

The Food Standards Agency sets out plans to modernise food regulatory system

The Future of Food Regulation Programme will develop proposals to strengthen the system that keeps our food safe, to ensure it keeps pace with new and emerging food businesses and reflects how people buy and consume food today.

The areas being explored by the programme include:

- Enhancing the food business registration system to make it more effective
- A national approach to regulation for some large businesses, which makes better use of existing data and assurance systems, alongside in-person inspections
- Improving the way we provide guidance to local authorities and businesses
- Strengthening enforcement powers where necessary to enable swift, proportionate action where needed
- Improving consumer information, including making the display of Food Hygiene Ratings mandatory in England, building on the trust of the scheme

“Our goal is simple: everyone in this country should be able to trust that their food is safe. This shared purpose drives what we, and our delivery partners, do every day to protect public health and protect consumers.

The food system is changing, and we know that both businesses and local authorities are facing new challenges. We want to make sure food regulation keeps pace with that changing food landscape, and remains effective, resilient and trusted by consumers and businesses.

The goal may be simple but the task is not. We recognise the scale and impact of this wide set of potential policy reforms, which is why we need to work collaboratively with businesses and delivery partners as we develop proposals to strengthen the food regulatory system for the future.”

Professor Susan Jebb, Chair of the Food Standards Agency

The Board agreed that, following a request by the Government in the 2025 Budget, the programme should develop proposals for a national system of regulation for large, food businesses in England — such as major supermarkets.

With government funding now in place, the Future of Food Regulation programme will explore a national system of regulation alongside other broader reforms that will make the food safety and standards system more resilient.

The Board agreed that system improvements could help identify food safety risks more quickly, while reducing unnecessary administrative burdens for businesses without compromising the regulatory controls that are critical to upholding high levels of food safety.

The FSA will now move forward with further engagement with local authorities, consumers, businesses and industry bodies, working in partnership to shape a food regulatory system that is fit for the future.