

# FSA 3-year Corporate Plan: Appendix 2 Our indicators

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We will monitor progress against our strategy using the indicators described in this appendix. At the same time, we will keep the list of indicators under review, updating them to reflect new measures. For example, as we grow our contribution to healthier and more sustainable food, we expect to identify new progress measures we can add.

The latest available data for each indicator is included. However, as this is the start of the first year of our plan, the data are intended to form a baseline and context for future years, not an assessment of progress over the last year.

Progress indicators must be interpreted carefully in their context, to give an accurate picture of delivery of our strategy. Many factors can cause change in the food system and the FSA does not have direct influence on all of them.

## Maintaining food you can trust

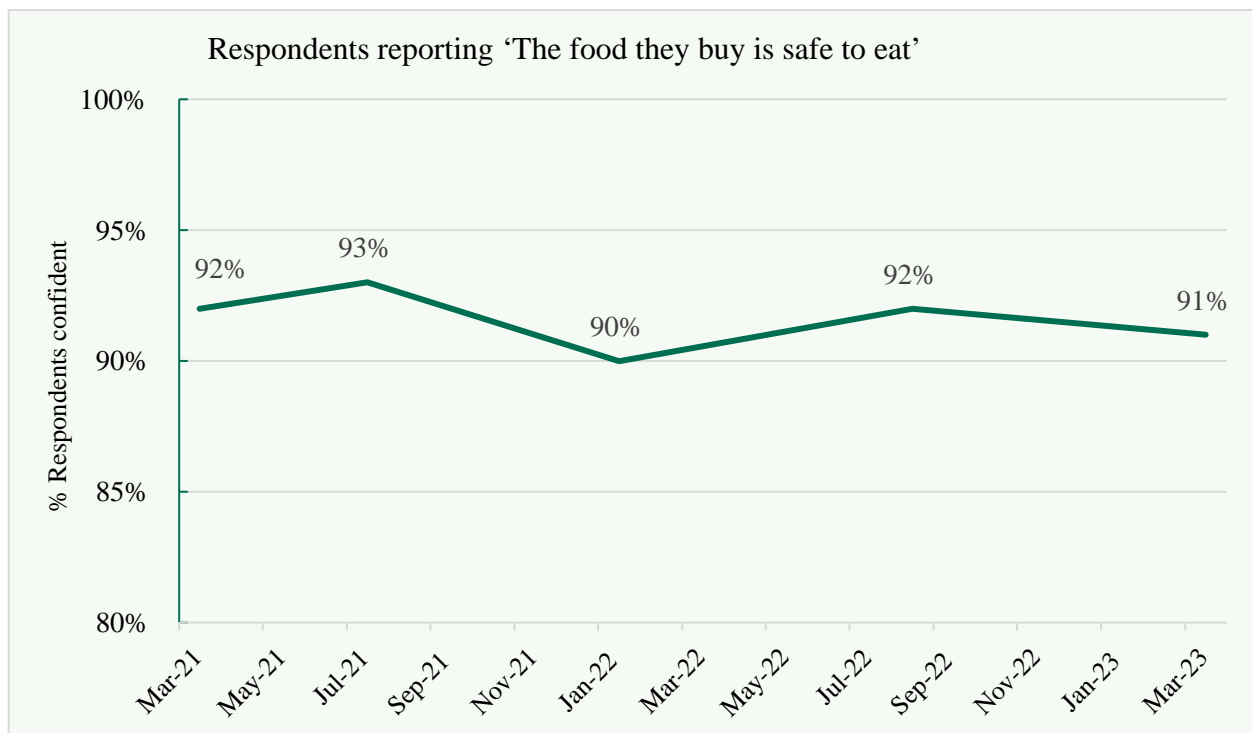
Measuring trust in food and the FSA is complex and influenced by a range of factors. We have both a direct and an indirect influence on some of the factors that lead people to trust food.

The FSA and our partners work to ensure that food is safe, is what it says it is and that food is healthier and more sustainable. This contributes indirectly to levels of trust in the food system. Our actions directly contribute to public trust in the FSA itself, which in turn contributes to trust in the food system.

