

# Chapter 2: Concerns about food

## Introduction

The FSA's role, set out in law, is to safeguard public health and protect the interests of consumers in relation to food. The FSA uses the Food and You 2 survey to monitor consumer concerns about food issues, such as food safety, nutrition, and environmental issues. This chapter provides an overview of respondents' concerns about food.

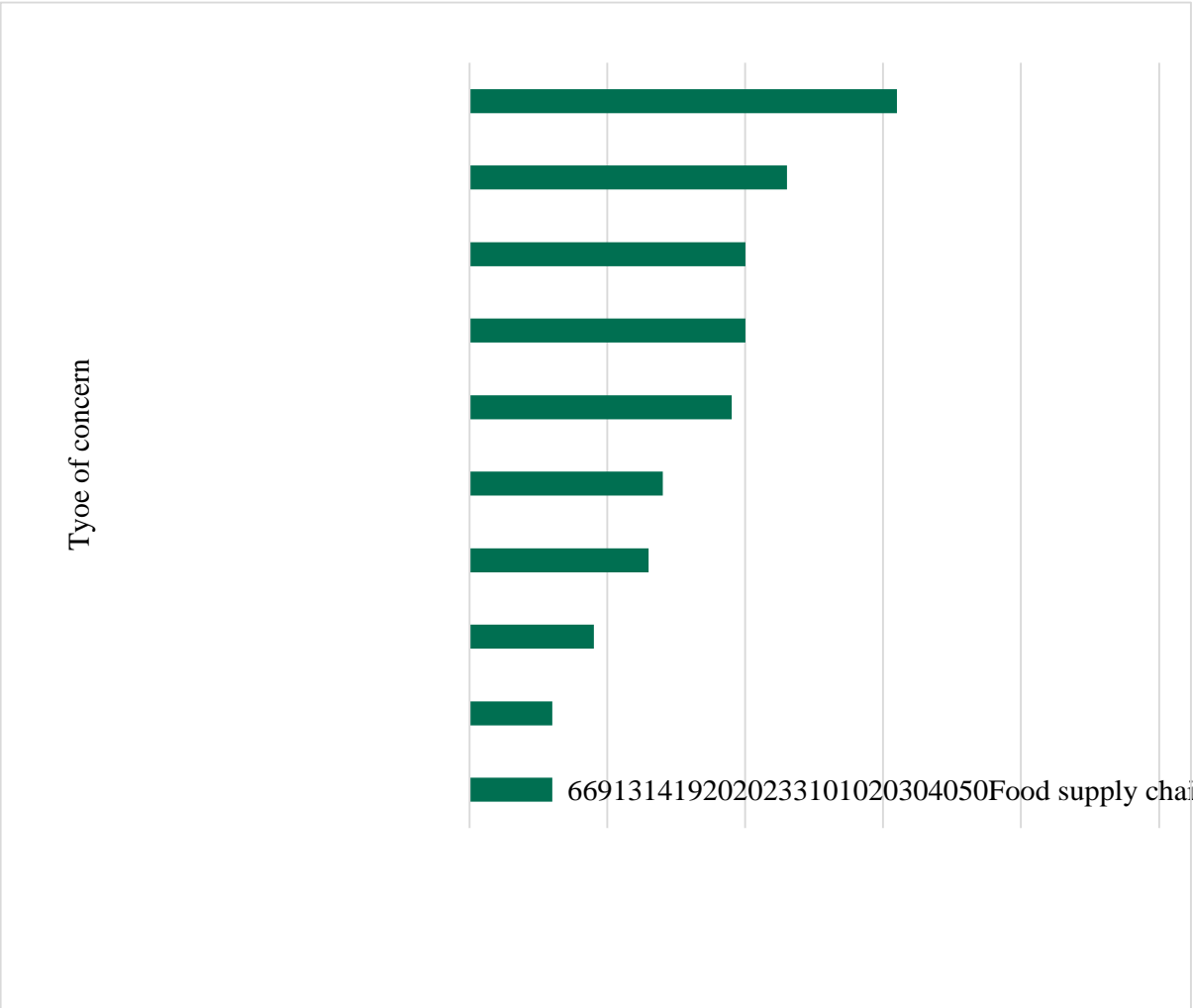
## Common concerns

Respondents were asked to report whether they had any concerns about the food they eat. Most respondents (86%) had no concerns about the food they eat, and 14% of respondents reported that they had a concern([footnote](#)).

