

F&Y2 trends: Introduction

The Food Standards Agency: role, remit, and responsibilities

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is a non-ministerial government department working to protect public health and consumers' wider interests in relation to food in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland ([footnote 1](#)). The FSA's overarching mission is 'food you can trust'. The FSA's vision as set out in the [2022-2027 strategy](#) is a food system in which:

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

Food and You 2 is designed to monitor the FSA's progress against its mission of 'food you can trust' and to inform policy decisions by measuring consumers' self-reported knowledge, attitudes and behaviours related to food safety and other food issues in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland on a regular basis.

Food and You 2: Wave 1-6

This is the first Food and You 2 trends report which provides an overview of key trends between Wave 1 (July 2020 to October 2020) and Wave 6 (October 2022 to January 2023) (Table 1).

Table 1: Summary of Wave 1 to 6 fieldwork dates and responses.

Wave	Fieldwork dates	Number of respondents	Number of households
1	29 July - 6 October 2020	9,319	6,408
2	20 November 2020 - 21 January 2021	5,900	3,955
3	28 April 2021 - 25 June 2021	6,271	4,338
4	18 October 2021 - 10 January 2022	5,796	4,026
5	26 April - 24 July 2022	6,770	4,727
6	12th October 2022 - 10th January 2023	5,991	4,217

Data were collected following the UK's exit from the EU in 2020 and the COVID-19 pandemic. Earlier waves of the survey were conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic, during which there were lockdowns, and other related measures which differed across the UK ([footnote 2](#)). More recent waves of the survey were conducted during a period which saw the highest levels of annual inflation of the price of food and non-alcoholic drinks since 1977 ([footnote 3](#)). It is expected that these circumstances will have had a significant impact on people's food-related behaviours, such as, how and where people buy and eat food, and on levels of household food insecurity ([footnote 4](#)).

Interpreting the findings

To highlight the key differences between waves of data collection, variations in responses are typically reported only where the absolute difference is 10 percentage points or larger and is statistically significant at the 5% level ($p < 0.05$).

Some differences between waves are included where the difference is less than 10 percentage points, when the finding is notable or judged to be of interest. These differences are indicated with a double asterisk (**).

Trends are typically reported for data which has been collected in three waves or more. In some cases, where trend data has not been calculated or not included in the report, the data are available in the full data set. Key information is provided for each reported question in the footnotes, including:

- question wording (question) and response alternatives (response).
- the total number of respondents presented with each question and description of the respondents who answered the question (Base= N).
- 'Please note:' indicates important points to consider when interpreting the results.

Key information is provided in each figure, including, the wave and fieldwork period of each data point. For example, W1 (July 2020 to October 2020) refers to Wave 1 and the fieldwork period of July 2020 to October 2020.

Future publication plans

A report which provides an overview of key trends from Food and You 2: Wave 1 to Wave 8 is expected to be published late 2024.

1. In Scotland, the non-ministerial office [Food Standards Scotland](#), is responsible for ensuring food is safe to eat, consumers know what they are eating and improving nutrition.
2. See the [Timeline of UK government coronavirus lockdowns and measures](#), and a [summary of key actions from the UK government](#) between 2020 and 2022.
3. See the [Cost of living insights: Food \(ONS\)](#).
4. For example, [Consumer insights tracker report: key findings from December 2021 to March 2022 \(2022\)](#), FSA. [The UK Public's Interests, Needs and Concerns Around Food \(2022\)](#), Bright Harbour. [Food in a pandemic \(2021\)](#). FSA. [Family Resources Survey \(FRS\): financial year 2020 to 2021 \(2021\)](#). DWP. The FRS asks respondents to report experiences of food insecurity in the last 30 days so responses cannot be compared with Food and You 2.

