

F&Y2 Wave 7: 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.

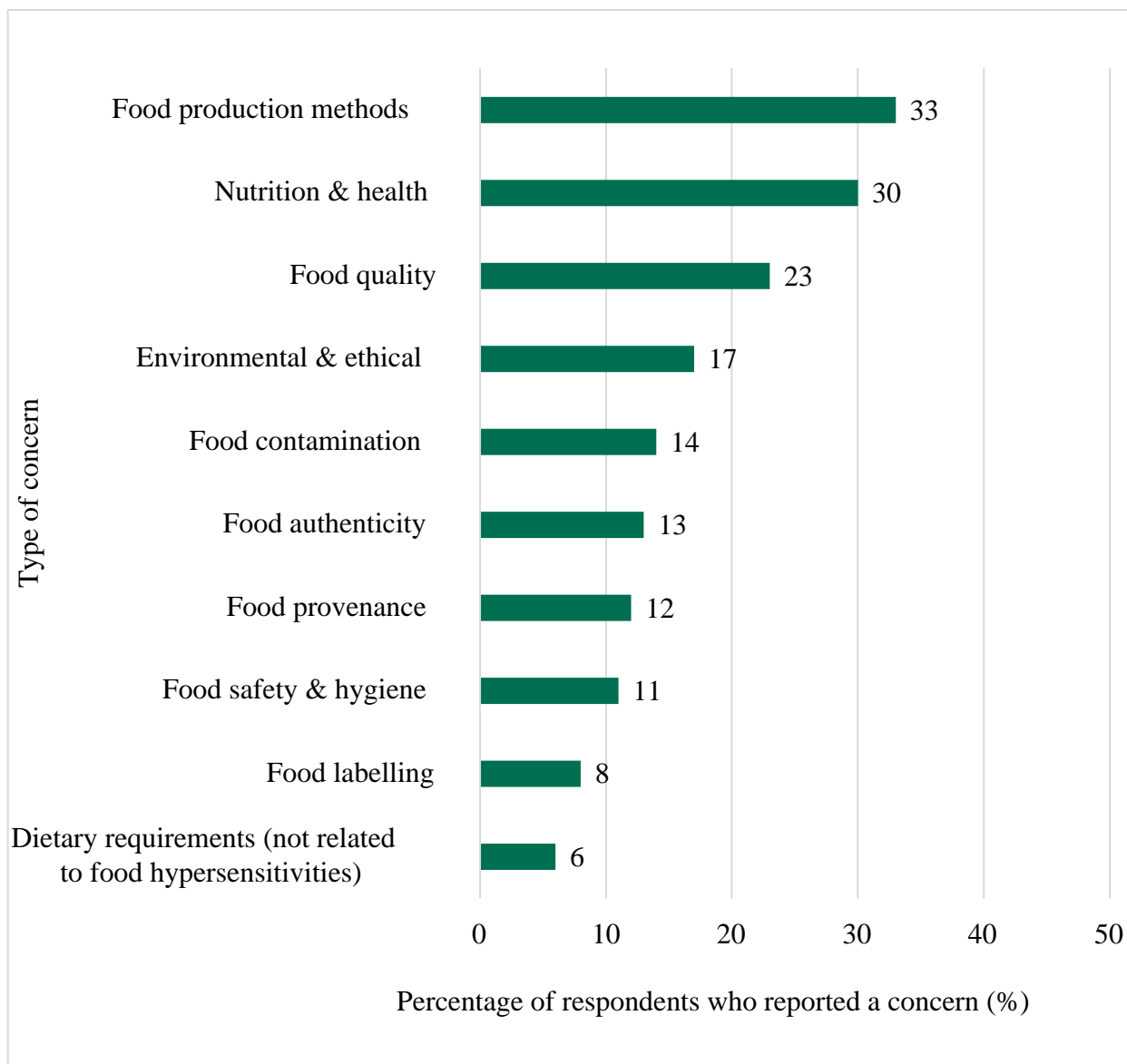
Common concerns

Respondents were asked to report whether they had any concerns about the food they eat. Most respondents (72%) had no concerns, and 28% of respondents reported that they had a concern ([footnote 1](#)).

