

Wave 5 Key Findings: Executive summary

Results available: Results available

Area of research interest: [Food and You 2](#)

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PDF

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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 5 was conducted between 26 April and 24 July 2022. A total of 6,770 adults from 4,727 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', 'Eating at home', and 'Food shopping'.

Food you can trust

Confidence in food safety, authenticity and the food supply chain

- 91% of respondents reported that they were confident that the food they buy is safe to eat.
- 86% of respondents were confident that the information on food labels is accurate.
- 74% of respondents reported that they had confidence in the food supply chain.

Awareness, trust and confidence in the FSA

- 91% of respondents had heard of the FSA
- 75% 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'
- 80% 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 is committed to communicating openly with the public about food-related risks, and 80% were confident that the FSA takes appropriate action if a food-related risk is identified.

Concerns about food

- 80% of respondents had no concerns about the food they eat, and 20% of respondents reported that they had a concern.

- Respondents with 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 (25%) and to food safety and hygiene (24%).
- Respondents were asked to indicate if they had concerns about a number of food-related issues, from a list of options. The most common concerns related to food prices (66%), food waste (60%), and the amount of sugar in food (59%).

Food security

- across England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, 80% of respondents were classified as food secure (67% high, 13% marginal) and 20% of respondents were classified as food insecure (10% low, 10% very low).
- 80% of respondents in England reported high or marginal food security, with 78% in Northern Ireland, and 74% in Wales. Low or very low food security was reported by 20% of respondents in England, 22% in Northern Ireland, and 26% in Wales.

Food shopping and labelling

Where do respondents buy food from?

- 83% of respondents reported that they bought food from a supermarket or mini supermarket about once a week or more often.
- 51% of respondents reported that they bought food from independent shops (greengrocers, butchers, bakers, fishmongers) and 44% bought food from a local / corner shop or newsagents 2-3 times a month or less often.

Confidence in allergen labelling

- 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.
- Respondents who bought food loose were more confident in identifying these foods from supermarkets in-store (67%), from an online supermarket (67%) and when shopping at independent food shops (63%) compared to buying food from food markets or stalls (52%).

Online platforms

- 60% of respondents reported that they had ordered food or drink from the websites of a restaurant, takeaway or café, while 55% of respondents had ordered from an online ordering and delivery company (for example, Just Eat, Deliveroo, Uber Eats). 27% of respondents had ordered via an online marketplace (for example Amazon, Gumtree, Etsy), 10% had ordered food or drink through a food sharing app (for example Olio, Too Good To Go), and 8% had ordered via social media platforms (for example, Facebook, Instagram, Nextdoor).

Eating at home

Cleaning

- 49% of respondents reported that they always wash their hands before eating.

- 74% of respondents reported that they always wash their hands before preparing or cooking food.

Avoiding cross-contamination

- Respondents were more likely to report that they (at least occasionally) washed fish or seafood (43%) and raw chicken (39%) compared to lamb, beef or pork (29%) and raw duck, goose or turkey (27%).

Use-by dates

- 66% of respondents identified the use-by date as the information which shows that food is no longer safe to eat.
- 65% of respondents reported that they always check use-by dates before they cook or prepare food.
- most respondents reported that they would not eat shellfish (72%), or other fish (64%) past the use-by date. Around half of respondents would not eat raw meat (52%) or smoked fish (50%) past the use-by date.

Food-related behaviours and eating habits

- most respondents had made changes to their eating habits in the last 12 months. The most common changes related to what and where respondents ate, reducing food costs and increased food management behaviours.
- the main causes of reported changes in eating habits were financial reasons (69%), health reasons (47%), and because of COVID-19 and lockdown (41%).

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