

# F&Y2 Wave 6: Chapter 2 Concerns about food

## Introduction

The FSA's role, [set out in law](#), is to safeguard public health and protect the interests of consumers in relation to food. The FSA uses the Food and You 2 survey to monitor consumers' concerns about food issues, such as food safety, nutrition, and environmental issues. This chapter provides an overview of respondents' concerns about food.

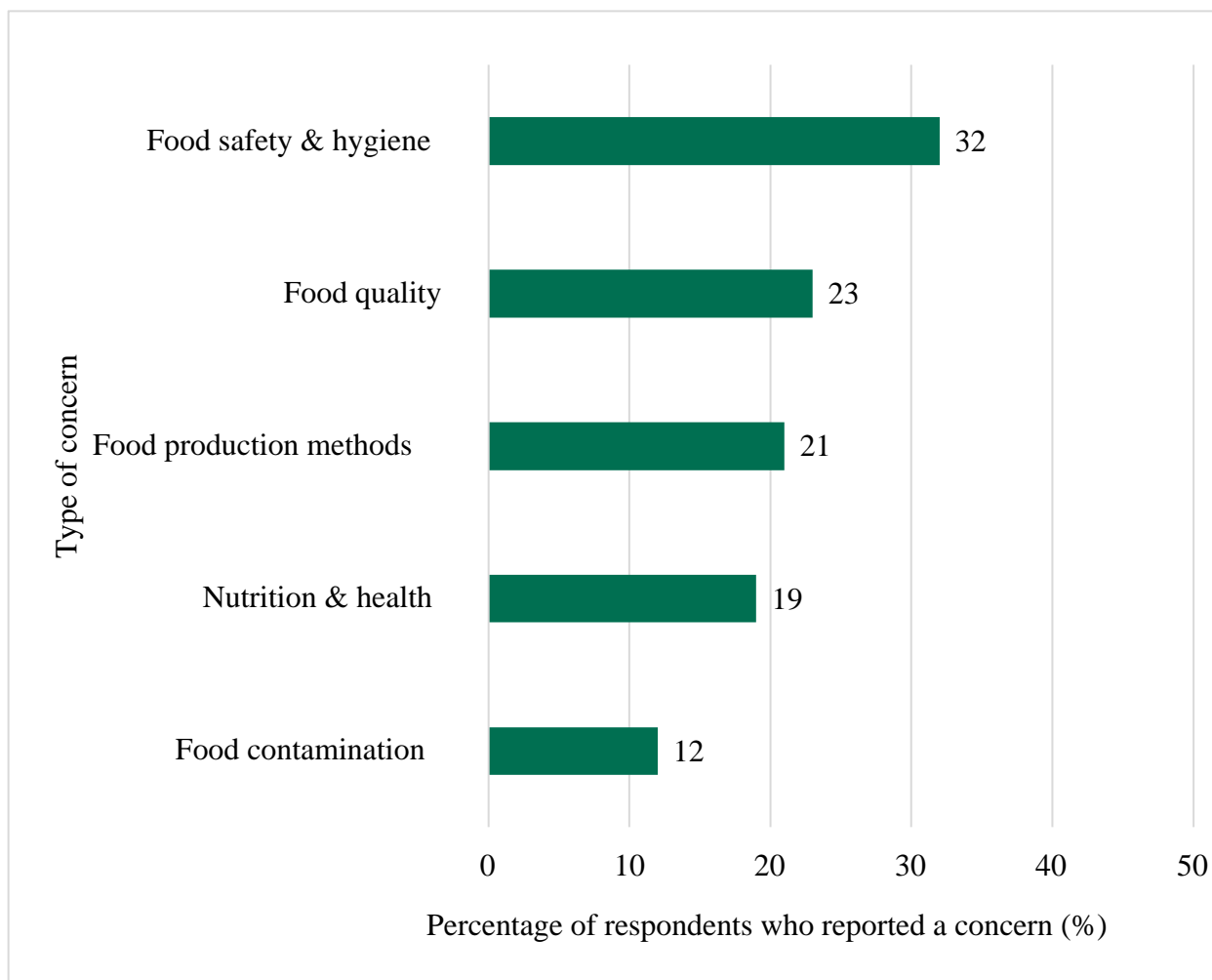
## Common concerns

Respondents were asked to report whether they had any concerns about the food they eat. Most respondents (82%) had no concerns about the food they eat, and 18% of respondents reported that they had a concern ([footnote 1](#)).

