

# Chapter 1: Food you can trust

## Introduction

The FSA's overarching mission is 'food you can trust'. The FSA's vision is a food system in which:

- food is safe
- food is what it says it is
- food is healthier and more sustainable

This chapter provides an overview of respondents' awareness of and trust in the FSA, as well as their confidence in food safety and the accuracy of information provided on food labels [\(footnote 1\)](#).

## Confidence in food safety and authenticity

Most respondents reported confidence (for example, were very confident or fairly confident) in food safety and authenticity; 92% of respondents reported that they were confident that the food they buy is safe to eat, and 86% of respondents were confident that the information on food labels is accurate [\(footnote 2\)](#).

Confidence in food safety varied between different categories of people in the following ways:

- NS-SEC [\(footnote 3\)](#) respondents in some occupational groups (for example, 94% of those in intermediate occupations) were more likely to be confident that the food they buy is safe to eat than respondents who were long term unemployed and/or had never worked (77%).

Confidence in the accuracy of information on food labels varied between different categories of people in the following ways:

- annual household income: respondents with an income over £96,000 (96%) were more likely to report confidence in the accuracy of food labels compared to those with an income of less than £95,999 (for example, 84% of those with an income of £19,000-£31,999).
- NS-SEC: respondents in occupational groups (for example, 88% of those in managerial, administrative and professional occupations) were more likely to report being confident that the information on food labels is accurate, compared to respondents who were long term unemployed and/or had never worked (74%).

## Confidence in the food supply chain

Around three quarters of respondents (76%) reported that they had confidence (for example, very confident or fairly confident) in the food supply chain [\(footnote 4\)](#).

Confidence in the food supply chain varied between different categories of people in the following ways:

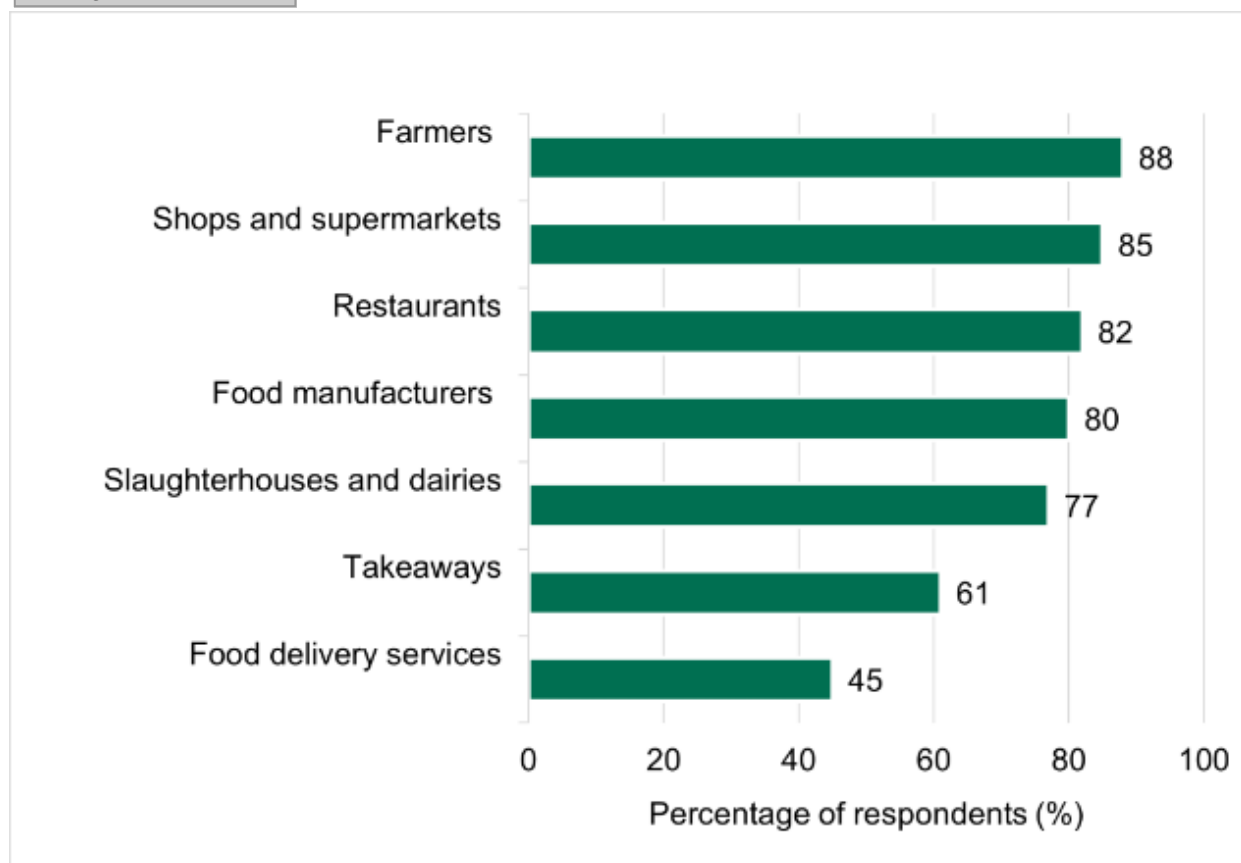
- age group: respondents aged 65-74 years (83%) were more likely to report confidence in the food supply chain compared to younger adults (for example, 70% of those aged 35-44 years)