Figure 4. Most common spontaneously expressed food-related concerns.

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Type of concern	Percentage of respondents who reported a concern (%)
Dietary requirements (not related to food hypersensitivities)	6
Food labelling	8
Food safety & hygiene	11
Food provenance	12
Food authenticity	13
Food contamination	14
Environmental & ethical	17
Food quality	23
Nutrition & health	30
Food production methods	33

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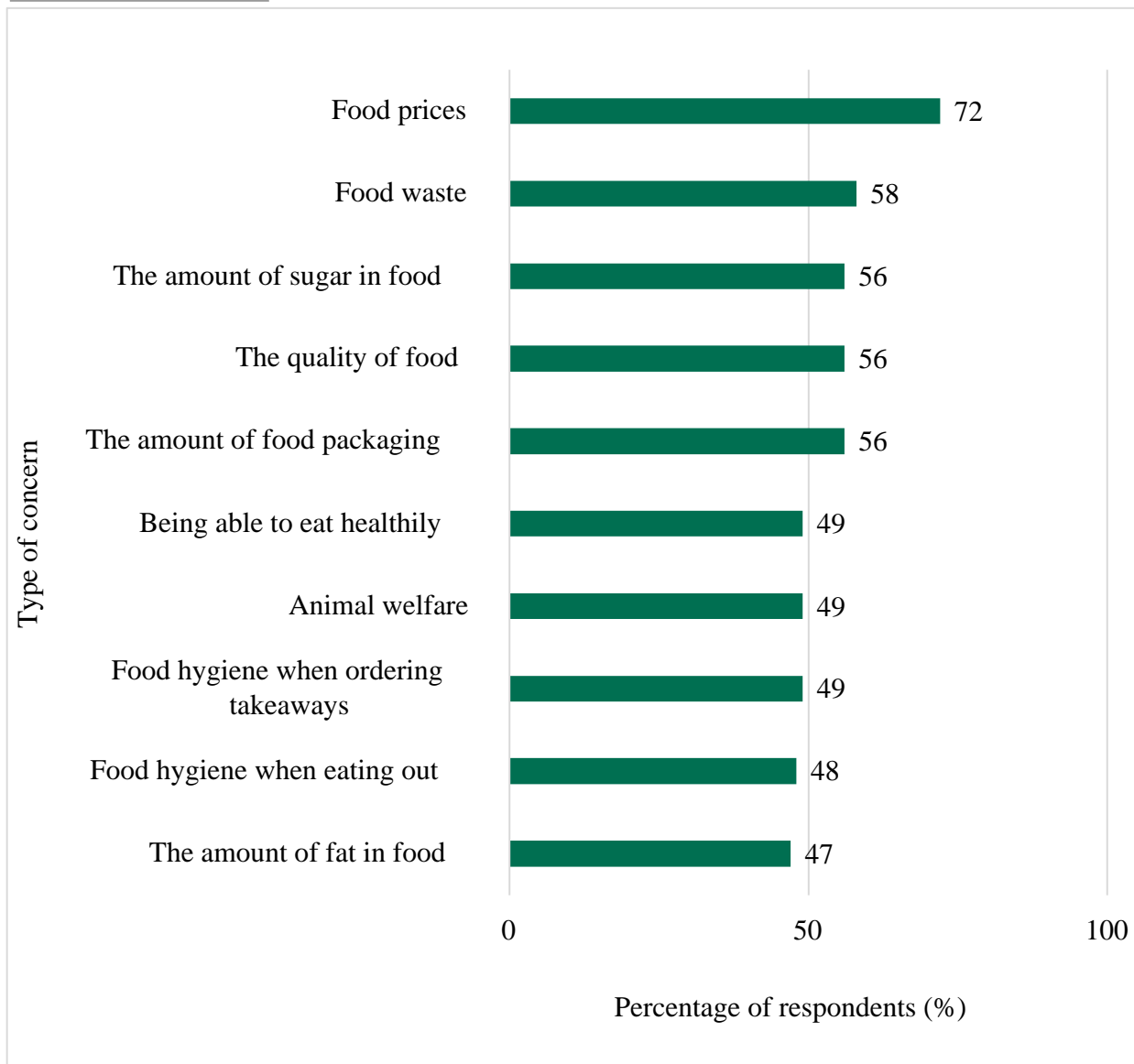
Source: Food and You 2: Wave 7

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 production methods (33%), nutrition and health (30%), and the quality of food (23%) (Figure 4) ([footnote 2](#)).

