

FSA and FSS publish strategic assessment to support businesses and protect consumers against food fraud

[The report](#) has found that in the UK, the majority of food is safe and authentic, but factors such as recent geopolitical events have caused disruptions in the food chain which in turn have contributed to the changing threat of food crime. Other key findings include:

- the UK's food supply has experienced disruption, with new opportunities for criminal diversification;
- more is now known about the individuals who are involved in committing crime within food supply chains.

The report is the organisations' assessment of the threat facing the UK from criminals who seek to profit from serious fraud within the food chain. It is shared with local authorities, government partners and industry to better inform collective work in protecting legitimate businesses and consumers from this threat.

Andrew Quinn, Head of the FSA's National Food Crime Unit said: ?

"We're confident that in the UK most food is what it says it is, but even small levels of food fraud are unacceptable. Although it's our view that food fraud is low, the risks are changing, and that is why we've worked with FSS to develop and publish the Food Crime Strategic Assessment today.?"

Food businesses are the first line of defence in ensuring food is safe and authentic; the Food Crime Strategic Assessment encourages food businesses to know their supply chain and manage fraud risks within them. We're sharing what they need to look out for and we're encouraging businesses to take up our free support.

The more we know about food crime, the better we can tackle it together with both the industry itself and our Local Authority partners to protect legitimate businesses and consumers."

Ron McNaughton, Head of the Scottish Food Crime and Incidents Unit at FSS, said:

"In the four years since our last strategic assessment, the UK food supply has faced significant disruption, creating new opportunities for criminal activity. This latest report outlines key food crime threats and highlights emerging risks within food systems due to external factors.

Addressing food crime demands ongoing collaboration across regulatory bodies, law enforcement, and industry, with shared intelligence, data, and experience remaining

vital to both this assessment and tackling food crime effectively."

The assessment explores the range of factors thought to influence the food crime landscape, a criminality which costs the UK up to £2billion a year as well as sharing what the key threats are within the intelligence picture.??The report discusses the seven different types of food crime which are: document fraud, theft, waste diversion unlawful processing as well as substitution, misrepresentation and adulteration.

Everyone in the food system can use the assessment to assist them in the actions they take to prevent, detect and deter criminals who would look to profit from deceiving consumers and businesses.

You can find more information on the work of NFCU, which covers England Wales and Northern Ireland, [here on the FSA website](#). For information on the work of SFCIU, which covers Scotland, [please visit the FSS website](#).