

Trust in a changing world

Deliberative forums research report for FSA



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1. Executive summary

Background and methodology

As part of its mission to protect public interests in relation to food, the Food Standards Agency (FSA) collects a wealth of public insight to guide its organisational strategy and policy priorities. Via both qualitative and quantitative research, the FSA gathers direct public views around food policy issues of interest, thus ensuring that the public voice is included in its organisational decision-making. The FSA's Citizens' Forum programme, including 'deliberative' research that supports the collection of public views around complex policy decisions, comprises an important part of this evidence programme.

The Food Standards Agency's executive management team has recently identified public trust in the FSA, and in the food system more widely, as an important indicator of success. At present, the FSA maintains a strong position in terms of public trust as measured at a quantitative level, via both the FSA Public Attitudes tracker and the wider public sector reputation tracker data (RepTrak). It has also explored some elements of what enables or hinders public trust in the FSA and the food system in some of its previous Citizens' Forum research (*Our Food Future 2017*¹; *Transparency: Understanding public views and priorities 2017*²).

Building on a wealth of data and insight from across the FSA's Strategic Evidence Programme, this report covers the qualitative element of an ongoing, multi-method, investigation of what trust in relation to food means for the UK public. This piece of work also aimed to build on the existing evidence base by providing qualitative deeper insights into enablers and barriers to trust. Like many Citizens Forum projects, this work takes a **deliberative** approach. That is, the research team explored the issue of trust with a carefully targeted selection of UK public participants over a longer period of time than 'traditional' qualitative approaches, incorporating time to examine the issue from multiple angles, discuss and reflect, and move from 'spontaneous' to more informed, reflective views. The sample was designed to reflect the spread of the local population in each of the research areas and general attitude statements were used within the recruitment questionnaire to ascertain people's base levels of trust and cynicism.

The findings summarised below have built on and evolved the FSA's existing evidence base, exploring enablers and barriers to trust for the UK public in general; differences and priorities for the food system particularly; and core needs from a food system regulator. 2 'waves' (day long workshops) of research were conducted in three locations across the United Kingdom (Farnborough in England, Belfast in Northern Ireland and Cardiff in Wales) with a group of public participants. There were thus 6 day-long workshops with 45 participants in total, or around 1890 total direct participant contact hours. All research was conducted by 2CV and Community Research, the FSA's Citizens' Forum research partners.

¹ <https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/our-food-future-full-report.pdf>

² https://acss.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/transparencyreport_0.pdf

Main findings

This research initially explored ‘trust’ in its broadest sense (e.g. What does trust mean to you? How is it gained or lost?) before narrowing down and exploring priorities and public expectations around trust and trustworthiness in the food system and its regulation.

Throughout, trust was both simple and challenging for participants to talk about; something they felt they could easily feel and talk about from one perspective and yet something often enacted without much ‘thinking’ and thus hard to talk about and explore rationally.

The research team explored the issue from a variety of perspectives, and analysis focused on finding ways to condense often complex and contradictory public views. Whilst views between people, and even within the same person (from moment to moment) varied widely, the key findings below were consistent across the audiences and experiences represented in this research.

To note: the high-level insights about ‘trust’ detailed below also apply to trust in the food system and its regulation. That said, there are also sector and regulator-specific trust enablers and barriers to consider.

How is trust built and lost?

- **Trust is complex:** The notion of ‘trust’ is a complicated concept and people’s definitions are multifaceted, fluid and often contradictory. Trust can be both a rational and emotional decision. To take one example, people spoke about placing your trust in someone/something as both a vulnerability (surrendering control to another) but also a source of strength (a problem shared; being able to call on the power and resources of someone who wants to protect you).
- **Trust is a social necessity.** Placing your trust in the people and organisations around you is a daily social necessity. The decision of whether to trust is thus something that people have evolved to do implicitly, making complex calculations often instinctively. This means that ‘trust’ is in many ways an instinctive response; rational ‘pros and cons’ calculation in every trust decision are overwhelming and quickly result in paralysis. Instead, trust is mostly experienced as automatic, implicit, emotional acceptance or rejection; a feeling as much as anything.
- **We don’t like to dissect our instinctive trust calculations.** People can be reluctant to ‘think through’ the trust decisions they are making at a largely automatic level; they might have to face up to the fact that they are wrong or have less control and power than initially thought.
- **Three core steps in understanding trust decisions:** At their core, participants’ wide and varied trust calculations rest on three ‘steps’ in understanding trust.³

³ This ‘rule of thumb’ framework has been adapted from social science academic theory: Adapted from [J Davis Lewis.; Andrew Weigert, 1985. Trust as a social reality, Social Forces 63\(4\): 967–985.](#)

1. **Context** – Decision context matters: the ease with which trust is granted depends on the situation, (What are the stakes? What are the consequences of reversing my decision?) and who is being asked to trust.
 2. **‘Social Trust’ (Intention)** – Trust fundamentally relies on a social assessment of intention: do you intend to do me well? Are you willing to respect my agenda, not (just) your own? **(N.B. ‘Social’ Trust in the context of this piece of work should not be confused with the existing concept of *Generalised Social Trust*. The label used here was created as a term to define the social assessment of intent towards individuals).**
 3. **‘Cognitive Trust’ (Delivery)** – Trust is further built by the ability to deliver: do you actually do what you said you would do for me? Do you have the authority and capability to work in my interests? **(N.B. as with Social Trust, ‘Cognitive’ Trust in the context of this piece of work should not be confused with the existing concept, which refers to individual beliefs about reliability, dependability, and competence. The label used here was created as a term to define the assessment of carrying out what has been assured).**
- **Loss of Social Trust is most damaging; Cognitive Trust is more resilient.** Trust is much more easily and deeply lost when belief in positive intent (Social Trust) fails; why would I trust you if I don’t think you have my best interests at heart? Cognitive Trust is more resilient and people can be more forgiving when an organisation falters in delivery, to a point. Incidents that suggest ill intent can thus damage trust more than ones involving human error unless the failure signals basic negligence, high level incompetence or delivers real harm.

How does this work in the food sector and its regulation, specifically?

- **The Context for food sector decisions makes trust easier for the public.** When exploring aspects of trust in different sectors it became apparent that people’s (positive) relationship with food strongly affected how they felt about the sector. As food is enjoyable and loved by most, this puts it at a strong advantage; people like to trust things that make them feel good. This advantage makes it easier to trust the food sector (and by extension the sector’s regulator). At a decision context level, choosing/buying/eating food also feels like a low risk, high control and simple decision most of the time.
- **The food sector also has major advantages in both the Social and Cognitive Trust spheres.**
 - As compared to other spheres of life, the public have more positive associations and experiences that build Social Trust around good intent. They assume that the food sector has a vested interest in meeting their needs, as consumers can ‘vote with their feet’ in an environment of choice. They have a range of powerful experiences with human representatives for the system in which they feel cared for and treated well (e.g. local butchers, favourite restaurants). This is in stark contrast to other sectors (such as Utilities or Telecoms) where opportunities to ‘feel’ positive social intent are absent, less personal and ‘human’, or where scandals and negative media coverage have called intent into question.
 - Most people also feel that the public’s needs are being relatively well met in terms of Delivery (Cognitive Trust). They believe that food is generally safe; that there is a good range of choice available; that there are few examples of obvious system

failure; and that for the most part their day-to-day experiences are positive. These daily interactions provided a counterbalance to stories of delivery problems (e.g. the Trace DNA or 'horsemeat' scandal). That said, positivity around delivery relied in part on low salience and understanding of challenges in the food sector, either at a domestic or global level, or particularly on low understanding of the wider farm to fork process.

- **Qualitative research mirrored the positivity towards the FSA seen in quantitative tracking (particularly in relation to trusting the FSA to do its job and to tell the truth in the information it provides) – but this seems not to be based on detailed knowledge or understanding of its remit, actions or performance.**
 - When initially exploring perceptions of the FSA and its role, it is apparent that specific knowledge of the FSA is low and perceptions informed by the Agency's name and/or general understanding of the role that regulators play in a sector.
 - For most, positive perceptions of the FSA seemed to be driven largely by overall sector performance and other 'trust points' around the food system and ideas behind a regulator's intentions and role (to protect consumers by regulating the sector).
 - Participants' spontaneous knowledge and assessment of FSA suggested that FSA is performing well in survey measures of trust, in large part because of factors external to the specifics of its remit, or how well it is delivering that remit, not due to rational, deliberated consideration about the safety of the food system or FSA performance.
- **As the public learn more about the food sector, or have their attention drawn to some of the complexities of the system and its regulation, this can initially raise discomfort and concern.**
 - Exploring the food system and whether it can be trusted can be uncomfortable for people as it challenges established perspectives and viewpoints.
 - People want to trust the food system
 - Exploration of the system and its regulation can provoke conflicting attitudes, beliefs and behaviours and put people in a state of cognitive dissonance
 - Engaging with complex things is challenging; it takes cognitive effort
 - Over the course of deliberation, participants must engage with uncomfortable truths, including:
 - Consequences are higher than they initially assumed and would like
 - Complexity means there are multiple processes/people to trust and provokes a lot of uncertainty
 - There are examples of obvious ill intent (e.g. food crime) in the system which challenges positivity about the system
 - Getting the system to 'work' is a massive, complex endeavour

