



**FSA-funded Food Labelling
Research including Consumer
Behaviour and Country of
Origin Labelling (CoOL)**

***Board Meeting
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Projects on consumer attitudes and behaviour

including Country of Origin

Five studies commissioned by FSA:

- A series of 'Citizens Forums' (BMRB)
- An omnibus survey including country of origin questions (NatCen)
- A survey of UK-marketed products assessing the extent to which the FSA guidance on country of origin is being followed (Campden BRI)
- A qualitative study exploring consumer use of food labelling (Ipsos MORI)
- An evidence review (Oxford Evidentia)

Plus Synthesis report bringing findings on origin labelling together
(Oxford Evidentia)



Findings around general labelling and behaviour

- Time available affects consumers' use of labels (Oxford Evidentia)
- Labels provide more information than can be processed, resulting in overload that often leads to confusion (Oxford Evidentia)
- But difficult to determine what might be removed, and different consumers think different elements are superfluous (Ipsos MORI)
- Any particular consumer has their own agenda and they exercise selective attention, developing short-cuts to information (Ipsos MORI)
- General food labels in UK read on initial purchases by approximately half the population only (Oxford Evidentia)



Synthesis report

Awareness of CoOL

- Unprompted, only 11% of consumers said they looked for CoOL (NatCen)
- When asked specifically about CoOL 52% of respondents said they looked for them (NatCen)

Views on CoOL

- CoOL not a priority when buying food (Ipsos Mori, BMRB, NatCen)
- CoOL is less important to most UK consumers than the price and the cost of food



Synthesis report

Uses of CoOL

- CoOL is used by shoppers to:
 - establish food safety, quality, freshness
 - establish animal welfare, and food miles / environmental issues
 - determine whether food is home grown/local produce

Understanding of CoOL

- The 'last substantial change' criterion of origin is ambiguous for many people



Next steps

- inform discussions within the EU
- behavioural research methods used proved successful and will be considered for other specific aspects of Agency work
- behavioural and general labelling findings update and improve the FSA evidence base