## Figure 3. Most common spontaneously expressed food-related concerns.

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Type of concern	Percentage of Respondents
Dietary requirements (not related to food hypersensitivities)	8
Food labelling	10
Food provenance	10
Environmental & ethical	10
Food contamination	12
Nutrition & health	19
Food production methods	21
Food quality	23
Food safety & hygiene	32

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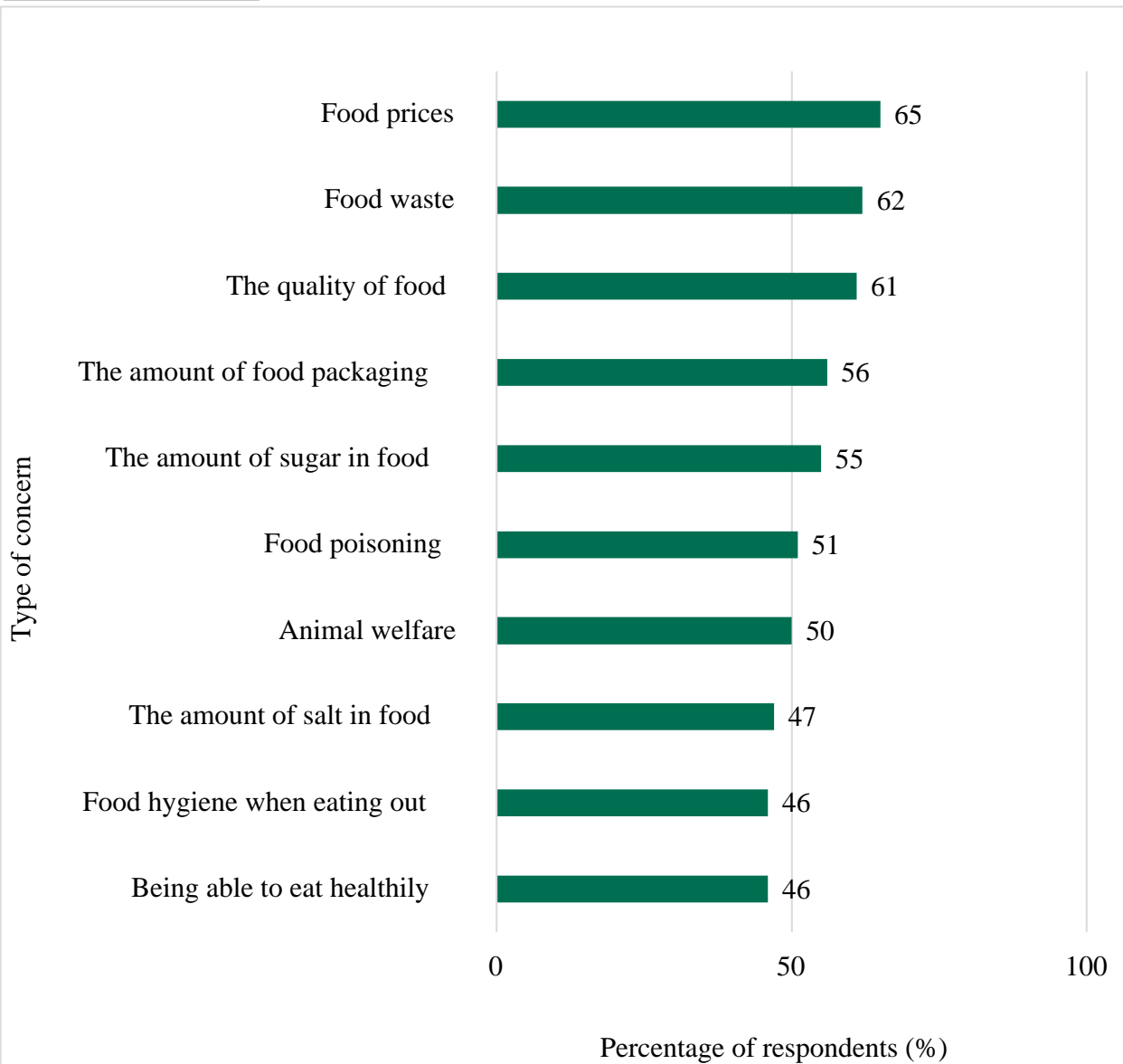
Source Food and You 2: Wave 6