- **Learning more about the FSA’s role and remit increased trust in the organisation and raises belief that it is well intentioned and has the public’s best interests at heart.** Overall, increased knowledge of complexity of the system and FSA’s role within it does raise the salience of risk but knowledge of FSA raises confidence in safety.
- When identifying what they believed ought to be the FSA’s priorities, participants were less worried about specific areas of the FSA remit than they were about seeing clear positive intentions and strong delivery in two key areas:
 - Proactivity in places they most associate with protection from harm
 - Proactive consumer education that helps them empower themselves
- **Overall the public want a visible, powerful FSA protecting their interests in the food system and maintaining proactive consumer communications.**
- **The public want clear signs of positive intentions and strong delivery in two key areas:**
 1. **Proactive consumer education that helps the public empower themselves (including information that allows them to make informed decisions and take action; and increases understanding of the FSA’s role)**
 2. **Taking action in areas the public most associate with protection from harm**
- **In terms of principles of communication, the public expect FSA to:**
 - **Be as visible as possible with any statements/action/communications they deliver**
 - **Demonstrate it cares for the public and the issue of food safety**
 - **Be specific about its remit and actions**
 - **Empower the public with information it delivers**

2. Introduction

2.1 Background and context

‘Trust’, as a concept, is increasingly on the agenda with media and the public questioning whether there is a ‘trust crisis’⁴ in today’s world. As an organisation, the FSA currently maintains a strong position at a quantitative level, performing well in the FSA Public Attitudes Tracker⁵.

The key questions for the organisation are: how can we better understand, deconstruct and model the concept of trust with regard in particular to food and its regulator, what are the public expectations that need to be fulfilled to build and maintain it, and which insights into the enablers and barriers to trust might be derived to inform the evidence base for future FSA decisions and

⁴ Media coverage at the time of the research focussed heavily on the Cambridge Analytica and Facebook controversy <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/mar/21/cambridge-analytica-facebook-exploited-trust>; <https://www.channel4.com/news/revealed-cambridge-analytica-data-on-thousands-of-facebook-users-still-not-deleted>

⁵ <https://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/biannual-public-attitudes-tracker>,

priorities. This research builds on previous findings from the FSA's Citizens' Forum and wider citizen insight programme, particularly: *Our Food Future*⁶; *FSA Strategy 2015-2020*⁷; *Trust and Transparency*⁸. In addition to this piece of work, a Rapid Evidence Assessment, *Trust in a changing world*, has also been commissioned to gain an overview of the density and quality of evidence on the issue of trust.

2.2 Research objectives

In March 2018 the FSA commissioned 2CV and Community Research to conduct research with the general public into the enablers of and barriers to trust. The overarching research aims were to:

- Understand the current drivers of the FSA's position in the trust landscape, and indicate public trust at a qualitative level, building on previous work
- Understand what builds and hinders trust in the food system and in a regulator
- Identify priority actions for a modern, accountable regulator to maintain trust

Detailed research questions included...

1. What do the public mean when they say they trust the food industry, or the FSA?
2. To what extent do they feel the food system is trustworthy?
3. What is trust based on? Rational choice? Implicit trust? Hope?
4. How does trust influence food choices?
5. How is trust lost, and what are the implications?
6. How is trust changing? Is it easier or harder to trust than in the past?
7. What drives differing levels of trust in the system across audiences?
8. What are the implications of all of the above for regulators? For the food system more widely?

2.3 Research methodology

2.3.1 Overview

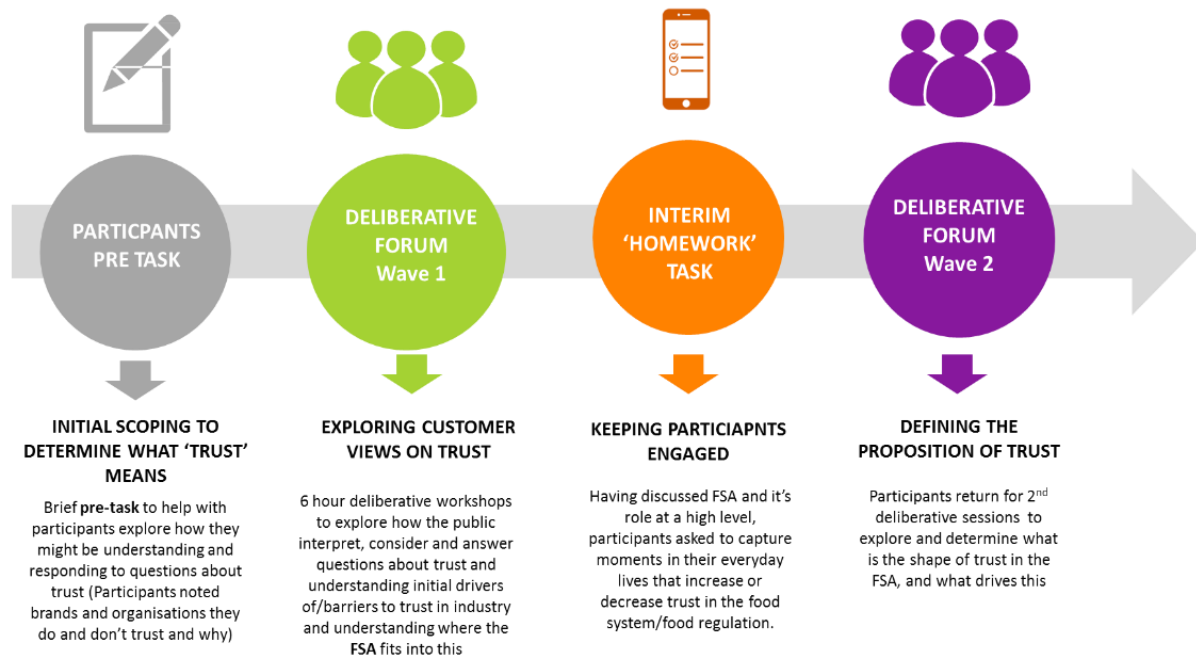
A deliberative approach was chosen to gather both spontaneous and more informed public views. Two waves of day long workshops were held with a broad range of participants in England (Farnborough), Northern Ireland (Belfast) and Wales (Cardiff). There were 6 workshops in all with 45 (15 people per location) participants in total. Break out groups and work sessions were audio recorded. Participants were also invited to contribute to 'vox pop' video.

⁶ <https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/our-food-future-full-report.pdf>

⁷ <https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Strategy%20FINAL.pdf>

⁸ https://acss.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/transparencyreport_0.pdf

Figure 1: Methodology overview



Participants were recruited to be a good representation of the research locations. A diverse mix of people attended (ages 18-65+, mixed gender, broad socio-economic grade and ethnicity). The following spread was achieved across all locations.

Sample in summary

Gender	
Male	20 x respondents
Female	25 x respondents
Age group	
18-24	8 x respondents
25-34	8 x respondents
35-54	10 x respondents
55-64	11 x respondents
65+	8 x respondents
Working status	
Employed (including quotas for part-time, full time, casual workers)	24 x respondents
Unemployed	8 x respondents
Retired	8 x respondents
Other	5 x respondent
Social grade	
AB	13 x respondents
C1C2	21 x respondents
DE	11 x respondents
Lifestyle	

Dependent children	18 x respondents
Geography	
Urban/suburban	32 x respondents
Rural	13x respondents

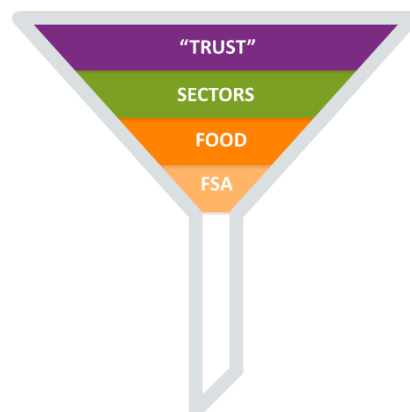
2.3.2 A note on methodology

A qualitative approach was chosen over a quantitative one. The abstract nature of the core topic area (what are drivers of trust and what are these based on) meant an approach that would provide clearer understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, behaviours and motivations was needed. While a quantitative study would deliver insights from a greater numerical base, it would not have been able to fully unpick these complex ideas in sufficient depth.

Given the complexity of the research question and the need to gather both spontaneous and more informed public views, it was felt that that a deliberative approach would be most suited. Informed dialogue or deliberation techniques go beyond the insight that traditional qualitative research methods deliver. The processes of open two-way discussion in which participants are provided with opportunities to learn about complex issues, as well as to give their opinions, can be used to engage consumers very effectively in the development of policy, strategies, services and communications. During this process we captured both spontaneous views as well as more informed views and issues under discussion tend to shift opinions over time.

The research process deliberately started from a broad and exploratory perspective and then 'funnelled' down into more detail. Initially it was not revealed to participants that the exercise was about food or the FSA specifically. The rationale behind this was to capture spontaneous views, more informed views, and then considered priorities. Representatives from the FSA attended and were involved in the 2nd wave workshops, participating in discussions, giving presentations and answering questions.

