

# What we do and our risk analysis process

An introduction to what we do and our risk analysis process

## What we do

### Effective and innovative food regulation

We ensure the effectiveness of the food regulatory system. We constantly refine our regulatory approach to make it easier for businesses to do the right thing in a complex, fast moving, global food ecosystem.

### Protecting the public from foodborne disease

We work with farmers, food producers and processors, consumers, and the retail and hospitality industries to reduce the risk of foodborne disease (food poisoning), which has a societal burden of approximately £9.1bn per annum.

### Controls on abattoirs and primary production

We implement checks at abattoirs, and we audit and inspect meat cutting plants, game handling establishments, wine producers and on-farm dairy establishments. We also monitor and report on classified shellfish production areas for contamination and marine biotoxins.



### Risk analysis

We use science and evidence to provide advice to ministers in England, Wales and Northern Ireland on food safety and consumer interests. We advise ministers on the authorisation of new products coming to the market.

### Food hypersensitivity

We improve the quality of life for people living with food hypersensitivities and support them to make safe and informed choices to effectively manage risk.

### Food crime

Our [National Food Crime Unit](#) is a dedicated law enforcement function which provides leadership on food crime.

## **Food and feed incident handling and response**

We respond to food incidents, taking action to protect consumers when there is a concern around the safety or quality of food (and/or feed).

## **Food business compliance**

In 2019/20, 97.9% of meat food business operators rated 'satisfactory' or above for compliance with food safety, hygiene and animal welfare regulations.

## **Incidents**

In 2019/20 FSA investigated 2,479 food, animal feed and environmental contamination incidents, protecting consumers by removing products from market or notifying them of risks.

## **Our risk analysis process**

Our [risk analysis](#) process uses science and evidence to provide advice to government, business and consumers on food safety risks.

It is the process of estimating risks to human health, finding ways to control these risks, and [communicating both risks and controls](#) to the people who need to know.

As well as food safety, it can also consider other factors such as animal welfare, environment and economic impact.

Issues include:

- Control of pathogens (e.g. COVID-19, Listeria)
- Control of allergens
- Authorisation of chemical washes
- GM processes
- and much more

We use the same risk analysis process to advise government ministers on authorising new products coming to market – like additives and flavourings – from the UK or further afield.

The advice that comes out of risk analysis is based on science and evidence, not on wider political or public pressures.

Our risk analysis process is world-leading in food safety regulation and puts transparency, public understanding and trust at its heart.



### FSA Explains

During the coronavirus crisis, we carried out detailed risk assessments on the transmissibility of COVID-19 through food and provided advice to help business and consumers to do the right thing.

When meat in prepacked sandwiches was linked to listeria infections in hospital patients in 2019, we used risk analysis to make risk management recommendations to the NHS Hospital Food Review panel to reduce the risk of vulnerable groups contracting listeriosis in the future.

In 2015, we carried out risk analysis on runny eggs and updated our advice to state that vulnerable groups could now safely eat raw or lightly cooked UK hen eggs if they bear the British Lion mark.

**[Download our brochure.](#) Learn more about how we have worked to protect your plate over the last 20 years and our vision for the future.**