Public trust in the food system is high. Wave 5 of our flagship social research survey, [Food & You 2](#) found that:

- 91% of respondents are confident that the food they buy is safe to eat
- 86% are confident that the information on food labels is accurate
- 80% are confident that the FSA (or government agency responsible) can be relied upon to protect the public from food-related risks

**Respondents reporting 'The food they buy is safe to eat'.**



Source: Food and You 2

Almost all small and micro food businesses have heard of the FSA (98%). Those who have contacted us score the agency on average 9/10 on trustworthiness. 95% of all businesses surveyed are confident that the FSA is influential in maintaining standards within the food industry and 93% are confident that we work hard to ensure that food safety and standards are maintained and improved.

According to qualitative research conducted for the FSA by IPSOS Mori (November 2021), stakeholders agree that we consistently put consumers first in our work:

- our key strengths are reported to be our transparency, openness, and integrity
- engagement with the FSA was found to be positive and productive
- we are perceived to be a science-led organisation, with a high level of independence and able to remain balanced and impartial.
- stakeholders identified some areas for us to improve, including greater clarity about our role, internal structure, and how we work with other government departments, and the level of FSA staff's experience of how different food sectors work on the ground.

## **Maintaining food that is safe and is what it says it is**

Food businesses are responsible for delivering food that is safe and is what it says it is. Nevertheless, we have direct influence on this, for example through our work regulating meat businesses or responding to food crime. We also have an indirect influence through our work with partners such as local authorities who regulate most food businesses.

Our work makes it easier for businesses to meet their obligations around food safety and authenticity, and do the right thing, while at the same time taking action when something goes wrong. We also make it easier for consumers to make informed decisions about what they eat.

### **Foodborne disease**

In line with the FSA's Foodborne Disease Framework, we monitor food safety through numbers of reported cases of foodborne disease through the annual rate of 4 key pathogens: Campylobacter, Salmonella, Shiga toxin producing E.coli O157, and Listeria monocytogenes. There are a number of issues that need to be taken into account when interpreting these figures including:

- a large volume of foodborne disease cases are not reported (for example, only an estimated 1 in 9 cases of Campylobacter were reported to national surveillance in 2008-9, see [The Second Study of Infectious Intestinal Disease in the Community \(IID2 Study\)](#))
- rates of some reported foodborne pathogens during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021 reduced substantially and the continuing impact of behaviours developed during the pandemic is unknown

### Foodborne Disease - reported cases per 100,000 population

Key Foodborne Pathogen	Median average for 2015 to 2019	2021
Campylobacter	97	101.5
Salmonella	15	8.8
Shiga toxin producing E.coli (STEC) O157	1.3	0.9
Listeria monocytogenes	0.3	0.3

Data is taken from the UK Health Security Agency, Public Health Wales, Public Health Scotland and Public Health Agency Northern Ireland. Data are provisional and may change.

