

Our approach and the context we work in

We use a scientific, evidence-based approach to ensure food is safe and what it says it is.

Our approach

We have developed seven guiding principles that set out how we will deliver our strategy.

Our guiding principles:

1. We are the trusted voice on food standards, protecting consumer interests
2. We are science and evidence led
3. We are open and transparent
4. We work with, and through, others
5. We make it easier for businesses to meet their obligations and do the right thing for consumers
6. We are risk-based and proportionate
7. We are innovative

More about [our guiding principles](#).

Did you know 91% of people have heard of the FSA? And of those, 69% trust us to do our job?

Source: [Food and You 2](#) (published March 2025)

The context we work in

In the UK food sector:

- £146.7 billion = Agri-food sector contribution to national Gross Value Added in 2022 (UK)
- 4.2 million people = Employed in the agri-food sector in 2022 (Great Britain)
- £245.5 billion = Consumer expenditure on food and drink in 2023 (UK)
- £24.4 billion = Food, feed and drink exports in 2023 (UK)

Source: [Defra Food statistics in your pocket](#)

Of the 600,000+ registered food businesses, England, Northern Ireland and Wales:

- 4,000+ = Primary producers
- 17,000 = Manufacturers and packers
- 1,000+ = Importers/exporters
- 9,000+ = Distributors/ transporters
- 121,000+ = Retailers
- 407,000+ = Restaurants and caterers

Source: [Annual local authority food law enforcement figures](#) (2023/24 and 2021/22)