Figure 2: Deliberative sessions' flow'



Starting 'wide' and including discussion of other sectors (*Utilities, Finance, Transport, Telecoms and Health*) and organisations (a mix of regulators, government departments, NGOs and commercial

businesses⁹) contributed to a more pragmatic response from the public than in other Citizens' Forum research. Responses felt more measured and considered overall as they had time to explore wider contextual issues relating to trust and the food system before deliberating the role of the FSA and how much they trusted it. Without this wider, more abstract start, it is likely responses would have been less rational and reactionary.

3. Main findings

3.1 'Trust': definitions, drivers, tensions and trends

3.1.1: What is trust?

As noted above, conversations in the deliberative process started 'wide' and discussions began by asking participants to spontaneously define what trust meant to them. Unsurprisingly there was a considerable variation in response.

"Loyalty, love, patience, being able to depend on someone or something no matter what happens to you to get you through situations."

"Confidence that I am being told the truth, honesty, belief in another."

"Trust means being honest, reliability. You have to earn trust and build a reputation."

Straightforward responses to this question took time and effort to verbalise and spanned the narrowest and broadest definitions and elements of trust. Participants had rarely given much thought to or articulated what exactly shaped trust or distrust in general, or for any of the sectors and bodies under discussion. As conversations moved on it emerged that as an abstract idea, trust is a complicated concept of feeling and action. The definitions participants used and came up with were complex, changeable and often contradictory. Trust can be both...

- A **necessary 'evil'** required to help navigate the organisations and systems in everyday life but also an **enjoyable** part of the human experience that can feel positive
- A **vulnerability** and surrendering of control that can leave us exposed but also a source of **strength** and support
- A **conscious** decision made to void risk but also an intuitive and **instinctive** behaviour
- An **internal**, personal feeling and behaviour but as a **relationship** built with others

The complex trust calculations that people make daily mostly occur at an implicit level and as such it was hard for participants to rationally deconstruct this instinctive response. The frequency with which these calculations are done makes complex risk evaluations routine. To make more considered, rational assessments would quickly result in being overwhelmed and 'analysis' paralysis. On the whole, humans feel rather than think their way through situations and rely on 'gut instinct',

⁹ Stimulus materials used in the workshops (including a full list of organisations/bodies) are included in the appendix

despite often limited information. For most, trust decisions are automatic, implicit; emotional acceptance or rejection. In this regard, humans are less able and reluctant to slow down and think about decisions, particularly if doing so results in facing up to the fact that they were wrong or made a mistake.

3.1.2 How does trust happen?

At their core, trust calculations people make are informed by three factors:

1. **Context** - The ease with which trust is granted depends on the situation, and who is being asked to trust
2. **Social Trust** - Trust relies on a social assessment of intention: do you intend to do me well?
3. **Cognitive Trust** – Trust is further built by the ability to deliver on what you said you would do for me

Figure 3: Model of factors that inform trust from *Trust in a changing world*, April 2018, 2CV & Community Research



Context

Context as a factor determining trust is informed by four distinct criteria developed on our analysis of participants' responses:

- *How does it feel?* People like things that feel enjoyable, as food often does. As a rule, people don't want a negative evaluation to curtail their enjoyment and so are more likely to see the positives and find trust easier.
- *What are the stakes in trusting someone?* If the stakes feel low, people are more likely to trust as they don't think the consequences of 'getting it wrong' will cause any significant harm.
- *How complex is the situation and decision to trust?* Simple decisions are easy to make trust evaluations in; somewhat more complex decisions may make people slow down and think.

Very complex systems or issues can also become so hard to engage with that people would sometimes rather trust blindly than endure the effort of resolving uncomfortable, competing or conflicting issues.

- *Individuals' outlook.* At a basic personality level, people's optimism and pessimism bias can impact on trust. Some people are more likely to assume good intentions from those around them, while others who are more cynical and inward looking assume an 'every man for himself' attitude, so they need more 'evidence' to trust.

Social Trust

Social Trust is established by demonstrating positive intent. Participants (in their role as consumers, customers and service users) want organisations to show they care about them and that they have no competing agenda or interests that run counter to theirs. If an organisation supports wider issues that are aligned with their customers'/consumers' ethics, the environment, values and morals, it can also achieve Social Trust. Actions and behaviours that help demonstrate good intent include: taking positive actions that benefit consumers and avoiding actions that harm them; honesty and respect in all transactions and interactions; proactively supplying information that can empower consumers. Social Trust is easier to achieve when there is an established relationship with the organisation and when consumers feel a sense of familiarity with it. It also helps if the organisation has an accessible 'human face' proxy to engage with rather than an automated system.

Cognitive Trust

While intention is a necessary and fundamental requirement, trust also requires faith in the ability to deliver as promised. To achieve Cognitive Trust, organisations need to demonstrate competence and reliability to customers. In addition, good delivery is shown by doing what has been promised by the organisation or body and exerting the influence or effort required to get it done well. Regarding what indication of delivery is most compelling, participants were clear that 'lived' evidence is stronger proof than 'evidence read' or reported. Their actual experience of an interaction is proof positive and what matters most.

3.1.3 How can trust be lost?

Organisations can directly influence Social and Cognitive Trust. Context is an element of the trust calculation they have less control over. When looking at Social Trust, people can lose belief in an organisation's intentions based on several specific behaviours and perceived motivations. Most commonly mentioned areas included: when an organisation prioritised profit motive over and above service delivery; when they are perceived to act with a total lack of openness and transparency in interactions with customers; when they are believed to act disrespectfully and not respond to concerns or frustrations. Loss of belief in intent can also be driven by any perceived lapses on values, ethics and morals.

"I used to love Cadbury's till I heard about their involvement in badger culling. I haven't bought any of their products since." Farnborough Phase 1

As noted, a 'Human face' proxy can impact positively on perceptions of intent. However, 'Human face' proxies (a rude call centre worker, an inattentive shop assistant) can tarnish the reputation and trustworthiness of an entire organisation.

In relation to Cognitive Trust, there appears to be some public empathy with the notion that delivery cannot always be gotten right all the time. As such, low-consequence failures may be tolerated for a while, although this can erode trust over time. Critically, delivery failures damage trust if they signal incompetence, real harm, or even ill intent. On balance, the loss of social trust can be the most damaging. Cognitive Trust is more resilient and people can be more forgiving when an organisation falters in delivery.

While the trust calculation is most likely intuitive, changes in situation can tip people into re-evaluation and more considered decision making with regards to trust. There are a range of factors that have the potential to cut through and shift more gut-level trust calculations, namely:

- *Raised stakes:* The consequences and being higher than initially thought can lead to vulnerability and anxiety
- *Complexity:* Heightening the magnitude of the trust decision at hand can result in a more considered attitude (though this can also have the opposite effect and tip some into 'not engaging with the issue as being too complex')
- *A shift in focus:* Media stories and how they are framed can change how people view an issue

It became apparent that FSA communications around food safety and hygiene can often be a trigger to tip people into revaluation by working to disrupt automatic actions and inspiring the public to stop and think.

3.1.4 Trust in today's world

The availability and use of information in today's (digital) age has resulted in tensions in terms whether people feel they can be less or more trusting. The public do feel that more information is available to them, in all spheres of life. In theory this is a positive; a democratisation of information can make organisations more accountable and signal care and positive intent. However this sense of being informed and trusting is easily punctured, particularly when they interrogate the provenance of information and realise that they cannot know who is controlling it and what their agenda might be. There is also an increasing belief that information can be biased, that readers can be strategically manipulated, and even 'weaponised'. Feeling like they are at the mercy of someone else's agenda, or that information has been provided 'in theory' but is not usable, can erode trust and a lack of trust can create anxiety. As well as these factors, the practice of trying to navigate the information available can be simply overwhelming, resulting in people becoming unsure *what* to believe.

Figure 3: Case study example of a' trust 'journey around food. A Swansea participant's journey in and out of veganism



3.2 People's trust in the food system

As referenced above, this research process adopted a deliberative approach with discussions starting 'wide' before looking more specifically at issues relating to food and the FSA. This included discussion of other sectors and how food compared. During the analysis of data, responses were looked at through the lenses of Context, Social and Cognitive Trust.

3.2.1 Context – Food is enjoyed by most

Broadly speaking, the public have a positive relationship with food. Food has an array of emotional levers (pleasure, nurturing, social) that deepens how people feel about it. At a basic human level, food is enjoyable and this puts it at a strong decision context advantage: people like to, and want to, trust things that make them feel good.

Figure 4 Swansea participant's pre-task illustrates the emotional resonance food has with people

about moments when you feel totally safe and content and when you feel a less trusting or nervous. Tell us why.

MOMENTS OF TRUST

Trust Moment 1: Where are you? What's happening? What day/time is it?

Rome 2007 November. Early evening.

Describe your thoughts and feelings

My wife and I discovered this tiny restaurant in a hole street in 2002. It comprised of 3 tables and was owned and run by a father and son. The only choice on the menu was home made wine, bread, rustic bread, Ricotta and home made wine, all produced by the owner. The food was served on 'grapefruit' paper and was delicious. We returned many times over the years and were treated as family.