### Business compliance

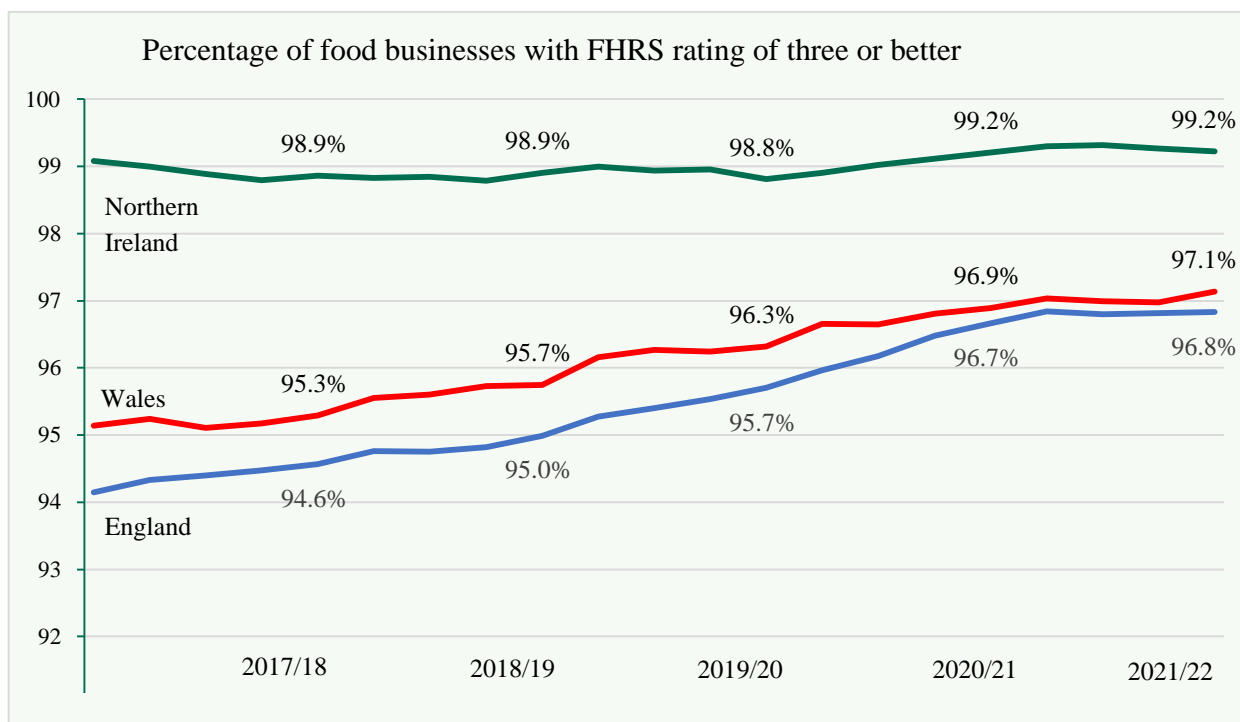
Food businesses are inspected to ensure that they comply with both food hygiene and food standards requirements. The results of inspection are key indicators of food safety and standards. There were over 600,000 registered food businesses in England, Wales and Northern Ireland in 2021/22.

### Food Hygiene Rating Scheme

The Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) is operated in partnership with local authorities across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The scheme helps consumers to make an informed choice when eating out or buying food by providing information about the hygiene standards of food businesses who supply consumers at the time of local authority inspections. In Wales only, the scheme also applies to businesses who sell to businesses including food manufacturers and wholesalers.

More than 470,000 businesses have a Food Hygiene Rating. FHRS covers approximately 85% of food businesses in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Businesses are rated from 0 to 5. A rating of 3 or above indicates generally satisfactory standards of hygiene. The top rating of 5 means that the business has very good standards. Display of FHRS ratings is mandatory in Wales and Northern Ireland and voluntary in England.

### Percentage of food businesses with FHRS rating three or better



## Meat hygiene compliance

The [FSA audits approved meat business establishments](#), which are those that require veterinary controls. At the end of 2021/22, there were 873 approved meat establishments.

Approved meat establishments 99% rated good or satisfactory, March 2022.

We use a risk-based approach that categorises them according to compliance levels. Compliance ratings for approved establishments in March 2022 showed 98.9% rated 'good' or 'generally satisfactory' and 1.2% rated 'improvement necessary' or 'urgent improvement necessary'.

## Dairy hygiene compliance

The FSA carries out hygiene inspections at all registered dairy farms in England and Wales. In Northern Ireland, dairy hygiene inspection is carried out by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Quality Assurance Branch. There were 7,978 registered dairy establishments at the end of December 2022.

In England and Wales, 98.1% of dairy establishments inspected achieved the highest outcomes of either Good or Generally Satisfactory in 2022. This is a notable improvement on the previous year's results and is due to a change in the way dairy hygiene compliance totals are calculated. It reflects the most up to date information we have on compliance and better aligns with the reporting methodology used by Northern Ireland.

