

Chief Executive's foreword

Emily Miles, Chief Executive's foreword for the Annual Report and Accounts.

I am pleased to lay before the Westminster Parliament and the Welsh Parliament, and present Welsh Parliament, and present to the Northern Ireland Assembly, the Food Standards Agency (FSA) Annual Report and Accounts. This edition covers our performance and activities in 2021/22 across England, Wales and Northern Ireland at a net cost of £130.5 million.

The report covers a productive year for the FSA. We have been continuing to manage the changes brought about by the UK's exit from the EU. Last year, the FSA took on responsibility for many of the risk analysis functions previously carried out by the European Commission and the European Food Safety Authority. Our report shows we progressed 428 live regulated products applications and provided risk assessments and advice on a number of topics.

We have progressed reforms and continued with our key regulatory responsibilities, from classifying shellfish beds to operating meat hygiene inspections, to investigating the most egregious examples of food fraud. We also saw a 21% increase in the number of notifications of food incidents during the reporting period.

Our Local Authority Recovery Plan was implemented in summer 2021 to help local authorities get back on track. It was designed to achieve a return to pre-pandemic levels of activity, and clear the backlog of food inspections that built up as local authorities successfully targeted their resources at the highest risk businesses while fighting COVID-19, by April 2023. All three countries showed signs of recovery, although the pace differed geographically.

I would like to thank FSA staff, local authority colleagues, and all of the businesses we work with closely for all of their hard work over the year to ensure food you can trust.

Emily Miles

Chief Executive, Food Standards Agency