“My wife and I discovered this tiny restaurant in Rome 2007....owned by father and son, the only choice on the menu was pork and pickles with homemade wine, it was delicious and we returned many times and always treated like family.” Cardiff Phase 1

And when it comes to food, participants can have positive relationships with things they feel they shouldn't (junk foods) and do not always engage with the evidence.

“I have 2 grand-daughters and they love MacDonald's. Everything is so child-friendly, there are balloons, colouring-in pencils and pads and I-pads. All the adverts look as if this is healthy food, but I am worried about the fact everything is processed, I bought the kids fruit bags and even the fruit tastes as if there is preservatives in it. This could be my imagination but everything tastes fake. We still went.” Belfast Phase 1

These advantages make it easier for people to trust the sector and, for the most part, to even avoid underlying concerns or evidence that would cause them to question the system.

At a decision context level, choosing, buying and eating food also feels like a low risk, high control and a simple decision most of the time. For the vast majority of participants the risk and consequences of 'things going awry' feels low even when they aren't and the perceived low incidence of significant food safety issues delivers a sense that things are going well and the sector is 'safe' and that no serious harm occurs. The public reference their own lived experiences to support the idea that food and by extension the sector and system is relatively risk free and something they can trust.

“I've been eating my whole life – nothing bad has ever happened” Belfast Phase 1

“There hasn't been a really big scandal for years. That to me says it [the system] must be alright” Farnborough Phase 1

Alongside the factors that help support the idea that food is fundamentally safe and the sector trustworthy, most are not engaging with and have a low understanding of the complexity of the system, with people developing simple heuristic shortcuts that help them feel safe (e.g. looking at or smelling food to determine freshness).

3.2.2: Social and Cognitive Trust – The food sector delivers

The food sector has more Social and Cognitive Trust positives and lacks the downsides of other sectors. What follows are the factors that were discussed to support the overall positivity people felt and the trust they had.

Social Trust

Participants identified areas they believed signified positive intent and therefore attendant Social Trust:

1. **Care and agenda:** As commercially driven businesses that operate in a competitive environment, it was widely believed food businesses would not jeopardise reputation by taking risks on the safety of consumers.

“Surely they have to care, or we won’t buy from them. It’d be too much of a risk for them to be slack.” Cardiff Phase 1

As well as having an agenda that was at odds with risking their relationships with consumers, participants referenced examples of employees (human proxies) ‘going the extra mile’ in terms of customer services. For some participants, obvious examples of business in the food sector working towards the ‘wider good’ (charity activity, sustainability, etc) had positive associations.

2. **Honesty and transparency:** Food businesses growing increasingly transparent (labelling initiatives) as well as some positive examples of disclosure were taken as evidence that this sector treats consumers with respect.
3. **Familiarity** The food people buy and consume tends to be from a repertoire of well established brands and shops and favourite restaurants.
4. **Life experience:** All participants had a lifetime of first hand examples of people working in the sector who have demonstrated care, expertise, skill.

Cognitive Trust

As with Social Trust, there is a range of evidence to support the idea the food sector is able to deliver on positive intent.

1. **Competence:** The public felt like the system they rely on fundamentally works to deliver what they demand. In addition, there were positive associations they had with the food system they had access to in the UK (hygiene standards, safety, availability) when compared to perceptions of what is available in other countries. This is in tandem with the relatively few examples of recent food related scandals or scares.

“Nothing bad has really happened here since the horsemeat scandal has it?” Cardiff Phase 1

“We’re better off here than say Africa or Asia. I mean how well will they be regulated in some 3rd World countries?” Farnborough Phase 1

2. **Quality:** As consumers, the public were aware of the range of ‘decent’ choices available to them which they saw as indicative of effective delivery and a safe food system, with salient high-quality experiences (favourite foods/brands/restaurants) and the options for ‘top shelf’ and premium products (organic, locally produced or sourced foods).
3. **Reliability:** People were quick to discuss how few poor experiences (particularly ones relating to safety) they or people they knew had experienced.

All the factors discussed above for Social and Cognitive Trust are personal and evidence lived experiences that makes the food system feel close, relatable and accessible. As such, concerns relating to food are not always in their personal sphere and can be more easily missed, ignored or even argued against.

3.2.3: How other sectors compare

As part of the deliberative process, participants were asked about the relative performance of a range of sectors alongside food. Sessions explored: *Finance, Health, Telecoms, Transport and Utilities*. In comparison, these other sectors were felt to have more ‘risk points’ that make trust harder to achieve and maintain. In summary, other sectors (bar Health) were felt more risky (Decision context), raised more doubt about their intention (Social Trust), and made more obvious (to the public) failures that negatively impacted on perceptions of delivery (Cognitive Trust).

Finance

Compared to food, money and finance are not enjoyable to manage and the consequences of things going poorly are high (personal wellbeing, wider ramifications on the economy). In addition, the world of finance is thought to be complicated and the system opaque. Given the well documented scandals (mis-selling of products; the global financial crisis) in this sector, many did not trust the motivations, agendas and intent of this sector.

Utilities

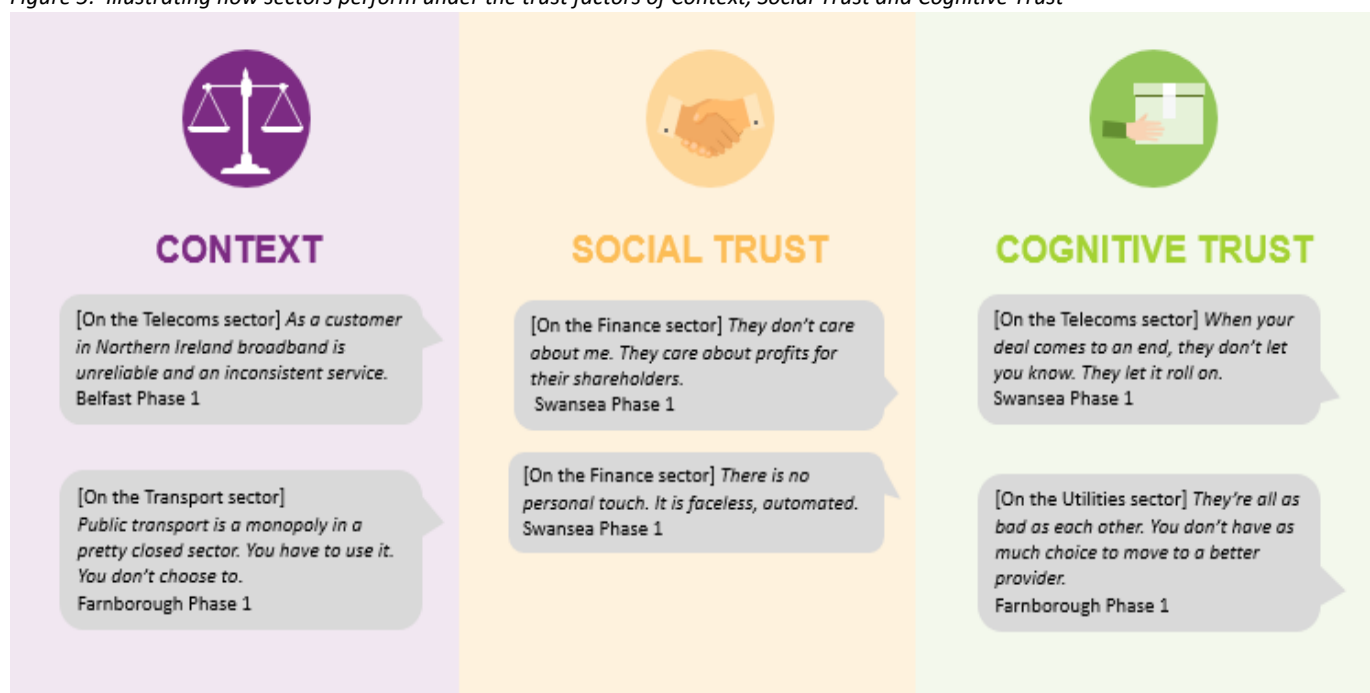
There are several overlapping similarities with how the public view the Utilities and Finance sectors. As with Finance, Utilities are a practical aspect of everyday life that lack the emotional resonance of

food. Equally, the businesses in this sector are believed to be driven solely by profit. Customer service and interactions were often reported as lacking a ‘human face’ with increasingly less dialogue with customers. As a sector, there was a consensus that Utilities lacked transparency and actively avoided equipping consumers with adequate information to empower and drive an equal relationship.

Transport

Discussion around the Transport sector tended to focus on public rather than commercial transport (roads and air travel). Comments focussed on the relative expense and the perceived lack of value for many delivered. The services were also described as monopolies, leaving consumers with no choice or alternatives, meaning trust in it as a sector felt relatively abstract and inapplicable.

Figure 5: Illustrating how sectors perform under the trust factors of Context, Social Trust and Cognitive Trust



It should be noted that *Health* performed as well as, if not better than, food across the sessions, despite concerns about underfunding and some aspects of delivery. This demonstrates the power of Social Trust despite Cognitive Trust concerns. The incidences of overt care and dedication demonstrated by health professionals builds Social Trust and outweighs the lack of Cognitive trust evidenced by poor delivery of services (NHS waiting lists and other crises in the health services).