### Dairy hygiene compliance levels for assessed premises as of 31 December 2022

Nation	Good	Generally satisfactory	Improvement necessary	Urgent improvement necessary

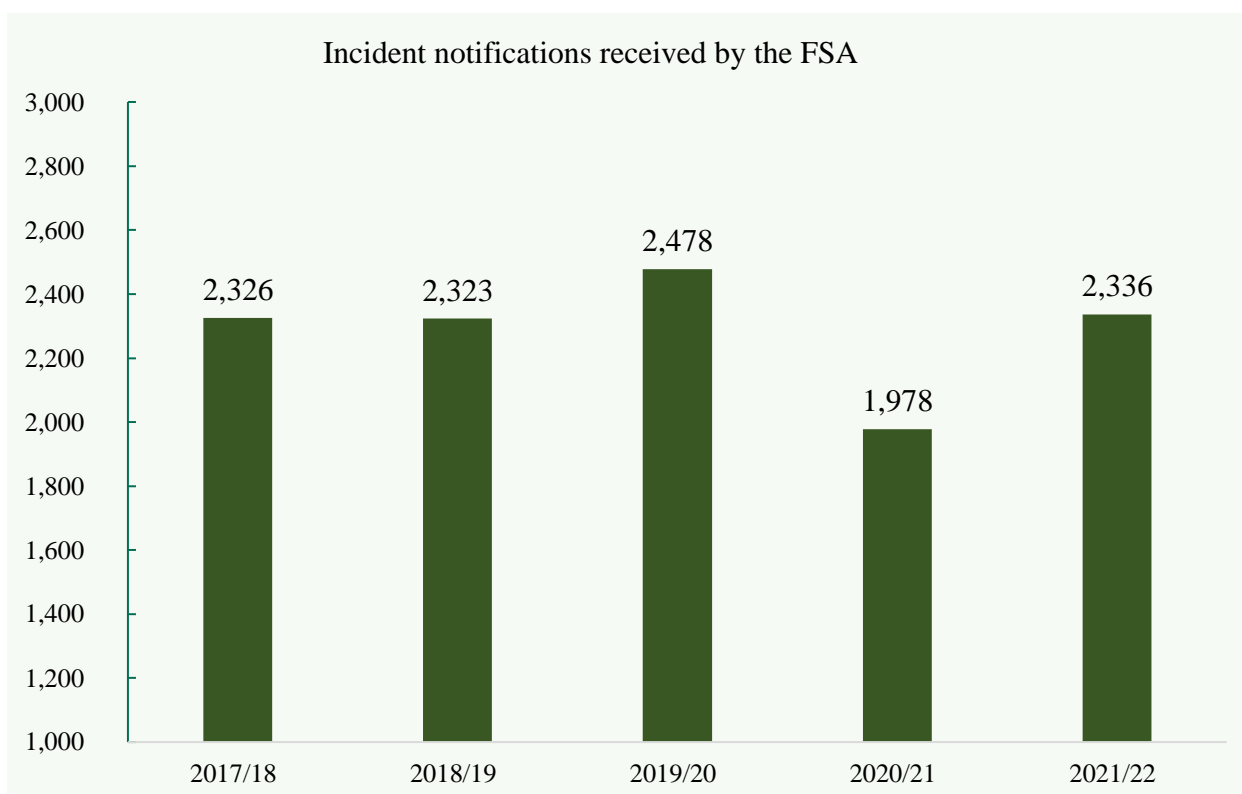
England and Wales	75.0%	23.1%	1.9%	0.04%
Northern Ireland	59.5%	39.7%	0.8%	0.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>72.4%</b>	<b>25.8%</b>	<b>1.7%</b>	<b>0.04%</b>

## Food Incidents

A food incident occurs when concerns about the actual or suspected safety or quality of food (or feed) may require action to protect consumers. Incidents broadly fall into 2 categories:

- contamination of food or animal feed in processing, distribution, retail and catering
- environmental pollution incidents such as fires, chemical/oil spills and radiation leaks

## Incident notifications received by the FSA



Food incidents vary significantly in their seriousness and the number of consumers and quantity of food affected. Numbers may also be affected by repeated incidents from the same source or by changes in sampling and detection.

The number of incidents fell during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and then increased steadily throughout 2021, while remaining lower than in 2019.

## Allergen related incidents

Allergens are the second largest cause of incidents and can be fatal for people with a food hypersensitivity. There were 320 allergen related incidents reported in 2021/22.

Allergen incidents 320 2021 to 2022.

The FSA will explore and assess options to improve the provision of allergen information over the next 3 years and has already undertaken allergen awareness campaigns aimed at consumers and food businesses. Increased awareness of food hypersensitivity may lead to increased reporting of allergen incidents.

