

Consumer views of potential regulatory divergence in the meat sector: Appendix 2

Focus group discussion guide

Note: this discussion guide is intended to inform the discussion in each workshop. Questions may not be asked in the order below, and not every question will be asked in each workshop.

Key:

- CAPITALISED = instructions for moderators
- **Bold lower case** = key questions
- Non-bold lower case = follow up questions and prompts

| Section | Timings | Questions and exercises |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|--|
| Arrival (before start) | 15-20 mins | Participants enter the 'zoom room' and any that have not already done so enter their screen name to first name and initial of their surname and check that their microphone is working |

| Section | Timings | Questions and exercises |
|--|----------------------|---|
| <p>Section 1: Introductions and warm-up</p> | <p>5 mins</p> | <p>SHOW STIMULUS: SLIDES 1-5</p> <p>Introduction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank participants for taking part. • Introduce self and Ipsos, any observers, tech support and notes • The discussion will last two hours and we'll have a short break <p>Explain purpose of the discussion: This research is being carried out by the Food Standards Agency. The FSA are looking at the way the food industry currently operates and in which this could change in the future. They have asked us to run this workshop in gaining a better understanding of public views on proposed changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • talk through the ground rules/ housekeeping [SLIDES 3 and 4] • we will be audio-recording this discussion in line with the MFIA Code of Practice. All recordings will be stored on our secure servers and no one outside of the project will have access to this. • following these groups, we will be writing up our findings into a report which will be published. However, no findings will be attributed to you, or any other participants in any reports. • any questions? • can I check you are all happy to take part in this research? • check if participants are happy for the discussion to be audio-recorded. We have a Code of Conduct of Conduct and that all recordings will be saved securely and deleted at the completion of the research project. <p>Ask if everyone is happy for the recording to begin TURN ON RECORDING</p> <p>everyone is happy to participate in the workshop, that they understand the purpose of the workshop, that their participation is voluntary and that their responses will be anonymous.</p> <p>WHEN INTRODUCING OBSERVERS, PLEASE SPECIFY: We're representing the Food Standards Agency, but please rest assured they don't have access to anything other than what can be seen on the screen.</p> |
| | <p>6:05</p> | |

| Section | Timings | Questions and exercises |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Section 2. Introductions and gaining level of awareness of the FSA</p> | <p>15 mins -6:20</p> | <p>SHOW STIMULUS: SLIDE 5 Introductions around the group. Please tell us:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • your first name • where you're from • what's your favourite meal to eat, or cook at the moment <p>We want to start by talking a bit about the Food Standards Agency, what they do/what they are responsible for. As a reminder, this is not a hearing about your awareness of the FSA.</p> <p>SHOW STIMULUS: SLIDE 6</p> <p>What initially comes to mind when you hear “the Food Standards Agency” have you heard of this organisation before?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what kinds of things do you think the FSA does? • what do you think they are responsible for? • what does this look like in practice? • where do you think they operate/enforce standards (for example)? • is there anything else you think the FSA does? <p>Do you think anyone else is responsible for regulating the safety of food? What do you think they do?</p> <p>What do you think happens to make sure the food you buy in the supermarket is safe to eat?</p> <p>Do you think there are any differences in the way that different types of food are regulated? For example, meat versus vegetables?</p> <p>SHOW STIMULUS: SLIDE 7 – Overview of role of the FSA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how much of this information is familiar to you? Any surprises? • do you have any questions about the FSA's role? <p>What do you think about the FSA and their role as a regulator?</p> |

| Section | Timings | Questions and exercises |
|--|--|--|
| <p>Section 3.</p> <p>Exploring consumers' meat purchasing habits and introducing the food journey and official controls 20 mins</p> | <p>20 mins</p> <p>6:40</p> | <p>Now we'd like to talk about what you consider when you purchase</p> <p>How often do you go grocery shopping?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • do you shop for anyone else? For example, family, neighbors? • do you tend to go to the same or different shops? <p>How often do you tend to buy meat?</p> <p>Moderator to note any vegetarians/ vegans in the group and explain if they don't tend to buy meat for themselves.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where do you tend to buy meat from? • do you tend to go to the same or different places? For what? • who are you buying for? Does this impact your decision making? <p>What do you consider when buying meat?</p> <p>PROBE IF NEEDED: Price, where produced, company producing example, Red Tractor, whether halal/kosher, anything else</p> <p>Does this differ in any way by the type of meat you are buying?</p> <p>How often will you look at the labels when buying meat?</p> <p>What sorts of things are you looking for?</p> <p>We're now going to move on to another area which is going to discuss with you today.</p> <p>As you know the FSA want to understand people's attitudes to in the meat industry. Before we go into more detail on this, we current food journey of meat products look like.</p> <p>SHOW STIMULUS: SLIDES 8 & 9 - INTRODUCE FOOD JOURNEY</p> <p>MODERATORS TO MAKE CLEAR THAT THE OFFICIAL CONTROLS ARE PART OF THE FOOD JOURNEY THAT THE FSA ARE INVOLVED IN AND ARE FOCUSSED ON IN THE DISCUSSION TODAY</p> <p>How much of this information feels familiar to you?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what had you heard about before? From where? • is anything surprising to you? • is there anything that you find confusing? • do you have any questions about any of this information? |