Respondents who reported having a concern were asked to briefly explain what their concerns were about the food they eat. The most common concerns related to food safety and hygiene (32%), the quality of food (23%), food production methods (21%), and nutrition and health (19%) (Figure 3) ([footnote 2](#))

**Figure 4. Most common prompted food-related concerns.**

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Type of concern	Percentage of respondents
Being able to eat healthily	46
Food hygiene when eating out	46
The amount of salt in food	47
Animal welfare	50
Food poisoning	51
The amount of sugar in food	55
The amount of food packaging	56
The quality of food	61
Food waste	62
Food prices	65

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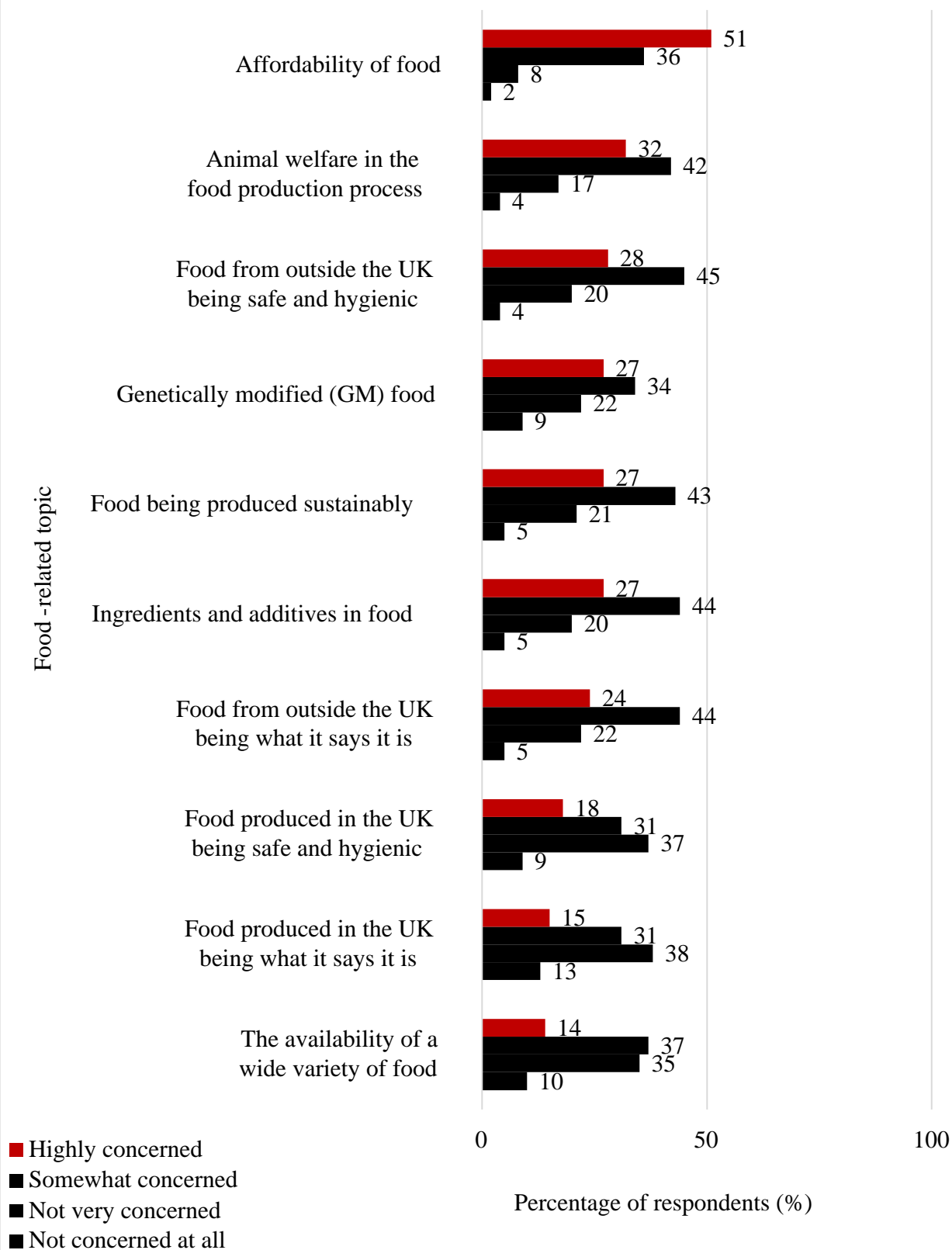
Respondents were asked to indicate if they had concerns about several food-related issues, from a list of options. The most common concern was food prices (65%). Other common concerns were food waste (62%), the quality of food (61%), and the amount of food packaging (56%) (Figure 4) [\(footnote 3\)](#).

