

Food and You 2 FHRs Wave 8: 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. 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 this vision and inform policy decisions by measuring self-reported consumers' knowledge, attitudes and behaviours related to food safety and other food issues in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland on a regular basis.

Introduction to the FHRs

[The Food Hygiene Rating Scheme \(footnote 1\)](#) (FHRs), which operates in England, Wales and Northern Ireland was launched in 2010 and helps people make informed choices about where to eat out or shop for food by giving clear information about the businesses' hygiene standards found at the time of local authority food hygiene inspections. Ratings are given to places where food is supplied or sold directly to people, such as restaurants, pubs, cafés, takeaways, hotels, schools, hospitals, care homes, supermarkets, and other retailers. In Wales, the scheme also includes businesses that trade only with other businesses, for example, manufacturers.

The FSA runs the scheme in partnership with local authorities in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland. A food safety officer from the local authority inspects a business to check that it follows food hygiene law so that the food is safe to eat. Businesses are given a rating from 0 to 5. A rating of 5 indicates that hygiene standards are very good and a rating of 0 indicates that urgent improvement is required.

Food businesses are provided with a sticker which shows their rating. In England businesses are encouraged to display their rating, however in Wales and Northern Ireland food businesses are legally required to display their rating [\(footnote 2\)](#). Ratings are also available on the [FSA ratings website](#) and via other third-party apps.

Food and You 2: Wave 8

This report presents key findings from the Food and You 2: Wave 8 survey relating to the FHRs, including respondents' awareness, recognition, and use of the FHRs, understanding and impact of the FHRs on behaviour and attitudes toward the FHRs.

Fieldwork for Food and You 2: Wave 8 was conducted between 12th October 2023 and 8th January 2024^{63T}. Around 6,000 adults (16 years or over) from approximately 4,000 households across England, Wales, and Northern Ireland completed the survey (see Annex A for more

information about the methodology). In wave 8, a total of 4,966 adults (aged 16 years or over) across England, Wales, and Northern Ireland completed the 'Eating out and takeaway' module via the online survey or the 'Eating out' postal questionnaire. Depending on their reported knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours not every respondent will answer every question in the survey or module.

Questions asked in other modules of the Food and You 2: Wave 8 survey (e.g. 'Eating at home') are not included in this report. The full results are available in the accompanying data tables and underlying dataset.

Interpreting the findings

The report presents differences between some socio-demographic and sub-groups (for example, by country) in the population. To highlight the key differences, any variation in response profiles is typically reported only where the absolute difference is 10 percentage points or larger and is statistically significant at the 5% level ($p < 0.05$). However, some differences between socio-demographic and other sub-groups are included where the difference is fewer than 10 percentage points, when the finding is notable or judged to be of interest. These differences are indicated with a double asterisk (**).

In some cases, it was not possible to include the data of all sub-groups, however these data are available in the [full data set and tables](#).

Key information is provided for each reported question in the footnotes, including:

- Question wording (question) and response options (responses).
- Number of respondents presented with each question and description of the respondents who answered the question (base = x).
- 'Please note:' indicates important points to consider when interpreting the results.

1. The Food Hygiene Information Scheme operates in Scotland under the responsibility of Food Standards Scotland.
2. Legislation for the mandatory display of FHRS ratings was introduced in November 2013 in Wales and October 2016 in Northern Ireland.