## Figure 3: Ten most commonly spontaneously expressed food-related concerns

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Type of concern	Percentage of respondents
Food supply chain	6
Food authenticity	6
Food labelling	9
Food provenance	13
Food contamination	14
Food quality	19
Nutrition & health	20

Type of concern	Percentage of respondents
Food safety & hygiene	20
Environmental & ethical	23
Food production methods	31

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Source: Food and You 2: Wave 4

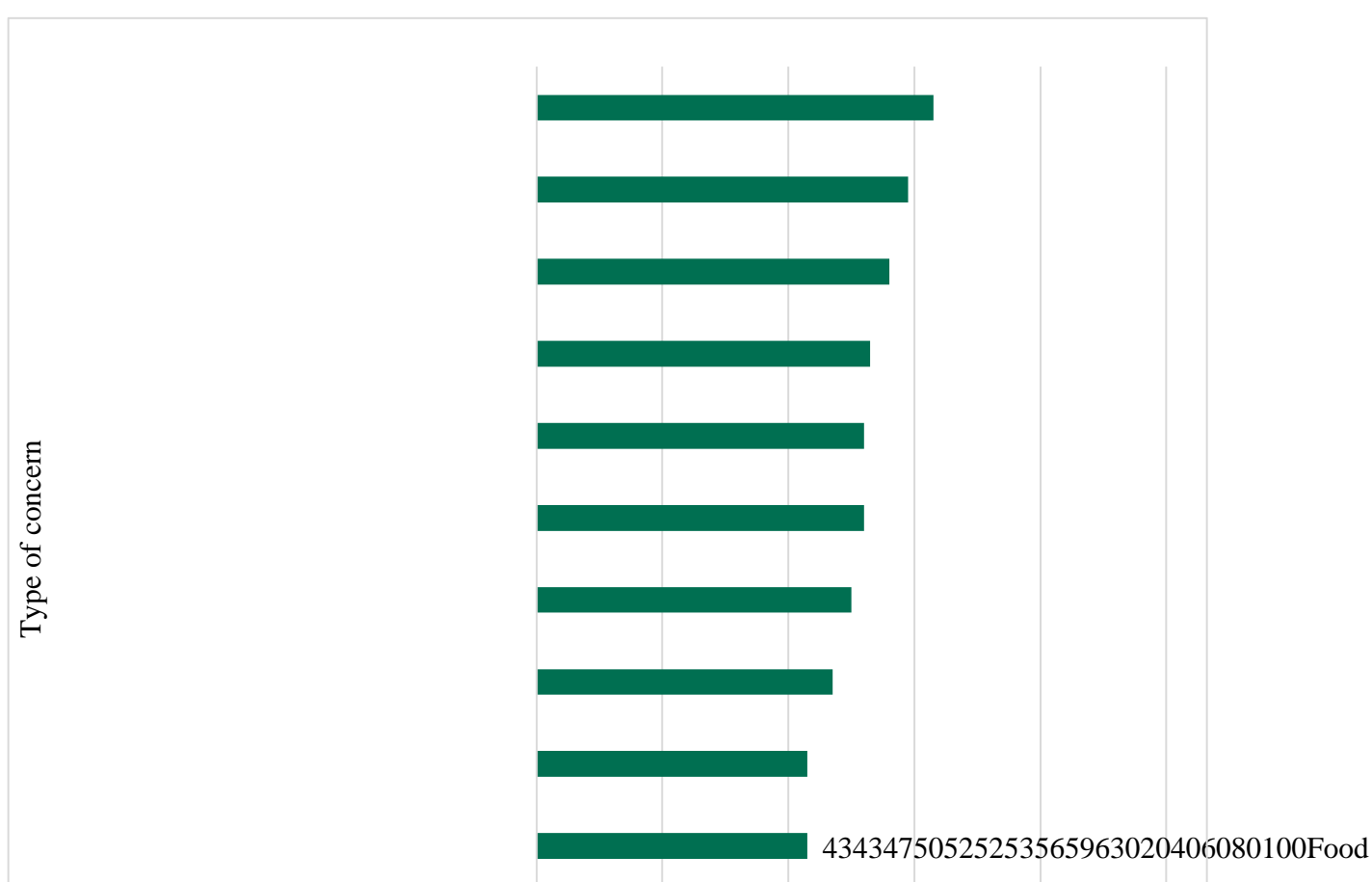
Respondents who reported having a concern were asked to briefly explain what their concerns were about the food they eat. The most common area of concern related to food production methods (31%), which included the use of additives (such as preservatives and colouring) in food products (14%), the use of pesticides / fertiliser to grow food (12%) and how food has been produced / processed (6%) (Figure 3).

The second most common concern related to environmental and ethical concerns, which included animal welfare / treatment of animals (including transportation) (12%), food miles (for example, the distance that food travels) (5%) and the impact of producing / eating meat on the environment (5%) (Figure 3)([footnote](#)).

