F&Y2 Wave 7: Executive summary

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Food and You 2 is a biannual ‘Official Statistic’ survey commissioned by the Food Standards Agency (FSA). The survey measures consumers’ self-reported knowledge, attitudes and behaviours related to food safety and other food issues amongst adults in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

Fieldwork for Food and You 2: Wave 7 was conducted between 23rd April 2023 to 10th July 2023. A total of 5,812 adults (aged 16 years or over) from 4,006 households across England, Wales, and Northern Ireland completed the ‘push-to-web’ survey (see Annex A for more information about the methodology).

The modules presented in this report include ‘Food you can trust’, ‘Concerns about food’, ‘Food security’, ‘Food shopping and labelling’, ‘Online platforms’ and ‘Novel foods'.

Food you can trust

Confidence in food safety and authenticity

- 88% of respondents reported that they were confident that the food they buy is safe to eat.
- 83% of respondents were confident that the information on food labels is accurate.
- Confidence in the food supply chain
- 68% of respondents reported that they had confidence in the food supply chain.
- Respondents were more likely to report confidence in farmers (84%) and shops and supermarkets (81%) than in takeaways (54%), and food delivery services (39%).

Awareness, trust and confidence in the FSA

- 89% of respondents had heard of the FSA.
- 69% of respondents who had at least some knowledge of the FSA reported that they trusted the FSA to make sure ‘food is safe and what it says it is’.
- 79% of respondents reported that they were confident that the FSA (or the government agency responsible for food safety) can be relied upon to protect the public from food-related risks (such as food poisoning or allergic reactions from food); 76% were confident that the FSA takes appropriate action if a food-related risk is identified, and 72% were confident that the FSA is committed to communicating openly with the public about food-

related risks.

Concerns about food

- 72% of respondents had no concerns about the food they eat, and 28% of respondents reported that they had a concern.
- Respondents who reported having a concern were asked to briefly explain what their concerns were about the food they eat. The most common concerns related to food production methods (33%), nutrition and health (30%), and the quality of food (23%).
- Respondents were asked to indicate if they had concerns about several food-related issues, from a list of options. The most common concern was food prices (72%) followed by food waste (58%), the amount of sugar in food (56%), the quality of food (56%), and the amount of food packaging (56%).

Food security

- Across England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, 75% of respondents were classified as food secure (61% high, 14% marginal) and 25% of respondents were classified as food insecure (13% low, 13% very low).
- 80% of respondents reported that they had made a change to their eating habits for financial reasons in the previous 12 months. The most common changes were eating out less (49%), eating at home more (45%), eating fewer takeaways (44%) and buying items on special offer more (44%).
- 4% of respondents reported that they had used a food bank or other emergency food provider in the last 12 months, and 94% of respondents reported that they had not.
- 5% of respondents reported that they had used a social supermarket in the last 12 months and 79% of respondents reported that they had not.

Food shopping and labelling

- 75% of respondents reported that they bought food from a large supermarket and 51% bought food from a mini supermarket about once a week or more often.
- 53% of respondents reported that they bought food from independent shops (greengrocers, butchers, bakers, fishmongers), 47% bought food from a local / corner shop, newsagent or garage forecourt, and 44% bought food from a local / farmer's markets or farm shops 2-3 times a month or less often.
- Most respondents reported that they 'always' or 'most of the time' check the use-by (85%) or best before (84%) date when they bought food. Respondents reported that they check the list of ingredients (52%), nutritional information (47%), country of origin (48%) and food assurance scheme logos (42%) about half the time or occasionally.
- 83% of respondents who go food shopping and take into consideration a person who has a food allergy or intolerance were confident that the information provided on food labelling allows them to identify foods that will cause a bad or unpleasant physical reaction.

Online platforms

- 60% of respondents reported that they had ordered food or drink from the websites of a restaurant, takeaway or café and 54% had ordered from an online ordering and delivery company (for example, Just Eat, Deliveroo, Uber Eats).
- 28% of respondents had ordered via an online marketplace (for example Amazon, Gumtree, Etsy). The platforms used least by respondents were food sharing apps (for example Olio, Too Good To Go) (14%) and social media platforms (for example, Facebook, Instagram, Nextdoor) (8%).

- 46% of respondents ‘always’ or ‘most of the time’ looked for the FHRS ratings, 31% of respondents did this about half of the time or occasionally, and 21% of respondents never looked for the FHRS rating when ordering food and drink online.
- Of the respondents who have a food hypersensitivity, or live with someone who has a food hypersensitivity, 18% always looked for information that would allow them to identify food that might cause them a bad or unpleasant reaction, 41% looked for this information less often and 37% never looked for this information.

Novel foods

- Respondents reported greater awareness and knowledge of genetically modified (GM) food than gene-edited or genome-edited food (GE) and precision bred food. For example, 68% of respondents had never heard of precision bred food whereas 41% of respondents had never heard of GE food and 9% of respondents had never heard of GM food.
- 60% respondents reported that they had not used or consumed Cannabidiol (CBD) while 14% of respondents reported that they had used or consumed CBD.