable diets as well as understanding how rebalancing food sales can deliver against net zero strategies.

Our updated approach retains a protein food disclosure but now also categorises foods sold by retailers into the five main food groups defined by the Eatwell Guide:¹¹

Food Group 1: beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins

- **Food Group 2**: dairy and alternatives
- **Food Group 3:** fats and oils,
- Food Group 4: fruits and vegetables
- **Food Group 5:** potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy carbohydrates

To assess progress towards healthier and more sustainable diets, it then asks for sales volumes of these food groups to be reported against the proportions modelled by Livewell. It also introduces a pragmatic approach to include pre-prepared and composite products.

The updated metrics, to assess retailer progress towards the WWF Basket diets outcome are:

- A) Protein food type
- B) Pre-prepared and composite products
- C) Rebalancing the basket

The table below sets out the food reporting level for each metric:

DIET DISCLOSURE METHOD	METRIC
Whole food level	
This method calculates the whole weight of a food that is predominantly from one food group e.g. chicken breast, sausages, yogurt, chickpeas, almonds.	A) Protein food type C) Rebalancing the basket
Composite product level	
This method calculates the whole weight of a pre-prepared or composite product where the main ingredients are from more than one food group e.g. 400g chicken curry meal. The reported weight is 400g - the total combined weight of the chicken, rice and curry sauce.	B) Pre-prepared and composite foods
Composite ingredient level	
This method calculates the weights of each of the ingredients from the main food groups within a product, rather than using the total weight of the whole composite product e.g. 44g of chicken in a 400g chicken curry meal.	A) Protein food type
This is the gold standard approach for reporting on pre-prepared and composite foods against the protein food type and rebalancing the basket metrics.	C) Rebalancing the basket

Reporting sales volume of protein foods, by type, at whole food level is the minimum reporting requirement. See Section 3 for more information.

WWF BASKET DIETS METRIC GUIDE

PROTEIN FOODS

Good sources of protein in the diet are defined in the Eatwell Guide as foods from the 'beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins' and 'dairy and alternatives' food groups (see below). We focus on these two food groups as they are the part of the diet that contain animal-based protein foods. Overconsumption of animal-based foods are associated with the highest diet-related environmental impacts and a transition to diversify and rebalance consumption of foods from these food groups is core to healthy, sustainable diet shift. For diet metric reporting, we sub-categorise animal-based foods into livestock-based and seafood-based.



Source: Public Health England in association with the Welsh government, Food Standards Scotland and the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland © crown copyright 2011

Definitions for protein food type disclosure need to encompass the foods which are included in these two food groups, but also be pragmatic.

While vegetables are excluded from protein food type disclosure, products that are intended as direct replacements for livestock-based protein food products should still be included (e.g. a mushroom burger with added pea protein).

When retailer reporting processes and systems are able to measure to composite ingredient level, blended products (e.g. sausages, burgers, meatballs) that include vegetables and less meat can also be included. See our supporting food list for more information.

¹¹ Public Health England. (2018). The Eatwell Guide Booklet. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5ba8a50540f-0b605084c9501/Eatwell Guide booklet 2018v4.pdf

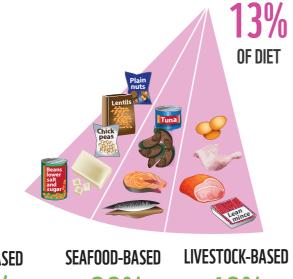
A: PROTEIN FOOD TYPE

AIM: TO DIVERSIFY AND REBALANCE SALES FROM ANIMAL AND PLANT-BASED PROTEIN FOODS

% OF PROTEIN FOODS FROM LIVESTOCK, SEAFOOD AND PLANT BASED SOURCES

For this metric, we ask organisations to provide total sales volumes, in tonnes, of foods from **Food** Group 1: beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins and the amount of these sales that are from livestock, seafood¹² and plant-based protein food sources.

Protein food type sales split will be calculated and compared to the proportions recommended by Livewell, where Food Group 1 contributes 13% of a healthy, sustainable diet. The Livewell protein food split goal is:



PLANT-BASED

This metric is focused on the sales split of protein foods by type from Food Group 1. However, it should be viewed in the context of WWF's wider ambition to support efforts to align meat and dairy consumption in the UK with national dietary guidance, which also requires an overall reduction in consumption of these foods.¹³

DIVERSIFYING AND REBALANCING SALES FROM ANIMAL AND PLANT-BASED PROTEIN FOODS

Disclosing total sales against each protein food type can help show the progress towards the dietary shifts needed to achieve healthy, sustainable diets in the UK and highlight where organisations need to take action to encourage sales towards Livewell.