## **Food crime**

A disruption is an action which is confirmed to have reduced the risk or harm done by food crime. Examples of disruptions include:

- a prosecution or arrest
- supporting a business to be more resilient to food crime

The impact of a disruption varies significantly depending on the number of potential perpetrators and victims affected. In 2021/22 there were 64 disruptions.

Food crimes that involve a risk to food safety are recorded as food incidents. Food crime affecting the authenticity of food, such as food fraud, may not pose a risk to public health.

## **Targeted sampling of food**

The [FSA basket of foods survey](#) provides a snapshot of how well a range of food products comply with food safety and standards, including:

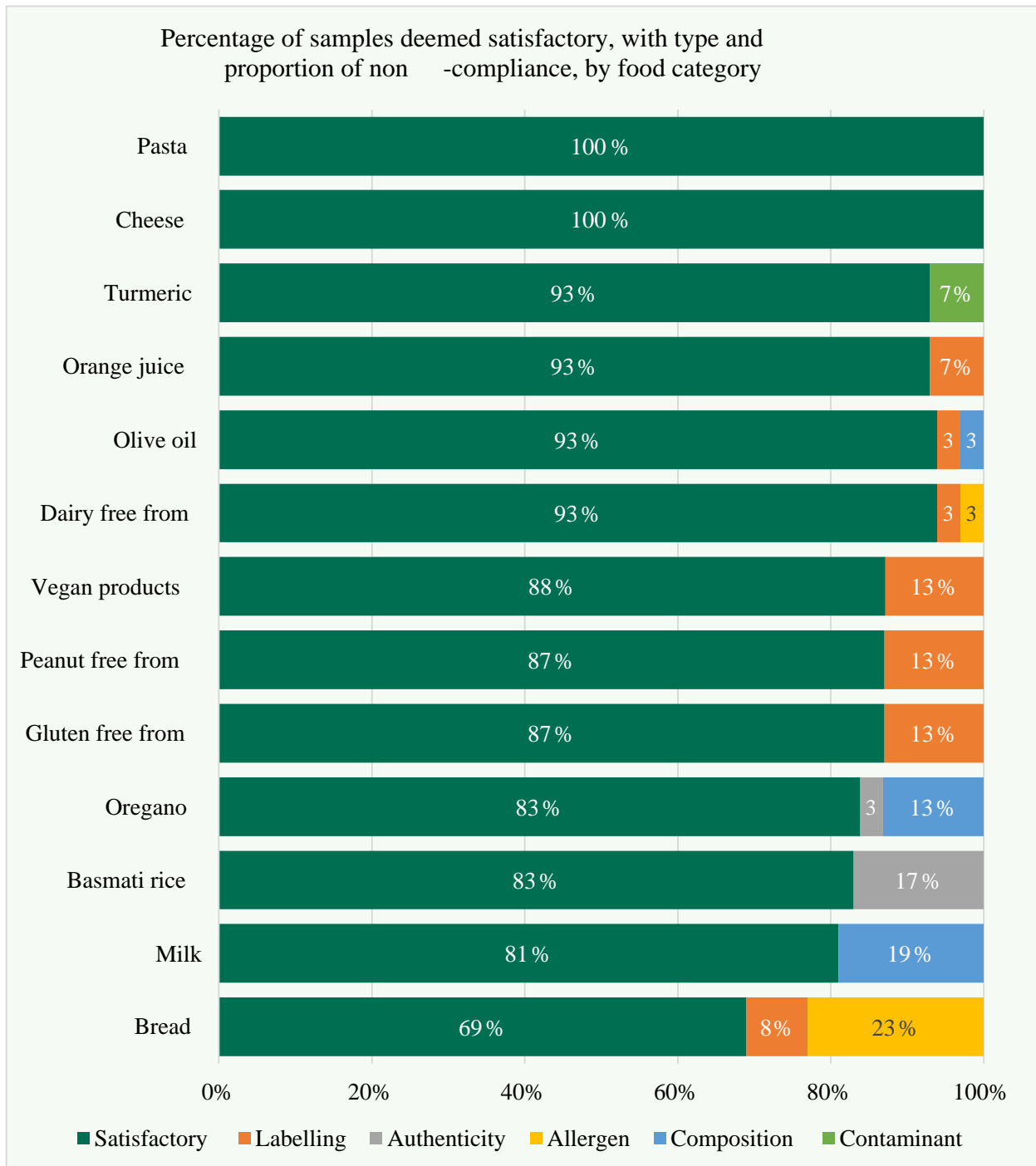
- the presence of allergens and contaminants
- consumer information relating to authenticity and labelling