3.2.4: The impact of trust on consumer behaviour

Over time, a cycle of trust between consumer and service provider is established. Consumers are driven to try goods and services with the expectation of being rewarded and once they have positive experiences they seek more from that organisation or body.

"I've built my trust up. When I first went to Lidl it was because it was cheap but now I've seen the quality is really good and I haven't been disappointed." Farnborough Phase 2

Over time, as these positive experiences are repeated, consumers trust these organisations and brands more and deepen their emotional attachment to them. As a result, the bar for trust is lowered and they then seek out more experiences *because* of this innate trust. The impact of trust gained is: loyalty and habitual spend that reduces rational consideration; increased resilience to problems or issues. Over time, consumers develop a vested interest in the relationship (and attendant trust) they have established and are reluctant to jeopardise it. This in turn can result in them only looking for and engaging with information that confirms rather than threatens their positive views of the brand (confirmation bias).

3.3 Trust in the FSA compared to other organisations

3.3.1 Awareness of the FSA

Participants' knowledge and awareness of the FSA'S role at the start of the process were low. Much of people's perceptions were informed by the organisation's name and general understanding of the role that regulators play in a sector.

"I'm assuming standards setting in food. They govern the food industry." Belfast Phase 1

With few firm ideas of the FSA's role, assumptions regarding the agency's remit are thus broad and vague and include the following: food safety; food quality; trading standards; a public health and dietary advice role. For those that are aware of the FSA as regulator in this space, points of positivity included Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (often referred to as 'Scores on the doors') and the organisation's media presence responding to food safety and food hygiene issues. This said there is little clear idea of the nature of the FSA's remit, it is hard to gauge whether there are specific areas of the organisation's activity they trust more than others.

When looking at a range of other organisations, the FSA was better regarded based to a large extent on the positive trust points they have with the food sector. It is apparent that consumer perceptions of an industry or sector have a clear impact on the perceptions of a regulator and its efficacy.

"The gas and electricity markets are in total disarray, so they [Ofgem] don't do their job."
Farnborough Phase1

"Their [HMRC's] role is to tax us and pay the money on, for the common good. They're just not particularly good at it." Swansea Phase 1

"They [HMRC] make mistakes, are impossible to contact and chase taxpayers for small errors whilst making larger errors themselves." Belfast Phase 1

Participants' spontaneous knowledge and assessment of the FSA suggests that the FSA is performing well in survey measures of trust in large part because of factors external to the specifics of its remit,

or how well it is delivering that remit rather than due to rational, deliberated consideration about the safety of the food system. Under the surface of this fairly spontaneous high trust at a 'gut' level are clear questions about what exactly FSA can do; how it does it; how its role overlaps/differs from other Government departments and NGOs (Defra, PHE etc).

3.4 Tackling the complexity of the food system and FSA's role

As noted above, the salience of the complexity of the food system is low and many of the public in this research were happy not interrogating its workings. Examining the food system served to challenge people's established perspectives and viewpoints and resulted in unnerving them. Interrogating the system was challenging for several reasons.

1. Crucially, people have a strong emotional relationship with food and want to trust the food system. Exploration of the system and its regulation can provoke conflicting attitudes, beliefs and behaviours and put people in a state of cognitive dissonance.
2. Engaging with complex things is challenging and requires significant cognitive effort.
3. The public questioned the value of interrogating the system and whether it delivered worthwhile returns. They questioned whether it was worth engaging with something so complicated and whether knowledge would affect anything around the system anyway.

As participants learn more about the system, they felt they should engage more and rationally evaluate their behaviours and choices. This said they were unsure if they want to navigate the enormity of the issue.

3.4.1: The impact of 'knowing more'

Over the course of deliberation about the food sector specifically, participants had to engage with uncomfortable truths. Participants grappled with 'new' news that challenged some of their established thinking regarding food and the system. The following areas provoked questions and concerns:

- The **risks and consequences** are higher than they realised and that they would like them to be
- The **complexity** highlighted that there are multiple processes in the system which provoked a lot of uncertainty about the competence and capability of all involved to deliver
- The examples of **obvious ill intent** (e.g. food crime) in the system that were explored in the sessions challenged their positivity about the system
- Looking more closely at the **information** provided (e.g. labelling) by food business prompted some to question whether it is as clear and transparent as they'd like it to be
- When looking at **regulation**, some questioned whether the enforcement regime really is focusing on the right areas (i.e. areas they care most about)
- Understanding that **standards vary across the globe** provoked concerns about whether the current system can really guarantee the same delivery to the consumer

"I don't see information on the subject, I just hear about it through the media."

Farnborough Phase 1

"I would like to know more – but I might be put off!"

Belfast Phase 1

"I want to know as much as I need to know what I'm eating and that it is safe, but no more!"

Farnborough, Phase 1

HOW MUCH MORE DO YOU WANT TO KNOW

"Not a lot more than I know now – I might not like what I hear."

Farnborough, Phase 1

When exploring the complexity of the food system, the public starting point is to look at how the issues related to their own lives. Interrogating the 'field to fork' food production journey prompted an understanding of how intricate and dense the system is and tracing the pathway of complexity to their food and lives changes their understanding of the decision context. The number of active 'players' involved in the system highlights the potential for risk and failure and rather than think of the human proxy with whom they have positive associations and relationships, they are forced to consider a multitude of actors and whether they can trust them all. The deliberative process and interrogating the system causes participants to reframe the impact of failures in the food system. When food safety impact (via food poisoning, food crime) becomes relatable and applicable to real life, it changes the decision context and people's concerns increase.

However, learning more about the FSA increases trust; the public trust the organisation's intentions, and thus hope they can delegate responsibility to them. Understanding that the FSA is an independent regulator is a positive and reassures that there are no competing agendas or conflicts of interest to juggle (as is assumed with other regulators).

An exploration of where and how FSA fits into the regulation of food raised belief that the organisation is well intentioned and has consumers' best interests at heart. Specific moments/areas that increased trust in the FSA:

- For some, further discussion of '**independence**' and FSA's structure
- Role in tackling **food crime**
- Ensuring standards **across the global food supply**
- **Consumer facing advice and information** (esp. on food preparation, cross-contamination)

"FSA has a clear educational remit – empowering consumers to make informed choices. It's important to provide information and guidance on all of these issues. It is good that FSA is making consumers aware." Swansea Phase 2

3.5 FSA action and communication priorities for public trust

Participants were less concerned about specific areas of the FSA remit and more focused on seeing clear positive intentions and strong delivery in two key areas: **proactive consumer education** (and driving awareness/education by having a higher profile) and **protecting consumers from harm**.

Proactively educating people helps to empower them to take action themselves and bolsters Social Trust. This proactivity signals care and makes the FSA relatable.

Participants were most eager to see action in places they most associate with protection from harm to build Cognitive Trust. Actions that communicated protection included: ensuring food from around the globe is safe; tackling food crime; tackling FHRS/hygiene issues with intent to harm.

3.5 1: The public's perspective on how a regulator can build and maintain trust

The public want a visible, powerful FSA protecting their interests in the food system and maintaining proactive consumer communications. What follows are participants' thoughts on how this can be achieved.

Achieving Social Trust



- FSA visibility would help increase trust
 - Reassuring and empowering to know someone with 'good intent' has a role
- Overt proof of fighting ill intent and coming down hardest on those that show they would harm the public (food crime, obvious negligence, poor quality standards)
- Maintaining proactive consumer education
 - Evidence that FSA cares about the public's wellbeing and safety
 - Build a direct relationship with consumers

Achieving Cognitive Trust



- Proactivity in taking action against errors/breaches that signal ill intent
- The public will want to see that FSA 'has real bite' in those instances – this is proof of independence and efficacy
- Do not abrogate responsibly and deflect – people will not accept 'system is

Context



- Raising the salience of some of the risks involved in the food system
- Helping engage with complexity people might otherwise dismiss

Figure 6: Participants' principles for trustworthy regulator action and communication

Participants' principles for trustworthy regulator action and communication



The principles that participants outlined applied across potential FSA communications – but they told us that they were particularly important in times of crisis or food system 'problems'

DO

- ✓ Use your networks, channels and influencing power to make your statements/action/comms **as visible as possible**; our belief in your intentions is only as strong as their visibility, and our belief your delivery depends on seeing you in action
- ✓ Present a **human, empathetic 'face'**: let us see that you care about the issue and us
- ✓ Be specific about your **actions and role**: Tell us exactly what you've done so far; what you've learned; what you're doing next; what you expect the outcome to be
- ✓ Give us a **balanced sense of risk** (don't 'scaremonger' and show us it's in hand if you can
- ✓ Where you need to **work with other agencies**, just do it; I want actions, not excuses
- ✓ **Empower us**: tell us specifics about what we can do in the situation to keep safe
- ✓ Be **accessible**: tell us exactly how to get more information
- ✓ Be **clear and straightforward**: use visuals that help it seem simpler and easier to take on, use video, use simple language

DON'T

- X **Be silent – or slow**; inaction or invisibility, particularly during times of problem, will call into question your care and intent, and certainly call into question your ability to deliver
- X **Pass the buck** – 'it's complicated; it's someone else's remit'
- X **Be too general/vague** about outcomes
- X **Call your independence into question**: the public expect you to work with industry, but want to see evidence of 'bite'
- X **Be inaccurate or 'sugar-coat' the truth**: honesty remains a priority to maintain affective trust

The principles that participants outlined above applied across potential FSA communications, but they felt they were particularly important in times of crisis or food system failings.