## Figure 4: Ten most common prompted food-related concerns

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Type of concern	Percentage of respondents
Food hygiene when eating out	43
Food hygiene when ordering takeaways	43
Food poisoning	47
Hormones, steroids, antibiotics in food	50
The amount of salt in food	52
The amount of fat in food	52
Food prices	53

Type of concern	Percentage of respondents
Animal welfare	56
The amount of sugar in food	59
Food waste	63

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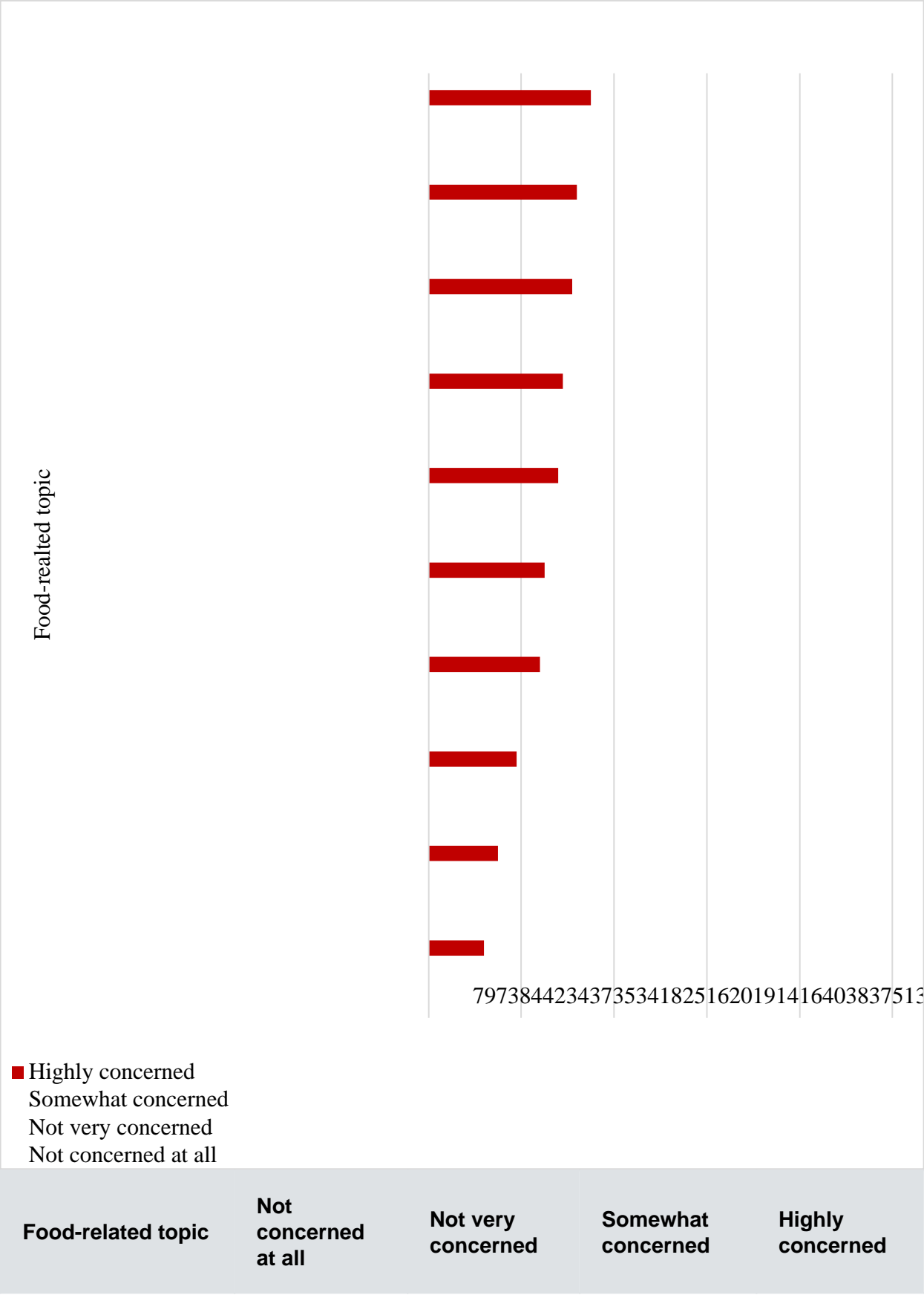
Source: Food and You 2: Wave

Respondents were asked to indicate if they had concerns about a number of food-related issues, from a list of options. The most common concerns related to food waste (63%), the amount of sugar in food (59%) and animal welfare (56%). Around half of respondents were concerned about food prices (53%), the amount of fat in food (52%), the amount of salt in food (52%) and hormones, steroids and/or antibiotics in food (50%) (Figure 4)([footnote](#)).

## Figure 5: Level of concern about food-related topics

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The availability of a wide variety of food	7	37	40	12
Food produced in the UK being what it says it is	9	35	38	15
Food produced in the UK being safe and hygienic	7	34	37	19
Ingredients and additives in food	3	18	51	24
Genetically modified (GM) food	8	25	35	25
Food being produced sustainably	4	16	48	28
Food from outside the UK				
being what it says it is"	4	20	44	29
Food from outside the UK being safe and hygienic	2	19	44	31
Affordability of food	3	14	48	32
Animal welfare in the food production process	4	16	41	35

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Source Food and You 2 Wave 4

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they were concerned about a number of specific food-related issues. Respondents were most likely to report a high level of concern about animal welfare in the food production process (35%). Around 3 in 10 respondents reported a high

level of concern about the affordability of food (32%) and food from outside the UK being safe and hygienic (31%) (Figure 5)([footnote](#)).