The basket of foods survey is not a random sample of all available products. The survey targets products with prior authenticity issues (such as basmati rice, herbs and spices) and supplements them with some commonly consumed foods (such as bread and milk). In 2021, the majority of samples were taken from smaller food businesses across the country (including retail outlets and online), which undertake less routine sampling than large food businesses.

The survey showed that 89% of products tested were compliant with respect to the specific standards we tested.

The majority of non-compliances found were for labelling and composition.

## **Percentage of samples deemed satisfactory, with type and proportion of non-compliance, by food category**



Source: FSA basket of food survey, 2021. Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

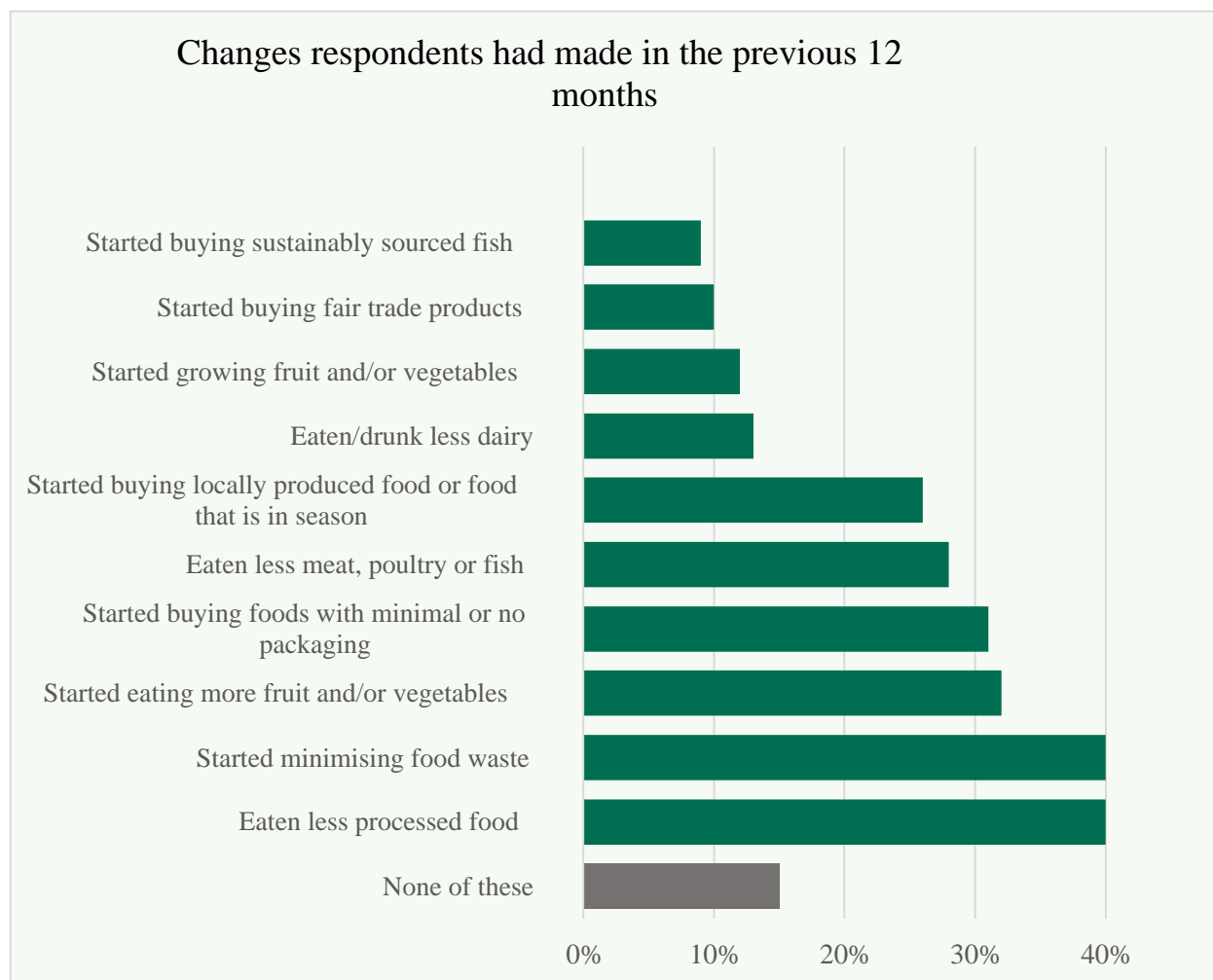
## Contributing to food that is healthier and more sustainable

