

F&Y2 Wave 5-6 NI: Chapter 1: Food you can trust

Introduction

The FSA's overarching mission is 'food you can trust'. The FSA's vision is a food system in which:

- food is safe
- food is what it says it is
- food is healthier and more sustainable

This chapter provides an overview of respondents' awareness of and trust in the FSA, as well as their confidence in food safety and the accuracy of information provided on food labels.

Confidence in food safety and authenticity

Most respondents reported confidence (for example, were very confident or fairly confident) in food safety and authenticity; 92% of respondents reported that they were confident that the food they buy is safe to eat, and 87% of respondents were confident that the information on food labels is accurate ([footnote 1](#)).

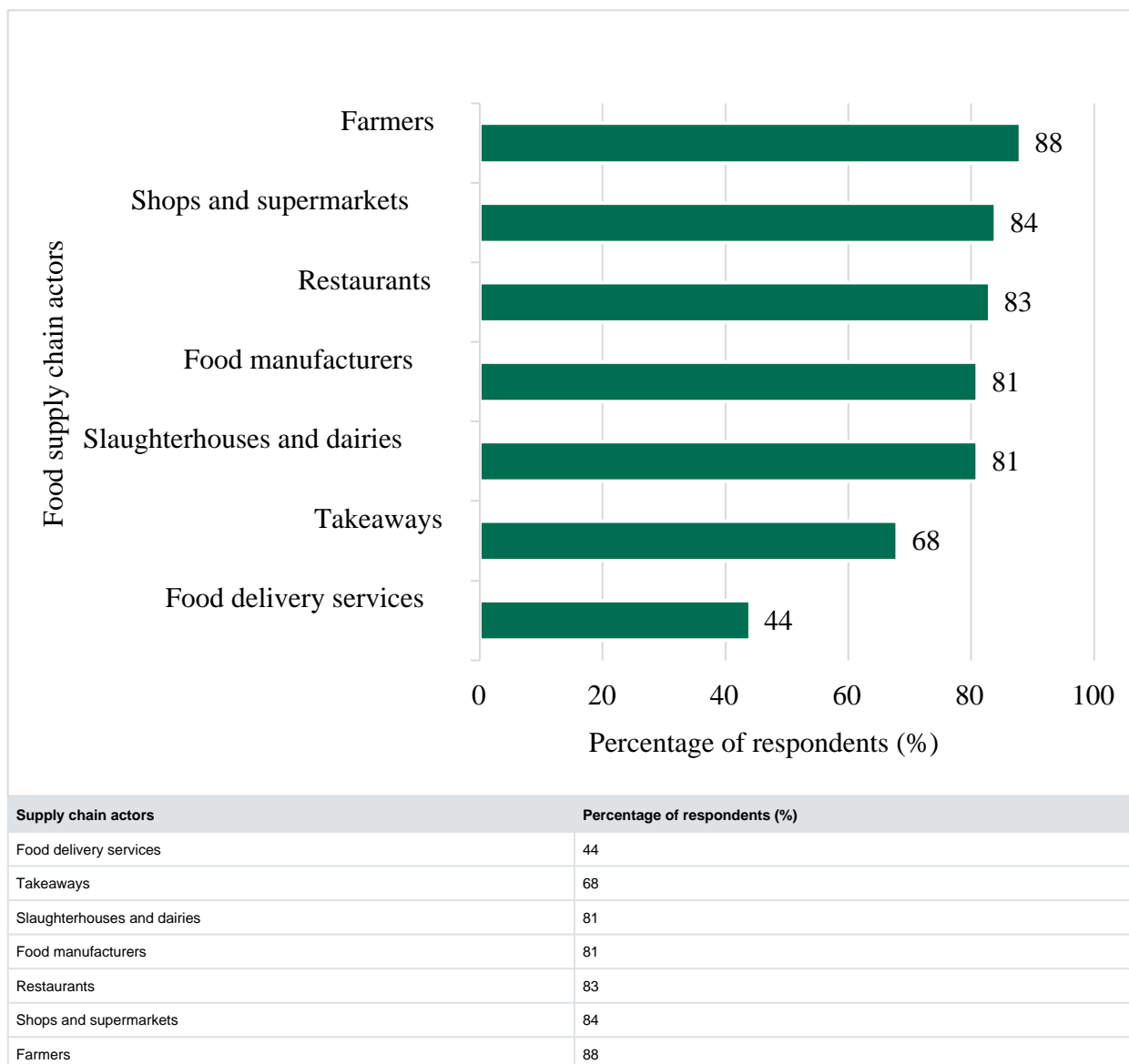
Confidence in the food supply chain

Around three quarters of respondents (76%) reported that they had confidence (i.e. were very confident or fairly confident) in the food supply chain ([footnote 2](#)).

Figure 1: Confidence that food supply chain actors ensure food is safe to eat.

