

The food regulatory system

The food system is complex and its regulation involves multiple bodies.

The Food Standards Agency operates in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. We have different policy responsibilities across the three countries.

[Food Standards Scotland](#) is the non-ministerial government department of the Scottish Government responsible for food safety, food standards, nutrition, food labelling, feed official controls and meat inspection in Scotland.

The Food Standards Agency represents the UK government interest in international forums and organisations, and promotes food safety and hygiene globally.

Our areas of policy responsibility

In Northern Ireland only:

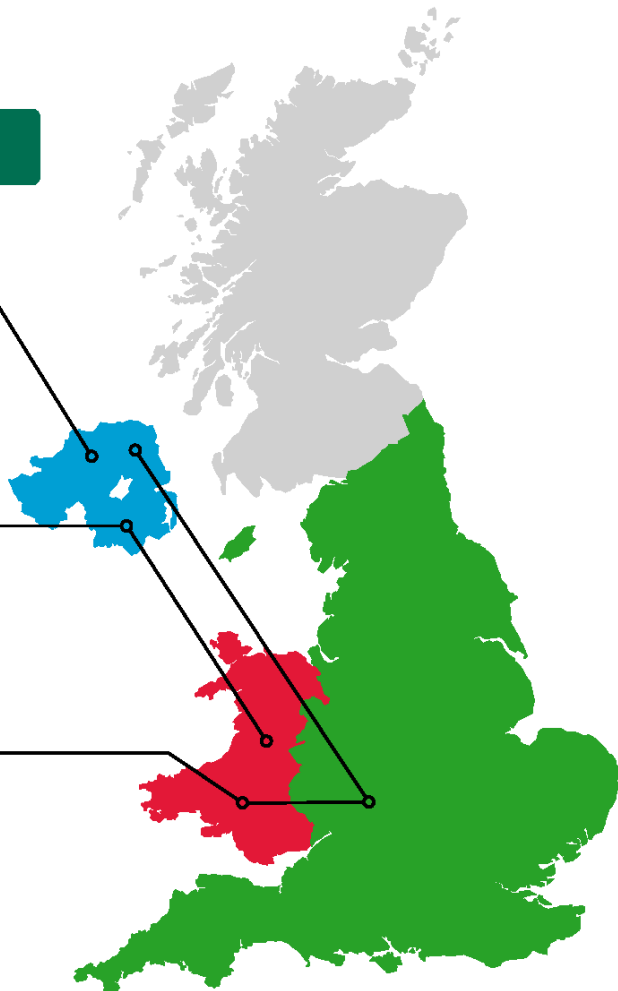
- Nutritional standards, and labelling
- Dietary health and surveillance

In Northern Ireland and Wales:

- Compositional standards and labelling

Across Wales, England and Northern Ireland:

- Food and feed safety and hygiene
- Food safety labelling, including allergen labelling



Our areas of policy responsibility

Across England, Northern Ireland, and Wales:

- food and feed safety and hygiene
- food safety labelling, including allergen labelling

In Northern Ireland and Wales:

- compositional standards and labelling

In Northern Ireland only:

- nutritional standards, and labelling
- dietary health and surveillance

Others' areas of policy responsibility

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Other food labelling in England (includes composition standards, country of origin)

Department of Health and Social Care: Nutrition standards, nutrition food labelling in England

Welsh Government: Nutrition standards, nutrition food labelling in Wales

Food and feed businesses responsibility

Under **UK food and animal feed regulations**, it is the responsibility of food businesses to ensure that all food and feed placed on the market is safe, that its quality is what consumers would expect and that it is not labelled in a false or misleading way.

Who enforces food controls?

FSA delivery

Meat Inspectors (Official Auxiliaries) and Official Veterinarians conduct hygiene, document and physical checks and take samples from approved producers of meat (including abattoirs and cutting plants). This includes ante-mortem and post-mortem inspection.

Official Veterinarians conduct checks on animal products and deliver animal welfare checks, audits and unannounced inspections. They also manage veterinary enforcement delivery. (Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) is responsible for the meat operations delivery on behalf of the FSA in Northern Ireland).

Wine Standards Inspectors conduct quality authenticity, labelling and traceability checks, and provide guidance and support to growers, wine producers and traders.

Dairy Hygiene Inspectors inspect primary production premises, check liquid raw milk, raw cow's drinking milk and raw drinking milk production, whilst promoting best hygiene practices.

Imported food controls delivery

Local and port health authorities in England, local authorities and the Animal and Plant Health Agency in Wales, and District Councils and DAERA in NI are responsible for imported food controls delivery.

Port Health Officers conduct risk-based document checks, identity checks, physical checks, and take samples of food imports.

Official Veterinarians and **Official Fish Inspectors** conduct checks on animal products.

Local authority delivery

Food Safety Officers conduct food safety and hygiene official controls. They inspect premises to check that food is stored and prepared safely.

Food Standards Officers check that food meets safety, composition and nutrition labelling standards (for example, labelling of allergens, use-by dates, nutritional and compositional information).

Food businesses regulated by local authorities include food producers, food processors, catering establishments, takeaway and food delivery, retailers and approved dairy, meat and fish establishments.

Delivery of **animal feed** controls is the responsibility of local authorities in England and Wales, and DAERA in NI.

The FSA and local authorities together deliver **shellfish** official controls.