4: Implications for FSA

Current high trust ratings in the FSA are not borne from detailed understanding of the organisation's remit and actions, or even on detailed consideration of the food sector. As noted, the food sector has more obvious positive trust touch points and lacks the downsides of other sectors. This positivity is transferred to the FSA as a regulator. This should mean that the FSA's trust score is relatively resilient overall compared to other organisations and sectors but also that much of the organisation's reputation score relies on factors beyond FSA control, such as how the media covers particular stories.

As compared to other public sector organisations and even other regulators, Social Trust in the FSA is high at both an uninformed and a more educated level. In essence, the FSA have a precious advantage in Social Trust which also gives a clear directive on how to ensure they can maintain it. It will be crucial to protect Social Trust at all times, in all touch points. This research has established key principles that can help build and maintain Social Trust, namely...

1. Being human, empathetic and relatable. As evidenced in this research many public sector organisations are perceived to be anonymous and faceless. The FSA can engage with the public via the tonality it chooses to adopt.
2. Demonstrating that the public and their welfare is the organisation's core priority

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Maintaining visibility (particularly in times of crisis) will help build and maintain social trust. It is apparent that the public wants highest visibility of the elements of FSA's remit that involve protection from ill intent and overt, gross negligence. Moments of crises or negative media spin on an issue can be opportunities for the organisation. Maintaining a high profile in these instances can be interpreted positively by the public as evidence of tackling issues and ducking responsibility. Clear and proactive action around 'hot spots' of interest (food crime; global food standards; ill will) will be essential in maintaining trust with the public.

"My biggest moment of trust in the system this week was reading about a problem in a factory locally – they'd been caught out not following the regulations, so it was a bit of a scandal for them. That made me really trusting; it was good to see that people who are doing bad things in the food industry ARE being caught, that someone's doing something about it." – Swansea Phase 2

In addition, use of FSA staff in this context of proactive action can also be a positive indication of the organisation's visibility. Consumer engagement and empowerment is also a critical part of maintaining public trust and should not be neglected. Initiatives like *FSA Explains* and other proactive communications play an important role, as does the principle of empowerment in all communications (including during a time of crisis) and could benefit from higher visibility from the organisation. Continuing to use these resources (and exploring other channels) will be key to maintaining Social Trust.

When crises in the system do occur, people will judge the FSA's efficacy in taking action against breakdowns that signal ill intent towards the public. In this context, the public will not accept the 'complexities' of overlapping remits and roles among public agencies and regulators and will view attempts to cite this as a reason for lack of action as avoidance of responsibility. When there are issues/crises in the system, the FSA will not be judged on delivering against its specific remit. The public will not concern themselves with whose responsibility it is, they will want the issue resolved and for this resolution to be communicated to them. The implications for the FSA are increased partnership working across other organisations and the presentation of a 'united front' and a coordinated response to help maintain trust.

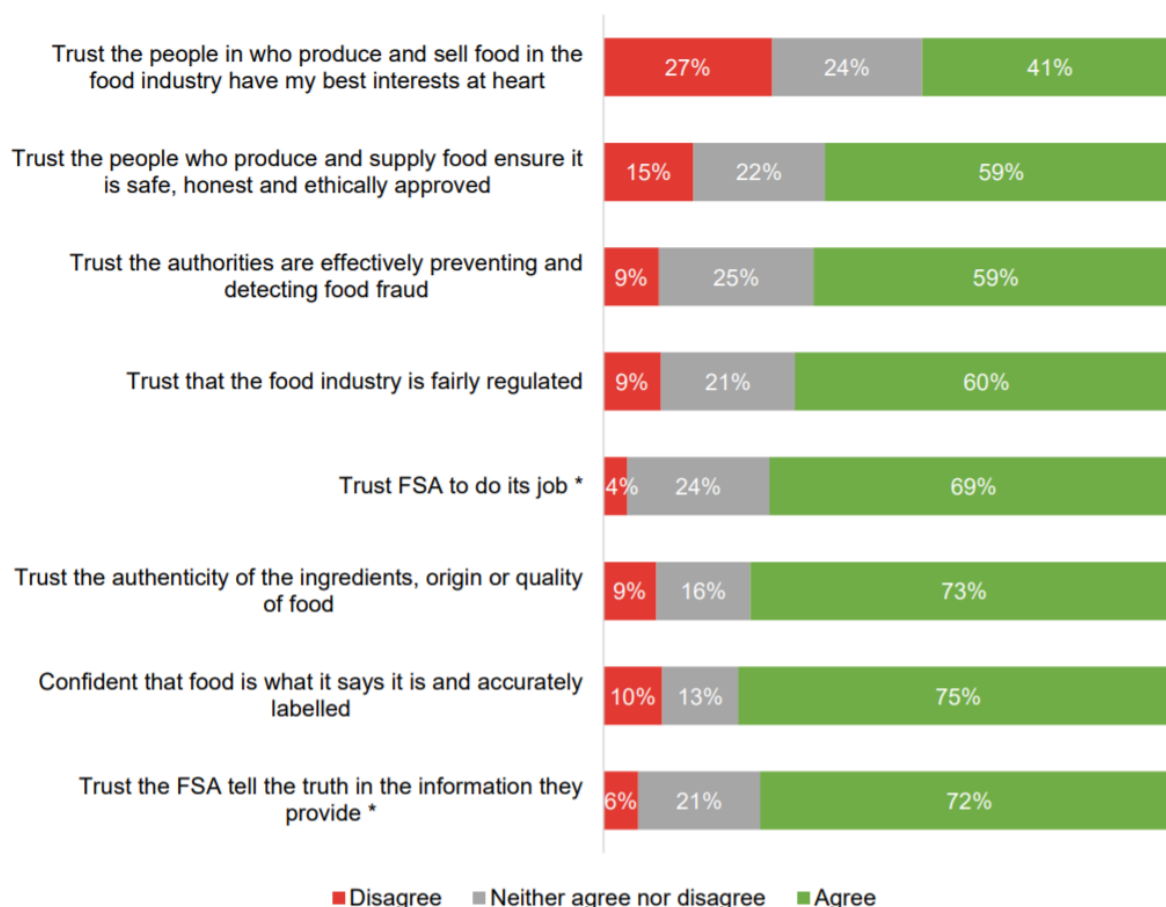
Moving forwards, it is important that the organisation ensures it measures trust in a way that makes sense to the public; that differentiates Social and Cognitive Trust; and that understands that trust isn't about the food industry focusing on 'your best interests' but an acceptable balance between industries' and consumers' interests.

The FSA Public Attitudes tracker offers an opportunity to more accurately measure Trust (both Social and Cognitive) in the organisation. Currently the tracker does not ask any questions that focus and establish Social Trust. Consideration ought to be given to including a question to better measure Social Trust. Using the area of intent and the social assessment to 'do me well' this question could be one centred on the FSA respecting the agenda/values of consumers, helping to establish whether the public believes that the FSA supports them and their priorities.

There is also merit in re-examining the metric *'Trust the people who produce and sell food in the food industry to have my best interests at heart'*. Given the public broadly understand and accept that food businesses are looking to generate profits, it is unlikely they will rate the food industry as having consumers' interests as a priority. As noted a balance between consumer and industry

interest is likely to be acceptable. As such, a question that reads ‘Trust that the people who produce and sell food in the food industry share my values’.

Figure 7: Summary of measures included in the FSA Public Attitudes tracker for trust in the FSA, regulations, safety and food crime prevention¹⁰



¹⁰ Example from FSA Public Attitudes Tracker Wave 16 May 2018 report:
www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/biannual-public-attitudes-tracker-wave-16-final-270718.pdf

Appendix

Participant Pre Task for Phase 1

Thanks very much for agreeing to participate in this exciting piece of research!

Before coming to the workshop, we would like you to answer a few short questions. There are no right or wrong answers. We just want to get you warmed up before we meet.

If you have any questions please email Naomi.Boal@2cv.com or call 020 7655 9900 and ask to speak to Naomi Boal.

When you have completed this form, please:

- ❖ **Bring it to the workshop, or**
- ❖ **Email it back to Naomi.Boal@2cv.com.**

If you want, you are welcome to make a short video on your phone of you answering the questions instead and send this back to us.

Many thanks. We look forward to meeting you!

Please tell us about a brand that you feel is trustworthy

Insert name of brand: _____

On a scale of 1-5, I trust _____ at a level of _____ [INSERT NUMBER]

I tend to trust this brand because...

When I think of this brand, I feel...

I find out information about this brand from...

This brand shows me I can trust them by doing / saying...

I might not trust this brand as much if they started doing / saying...