Figure 5. Most common prompted food-related concerns.

Change to table and accessible view

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Type of concern	Percentage of respondents (%)
The amount of fat in food	47
The amount of calories in food	47
Hormones, steroids or antibiotics in food	40
The use of additives	42
Food hygiene when eating out	48
Food hygiene when ordering takeaways	49
Animal welfare	49
Being able to eat healthily	49
The amount of food packaging	56
The quality of food	56
The amount of sugar in food	56
Food waste	58

Type of concern	Percentage of respondents (%)
Food prices	72

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Source: Food and You 2: Wave 7

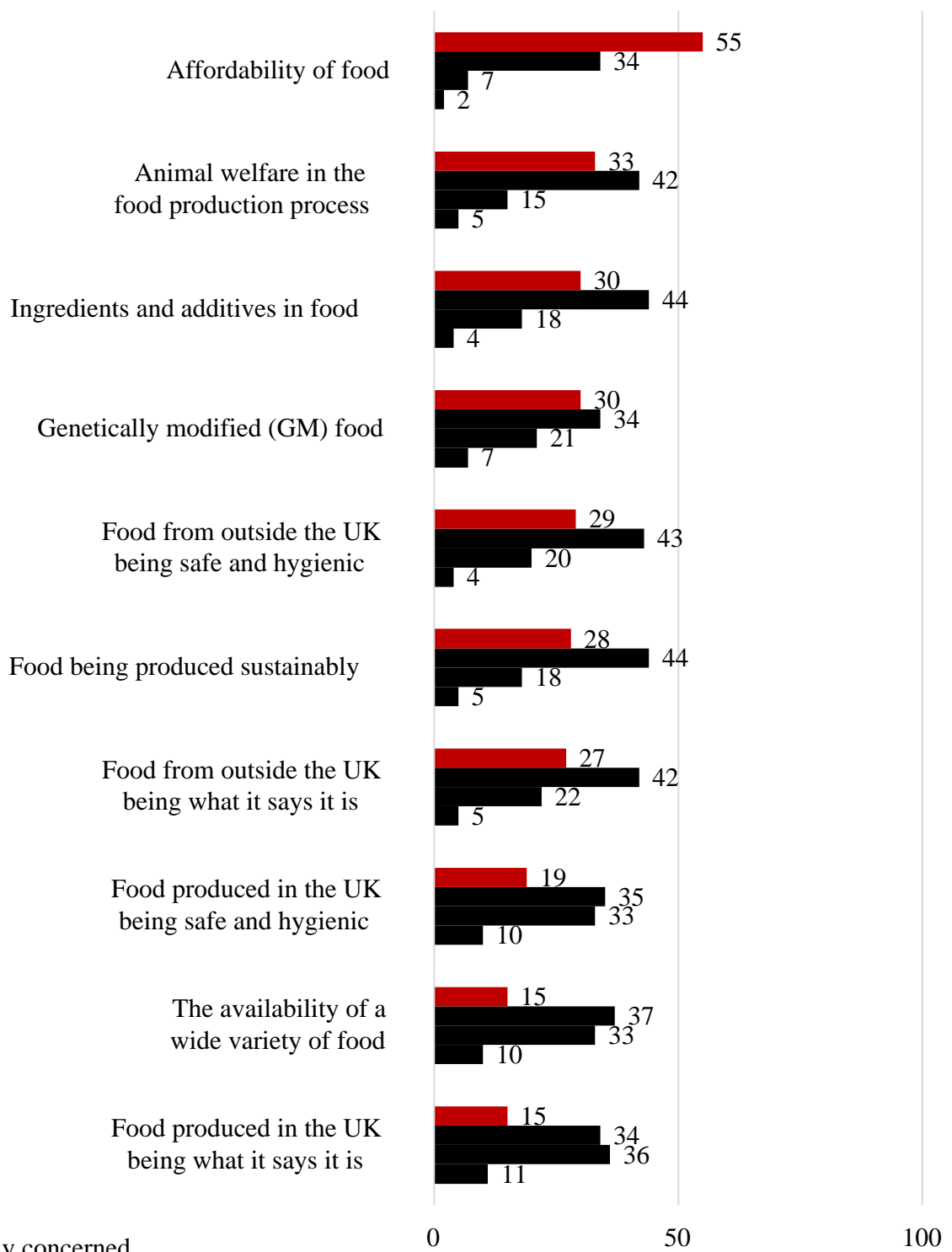
Respondents were asked to indicate if they had concerns about several food-related issues, from a list of options. The most prevalent concern was food prices (72%). Other common concerns were food waste (58%), the amount of sugar in food (56%), the quality of food (56%), and the amount of food packaging (56%) (Figure 5) [\(footnote 3\)](#).