- NS-SEC: respondents in occupational groups (for example, 78% of those in intermediate occupations) were more likely to report confidence in the food supply chain than those who were long term unemployed and/or had never worked (64%)
- food security: respondents with a high (78%) level of food security were more likely to report confidence in the food supply chain than respondents with very low (68%) food security
- ethnic group: white respondents (77%) were more likely to report confidence in the food supply chain than Asian or British Asian (68%) respondents\*\*
- food hypersensitivity: respondents who did not have a food hypersensitivity (77%) were more likely to report confidence in the food supply chain compared to respondents with a food intolerance (69%).

**Figure 1: Confidence that food supply chain actors ensure food is safe to eat**

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Change to chart view



Food actor	Consumers confident in food actor (%)
Food delivery services	45
Takeaways	61
Slaughterhouses and dairies	77
Food manufacturers	80
Restaurants	82
Shops and supermarkets	85
Farmers	88

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Source: Food and You 2: Wave 4

Respondents were asked to indicate how confident they were that key actors involved in the food supply chain ensure that the food they buy is safe to eat. Respondents were more likely to report confidence (i.e. very confident or fairly confident) in farmers (88%), and shops and supermarkets (85%) than in takeaways (61%), and food delivery services for example, Just Eat, Deliveroo, Uber Eats (45%) (Figure 1) ([footnote 5](#)).

## Awareness, trust and confidence in the FSA

Most respondents (92%) had heard of the FSA ([footnote 6](#)).

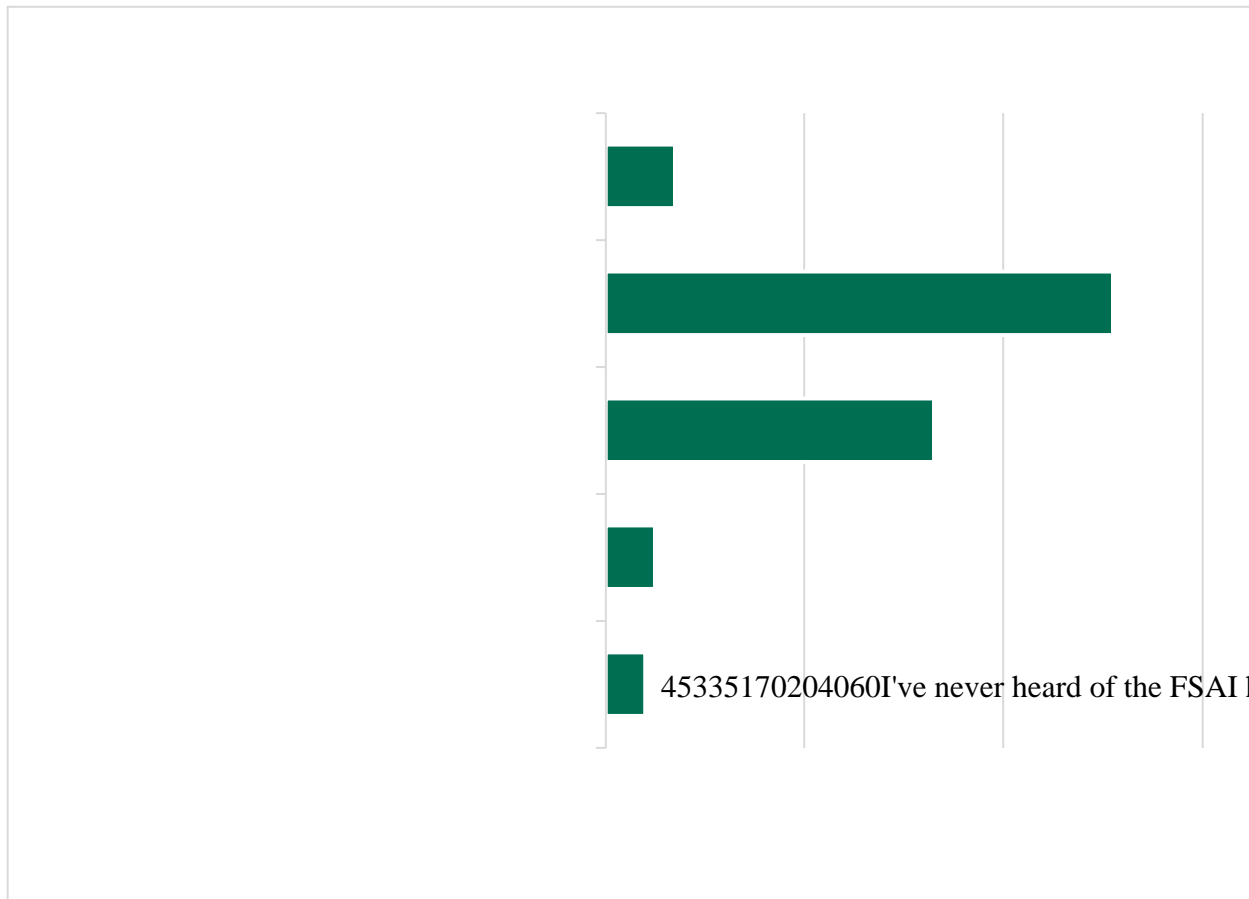
Awareness of the FSA varied between different categories of people in the following ways:

- age group: older respondents were more likely to have heard of the FSA than younger respondents. For example, 96% of those aged 65-74 years had heard of the FSA, compared to 81% of those aged 16-24 years
- NS-SEC: respondents in some occupational groups (for example, 96% of those in intermediate occupations) were more likely to have heard of the FSA compared to those who were long term unemployed and/or had never worked (70%) and full-time students (80%)
- food security: respondents with a high (95%) level of food security were more likely to have heard of the FSA than respondents with low (85%) food security
- ethnic group: white respondents (94%) were more likely to have heard of the FSA compared to Asian or British Asian (82%) respondents.
- responsibility for cooking: respondents who were responsible for cooking (93%) were more likely to have heard of the FSA than those who do not cook (77%)
- responsibility for food shopping: respondents who were responsible for food shopping (94%) were more likely to have heard of the FSA than those who never shop for food (74%).

## Figure 2: Knowledge about the Food Standards Agency

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Level of knowledge	Percentage of respondents (%)
I've never heard of the FSA	4
I hadn't heard of the FSA until I was contacted to take part in this survey	5
I've heard of the FSA but know nothing about it	33
I know a little about the FSA and what it does	51
I know a lot about the FSA and what it does	7

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Source: Food and You 2: Wave 4

A majority of respondents reported at least some knowledge of the FSA; 7% reported that they knew a lot about the FSA and what it does, and 51% reported that they knew a little about the FSA and what it does. Around 4 in 10 (42%) respondents reported that they had no knowledge of the FSA; 33% had heard of the FSA but knew nothing about it, 5% had not heard of the FSA before being contacted to take part in Food and You 2, and 4% had not heard of the FSA (Figure 2) (footnote 7).

Knowledge of the FSA varied between different categories of people in the following ways:

- age group: respondents aged between 45 and 64 years (for example, 69% of those aged 45-54 years) were more likely to report knowledge of the FSA compared to younger respondents (50% of those aged 16-24 years; 54% of those aged 25-34) or the oldest respondents (41% of those aged 75 years and over)
- NS-SEC: respondents in managerial, administrative, and professional occupations (63%) were more likely to report knowledge of the FSA than those who were in lower supervisory and technical occupations (53%), long term unemployed and/or never worked (45%) or full-

time students (46%)

- country: respondents in Wales (68%) were more likely to report knowledge of the FSA than those in England (57%). Six in ten (60%) respondents in Northern Ireland reported knowledge of the FSA
- food hypersensitivity: respondents with an allergy (70%) were more likely to report knowledge of the FSA compared to respondents with a food intolerance (56%) or those who did not have a food hypersensitivity (58%)
- responsibility for cooking: respondents who were responsible for cooking (60%) were more likely to report knowledge of the FSA compared to respondents who do not cook (34%)
- responsibility for shopping: respondents who were responsible for shopping (60%) were more likely to report knowledge of the FSA compared to respondents who never shop (35%).

