

Summary of discussions at FSA Board meeting 15 June 2022

Household Food Insecurity

The Board discussed the FSA [research](#) that shows the cost of food is a future major worry for three out of four of people in the UK.

They discussed how important it was for people in need to have access to safe food. The Board agreed that the FSA should ensure there are no unnecessary barriers getting in the way of food redistribution through food banks and other community food sharing organisations. As part of this they talked about the need for businesses to set sensible best before dates; and about work the FSA could do to help consumers understand that a use by date is about safety, whereas a best before date is about optimal quality.

Response to supply chain disruption arising from Ukraine conflict

The war in Ukraine is having an effect on the supply of sunflower oil to the UK and since March there have been a number of temporary labelling arrangements allowing the substitution of sunflower oil with other vegetable oils. The Board agreed this approach on a temporary basis but was keen that industry resolved the situation by the end of October and had the correct labelling in place by then.

FSA Chair, Professor Susan Jebb took the opportunity to speak directly to the food industry, she said:

"Thank you for everything you have done to manage the impact of the crisis on the food system, but I must emphasise the importance of accurate food labelling and the need to keep the period during which labels may be inaccurate to an absolute minimum."

Civil Service Reform

The Board also discussed the Civil Service Reform programme which aims to reduce numbers of Civil Servants to 2016 levels in three years. No headcount reduction targets have yet been set for the FSA but the FSA has been asked to model scenarios with significantly fewer people. Summing up the discussion Professor Jebb said:

"Our departure from the EU has brought a huge amount of extra work for the FSA which is not going away. And if we want to seize the opportunities from having left the EU, we need resources to do more not less.

"I speak on behalf of board members when I say we're gravely concerned about the impact a cut in our numbers would have on our ability to deliver safe food for the people of the UK."

The [agenda and meeting papers for FSA Board Meeting - June 2022](#) are available to read and you can watch [FSA Business & Board Meeting - June 2022](#) on YouTube.

The next board meeting will take place in Belfast on 14 September 2022.