

FHRS Audit 2021 Technical report:

Introduction

Results available: Results available

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Research topics: [Food hygiene](#)

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The Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) was formally launched in November 2010. The scheme is designed to help consumers make more considered choices about where they purchase their food by providing clear information about the hygiene standards of food businesses at their last inspection by a food safety officer.

Under the scheme, places where food is supplied, sold or consumed are given a rating ranging from 0 to 5, with 5 standing for 'very good' food hygiene and 0 'urgent improvement necessary'. The ratings are determined by three elements: hygienic food handling; physical condition of the premises and facilities; and food safety management.

The FSA has conducted research into the Display of Food Hygiene Ratings in England, Northern Ireland and Wales since 2011 and commissioned IFF Research to conduct the 2021 wave. As with the previous waves of the research, the objectives were threefold:

- provide a representative estimate of the display of food hygiene ratings by food businesses
- explore the reasons and drivers for display and non-display
- explore business awareness and attitudes towards the scheme

To meet these objectives, a two-pronged research approach was adopted, consisting of 1) a covert audit of 1,522 food businesses in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, conducted by Mystery Shopper and 2) a telephone survey of 1,500 food businesses in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, conducted by IFF Research.

This paper outlines the methodological approach taken for both strands of the research, including sampling; feasibility testing; pilot and mainstage fieldwork; response rates; and weighting.