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Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Ynni, Cynllunio a Materion Gwledig
Cabinet Secretary for Energy, Planning and Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Paul Davies AM
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Dear Paul

Thank you for your question during my oral statement of 23 January 2018, regarding whether I would publish job creation statistics in the food and drink industry alongside the Skills Action Plan which is being developed.

The Skills Action Plan has been developed following the first food and drink industry skills conference "Invest in Skills, Invest in Growth" in October 2017. It's an industry initiative, led by the Food and Drink Industry Wales Board, which is being developed with the Welsh Government's support. The focus is to increase the quantity and quality of apprenticeships and to improve skills and productivity through innovation and automation. Doing so will help the industry's productivity and, crucially, aims to create a positive shift in people's perception of the industry as a place to work. The October conference was an important first step to inform and work collaboratively with businesses to begin to resolve these challenges. A second skills conference (8 February) helped contribute further to a final plan which has the full support of industry and stakeholders. Creating a workable plan which has the backing and buy-in of industry will contribute more widely to the aims of the Welsh Government's Economic Action Plan and action to tackle poverty, through the Valleys Task Force Delivery Plan, and wider employability issues.

I do not intend to publish job creation statistics with the Skills Action Plan. My Department already undertakes an economic appraisal of the food and drink industry and this includes a count of employment in the food and drink manufacturing sector, its subsectors, and the wider supply chain. The wider supply chain is one of Wales' largest business sectors with over 240,000 people employed within the whole food and drink supply chain and over 20,000 of them employed in the food and drink (FD) manufacturing sector. Information about the number of employees is published routinely by Business Wales and is available at: <https://businesswales.gov.wales/foodanddrink/about-us/key-facts>

Regards
Lesley

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We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.