

# Who we are

Who we are, what we do, and how we do it at the Food Standards Agency

The FSA is an independent, non-ministerial department, established in 2000 following several high-profile outbreaks of foodborne illness such as BSE (mad cow disease).

Our objectives, powers and duties are mainly set out in the Food Standards Act 1999. We work across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Our main objectives in law are to protect public health from risks arising from the consumption of food and generally to protect the interests of consumers in relation to food. This includes providing information and advice to the general public in connection with food safety, commissioning or coordinating research in science on such matters and supervising safety of animal feed and other interests of users of animal feed.

Our statutory powers include the power to carry out observations of this activity, monitor the performance of enforcing the applicable legislation by the relevant enforcement authority, issue guidance on control of foodborne disease and anything which facilitates the exercise of our statutory function. More information about who enforces food controls can be found on [the food regulatory system page](#).

We are [governed by a Board](#), whose chair and other members are appointed by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, and the Welsh and Northern Ireland governments.

Our work is underpinned by the latest science and evidence and agreed at our open Board meetings. Transparency is a guiding principle for the FSA and key to maintaining public confidence.

[Our total budget limit for 2022/23 was £143.3 million.](#)



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