

Deep-rooted poor Scots diet 'needs to change'

● Report warns bad eating habits are damaging people's health

#DIET

By LIZZY BUCHAN

Promotion of sugary drinks and fattening snacks should be curbed to tackle the "deep rooted" poor diet in Scotland, a new report by the independent food body has claimed.

Food Standards Scotland (FSS) warned that bad eating habits are seriously damaging people's health and the situation has not changed for the past 15 years, despite attempts by ministers to curb the swell of obesity.

The critical report, entitled 'The Scottish Diet: It Needs to Change', found Scots consume a high-fat, high-calorie, high-sugar diets which is placing a burden on the NHS.

It called for consumption of discretionary foods such as crisps, confectionary and sugary drinks to be slashed by 50 per cent, as half of all sugar consumed comes from these products.

Campaigners also highlighted a worrying trend in attitudes as around three quarters of adults in Scotland say their diet is healthy yet 65 per cent of Scots are either overweight or obese.

FSS chairman Ross Finnie said: "The Scottish diet is not improving and the problem of diet-related ill-health is now spanning the gener-

ations. There is a disconnect between the scale of the problem and how healthy people believe their diet to be.

"We all need to recognise there is a problem and everyone including consumers, the food and drink industry, retailers, media and government has a part to play in finding a solution."

Lorraine Tulloch, programme lead for Obesity Action Scotland, said the report should provide a wake up call to the nation over the extent of challenge faced.

She said: "Educational messages and voluntary action from industry are not delivering the scale of change we need.

"We would urge Food Standards Scotland and Scottish Government to take bold, committed action to reduce sugar and fat content of foods, tipping the balance of cost and availability to healthier foods."

FSS is now recommending that the Scottish Government strengthens its dietary goals, including reducing consumption of sugar to 5 per cent of total energy intake.

Public health minister Maureen Watt agreed there were long-standing issues with the Scottish diet but responsible marketing and limiting salt, fats and sugar in food and drink were key areas for action.

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said the report should provide a wake-up call