

F&Y2 Wave 7-8 NI: Executive Summary

Results available: Results available

Area of research interest: [Food and You 2](#)

Research topics: [Social science](#)

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[View Food and You 2: Northern Ireland Wave 7-8 Key Findings report as PDF\(Open in a new window\)](#) (640.84 KB)

Overview of Food and You 2

Food and You 2 is a biannual 'Official Statistic' survey commissioned by the Food Standards Agency (FSA). The survey measures self-reported consumers' knowledge, attitudes and behaviours related to food safety and other food issues amongst adults in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

The modules presented in this report include 'Food you can trust', 'Concerns about food', 'Food security', 'Eating out and takeaways', 'Food allergies, intolerances and other hypersensitivities', 'Eating at home', 'Food shopping and labelling' and 'Healthy eating'.

This report presents findings from respondents in Northern Ireland, in Waves 7 and 8 of the Food and You 2 survey, therefore reported findings refer to data collected in Northern Ireland unless otherwise specified. Where the same data were collected in both Waves 7 and 8, the findings from Wave 8 are reported.

[Wave 7](#) fieldwork was conducted between 28 April 2023 and 10 July 2023 with 1,526 adults in Northern Ireland. [Wave 8](#) fieldwork was conducted between 12 October 2023 and 8 January 2024 with 1,550 adults in Northern Ireland.

Key findings

Food you can trust

Confidence in food safety and authenticity

- 91% were confident that the food they buy is safe to eat
- 84% were confident that the information on food labels is accurate

Confidence in the food supply chain

- 76% were confident in the food supply chain
 - respondents were more likely to report confidence in farmers (86%), shops and supermarkets (78%), than in takeaways (55%), and food delivery services such as Just Eat, Deliveroo, Uber Eats (37%)
- Awareness, trust and confidence in the FSA

Awareness, trust and confidence in the FSA

- 91% had heard of the FSA
- of the 59% of respondents who had at least some knowledge of the FSA, 77% trusted the FSA to make sure 'food is safe and what it says it is'
- 83% were confident that the FSA (or the government agency responsible for food safety) can be relied upon to protect the public from food-related risks (such as food poisoning or allergic reactions from food)

Concerns about food

- 83% had no concerns about the food they eat, and 17% had a concern
- the most common concerns were food prices (67%) and food quality (64%)

Food security

- 73% were classified as food secure (58% high, 15% marginal)
- 27% were classified as food insecure (13% low, 14% very low)

Eating out and takeaways

- 62% of respondents reported eating in or taking food out from a café, coffee shop or sandwich shop, and/or eating in a restaurant (58%), and/or ordering a takeaway directly from a takeaway shop or restaurant (56%) in the past 4 weeks
- 91% had heard of the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS), of which 66% knew a bit or quite a lot about it. 49% who eat out had checked the hygiene rating of a food business in the last 12 months

Food allergies, intolerances and other hypersensitivities

- 78% said they did not have a food hypersensitivity, while 10% reported a food intolerance, 3% reported a food allergy, and 1% reported having coeliac disease

Confidence in allergen labelling

- 82% of respondents (who shop for food and take into consideration a person who has a food allergy or intolerance) were confident that the information provided on food labelling allows them to identify foods that will cause a bad or unpleasant physical reaction
- respondents who bought food loose were more confident in identifying these foods in-store at a supermarket (67%), at independent food shops (66%), or when buying food from a supermarket online (62%), and less confident when buying food from food markets or stalls (55%)

Eating at home

Use-by dates

- 70% of respondents identified use-by dates as the information which shows that food is no longer safe to eat
- 91% of respondents always or most of the time check the use-by date when they buy food
- 77% of respondents always check use-by dates before they cook or prepare food

Food shopping and labelling

Where do respondents buy food from?

- most respondents bought food from a large supermarket (70%) or mini supermarket (64%) about once a week or more often

Sustainability and environmental impact

- 73% said it was important to them to buy food which has a low environmental impact and 35% said they often buy food which has a low environmental impact
- 21% said they often checked for information about the environmental impact when purchasing food
- 64% believed that eating less processed food contributes most to a sustainable diet
- 64% thought that buying food that is locally produced contributes most to sustainable shopping choices

Healthy eating

- 77% said they ate fruit and vegetables every day or most days, and 55% said what they usually eat is fairly healthy
- eating fruit and vegetables (81%), drinking plenty of water (77%), limiting food and drinks high in sugar (68%) and eating less salt (59%) were considered the most important factors for a healthy diet