The FSA's ability to influence whether food is healthier and more sustainable is more limited than for food that is safe and is what it says it is. Other government departments hold policy responsibility for most of these areas, but the FSA can make some targeted contributions that make a real impact. As such, our indicators will focus first on consumer attitudes about healthier and more sustainable food and on our contributions, rather than food system outcomes.

### Food and You 2 Survey

Our flagship social research survey, [Food and You 2](#), includes questions on respondents' food-related behaviours, these were covered most recently in an [earlier wave of the Food and You 2 survey in 2022](#). Consumers reported several changes of behaviour over the previous 12 months, for example 40% reported eating less processed food and the same percentage minimising food waste.

### Changes respondents had made in the previous 12 months

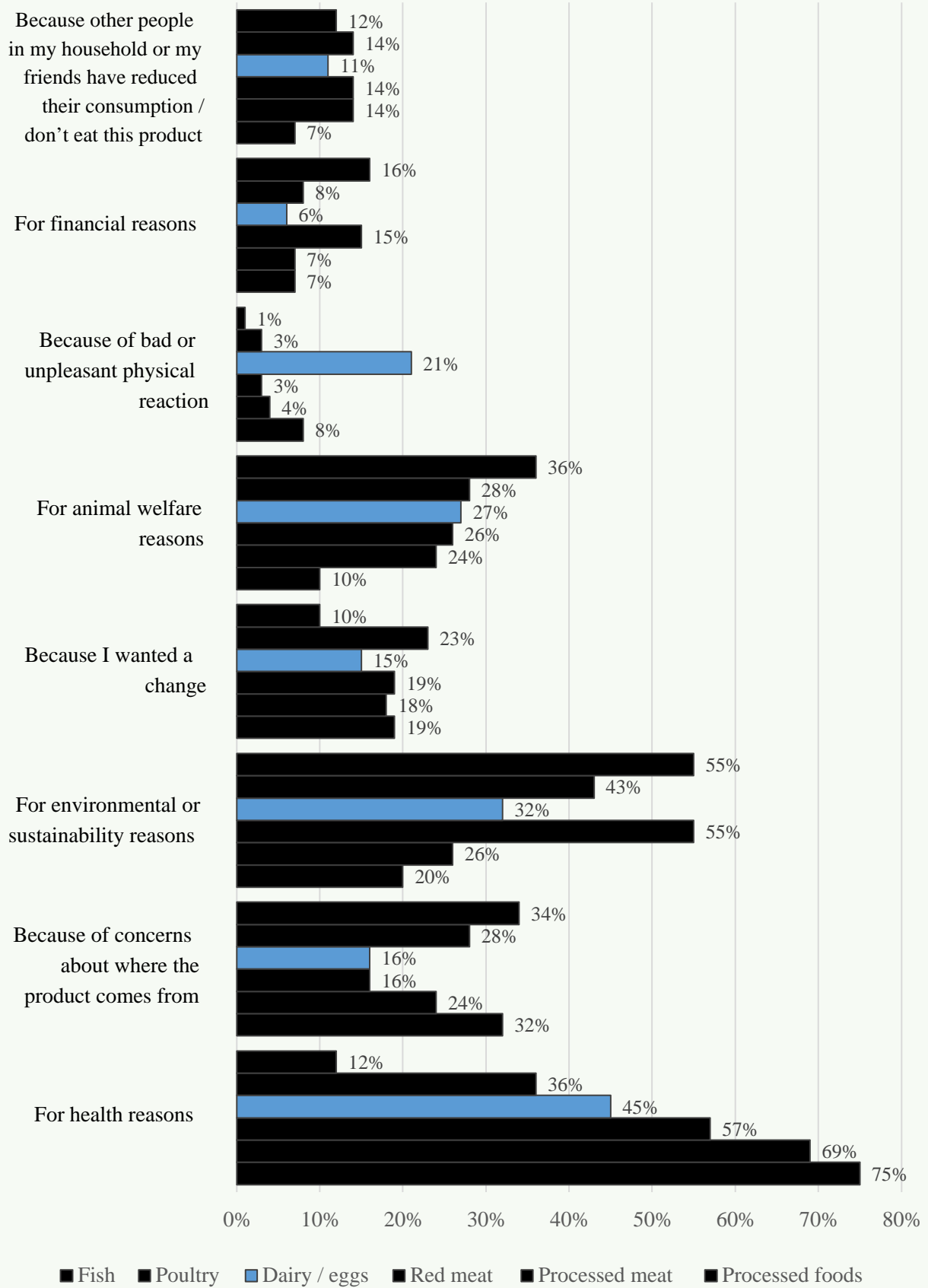


Reasons for making these behavioural changes varied. Health reasons were the most common reason for several of the changes we asked about. Environmental or sustainability concerns were also often selected.

### Common reasons that respondents had eaten less of specified foods in the previous 12 months



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## Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland, the FSA is responsible for the delivery of some nutrition and dietary health policy. The aim is to improve nutrition and health outcomes by making healthier food products available and increasing consumers' understanding of nutrition.

Our contribution to delivering healthier and more sustainable food will be indicated by case studies and data from the FSA's Making Food Better (MFB) programme, Calorie Wise, MenuCal, and other relevant programmes and surveys.

## Making Food Better

The Making Food Better programme supports small and medium sized food businesses to reduce the calorie, sugar, saturated fat and salt content of the food they produce, sell or serve, as well as reducing portion sizes to help consumers make healthier choices.

The FSA's webinar on reformulating bakery products to make food healthier has been viewed 1,226 times.