## Figure 5. Level of concern about food-related topics.

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Food-related topic



Food-related topic	Not concerned at all	Not very concerned	Somewhat concerned	Highly concerned
The availability of a wide variety of food	10	35	37	14
Food produced in the UK being what it says it is	13	38	31	15
Food produced in the UK being safe and hygienic	9	37	31	18

Food-related topic	Not concerned at all	Not very concerned	Somewhat concerned	Highly concerned
Food from outside the UK being what it says it is	5	22	44	24
Ingredients and additives in food	5	20	44	27
Food being produced sustainably	5	21	43	27
Genetically modified (GM) food	9	22	34	27
Food from outside the UK being safe and hygienic	4	20	45	28
Animal welfare in the food production process	4	17	42	32
Affordability of food	2	8	36	51

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Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they were concerned about a number of specific food-related issues. Respondents were most likely to report a high level of concern about the affordability of food (51%). Other issues respondents were highly concerned about included animal welfare in the food production process (32%) and food from outside the UK being safe and hygienic (28%) (Figure 5) ([footnote 4](#)).

The reported level of concern about the affordability of food varied between different categories of people in the following ways:

- **age group:** respondents aged between 16 and 64 years were more likely to report that they were highly concerned about the affordability of food compared to those aged 65 years or over (for example, 55% of those aged 25-34 years compared to 37% of those aged 80 years or over).
- **children under 6 years in household:** 64% of respondents with children under 6 reported that they were highly concerned about the affordability of food compared to 50% of those without children of that age in the household.
- **annual household income:** respondents with a lower income were more likely to report that they were highly concerned about the affordability of food compared to households with a higher income (for example, 59% of those with an income below £19,000 compared to 49% of those with an income between £64,000 and £95,999).
- **region (England) ([footnote 5](#)):** levels of concern about the affordability of food varied by region in England. For example, respondents who live in the North-East of England (65%) and West Midlands (59%) were more likely to report that they were highly concerned about the affordability of food compared to those who live in London (45%).
- **food security:** respondents with very low food security (75%) were more likely to report that they were highly concerned about the affordability of food than those with low (65%) or marginal (56%) food security. Those with high food security were least likely to report that they were highly concerned about the affordability of food (44%).

1. Question: Do you have any concerns about the food you eat? Responses: Yes, No. Base= 5991, all respondents.
2. Question: What are your concerns about the food you eat? Responses: [Open text]. Base= 1064, all respondents with concerns about the food they eat. Please note: additional responses are available in the full data set and tables, responses were coded by Ipsos, see Technical Report for further details.

3. Question: Do you have concerns about any of the following? Responses: the amount of sugar in food, food waste, animal welfare, hormones, steroids or antibiotics in food, the amount of salt in food, the amount of fat in food, food poisoning, food hygiene when eating out, food hygiene when ordering takeaways, the use of pesticides, food fraud or crime, the use of additives (for example, preservatives and colouring), food prices, genetically modified (GM) foods, chemical contamination from the environment, food miles, the number of calories in food, food allergen information, cooking safely at home, the quality of food, the amount of food packaging, being able to eat healthily, none of these, don't know. Base= 3820, all online respondents. Please note: the data from this question are not directly comparable to previous waves due to new response options; being able to eat healthily, the quality of food, the amount of food packaging.
  
4. Question: Thinking about food in the UK [question wording variation in Northern Ireland: the UK and Ireland] today, how concerned, if at all, do you feel about each of the following topics? a) affordability of food b) food produced in [in England and Wales: the UK; [in Northern Ireland: the UK and Ireland] being safe and hygienic c) food from outside [in England and Wales: the UK; in Northern Ireland: the UK and Ireland] being safe and hygienic d) food produced in [in England and Wales: the UK; in Northern Ireland: the UK and Ireland] being what it says it is e) food from outside [in England and Wales: the UK; in Northern Ireland: the UK and Ireland] being what it says it is f) food being produced sustainably g) the availability of a wide variety of food h) animal welfare in the food production process i) ingredients and additives in food j) genetically modified (GM) food. Base = 5991, all online respondents. Please note: some question wording was modified for respondents in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.
  
5. Regional differences were only considered in England due to the low sample / base size in Wales and Northern Ireland.