Change to table and accessible view

Change to chart view



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Source: Food and You 2: Wave 6

Respondents were asked to indicate how confident they were that key actors involved in the food supply chain, in the UK and Ireland, ensure that the food they buy is safe to eat. Respondents were more likely to report confidence (i.e. were very confident or fairly confident) in farmers (88%), shops and supermarkets (84%), and restaurants (83%), than in takeaways (68%), and food delivery services for example, Just Eat, Deliveroo, Uber Eats (44%) (Figure 1) [\(footnote 3\)](#).

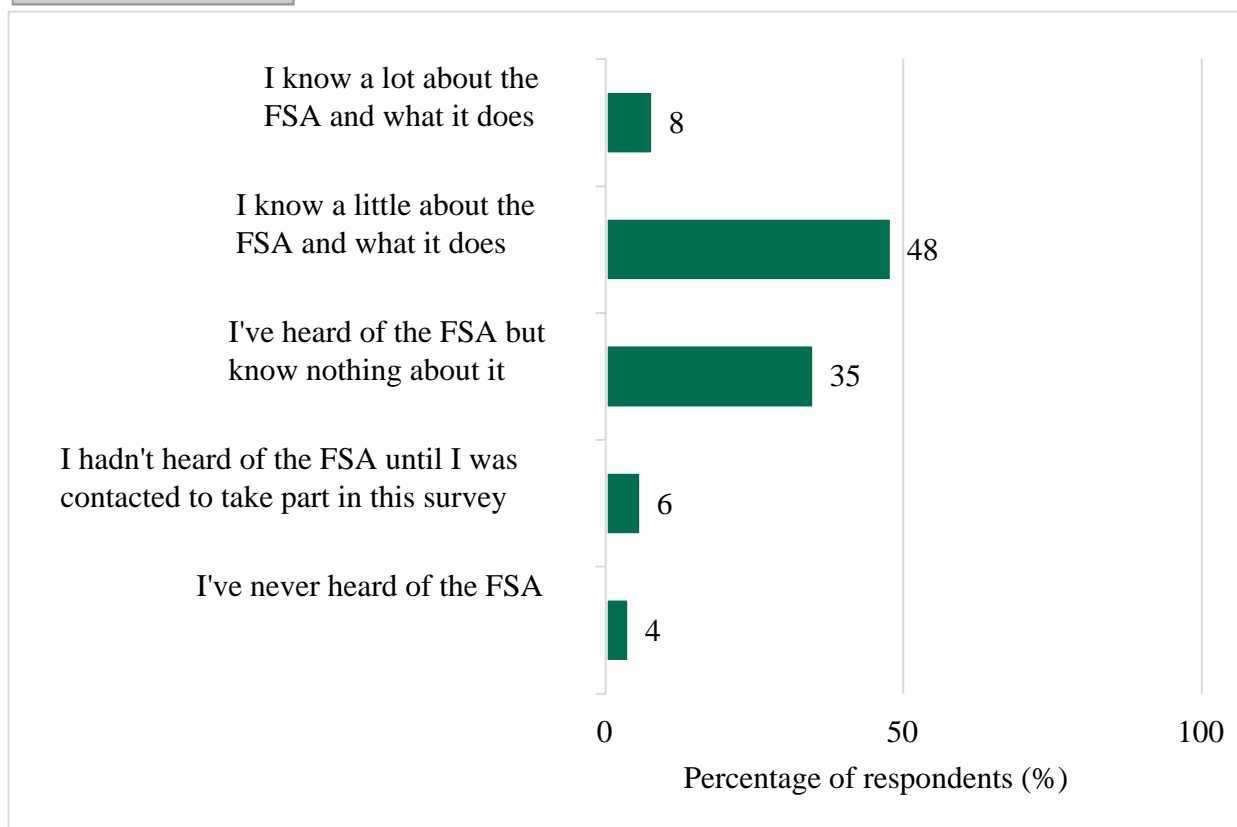
Awareness, trust and confidence in the FSA

Most respondents (91%) had heard of the FSA [\(footnote 4\)](#).

Figure 2. Knowledge about the Food Standards Agency.

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Heard of FSA	Percentage of respondents (%)
I've never heard of the FSA	4
I hadn't heard of the FSA until I was contacted to take part in this survey	6
I've heard of the FSA but know nothing about it	35
I know a little about the FSA and what it does	48
I know a lot about the FSA and what it does	8

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Source: Food and You 2: Wave 6

Over half (56%) of respondents reported at least some knowledge of the FSA; 8% reported that they knew a lot about the FSA and what it does, and 48% reported that they knew a little about the FSA and what it does. 35% had heard of the FSA but knew nothing about it, 6% had not heard of the FSA before being contacted to take part in the survey, and 4% had not heard of the FSA (Figure 2) [\(footnote 5\)](#).