FOOD GROUP	SUBGROUPS FOR REPORTING	CURRENT UK DIET SPLIT %	TARGET BASKET (LIVEWELL) SPLIT %
Food Group 1	Livestock-based	71%	40%
Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat, and other proteins	Plant-based	16%	30%
	Seafood-based	13%	30%

¹² Promotion of lower trophic and sustainably sourced species will help to ensure that UK dietary recommendations are met and the environmental impacts of seafood consumption are minimised.

% OF DAIRY AND ALTERNATIVES FROM LIVESTOCK AND PLANT BASED SOURCES

For this metric, we ask organisations to provide total sales volumes, in tonnes, of foods from **Food Group 2:** dairy and alternatives, and the amount of these sales that are from livestock or plant-based sources. Sales will be compared to the dairy and alternative proportions recommended by Livewell, where Food Group 2 contributes 8% of a healthy, sustainable diet.

We ask that total liquid sales are reported independently from other dairy and alternative products. This is to enable the sales volumes that are reported to be halved, consistent with methodology used to model the Eatwell Guide¹⁴ and Livewell diet.¹⁵

For both Food Group 1 and 2, disclosure should be based on whole foods (e.g. chicken breast or cheese) and composite ingredient level for pre-prepared and composite products (e.g. 44g of chicken breast or 30g cheese in a prepared meal). Disclosure should be based on food weight rather than the amount of the macronutrient protein it contains. See Section 3 and 4 for definitions and foods in scope.

For pre-prepared or composite products, if ingredient level reporting is currently unavailable, a separate disclosure can be used (see Section 2B).

MEAT AND DAIRY ALTERNATIVES

Meat and dairy alternatives are designed to mimic the texture and flavour of livestock-based foods. These products can play a role in helping to reduce the consumption of meat, processed meat and dairy, which have high environmental impacts, as well as increase convenience and variety within the diet. However, they can often be high in fat, salt and/or sugar and lack the essential nutrients that livestock-based foods contain.

Retailers should consider sales of meat and dairy alternatives alongside their wider health strategies and promote reformulating and/or fortifying products to improve their nutritional profile, which can further support a healthy transition to sustainable diets. Read our report for more information on the role of meat and dairy alternatives in the Livewell diet.



¹³ WWF. (2023). Eating for Net Zero technical report. Available at: https://www.wwf.org.uk/sites/default/files/2023-05/Eating For Net Zero Technical Report.pdf

B: PRE-PREPARED AND COMPOSITE PRODUCTS

AIM: TO DIVERSIFY AND REBALANCE SALES FROM ANIMAL AND PLANT-BASED PROTEIN FOODS

% OF VEGAN, VEGETARIAN, SEAFOOD AND MEAT-BASED PRE-PREPARED AND COMPOSITE PRODUCTS

For this metric, we ask organisations who have not yet achieved composite ingredient level reporting to share the total sales volumes, in tonnes, of pre-prepared and composite products, and the proportion that these product sales make up of a retailers food portfolio.

Disclosure should be based on the total weight of the product (e.g. 400g chickpea curry meal). To calculate the sales split of pre-prepared and composite products, sales are categorised into four groups:

- Vegan
- Vegetarian
- Meat-based
- · Seafood-based

This metric aims to pragmatically reflect dietary patterns, where diets high in meat are associated with the greatest environmental impacts, ¹⁶ and measure progress in reducing meat-based pre-prepared and composite product sales to 40%.



16 Scarborough, P et al. (2023). Vegans, vegetarians, fish-eaters and meat-eaters in the UK show discrepant environmental impacts. Nat Food 4, 565–574. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1038/s43016-023-00795-w

C: REBALANCING THE BASKET

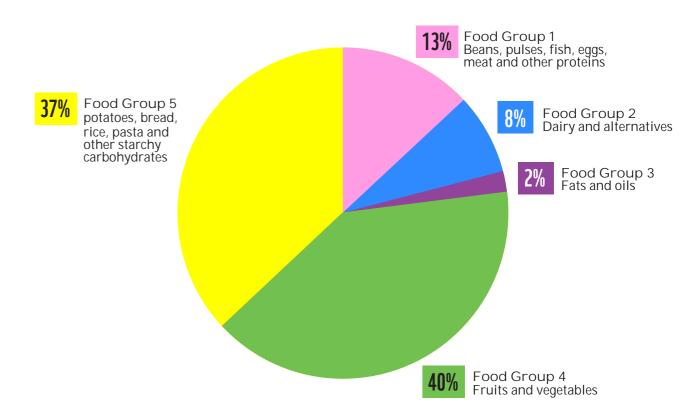
AIM: TO REBALANCE SALES TOWARDS A HEALTHY AND SUSTAINABLE DIET

% OF FOOD FROM EACH FOOD GROUP

For this metric, we ask organisations to provide total sales volumes, in tonnes, of foods from:

