

Healthier Food Targets and Reporting (HFTR)

FSA 26/03/06 - Report by Beth Chaudhary, Rachel Cooper, David Holmes

1. Summary

1.1 This paper gives a brief update on the Government's commitment to introduce mandatory healthy food sales reporting for large food businesses and to set targets to increase the healthiness of sales. The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) is leading policy development and plans to consult in due course.

1.2 In December 2025, the former Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Public Health and Prevention, Ashley Dalton MP, formally requested the continued support and guidance of FSA colleagues on policy development and indicated the FSA as a potential regulator, subject to consultation and ministerial decision. This would strengthen our ability to deliver on the FSA Strategy ambition that food is healthier and more sustainable.

1.3 The Board is asked to endorse the approach we are taking to the work at this stage: provide clear, evidence-based advice to DHSC on what would be deliverable, enforceable and workable in practice; and begin discussions on the detailed design work and funding required to prepare for and then assume new responsibilities if the FSA were appointed as the regulator.

1.4 FSA officials will return to the Board in due course with the implications and options for any potential regulatory role for the FSA.

2. Introduction

2.1 Healthier Food Targets and Reporting (HFTR) forms part of the Government's approach to improving population health through prevention. The *10 Year Health Plan for England* commits to introducing mandatory healthy food sales reporting for large food businesses to improve transparency and create a robust baseline, and to setting mandatory targets to increase the healthiness of sales while allowing businesses flexibility in how they meet them ([footnote 1](#)).

2.2 HFTR is therefore a central element of the Government's strategy to prevent ill-health, aimed at taking decisive action on obesity and improving dietary outcomes across all communities by monitoring and reporting on the healthiness of food sales.

2.3 The FSA Strategy sets an ambition for food to be healthier and more sustainable, and HFTR's focus on transparency and accountability in sales healthiness aligns with our role in protecting consumers' interests and supporting improved public health. This is also consistent with our capabilities as a regulator in the food system, and our experience in setting guidance, engaging businesses, and supporting compliance in ways that put consumer protection first.

2.4 DHSC is leading the development of the policy, including deciding the scope of the scheme, determining which businesses are in scope, and selecting the metrics and definitions that will underpin mandatory reporting and any future targets. Their work includes shaping the methodology, the reporting requirements, and how the scheme will operate across sectors.

2.5 The FSA's role is to advise on the practicalities of implementation and enforcement, drawing on our regulatory experience to ensure that whatever DHSC designs is deliverable, proportionate, auditable and workable in practice. This includes advising on where requirements may create operational challenges for businesses, identifying risks or unintended consequences, and helping DHSC think through the regulatory model, compliance expectations and feasibility.

3. Evidence and Discussion

3.1 DHSC is engaging across the sector to shape the policy, including technical workshops with large food businesses. This work will feed into a formal public consultation later in the year, which will test proposals and help finalise scope, metrics and requirements of any future scheme. The FSA will provide advice throughout this process, refining our position in light of evidence emerging from DHSC's engagement activity, and will continue to assess outputs from each phase to support future Board decisions on any potential regulatory role.

3.2 Since July 2025, the FSA has been providing working?level support to DHSC as they develop early policy proposals, drawing on the expertise of our Strategy and Regulatory Compliance, and Information and Science teams, with limited input from other areas where needed.

3.3 If the FSA were designated as the regulator, we would need to undertake substantial design and implementation work, including recruiting Digital, Data and Technology specialists and policy staff, undertaking structured engagement with industry, and potentially beginning procurement for new digital systems.

3.4 No funding has yet been provided, and DHSC Ministers have not made a decision on the regulator. Given pressures arising from Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) agreement and other core programmes, we recommend maintaining our current level of working?level engagement with DHSC, including providing clarity on the detailed design activity and the funding that would be required to prepare for and then assume new responsibilities if the FSA were appointed as the regulator.

3.5 Within these boundaries, FSA will keep on providing policy advice that promotes transparency (open, transparent, truthful/comparable reporting), proportionality (risk?based oversight; burden no more than needed), and enforceability (practical, auditable rules businesses can comply with) – grounded in our statutory duty to protect public health and consumers' interests.

3.6 FSA officials will return to the Board in due course with implications and options for any potential role for the FSA.

4. Devolved Nations

4.1 The Government announced HFTR as a scheme for England, with a commitment to work with the devolved governments to support alignment in how food businesses are regulated across the UK ([footnote 2](#)).

4.2 We and DHSC are engaging with all devolved government officials for their input and views. Any decision to implement HFTR in the Devolved Nations, and who would act as the regulator in each, would be made by their Ministers.

5. Conclusions

5.1 HFTR is an opportunity to increase transparency and to use data to drive progress towards a healthier food system; the Board's strategic steer on the stance above will allow the FSA to contribute confidently now and return later with clear options.

1. UK Government, "Fit for the Future: The 10 Year Health Plan for England", July 2025, [Fit for the future: 10 Year Health Plan for England](#), p. 64.
2. Ministerial Written Statement: The Government's Plan to Prevent Ill Health, 30.06.2025
[Written statements - Written questions, answers and statements - UK Parliament.](#)