Respondents who had at least some knowledge of the FSA were asked how much they trusted the FSA to do its job, that is to make sure food is safe and what it says it is; 77% of these respondents reported that they trusted the FSA to do this ([footnote 8](#)).

Over 8 in 10 (85%) 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), 80% were confident that the FSA is committed to communicating openly with the public about food-related risks, and 83% were confident that the FSA takes appropriate action if a food-related risk is identified ([footnote 9](#)).

1. In line with the FSA's [2022-2027 Strategy](#), future reports will also consider food being healthier and more sustainable within this chapter.
2. Question: How confident are you that... A) the food you buy is safe to eat. B) the information on food labels is accurate (for example, ingredients, nutritional information, country of origin). Responses: Very confident, Fairly confident, Not very confident, Not at all confident, It varies, Don't know. Base= 4786, all online respondents and all those who completed the 'Eating at Home' paper questionnaire.
3. [The National Statistics Socio-economic classification](#) (NS-SEC) is a classification system which provides an indication of socio-economic position based on occupation and employment status.
4. Question: How confident are you in the food supply chain? That is all the processes involved in bringing food to your table. Responses: Very confident, Fairly confident, Not very confident, Not at all confident, It varies, Don't know. Base= 4786, all online respondents and all those who completed the 'Eating at Home' paper questionnaire.
5. Question: How confident are you that... A) Farmers, B) Slaughterhouses and dairies, C) Food manufacturers for example, factories, D) Shops and supermarkets, E) Restaurants, F) Takeaways, G) Food delivery services for example, Just Eat, Deliveroo, Uber Eats...in the UK (and Ireland) ensure the food you buy is safe to eat. Responses: Very confident, Fairly confident, Not very confident, Not at all confident, It varies, Don't know. Base= 4755, all online respondents and all those who completed the 'Eating Out' paper questionnaire.

6. Question: Which of the following, if any, have you heard of? Please select all that apply.  
Response: Food Standards Agency (FSA), (England) Public Health England (PHE), (England) Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), (England) Environment Agency, (England and Wales) Health and Safety Executive (HSE), (Wales) Public Health Wales (PHW), (Wales) Natural Resources Wales, (NI) Public Health Agency (PHA), (NI) Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), (NI) Health and Safety Executive Northern Ireland (HSENI), (NI) Safefood. Base= 3745, all online respondents. Please note: All consumers taking part in the survey had received an invitation to take part in the survey from Ipsos which mentioned the FSA. An absence of response indicates the organisation had not been heard of by the respondent or a non-response.
  
7. Question: How much, if anything, do you know about the Food Standards Agency, also known as the FSA? Response: I know a lot about the FSA and what it does, I know a little about the FSA and what it does, I've heard of the FSA but know nothing about it, I hadn't heard of the FSA until I was contacted to take part in this survey, I've never heard of the FSA. Base= 5796, all respondents. Please note: All consumers taking part in the survey had received an invitation to take part in the survey which mentioned the FSA.
  
8. Question: How much do you trust or distrust the Food Standards Agency to do its job? That is to make sure that food is safe and what it says it is. Responses: I trust it a lot, I trust it, I neither trust nor distrust it, I distrust it, I distrust it a lot, Don't know. Base= 3543, all respondents who know a lot or a little about the FSA and what it does. Please note: 'I trust it a lot' and 'I trust it' referred to as trust.
  
9. Question: How confident are you that the Food Standards Agency / the government agency responsible for food safety in England, Wales and Northern Ireland...A) Can be relied upon to protect the public from food-related risks (such as food poisoning or allergic reactions from food). B) Is committed to communicating openly with the public about food-related risks. C) Takes appropriate action if a food related risk is identified? Responses: Very confident, Fairly confident, Not very confident, Not at all confident, Don't know. Base= 5796, all respondents. Please note: 'Very confident' and 'Fairly confident' referred to as confident. Respondents with little or no knowledge of the FSA were asked about 'the government agency responsible for food safety', those with at least some knowledge of the FSA were asked about the FSA.