Figure 6. Level of concern about food-related topics.

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Food-related topic



- Highly concerned
- Somewhat concerned
- Not very concerned
- Not concerned at all

Percentage of respondents (%)

Food related topic	Not concerned at all	Not very concerned	Somewhat concerned	Highly concerned
Food produced in the UK being what it says it is	11	36	34	15
The availability of a wide variety of food	10	33	37	15
Food produced in the UK being safe and hygienic	10	33	35	19

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	42	27
Food being produced sustainably	5	18	44	28
Food from outside the UK being safe and hygienic	4	20	43	29
Genetically modified (GM) food	7	21	34	30
Ingredients and additives in food	4	18	44	30
Animal welfare in the food production process	5	15	42	33
Affordability of food	2	7	34	55

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Source: Food and You 2: Wave 7

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 being highly concerned about the affordability of food (55%). Other issues respondents were highly concerned about included animal welfare in the food production process (33%), ingredients and additives in food (30%) and genetically modified (GM) food (30%) (Figure 6) ([footnote 4](#)).

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

- Gender: women (61%) were more likely to report that they were highly concerned about the affordability of food than men (48%).
- Age group: respondents aged between 25 and 74 years were more likely to report that they were highly concerned about the affordability of food than those aged between 16 and 24 years (45%) and those aged 75 years or over (37%).
- 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, 61% of those with an income below £19,000 compared to 55% of those with an income between £64,000 and £95,999).
- NS-SEC: those in most occupational groups (for example, 61% of those in semi-routine and routine occupations) were more likely to report that they were highly concerned about the affordability of food than full-time students (44%).
- Region (England) ([footnote 5](#)): concern about the affordability of food varied by region in England. For example, respondents who live in the North-East of England (61%) and North-West of England (58%) were more likely to report that they were highly concerned about the affordability of food compared to those who live in the East of England (44%).
- Food security: respondents with very low food security (79%) were most likely to report that they were highly concerned about the affordability of food than those with low (66%) or marginal (66%) food security. Those with high food security were least likely to report that they were highly concerned about the affordability of food (45%).
- Food hypersensitivity: respondents with an allergy only (65%) were more likely to report that they were highly concerned about the affordability of food than those without a food hypersensitivity (54%).
- Long-term health condition: respondents with a long-term health condition (61%) were more likely to report that they were highly concerned about the affordability of food than those without a long-term health condition (52%)**.
- Responsible for cooking: respondents who were responsible for cooking (55%) were more likely to report that they were highly concerned about the affordability of food than those who were not responsible for cooking (43%).

- Responsibly for shopping: respondents who were responsible for shopping (56%) were more likely to report that they were highly concerned about the affordability of food than those who were not responsible for shopping (36%).

1. Question: Do you have any concerns about the food you eat? Responses: Yes, No. Base= 5812, all respondents.
2. Question: What are your concerns about the food you eat? Responses: [Open text]. Base= 1715, 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= 3617, 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 = 5812, all 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.