

# Foreword - A changing food system

An introduction to the FSA's 5-year strategy set in the context of a changing food system. A full version of [Food you can trust - FSA Strategy 2022 to 2027](#) is available for download.

The **Food Standards Agency (FSA)** works to protect public health and consumers' wider interests in relation to food in **England, Wales** and **Northern Ireland**.

Our work protects people's health, reduces the economic burden of foodborne disease and supports the UK economy and trade by ensuring – together with [Food Standards Scotland](#) – that our food has a strong reputation for safety and authenticity in the UK and abroad.

Much has changed since our last formal strategy was published in 2015.

Our role has grown significantly since the UK left the EU. We have taken on new responsibilities, including the regulation of novel foods, advising the UK Government on new trade deals, and advising on and assuring standards for imported and exported food.

Meanwhile, the pace of technology and business change in the food system continues to accelerate. People are buying food in new ways, for example via online marketplaces and through social media. These changes are affecting the way people purchase food and the way food businesses operate.

People and governments around the world are becoming increasingly conscious of the impact that food production has on the planet. The climate crisis is driving innovation in food, as more companies are investing in alternative protein sources or sustainable food packaging.

There is also a continuing challenge to improve our national diet, so the food we eat helps us to live longer and healthier lives. Our research shows that some of people's biggest concerns about food are around health and nutrition.

People are also very worried about food affordability and insecurity. We will continue to consider the impact of these issues across all our work.

The food industry and the UK and devolved governments worked together to ensure a safe supply of food throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Each major shock to the food system affects supply chains, staffing and operating models. The FSA must be ready to adapt.

Against this changing landscape, the FSA's mission – food you can trust – remains as important as ever.

This [strategy](#) describes what we will do. We will continue to protect consumers by ensuring that food is safe and is what it says it is. We will also play our part in helping to make food healthier and more sustainable for everyone.

These are outcomes we want for everyone, wherever they live in the UK and whatever their personal circumstances. Issues like affordability, and the information given to consumers so they can make informed decisions, cut across our entire mission.

Our strategy also sets out how we will work as an independent, non-ministerial government department. It reaffirms the role of science and evidence in informing everything we do and our

commitments to transparency, proportionality and innovation. It sets out our aspiration to make it easier for food businesses to meet their obligations and do the right thing to protect public health.

Looking ahead, it will be vital for the FSA to work with and through others. We can bring particular strengths to the table: our scientific and analytical capability; our reputation with the public; our expertise on and passion for food; and our technical working relationships with local authorities and with the food industry.

The food system is changing but there are exciting opportunities to ensure it is safer, healthier and more sustainable for the future. This strategy will ensure we play our part.



Professor Susan Jebb, Chair



Emily Miles, Chief Executive