- Food Group 3: fats and oils we also ask retailers to report disclosure on the fats sales split that are livestock-based and plant-based (saturated) or plant-based (unsaturated)
- Food Group 4: fruits and vegetables
- **Food Group 5:** potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy carbohydrates

For Food Groups 3, 4 and 5 disclosure should be based on **whole food** (e.g 800g loaf of bread) and **composite ingredient level** (e.g. 80g of bread in a sandwich). However, we ask retailers to use a consistent diet disclosure method for the five food groups reported on in this metric therefore, where **composite ingredient level** data is not available for all the food groups, disclosure on **whole foods** only is accepted. Retailers are also encouraged to explore use of technology solutions that may support reporting on this metric.¹⁷



To give an overarching view on whether sales are aligned with healthy, sustainable diets, food group sales split will be calculated and compared to the proportions recommended by the Livewell diet. This can indicate the category areas that organisations should focus their efforts to rebalance sales towards a healthier, more sustainable basket.

¹⁷ Eatwell Classification Tool (2022) Available at: https://github.com/Leeds-CDRC/Eatwell_product_classification



REBALANCING THE BASKET

Disclosing total sales against all five food groups can help to show progress towards the dietary shifts needed to achieve healthy, sustainable diets in the UK and encourage businesses to take action to incentivise sales towards Livewell.

Currently, the overall diet consumed in the UK is 66% plant-based and 34% animal-based (including livestock and seafood). Achieving the Livewell splits for protein food type and rebalancing the food groups would shift overall diets to become 79% plant-based and 21% animal-based. 18

FOOD GROUP	SUBGROUPS FOR REPORTING	CURRENT UK DIET SPLIT %	TARGET BASKET (LIVEWELL) SPLIT %
Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat, and other proteins	Livestock-based Seafood-based Plant-based	20%	13%
Food Group 2 Dairy and alternatives	Livestock-based Plant-based	14%	8%
■ Food Group 3 Oils and spreads	Livestock-based Plant-based	2%	2%
Fruits and vegetables	n/a	32%	40%
Food Group 5 Potatoes, bread, rice, pasta, and other starchy carbohydrates	n/a	32%	37%

¹⁸ WWF. (2023). Eating for Net Zero technical report. Available at: https://www.wwf.org.uk/sites/default/files/2023-05/Eating For

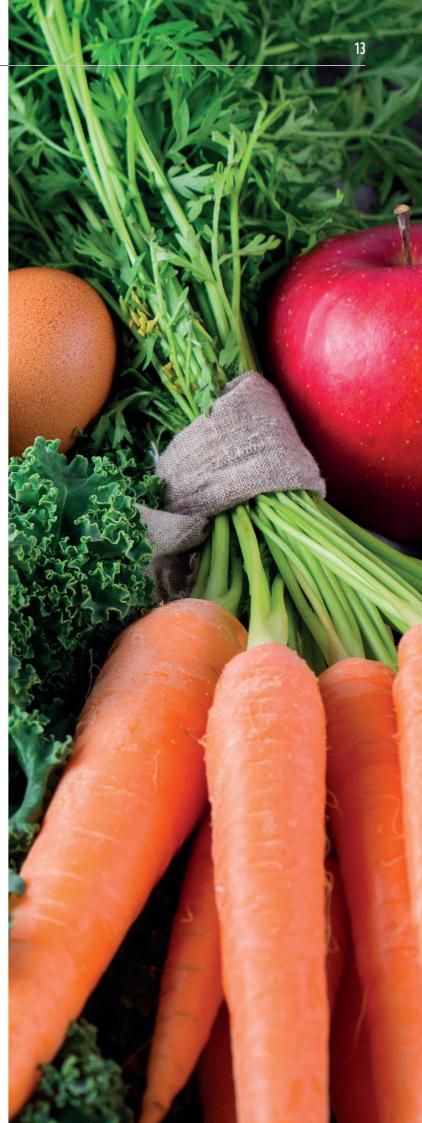
3: DISCLOSURE **DEFINITIONS**

Each company categorises the products it sells differently, but the categories - 'fresh', 'grocery/ambient', 'frozen', 'pre-prepared' and 'composite' - broadly capture the range of products available that contain animal or plant-based protein foods, and this has informed the scope of products that should be included in protein food type disclosure.

For retailers at the early stages of reporting, disclosing own brand, whole food, protein food type is a minimum. Ultimately reporting also needs to encompass branded products to give an accurate representation of the total sales from each food group, which will require collaboration along the supply chain, for example with manufacturers and branded suppliers.