| Section | Timings | Questions and exercises |
|---|-----------------|---|
| <p>Section 3.</p> <p>Introducing the concept of regulatory divergence and exploring examples of this in practice</p> | <p>20 mins-</p> | <p>SHOW SLIDE 10</p> <p>As you may know, the UK left the European Union in January 2020. We are interested in exploring the potential opportunities the UK now has as a country that is no longer regulated.</p> <p>This could mean different regulations apply in different parts of the UK. Northern Ireland will continue to follow EU regulations, while the rest of the UK will follow UK regulation. Or it could be because England, Wales and Scotland will make changes as each other.</p> <p>Currently, most UK regulations are the same as EU regulations. However, in the future if the EU made changes to their regulations, or the UK made changes to theirs, this is known as 'regulatory divergence'. This could mean that some food products in the UK and EU regulations, depending on which market they are produced in, are different. This could be expensive for businesses, as it could mean they have to produce two lines to meet different rules for EU exports and supply of the UK market. However, all UK shops will all be produced to UK regulations.</p> <p>One alternative is that food businesses could be allowed to choose between EU regulation for the UK market when these regulations are different. This could mean they could still sell their products in the UK by complying with EU regulations, rather than those in the UK. In this scenario, two products that appear to be different could be sold, even though they have been manufactured to different regulations.</p> <p>The FSA wants to explore consumer attitudes towards these potential changes and what this would mean for food businesses and consumers.</p> <p>What do you think of the information you've just heard? Do you have any questions? Is anything unclear?</p> <p>What do you think about the idea that food businesses could decide to follow EU regulations? Do you think there could be any positives to this? What about downsides?</p> <p>What do you think about the idea that regulations could be different for different parts of the UK? Do you think there could be any positives to this? What about downsides?</p> <p>What do you think this could mean to consumers? Do you have any concerns? How do you think this might affect you? Could it change what you buy?</p> <p>INTRODUCE EXAMPLES: We have developed some hypothetical examples of how regulatory divergence could look like in the future, with regards to meat production.</p> <p>SHOW SLIDE 11</p> <p>Example 1. Jameson's, a UK food business, has sold meat to the UK for 20 years. Following changes to UK regulations in the meat industry, Jameson's will produce meat which adheres to EU regulations, rather than producing meat to UK regulations.</p> |

| Section | Timings | Questions and exercises |
|---------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Break | 7:pm 10 mins | SLIDE 12 |

| Section | Timings | Questions and exercises |
|---------|---|---|
| | <p>7:10-7:40</p> <p>30min</p> | <p>SHOW SLIDE 13</p> <p>Example 2. Under the new regulations, one of the main areas Meat, makes changes to is their approach to disinfecting tools safely. The water for disinfecting tools must be supplied at no research is commissioned and demonstrates that equivalent to 72oC. The FSA accepts the research and amends their legislation temperature to be used in England and Wales. Due to regulations appear next to each other on the shelves, one prepared at a far temperatures of 82C and the other at 72C.</p> <p>What do you think about this scenario?</p> <p>Do you have any immediate concerns?</p> <p>What could this mean for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consumers? • food businesses? • retailers? <p>How would you feel about some businesses using water at a lower compared to others?</p> <p>What might be the benefits?</p> <p>What concerns do you have?</p> <p>How would you feel about the change in regulations only applying Northern Ireland)?</p> <p>What might be the benefits?</p> <p>What concerns do you have?</p> <p>Would you want this to be communicated to consumers?</p> <p>If so, in what way?</p> <p>Would this affect your decision-making in any way when purchasing</p> <p>To what extent would you trust that food adhering to these revised</p> <p>How would you feel about two meat products that are packaged purchase, but they have been prepared on production lines us</p> <p>SHOW SLIDE 14</p> <p>Example 3. Currently under retained EU regulations, Official Veter at abattoirs at all times to ensure no animal welfare breaches are r</p> <p>Potential changes in the future could involve a greater use of artificial welfare monitoring for animals, or training staff within the meat pro investigate breaches to animal welfare. This would be instead of C inspections of animals to check for any injuries or cause of death.</p> <p>In both of these scenarios, animal welfare standards would remain or way in which monitoring standards is delivered could be differen</p> <p>What do you think about this scenario?</p> <p>Do you have any immediate concerns?</p> <p>What could this mean for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consumers? • food businesses? |

| Section | Timings | Questions and exercises |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|---|
| Wrapping up and reflections | 7:40 -7:55 15mins | <p>IF NOT ALREADY COVERED: How important is it that consumers regulations?</p> <p>How should consumers be told about this?</p> <p>Who do you think should be providing this information?</p> <p>Overall, what do you think any proposed changes to regulation might mean for the FSA?</p> <p>The FSA? Are there any additional controls/resources/admin which you think will help progress with these proposed plans?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • food businesses? • consumers? <p>Moderator to go round group and ask individually if participants are happy with the proposed changes?</p> <p>What would you say would be the ONE main benefit of potentially introducing regulation?</p> <p>What would you say would be the ONE key risk or challenge of potentially introducing regulation, if any?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • who may be most affected here? • what concerns do you have? • do you have any concerns with regards to food safety? • do you have any concerns with regards to animal welfare? • are there any other risks you can think of? <p>What do you now think about the idea that regulations could be introduced in the UK?</p> <p>Do you think there could be any positives to this?</p> <p>What about downsides?</p> <p>What is the ONE thing you would want to be in place to reassure you that different regulations is safe to eat?</p> <p>What would these assurances or limits look like in practice?</p> <p>Who would be best place to communicate this?</p> <p>What would you want the FSA to prioritise as they develop their plans?</p> <p>Do you have any final thoughts for the FSA? Moderator to debrief group individually here</p> <p>Do you have any questions about what we've discussed today?</p> |

| Section | Timings | Questions and exercises |
|--|---------------|--|
| Section 4: Final reflections | 5 mins | MODERATOR TO SHARE SIGNPOSTING SLIDE ON SCREEN If anyone has any questions about food safety at home, you can leave this slide up, so you can take a note of their names and contact details. Please let me know if you would like me to send you a copy of this. THANK AND CLOSE |