Please tell us about a food brand that you feel is trustworthy

Insert name of food brand: _____

On a scale of 1-5, I trust _____ at a level of _____ [INSERT NUMBER]

I tend to trust this food brand because...

When I think of this food brand, I feel...

I find out information about this food brand from...

This food brand shows me I can trust them by doing / saying...

I might not trust this food brand as much if they started doing / saying...

Please tell us about a service provider that you feel is trustworthy.
By service provider we mean banks / utility / insurance companies
etc.

Service provider name:

On a scale of 1-5, I trust _____ at a level of _____ [INSERT NUMBER]

I tend to trust this service provider because...

When I think of this service provider, I feel...

I find out information about this service provider from...

This service provider shows me I can trust them by doing / saying...

I might not trust this service provider as much if they started doing / saying...

Please tell us about a public body that you feel is trustworthy. By public body we mean a government department, government organisation, charity etc.

Insert name of public body: _____

On a scale of 1-5, I trust _____ at a level of _____ [INSERT NUMBER]

I tend to trust this public body because...

When I think of this public body, I feel...

I find out information about this public body from...

This public body shows me I can trust them by doing / saying...

I might not trust this public body as much if they started doing / saying...

Please tell us about a brand that you feel is untrustworthy

Insert name of brand: _____

On a scale of 1-5, I trust _____ at a level of _____ [INSERT NUMBER]

I tend not to trust this brand because...

When I think of this brand, I feel...

I find out information about this brand from...

This brand shows me I cannot trust them by doing / saying...

I might trust this brand more if they started doing / saying...

Please tell us about a food brand that you feel is untrustworthy

Insert name of food brand: _____

On a scale of 1-5, I trust _____ at a level of _____ [INSERT NUMBER]

I tend not to trust this food brand because...

When I think of this food brand, I feel...

I find out information about this food brand from...

This food brand shows me I cannot trust them by doing / saying...

I might trust this food brand more if they started doing / saying...

**Please tell us about a service provider that you feel is untrustworthy.
By service provider we mean banks / utility / insurance companies
etc.**

Service provider name:

On a scale of 1-5, I trust _____ at a level of _____ [INSERT NUMBER]

I tend not to trust this service provider because...

When I think of this service provider, I feel...

I find out information about this service provider from...

This service provider shows me I cannot trust them by doing / saying...

I might trust this service provider more if they started doing / saying...

Please tell us about a public body that you feel is untrustworthy. By public body we mean a government department, government organisation, charity etc.

Insert name of public body: _____

On a scale of 1-5, I trust _____ at a level of _____ [INSERT NUMBER]

I tend not to trust this public body because...

When I think of this public body, I feel...

I find out information about this public body from...

This public body shows me I cannot trust them by doing / saying...

I might trust this public body more if they started doing / saying...

Phase 1 Materials

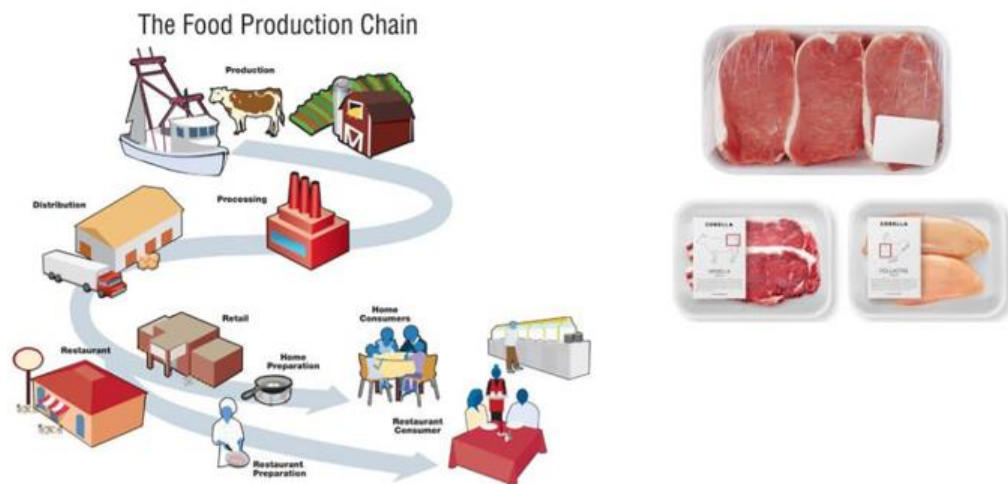
Competitive Set organisations and bodies used in Phase 1

- FSA
- Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra); Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (Daera) NI
- Department for Transport (DfT); Department for Infrastructure NI
- Ofgem (The Office of Gas and Electricity Markets) National Resources Wales
- Public Health England; Public Health Wales
- HMRC (Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs)
- Financial Conduct Authority (FCA)
- Sainsbury's
- Big Lottery Fund
- Health & Safety Executive (HSE); Health & Safety Executive Northern Ireland (HSENI);
- Sea Fish Industry Authority
- Gambling Commission
- Environment Agency (EA); Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA)

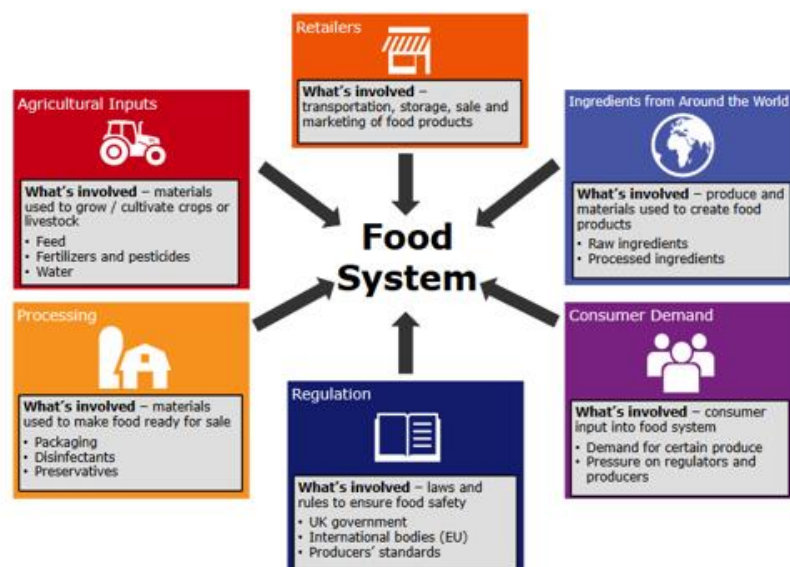
Phase 2 Materials

1. Understanding the food system

Packaging and handling of food



The food system - who's who



Supply chain – A bar of chocolate



Each country in the supply chain will be governed by its own laws on:

- Manufacturing practice
- Processing practice
- Provenance
- Safety management systems
- Risk management processes

Every product in turn will need to meet UK food standards

Food labelling



1. The name of the food
2. List of Ingredients
3. The quantity of certain ingredients (QUID)
4. Instructions for use (if needed)
5. 'Use by' or 'best before' dates
6. Special storage instructions
7. Name and address of the manufacturer, packer or seller
8. Place of origin or provenance (if implied)

2. Food risk scenarios

Food businesses and Food Hygiene Ratings



Findings

Eating out? Getting food in?

Find out if a restaurant, takeaway or food shop you want to visit has good food hygiene standards.
> Find out more



Search for food hygiene ratings

Cannot use your current location

Business name

Street, town or postcode

More search options

Show results with map

Go

National and local media on fake alcohol



Fake booze and the festive spirit

Alcohol consumption rises dramatically during the festive season but will more people be reaching for cheap counterfeit booze in the future?

Aside from the obvious health implications of festive boozing, it can also cost people a huge amount of money.

Some criminal gangs take advantage of this to offer what appears to be cheap booze but which often contains dangerous chemicals such as antifreeze and even chloroform.

Central Bedfordshire Council news

Restaurant fined for selling fake vodka

An Indian restaurant from Sandy has been prosecuted for selling counterfeit alcohol. In a case brought by us, Taj Mahal Ltd and its food operator Mohammed Ali appeared at Luton Magistrates' Court.

It followed a series of test operations carried out by the Public Protection team in the run-up to Christmas. Officers visited 40 businesses across Central Bedfordshire to ensure that party goers were getting what they paid for. The team carried out on-site checks looking for businesses serving alcoholic drinks which had been watered down or who had swapped known brands with cheaper or fake alcohol. Taj Mahal (Sandy) Ltd was fined £500 (£250 for each offence),

Councillor Ian Dalgarno, said: "Businesses may be tempted to sell watered-down or cheaper alcohol to customers thinking they are getting the genuine product in a bid to make a bit of extra money. "However, as this case proves, we take this matter very seriously. If you're caught then you will be investigated and are likely to end up with a criminal record, as well as facing everything from a hefty fine and a possible prison sentence to a recovery order to pay back all the illegal profits."

BirminghamLive

Fake booze that could turn you BLIND this Christmas

People are being warned to take special care to avoid dangerous counterfeit alcohol this Christmas.

Counterfeit alcohol often contains potentially hazardous levels of methanol - consumption of which can cause vomiting, dizziness, blurred vision and in extreme cases blindness.