DISCLOSURE STANDARDS AND ROADMAP

To accommodate retailers' varying levels of data availability, data management approaches and resources, we demonstrate in the roadmap overleaf, minimum reporting standards and how retailers can advance to gold standard reporting. Alongside delivery of the other areas of the WWF Basket, this stepwise approach enables retailers to start at the minimum level of protein food type disclosure and progress to more comprehensive data collection and reporting on healthy, sustainable diets to support and track progress towards the dietary shifts needed by 2030.



ROADMAP

The roadmap below indicates the levels retailers can advance through to achieve comprehensive data collection and reporting to show progress on supporting healthy, sustainable diet shift.

LEVEL 6

Protein Food Type and Rebalancing The Basket

- Food group 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5
- Ingredient level for own brand and branded products

GOLD STANDARD **BEST** PRACTICE 2025/2026

LEVEL 5

Protein Food Type

Food group 1 and 2 ingredient level for own branded products

LEVEL 4

Protein Food Type

- Food group 1 sub-group level
- · Own brand and branded products

Rebalancing The Basket

Food group 3 livestock vs plant

LEVEL 3

Within retailer and other food organisation's control

Rebalancing The Basket

- Whole product level
- Food group 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5
- Own brand and branded products

LEVEL 2

Pre-Prepared and Composite Products

- Whole product level
- Own brand and branded products
- · Vegan, Vegetarian, Seafood and Meat

LEVEL 1

Protein Food Type

- · Whole food level
- Food groups 1 and 2
- Plant vs Seafood vs Livestock
- Own brand and branded products

2023/2024

MINIMUM

PROTEIN FOODS

Good sources of protein in the diet are defined in the Eatwell Guide as foods from the 'beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins' and 'dairy and alternatives' food groups. Protein foods are therefore defined by the WWF Basket Diet Disclosure Guide as:

Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins:

4: GLOSSARY

- Livestock-based protein foods this includes, for example, the following product types:
 - · Red meat and processed meat
 - Poultry
 - Game
 - Eggs
- Seafood-based protein foods this includes, for example, the following product types:
- Fish
- · Shellfish
- · Processed fish products
- Plant-based protein foods this includes, for example, the following product types:
- Legumes, beans and pulses
- Mycoprotein
- · Minimally processed plant proteins
- Meat alternatives
- · Nuts and seeds

Dairy and alternatives:

- Livestock-based foods this includes, for example, the following product types:
 - · Dairy including milk, cheese, yoghurt, cream
- Plant-based foods this includes, for example, the following product types:
 - · Dairy alternatives including plant milk and voghurt, vegan cheese and cream

See our supporting food list for further information.

PRE-PREPARED AND COMPOSITE PRODUCTS

Products that can contain animal and plant-based protein foods and ingredients from other food groups. See our supporting food list for further information.

FOOD GROUP 1 SUB-GROUP LEVEL

As retailers advance with data collection, further reporting on the sub-categories within livestock, seafood and plant protein foods can enhance data granularity and strategy impact. See our supporting food list for further information.

DIET DISCLOSURE METHODS

Whole food level: This method calculates the whole weight of a food that is predominantly from one food group (e.g. chicken breast, sausages, yogurt, chickpeas, almonds).

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Composite product level: This method calculates the whole weight of a pre prepared or composite product where the main ingredients are from more than one food group e.g. 400g chicken curry meal. The reported weight is 400g - the total combined weight of the chicken, rice and curry sauce.

Composite ingredient level: This method calculates the weights of each of the ingredients from the main food groups within a product, rather than using the total weight of the whole composite product e.g. 44g of chicken in a 400g chicken curry meal.

WWF LIVEWELL DIET

Livewell is WWF-UK's approach to illustrate an achievable healthy, balanced and sustainable diet for the UK population. It is modelled to reduce the environmental impact of diets in the UK while meeting UK government nutrition and diet recommendations (the Eatwell Guide) and remaining socially and culturally acceptable (by not deviating drastically from the current average UK diet and not costing more).

Shifting diets towards the food group proportions represented by Livewell would deliver over half of the food emissions reductions needed by 2030.19

EATWELL GUIDE

The UK's national dietary guidelines, developed by Public Health England in 2016,20 which provides a visual representation of the different types of foods and drink we should consume and in what proportions to have a well-balanced and healthy diet. It shows five main food groups:

- Fruit and vegetables
- Potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starch carbohydrate foods
- · Beans, pulses, fish, eggs meat and other proteins
- · Dairy and alternatives
- Oils and spreads

¹⁹ Halevy, S, Trewern, J (2023). Eating for Net Zero. How diet shift can enable a nature positive, net zero transition in the UK. Available at: https://www.wwf.org.uk/sites/default/files/2023-05/Eating For Net Zero Full Report.pdf 20 Public Health England (2016) The Eatwell Guide. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5bbb-790de5274a22415d7fee/Eatwell guide colour edition.pdf

