

F&Y2 Wave 9: Executive summary

PDF

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

Fieldwork for Food and You 2: Wave 9 was conducted between 24th April 2024 to 1st July 2024. A total of 5,526 adults (aged 16 years or over) from 3,908 households across England, Wales, and Northern Ireland completed the 'push-to-web' survey (see Annex A for more information about the methodology).

The modules presented in this report include 'Food you can trust', 'Concerns about food', 'Food security', 'Food shopping and labelling', 'Online platforms' and 'Genetic technologies' ([footnote 1](#)).

Food you can trust

Confidence in food safety and authenticity

- 89% of respondents reported that they were confident that the food they buy is safe to eat
- 81% of respondents were confident that the information on food labels is accurate

Confidence in the food supply chain

- 69% of respondents reported that they had confidence in the food supply chain

Awareness, trust and confidence in the FSA

- 91% of respondents had heard of the FSA
- 69% of respondents who had at least some knowledge of the FSA reported that they trusted the FSA to make sure 'food is safe and what it says it is'
- 78% of respondents reported that they 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; 76% were confident that the FSA takes appropriate action if a food-related risk is identified, and 70% were confident that the FSA is committed to communicating openly with the public about food related risks

Concerns about food

- 79% of respondents had no concerns about the food they eat, and 21% of respondents reported that they had a concern.

- respondents who reported having a concern about food were asked to briefly explain what they were concerned about. The most common concerns related to food production methods (35%), nutrition and health (26%), food safety and hygiene (23%) and the quality of food (22%)
- respondents were asked to indicate if they had concerns about several food related issues, from a list of options. The most common concerns were food prices (69%), the quality of food (57%), the amount of sugar in food (57%), and the amount of food packaging (55%)

Food security

- across England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, 79% of respondents were classified as food secure (65% high, 14% marginal) and 21% of respondents were classified as food insecure (10% low, 11% very low)
- 75% of respondents reported that they had made a change to their eating habits for financial reasons in the previous 12 months. The most common changes were eating out less (43%), eating at home more (42%), eating fewer takeaways (38%) and buying items on special offer more (39%)
- 4% of respondents reported that they had used a food bank or other emergency food provider in the last 12 months, and 94% of respondents reported that they had not
- 5% of respondents reported that they had used a social supermarket in the last 12 months and 79% of respondents reported that they had not

Food shopping and labelling

- 69% of respondents reported that they bought food from a large supermarket and 49% bought food from a mini supermarket about once a week or more often
- most respondents reported that they 'always' or 'most of the time' check the use-by date (86%) or best before date (83%) when they bought food. Respondents reported that they check the list of ingredients (53%), nutritional information (50%), country of origin (47%) and food assurance scheme logos (40%) about half the time or occasionally
- 84% of respondents who consider the dietary requirements (allergy/intolerance) for themselves or someone else in the household when shopping for food, were confident that the information provided on food labelling allows them to identify foods that will cause a bad or unpleasant physical reaction

Online platforms

- 60% of respondents reported that they had ordered food or drink from websites of a restaurant, takeaway or café and 55% had ordered from an online ordering and delivery company (for example, Just Eat, Deliveroo, Uber Eats)
- 27% of respondents had ordered food and drink via an online marketplace (for example Amazon, Gumtree, Etsy). The platforms used least by respondents were food sharing apps (for example Olio, Too Good To Go) (17%) and social media platforms (for example, Facebook, Instagram, Nextdoor) (7%)
- 47% of respondents looked for the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) ratings, 'always' or 'most of the time', when ordering food and drink online
- when ordering food and drink online, 20% of respondents who have a food hypersensitivity always looked for information that would allow them to identify food that might cause them a bad or unpleasant reaction, and 40% of respondents looked for this information less often

Eating at home

Cleaning

- 70% of respondents reported that they always wash their hands before preparing or cooking food
- 92% of respondents reported that they always wash their hands immediately after handling raw meat, poultry, or fish

Chilling

- 59% of respondents who have a fridge correctly reported that their fridge temperature should be between 0-5 degrees Celsius
- of the respondents who monitor the temperature of their fridge, 48% reported that they check the temperature of their fridge at least once a week or more often
- 43% of respondents reported that they defrost meat or fish in the fridge and 42% reported that they leave the meat or fish at room temperature

Cooking

- 80% of respondents reported that they always cook food until it is steaming hot and cooked all the way through, and 20% reported that they do not always do this
- around two-thirds of respondents reported that they never eat duck (68%) or beef burgers (66%) when it is pink or has pink juices; but around a third reported that they do eat these at least occasionally
- 35% of respondents reported that they always follow packaging instructions when preparing frozen fruit and vegetables, whilst 15% reported never doing this

Avoiding cross-contamination

- 40% of respondents reported that they wash raw fish or seafood and 38% report washing raw chicken

Use-by dates

- around seven in ten respondents (67%) of respondents identified the use-by date as the information which shows that food is no longer safe to eat
- around six in ten respondents (62%) reported that they always check use-by dates before they cook or prepare food

Genetic technologies

- respondents reported greater awareness and knowledge of genetically modified (GM) food than gene-edited or genome-edited food (GE) and least knowledge of precision bred food. For example, 63% of respondents had never heard of precision bred food whereas 38% of respondents had never heard of GE food. 8% of respondents had never heard of GM food

1. For a full list of modules, please see the accompanying wave 9 technical report.