Knowledge of the FSA varied between different categories of people in the following ways:

- **age group:** respondents aged between 25 and 79 years (for example, 67% of those aged 55-64 years) were more likely to report knowledge of the FSA compared to the oldest respondents (for example, 55% of those aged 65-79 years and over) [\(footnote 6\)](#).
- **NS-SEC:** respondents in a managerial, administrative and professional occupation (63%) and small employers and own account workers (60%) were more likely to have knowledge of the FSA than those in semi-routine and routine occupations (47%) and those who are

long term unemployed or who have never worked (36%).

- **country:** six in ten (56%) respondents in Northern Ireland reported knowledge of the FSA. Respondents in Wales (65%) were more likely to report knowledge of the FSA than those in England (56%)**.
- **responsibility for cooking and / or shopping:** respondents who were responsible for cooking (57%) and / or shopping (58%) were more likely to report knowledge of the FSA compared to respondents who do not cook (43%) and/or those who never shop (37%).

Trust in the FSA

Respondents who had at least some knowledge of the FSA were asked how much they trusted the FSA to do its job, that is to make sure food is safe and what it says it is; 82% of these respondents reported that they trusted the FSA to do this [\(footnote 7\)](#).

Nearly 9 in 10 (85%) 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), 80% were confident that the FSA is committed to communicating openly with the public about food-related risks, and 83% were confident that the FSA takes appropriate action if a food-related risk is identified [\(footnote 8\)](#).

1. Question: How confident are you that... A) the food you buy is safe to eat. B) the information on food labels is accurate (for example, ingredients, nutritional information, country of origin). Responses: Very confident, Fairly confident, Not very confident, Not at all confident, It varies, Don't know. Base= 1644, all online respondents and all those who completed the 'Eating at Home' paper questionnaire in Northern Ireland. Wave 6.
2. Question: How confident are you in the food supply chain? That is all the processes involved in bringing food to your table. Responses: Very confident, Fairly confident, Not very confident, Not at all confident, It varies, Don't know. Base= 1644, all respondents in Northern Ireland. Wave 6.
3. Question: How confident are you that... A) Farmers, B) Slaughterhouses and dairies, C) Food manufacturers for example, factories, D) Shops and supermarkets, E) Restaurants, F) Takeaways, G) Food delivery services for example, Just Eat, Deliveroo, Uber Eats...in the UK (and Ireland) ensure the food you buy is safe to eat. Responses: Very confident, Fairly confident, Not very confident, Not at all confident, It varies, Don't know. Base= 1327, all online respondents and all those who completed the 'Eating Out' paper questionnaire in Northern Ireland. Wave 6.
4. Question: Which of the following, if any, have you heard of? Please select all that apply. Response: Food Standards Agency, Public Health Agency, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Health and Safety Executive Northern Ireland, safefood. Base= 1037, all online respondents in Northern Ireland. Wave 6. Please note: All consumers taking part in the survey had received an invitation to take part in the survey from Ipsos which mentioned the Food Standards Agency. An absence of response indicates the organisation had not been heard of by the respondent or a non-response.
5. Question: How much, if anything, do you know about the Food Standards Agency? Response: I know a lot about the Food Standards Agency and what it does, I know a little

about the Food Standards Agency and what it does, I've heard of the Food Standards Agency but know nothing about it, I hadn't heard of the Food Standards Agency until I was contacted to take part in this survey, I've never heard of the Food Standards Agency. Base= 1644, all respondents in Northern Ireland. Wave 6. Please note: All consumers taking part in the survey had received an invitation to take part in the survey which mentioned the Food Standards Agency. Due to rounding, percentages may not add up to 100%.

6. Data for respondents aged 16-24 years and those aged 80 years and over is not reported due to a small number of respondents being in this group.
7. Question: How much do you trust or distrust the Food Standards Agency to do its job? That is to make sure that food is safe and what it says it is. Responses: I trust it a lot, I trust it, I neither trust nor distrust it, I distrust it, I distrust it a lot, Don't know. Base= 954, all respondents who know a lot or a little about the Food Standards Agency and what it does in Northern Ireland except where England, Wales and NI differences are stated. Wave 6. Please note: 'I trust it a lot' and 'I trust it' referred to as trust.
8. Question: How confident are you that the Food Standards Agency / the government agency responsible for food safety in England, Wales and Northern Ireland...A) Can be relied upon to protect the public from food-related risks (such as food poisoning or allergic reactions from food). B) Is committed to communicating openly with the public about food-related risks. C) Takes appropriate action if a food-related risk is identified? Responses: Very confident, Fairly confident, Not very confident, Not at all confident, Don't know. Base= 1644, all respondents in Northern Ireland. Wave 6. Please note: 'Very confident' and 'Fairly confident' referred to as confident. Respondents with little or no knowledge of the Food Standards Agency were asked about 'the government agency responsible for food safety', those with at least some knowledge of the Food Standards Agency were asked about the Food Standards Agency.