

# Greens say School leavers should know how to cook

A survey for the Scottish Greens shows a strong appetite among Scots for the Government to set a target to ensure all school leavers are able to cook a basic meal from scratch.

By contrast the major supermarkets, who already control three-quarters of our grocery spending, are encouraging the growth of the ready meals sector through advertising campaigns, broadcasts and billboards. The UK ready meal market, which has been at the centre of the horsemeat scandal, continues to grow at five per cent a year and is now worth £1 billion a year.

The Panelbase survey for the Scottish Greens shows 79 per cent of 1,000 Scots agreed with the need for a target for school leavers, while only 7 per cent disagreed.

Other research suggests the majority of 18-25 year olds leave home without the ability to cook a simple recipe such as Spaghetti Bolognese, with many relying on ready meals and takeaways.

Alison Johnstone, Green MSP for Lothian and spokesperson on food and education for the Scottish Greens, said:

“We have a growing problem with obesity and ready meals are nutritionally haphazard. It’s time the Scottish Government challenged the big manufacturers and retailers. The inconvenient truth about many convenience foods is they make big firms big profits while public health pays dearly.

“Curriculum for Excellence has great potential and I would urge the government to recognise the appetite there is for ensuring school leavers are able to cook. As more people question what’s in the food they’re buying due to the horsemeat scandal it’s important we establish a balanced food

culture from the start.”