

A survey on the nutritional content and portion sizes of scones

Area of research interest: [Consumer Interests \(aka Wider Consumer Interests\)](#)

Study duration: 2018-01-01

Conducted by: Food Standards Agency and District Councils in NI

Background

Obesity is one of the most important public health challenges currently facing Northern Ireland (NI) with 64% of adults and 27% of children aged 2-15 years old here classified as overweight or obese. Research shows the NI diet contains too much saturated fat, sugar and salt, and at the same time most people are not consuming enough fruit, vegetables and wholegrain products.

Public Health England (PHE) identified 'morning goods' such as scones, pancakes, pastries etc. as one of the top ten sources of sugar in the UK diet, and have therefore included scones in its reduction and reformulation programme. Scones were recognised as a food of 'particular relevance' to the NI population as they are commonly consumed as a mid-morning snack and are frequently served at meetings and events. The bakery sector in NI has been identified as a significant local manufacturer of baked produce consumed within NI.

Approach

Between January and March 2018, the 11 district councils surveyed and sampled 57 scones sold in high street coffee shops across NI.

The samples included a range of scones which were categorised into three groups – plain, fruit and luxury. A minimum of three scone samples were collected from each council area with many providing more samples.

The survey was commissioned by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and district councils as part of the [Eating Well Choosing Better](#) programme.

Results

Analysis was carried out on each scone sample to provide nutritional information per 100g and per portion. For each sample, results are available per 100g and per portion for calories, fat, saturated fat, sugar, fibre and salt.

- The largest scone (a fruit scone) weighed 233.2g, contained the highest number of calories (756kcal) and the most sugar (39.2g)
- The range of calories varied widely from 154kcal to 756kcal.
- The average scone provided 20g of sugar which is the equivalent of 5 sugar cubes.
- The range of fat per scone varied between 3.4g to 22.7g.
- A luxury raspberry and white chocolate scone had the highest fat content (22.7g fat) and contained the most saturated fat (14g saturated fat per portion)
- The average scone provided 1.9g of salt.
- The range of salt varied between 0.54g to 5.01g per scone.

The full results of the survey are outlined in the [Nutritional Content of Scones report](#).

The FSA is committed to working with academia and industry on technical guidance to help businesses to reformulate recipes and to reduce portion sizes and levels of sugar, salt and fat in baked goods.