The Eating Well, Choosing Better Tracker Survey monitored NI consumers' understanding and knowledge of recommended daily calorie intake, use of traffic light labels, attitudes towards reformulation and calorie information, and awareness of campaign communications.

Key findings from the [Eating Well Choosing Better Tracking Survey - Wave 7 \(2021\)](#) included:

- 21% of male and 20% of female participants are aware of the correct recommended daily calorie intake for their sex
- 42% of respondents in 2021 use the traffic light label
- 79% of respondents in 2021 understand the traffic light label

## MenuCal

MenuCal is a free online tool which helps food businesses put allergen and calorie information on their menu. 10,591 recipes were entered into MenuCal in 2021/22, a 63% increase on the previous year. This increase was likely influenced by the introduction of mandatory calorie labelling in the Out of Home Sector in England.

## Growing our contribution

Outside of this role in Northern Ireland, we must work together with other government departments with direct responsibility for policy on health and sustainability, and with other stakeholders with expertise and influence to deliver improvements. For example, our work in Wales aligns with the goals of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015. We are setting a realistic ambition to contribute on health and sustainability given short-term constraints and the demands of delivering on our core remit.

For these areas, our indicators of progress focus less on the food system and more on the extent of the FSA's work collaborating with other actors. Change in the health and sustainability of food will be driven primarily by actions of the food industry, consumers, and other government departments. These factors, in addition to the nuances of measuring health and sustainability of food, mean that indicators of the FSA's activities will better evaluate the delivery of this part of the strategy. We will also seek to clarify what healthier and more sustainable food means for the FSA specifically.

Future indicators of healthier and more sustainable food could include case studies of our work on:

- the School Foods Standards Compliance pilot with the Department for Education
- the Food Data Transparency Partnership with DEFRA
- our work to make food more sustainable with the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) charity