

Our approach to science

Our framework for science governance sets out what we do to make sure we live up to our principles of being open, transparent and based on scientific evidence.

We ensure the following:

- policies, decisions and advice are based on the best available scientific evidence and analysis, including independent expert advice
- we are open about the scientific evidence and analysis underpinning our decisions, including uncertainties, gaps and assumptions, and how we have used scientific evidence and analysis, and any other factors, in our decision-making and advice
- scientific evidence and analysis is informed by input, scrutiny and challenge by experts and other stakeholders
- evidence and analysis is available for further use by the science community and other stakeholders

Our strategy on science and evidence

To achieve this, our Science, Evidence and Information Strategy 2015-20 Delivery Plan sets out how we will use science, evidence and information to deliver food we can trust. The plan was agreed by the FSA Board in 2015. In our strategy, we make it clear that effective use of science is crucial to achieving our ambitious goals for protecting consumers' interests in relation to food.

We will use science, evidence and information both to tackle the challenges of today, and to identify and contribute to addressing emerging risks for the future.

The strategy describes our priorities for the evidence we will need and the activities we will carry out, to make sure we obtain and use that evidence effectively to support the delivery of our overarching strategy. This is supported by a forward evidence plan, which sets out the research and other evidence-gathering work we plan to commission.

It describes the vision, principles and framework for our science, evidence and information work, and a high-level narrative of the key objectives and areas of work. These are illustrated by a set of headline activities, which we will undertake to achieve and to test progress against our objectives.

[View Science, evidence and information strategy 2015-20 delivery plan as PDF](#) (1.25 MB)

Key features of the strategy

The science we need to develop and apply

- understanding risks and how to evaluate and compare them, so that we can target our work on effective consumer protection
- intelligent and shared use of data, information and analytics, to understand existing risks, identify new and changing risks, and to develop targeted and effective surveillance and regulation
- understanding consumers, food businesses, enforcement partners and others in the food

system and how we can work with them to support behaviour change and build and spread good practice

- learning from what works and what doesn't, to maximise positive impacts and value for money, through our own work and our work with others

The way we conduct our science

- building and maintaining the skills and capabilities we need
- assuring the quality of our science, evidence and information and their use so they have value for us and utility and legitimacy for others
- use, communication and knowledge transfer of science, evidence and information, for openness, engagement and effective use and impact by FSA and others
- delivering ambitious objectives and cross-cutting impact through strategic partnerships

Chief Scientific Advisory Support

Our CSA Science Reports provide insight to the cutting edge work we are involved with.

Our reports review the food hygiene rating scheme, data science, the scientific approaches behind food allergies and intolerances.

[Read the latest CSA Science reports](#)

Committee support

We are advised by independent [scientific advisory committees](#), which provide independent advice and challenge on risk assessment and our use of science. The committees are comprised of more than 120 independent experts appointed through open competition.

The science checklist sets out the points that need to be considered when developing and communicating policy proposals that deal with science-based issues, or draw on advice from the scientific advisory committees.