Staffordshire County Council has been carrying out an ongoing operation to stamp out sales of fake booze using Government funding awarded through the Proceeds of Crime Act in recognition of its work.



FSA's fake alcohol campaign



The 4 Ps

It's important to know how to spot - and avoid - fake alcohol if you do come across it. Always remember the 4 Ps.



FSA's statement on Counterfeit Glen's Vodka

The Food Standards Agency has been made aware that counterfeit vodka labelled as Glen's Vodka has been offered for sale in several locations around the UK. The FSA is sharing intelligence with the brand owner and local authority officers investigating this issue.

Investigations by enforcement officers, supported by intelligence from the FSA and information supplied by Glen's Vodka, have revealed that the counterfeit vodka has been offered for sale in a number of small independent retail outlets in London, the Midlands and North Scotland.

How to identify the counterfeit bottles of Glen's Vodka

1. The word 'bottled' is misspelt on the front label text reading 'Produced and botteled in Great Britain'.
2. The text below the statement 'ENJOY GLEN'S VODKA RESPONSIBLY' on the rear label should read 'DRINKAWARE.CO.UK' rather than 'D-RINK AWARE.CO.UK'.

The FSA advises that consumers should be vigilant and check closely for spelling mistakes on the label. The FSA takes the issue of food and drink fraud very seriously and is working closely with local authorities and the brand owner to stop the unlawful selling of this vodka.

If you or another member of the public ever identifies counterfeit alcohol, the safest thing to do is not to drink it and report it. If you are concerned that you may have bought any counterfeit vodka, you should contact the FSA's National Food Crime Unit by calling 020 7276 8787 or emailing foodcrime@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk



FSA's Allergy Alert

Confectionery World recalls Turkish Delight – Rose and Lemon Flavours because of undeclared nuts



Last updated: 21 March 2018

Confectionery World is recalling Turkish Delight – Rose and Lemon Flavours because it contains nuts which is not mentioned on the product label. This means the product is a possible health risk for anyone with an allergy to nuts.

Allergy alert

Product details:

Product: Turkish Delight – Rose and Lemon Flavours
Pack size: 200g
'Best before' date: 25 October 2019
Batch code: 251017

No other Confectionery World products are known to be affected

Risk: Nuts

This product contains nuts making it a possible health risk for anyone with an allergy to nuts.

Our advice to consumers:

If you have bought the above product and have an allergy to nuts, do not eat it. Instead return it to the store from where it was bought for a full refund.

Action taken by the company

Confectionery World is recalling the above product from customers and has been advised to contact the relevant allergy support organisations, which will tell their members about the recall. The company has also issued a point-of-sale notice to its customers. This notice explains to customers why the product is being recalled and tells them what to do if they have bought the product. Please see the attached notice.

About Allergy Alerts

Sometimes there will be a problem with a food product that means it should not be sold. Then it might be 'withdrawn' (taken off the shelves) or 'recalled' (when customers are asked to return the product). Sometimes foods have to be withdrawn or recalled if there is a risk to consumers because the allergy labelling is missing or incorrect or if there is any other food allergy risk. When there is a food allergy risk, the FSA will issue an Allergy Alert.

National media on ingredients labelling

May contain nuts – Changes to the rules on food labelling

Rules on food labelling were brought in by the EU Food Information for Consumers (EU FIC) Regulation No. 1169/2011.

The main objective of the EU FIC is to enable consumers to make balanced and healthier dietary choices.

The EU FIC lists fourteen major allergens which, from 13 December 2014, needed to be emphasised within the ingredients list.

The method for emphasising the allergen in the ingredients list has to be done by listing them in **bold** or contrasting colours or underlining.

Ingredients				
Oatmeal (88%), Palm Oil, Sea Salt, Raising Agent (Sodium hydrogen carbonate).				
Allergy Advice				
For allergens, including cereals containing gluten, see ingredients in bold .				
Origin				
Made in Scotland using Scottish Oats for Co-operative Group Ltd., Manchester M60 0AG. www.co-operativefood.co.uk				
Nutrition			Reference Intake	
Typical Values	per 100g	per oatcake (approx. 11g)	Average adult	per portion
Energy value	1910 kJ	210 kJ	8400 kJ	

Social media on labelling of ingredients

Barry Brewer 'basher' @basherdrummer · Feb 26

As a **nut allergy** sufferer I don't think this **labelling** is acceptable @sainsburys when on further investigation on your website I found this product contained almonds!!! this info needs to be on packaging - not suggesting I ask a member of the bakery staff!!! I could have died!!!



£1.85 each (£0.53 each)

Overview

Item code: 0544201

Allergy Advice

Allergy advice: For allergens, including cereals containing gluten, see ingredients

Contains Wheat, Milk, Almond (Nuts), Sulphites

VJ @vi_kitchen · 10 Nov 2017

Lidl is recalling three varieties of its Alestro Snacking Pockets because the **labelling** is not in English. This means the product is a possible health risk for anyone who has an **allergy to nuts** and/or a sensitivity to sulphite dioxide/sulphites.

Rachel Hickey @daisychaincakes · 5 Nov 2017

Why does ur **labelling** not show which individual sweets contain **nuts**? With a **nut allergy** this is so dangerous!! @QualityStreetUK @FSAinfo



Trish Holden @PatsyHolden · Feb 7

@CadburyUK Hi, I'm disappointed that nearly a month after messaging you about potential misleading **labelling** on your biscuits regarding **nut** content that I have still not had a reply. I'm worried about buying further products as my daughter has a **nut allergy**.

NHS choices

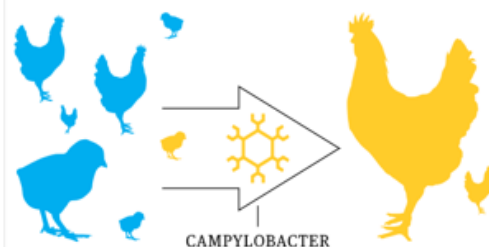
In the UK, campylobacter bacteria are the most common cause of food poisoning.

The bacteria are usually found on raw or undercooked meat (particularly poultry), unpasteurised milk and untreated water.

The incubation period (the time between eating contaminated food and the start of symptoms) for food poisoning caused by campylobacter is usually between two and five days. The symptoms usually last less than a week

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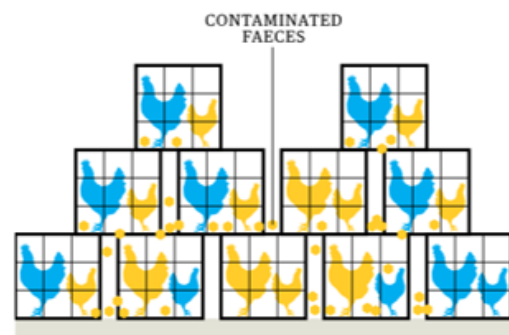
THE CULPRIT Chicken



Around 80% of all the campylobacter infections, are linked to chickens, which carry the bug in their guts and faeces. About 65% of raw chicken on sale in UK supermarkets and butchers is contaminated with it.

To clean up the system would cost money. With constant pressure from supermarkets to keep the price of chicken low, and the industry working on high volumes but low margins, experts say the campylobacter problem has been left unsolved for years.

Transport



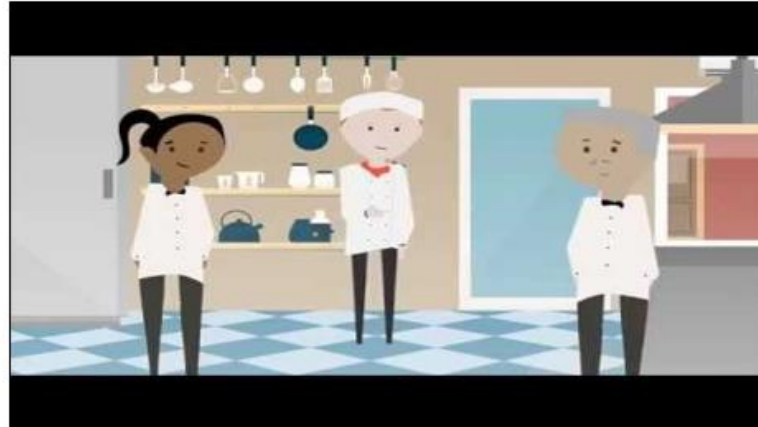
Live chickens are typically transported in crates, meaning campylobacter-carrying faeces can fall through the gaps from crate to crate. Minimising stress to the birds would help, but constantly changing demand can mean birds are left in crates for hours. Sometimes where there are breakdowns they may be left overnight.

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Video on FSA's website on The Food Hygiene Rating Scheme

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GqWdwWlNaa0>



Each year in the UK around a million people suffer a food-borne illness.

Twenty thousand of these receive hospital treatment and 500 die from food poisoning. It also costs the economy £1.5 billion a year.

'The vast majority of food poisoning occurs because of under-cooking or cross contamination of food,' says Professor Tom Humphrey of the Institute of Infection and Global Health at the University of Liverpool.

Read more: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-2055844/Never-meat-shelf-beware-raw-vegetables-Could-fridge-KILL-YOU.html#ixzz5AV39KWQo>

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