

Food and You 2 FHRS Wave 8: Executive Summary

Results available: Results available

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

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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.

This report presents main findings from the Food and You 2: Wave 8 'Eating out and takeaway' module relating to the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS). In this module respondents are asked about their awareness, use and attitudes towards the FHRS. This module is included within the Food and You 2 survey on an annual basis.

Fieldwork for Food and You 2: Wave 8 was conducted between 12th October 2023 and 8th January 2024. Around 6,000 adults (16 years or over) from around 4,000 households across England, Wales, and Northern Ireland completed the survey (see Annex A for more information about the methodology). In Wave 8, 4,966 adults across England, Wales, and Northern Ireland completed the online or postal version of the 'Eating out and takeaway' module which is presented in this report. Depending on their reported knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours, not every respondent will answer every question in the survey or module.

Key Findings

Awareness and recognition of the FHRS

- 86% of respondents had heard of the FHRS; 86% in England, 93% in Wales, and 91% in Northern Ireland** ([footnote 1](#)).
- 57% of respondents had heard of the FHRS and knew a lot or a bit about it. Respondents in Wales (74%) and Northern Ireland (66%) were more likely to report knowledge of the FHRS than those in England (56%).

- Of those who had heard of the FHRS, 85% had come across the FHRS through a food hygiene rating sticker displayed at a food business premises, 36% had come across it on a food business's own website, and 22% had come across it on a food ordering delivery website or app.
- When shown an image of the food hygiene rating sticker, 89% reported that they had seen the sticker before. Recognition of the sticker was slightly lower in England (89%) than in Wales (95%) and Northern Ireland (94%)**. Respondents were most likely to have seen the sticker in a restaurant (84%), café (72%) or takeaway (65%) in the last 12 months.

Use of the FHRS

- Around 4 in 10 (42%) respondents had checked the food hygiene rating of a food business in the previous 12 months (either at the business premises or online). Respondents in Wales (58%) were more likely to have checked the food hygiene rating of a business than those in England (41%), and Northern Ireland (49%).
- Of those who had checked the food hygiene rating of a food business, most respondents (86%) had done this by looking at a food hygiene rating sticker displayed at the business, and the most common types of businesses where respondents had checked ratings were takeaways (70%) and restaurants (70%).
- Around one in 10 (9%) respondents reported that they always checked the food hygiene rating of a restaurant or takeaway on arrival, 21% reported that they did this most of the time, 31% of respondents did this about half the time or occasionally and 35% of respondents never did this.

Use of the FHRS in decision making

- Of those who had heard of the FHRS, most said that they would still eat at a restaurant or takeaway if they saw a food hygiene rating sticker with a rating of 4 (good) (94%) or 3 (generally satisfactory) (61%). However, most respondents reported that they would not eat at a restaurant or takeaway if they saw a food hygiene rating sticker with a rating of 2 (improvement necessary) (82%), 1 (major improvement necessary) (95%) or 0 (urgent improvement necessary) (95%).
- Less than 1 in 10 (8%) respondents said that a rating of 5 (very good) is the lowest rating they would consider acceptable when considering buying food. 44% would consider a rating of 4 (good) as the lowest acceptable rating, and 37% of respondents would consider 3 (generally satisfactory).
- Of those who had heard of the FHRS, 58% would be less likely (i.e., 'much less likely' or 'a little less likely') to eat at a food business that did not have the food hygiene rating sticker present at the entrance.
- Of those who had heard of the FHRS, 17% reported that in the last 12 months, they had decided against using a food business because it did not display its food hygiene rating sticker.
- The most common concerns that respondents said they would have if they visited a food business that did not display its food hygiene rating sticker were that the food business had poor hygiene standards (50%) and that it had a poor or low food hygiene rating and was trying to hide it (47%). Respondents in Wales (56%) and Northern Ireland (53%) were more likely to be concerned that the food business had a low/poor hygiene rating and was trying to hide it than respondents in England (46%)**.

Views on mandatory display

- Of the respondents who had heard of the FHRS, 91% thought that food businesses should be required by law to display their food hygiene rating at their premises. Similarly, 93% thought that businesses providing an online food ordering service should display their food hygiene rating where it can clearly be seen by customers before they order food.

1. See 'Interpreting the findings' section for explanation of '**'.