

Performance and Resources report quarter 4 2022 to 2023: Science

Performance and resources results for science in quarter 4 2022 to 2023.

One of our guiding principles in the Strategy is that we are science and evidence led. The evidence we generate from our science and analysis is critical to our decision making, management of risks, and improving food and feed regulation and policy. We have developed a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure the status of science at the FSA which have been presented for the first time in slide 12 and indicate that we are making good progress towards key science outcomes. Slide 13 will also cover our annual information for FSA sampling activity.

Key successes

Key science outcomes

Most aspects of science, are performing as required, subject to a one area of concern, as highlighted in the KPIs in slide 12.

Some KPIs are now notably higher than the benchmark we set for them particularly those around our culture of openness and collaboration.

Ongoing monitoring, where available has shown all but one of the KPIs has improved from 2021/22, indicating that we are making good progress towards our key outcomes in their first full year of monitoring.

FSA sampling activity

We have maintained broadly the same level of sampling as for 2021/22, sustaining the contribution of this activity to ensuring the safety and standards of our food. This has been achieved through a slight increase in spend of the cost of sampling due to current economic situation.

Following the successful pilot, the LA Directed Food Standards sampling programme will continue as business as usual. This programme supports LA Official Control sampling being used to improve compliance in food businesses.

Our National Reference Labs have developed or adapted 7 analytical methods for testing food and feed, including a method to determine the prevalence of Polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS; long-lasting chemicals with potential health affects) in food, feed and food contact materials. These methods can be transferred to the Official Labs to increase testing capabilities.

Concerns/Risks and Next steps

Concerns/Risks	Next steps
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<p>Science key outcomes</p> <p>The Risk Assessment KPI is a measure of the quality of evidence packages to support policy decisions. It is very challenging target which was not met as one package was delivered after the aspirational deadline. The customer confirmed that this did not impact its usefulness and was fit for purpose.</p>	<p>This along with all KPIs, will be continually monitored, observing trends over time, and suitable actions taken if it appears targets will not be met in future.</p>
<p>FSA sampling activity</p> <p>Targeted sampling, presents good value for money, and avoiding duplication internally and with external programmes is important due to budget constraints and increasing sampling and analysis costs</p> <p>The cost of living crisis led to pressures on manufacturers to keep costs down and changes in consumer shopping habits needs to be taken into consideration in targeted sampling to ensure sampling addresses risks relevant to the consumer.</p>	<p>Improved governance for sampling prioritisation has been established which will continue to be embedded to ensure effective targeting of sampling both within the FSA and between government departments.</p>

Science key outcomes and performance indicators

We are a trusted provider of independent evidence (Delivery)

- 95% of evidence packages meet our target to ensure the risk analysis process is being followed and outputs are fit for purpose. **Below our 100% target.**
- 70% Satisfaction score for Science, Evidence and Research from FSA colleagues using our internal survey which ensures we are improving the use of research and evidence across the agency.
- **Achieving our 70% target.**
- 13.9% of total FSA spend is on science to ensure we maintain total science investment. **Above our 10% target.**

Science will continue to sit at the heart of the FSA (Capability)

- £1.3 million FSA spend on National Reference Labs to safeguard national science capacity. **Above our £1 million target.**
- 105 Experts on Science Advisory Committees (SACs) to retain access to external expertise. **Above our target of 100.**
- 56% of external science spend is outside of London/South East region. **Above our 50% target.**

We have a culture of openness and collaboration (Partnership)

- 129 reports published as a result of SERD funding to maintain or increase the use of FSA science. **Above our target of 75.**
- 19 fellows and students to retain and enhance support for those working in the FSA. **Above our target of 15.**
- 56% leverage of external funds To maintain or increase research
- collaborations by co-funding joint projects. **Above our 10% target.**