

# **Paper 15.4 Food and You 2: Opportunities for further analysis and reporting**

## **Summary**

In 2025 we reduced the frequency of Food and You 2 from bi-annual to annual which has freed up capacity in the Analytics Unit to conduct more in-depth secondary analysis. We have identified three policy areas that we could conduct more detailed analysis on: food safety, food hypersensitivities, and healthy & sustainable diets. This paper outlines potential opportunities for further analysis on each of these topics.

Members are asked to consider:

1. What analytical techniques or methods could we use to deliver more meaningful insights from Food and You 2 on the three topics discussed in this paper (food safety, food hypersensitivities and healthy and sustainable diets)? Do you have any examples you can share where this type of analysis has been used?
2. Are you aware of any existing insights or data sources on these topics that could inform our analyses (e.g. potential drivers/barriers or moderators/mediators)?

## **Background**

[Food and You 2](#) is our official statistic survey with consumers. The survey covers a broad range of topics including food safety, food hypersensitivities, healthy and sustainable diets, and food insecurity.

In 2025 we reduced the frequency of Food and You 2 from bi-annual to annual which has freed up capacity in the Analytics Unit to conduct more in-depth secondary analysis. We hope this will help increase the use and impact of the

data. We are currently developing a secondary analysis plan for the next year and would welcome input from ACSS members.

## **Food and You 2 methodology**

Food and You 2 is conducted among a cross-section of approximately 7,000 adults (aged 16 years or over) living in households in England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland using a push-to-web methodology. Adults invited to take part are selected from the Royal Mail's Postcode Address File (PAF) using random probability sampling. Up to two adults per household are eligible to take part. Sample boosts are used in Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland to provide a sufficient sample size (1,000) in each country so country comparisons and sub-group analysis within individual countries can be conducted.

The survey covers a broad range of food-related topics, including food safety, food hypersensitivities, healthy and sustainable diets, and food insecurity (see Annex A for a full list of topics). We also capture a range of socio-demographic information about respondents (see Annex B). Fieldwork dates are provided in Annex C.

## **Current analysis and reporting**

Whilst fieldwork is conducted by a survey supplier, reporting and analysis is delivered in house by the FSA's Analytics Unit. The FSA's reports cover England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Food Standards Scotland are responsible for reporting data for Scotland.

The [main report](#) includes basic descriptive statistics for the latest survey wave. It also presents statistically significant differences between countries or sub-groups of the population (e.g. age, income, region) for key questions. To minimise any time delay between data collection and publication, trend analysis (changes over time) has historically been presented in a separate trends report, produced annually. However since we have streamlined the questionnaire from Wave 11 (helping to speed up data processing and analysis) trends will be incorporated into the main report from Wave 11.

To minimise any time delay between data collection and publication, trend analysis (changes over time) has historically been presented in a separate [trend report](#), produced annually. However since we have streamlined the questionnaire from Wave 11 (helping to speed up data processing and analysis) trends will be incorporated into the main report from Wave 11.

We also routinely produce two supplementary reports:

- A [Food Hygiene Rating Scheme \(FHRS\) report](#) - produced annually for the FHRS Policy team. This presents findings from the 'eating out' module in more detail and includes more country comparisons and sub-group analysis.
- A [Northern Ireland report](#) - produced annually for stakeholders in Northern Ireland. This presents findings for respondents in Northern Ireland only including the module on 'healthy eating' which is only asked in Northern Ireland (FSA only has remit for nutrition in NI).

We are planning to increase the number of supplementary reports we produce from Wave 11 and incorporate more in-depth secondary analysis.

## **Opportunities for further analysis and reporting**

We have identified three policy areas that we think it would be worthwhile to deliver more detailed analysis and supplementary reporting on using Food and You 2 data:

1. Food safety
2. Food hypersensitivities
3. Healthy and sustainable diets

We have ruled out topics where we (or others) have already conducted additional analysis (e.g. food insecurity and trust in the FSA).

The proposed food hypersensitivity report would be produced in collaboration with Food Standards Scotland and draw on data collected in all UK countries. This is to maximise the sample size of respondents with a food hypersensitivity and because the policy context for food hypersensitivities is closely aligned across the two organisations. The other reports would be led by FSA and draw on data collected in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The current insights and opportunities for further analysis for each topic are discussed below.

### **Food safety**

#### **Current insights**

Food and You 2 collects data on consumers' food safety knowledge and reported behaviour in relation to chilling, cleaning, cooking, cross-contamination and use-by dates (see Annex D for a full list of questions). Our main report provides

insights on the percentage of respondents who are adhering to FSA's recommended practices and our trends report provides insights on whether this has changed over time. Data for sub-groups of the population (e.g. age, gender) is available in the published data tables and can be provided for stakeholders on request.

These insights are primarily used by the FSA's policy and communications teams to identify where further action (e.g. consumer messaging) or follow-up research is needed. For example, we recently provided our communications team with insights on which FSA recommendations consumers are least likely to adhere to, and among which demographic groups. This was used to inform a consumer-facing communications campaign on food hygiene. Data from these questions have also been used in [risk assessments](#) and [cost-of-illness modelling](#).

Food and You 2 also asks about consumers' attitudes towards food safety and regulation. These insights are used by FSA's strategy team to measure progress towards our [strategic objectives](#) and are referenced in FSA's annual [annual reporting](#) and the [UK Food Security report](#).

## **Further analysis**

More sophisticated analysis (e.g. regression) could be conducted to better understand:

- a) What individual and household level factors are associated with deviations from recommended food safety practices in the home
- b) To what extent seasonality affects consumer's food safety behaviours and practices

## **Food hypersensitivities**

### **Current insights**

Food and You 2 collects data on self-reported prevalence of food hypersensitivities in the population. It also asks about the experiences of those living with a food hypersensitivity, for example when eating outside of the home. Our main report provides insights on the percentage of respondents who have different types of hypersensitivities (e.g. food allergy, food intolerance, coeliac), the type of food they react to, how severe their reactions are, and how they were diagnosed. It also reports the attitudes and behaviour of respondents with a food

hypersensitivity when eating outside of the home (see Annex E for a full list of questions), however we do not report on these findings by hypersensitivity type. Where sufficient data is available, changes over time are presented in the trends report. We don't typically report other questions in the survey (e.g. food safety questions) by food hypersensitivity status, although this data is available in the published data tables and can be provided to stakeholders on request.

Insights from these questions are primarily used by the FSA's policy team to understand the experiences of those with food hypersensitivities and to inform and evaluate interventions targeting this group of consumers.

## **Further analysis**

More sophisticated analysis could be conducted to better understand:

- a) What demographic groups and behaviours are associated with consumers' confidence in managing a food hypersensitivity when eating outside the home
- b) What demographic groups and behaviours (e.g. frequency of eating out) are associated with the upward trend in self-reported adverse reactions
- c) The extent to which having a food hypersensitivity is associated with consumers' attitudes towards and engagement with the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS)<sup>1</sup>

## **Healthy and sustainable diets**

### **Current insights**

Food and You 2 asks a series of questions relating to health and sustainability (see Annex F for a full list of questions). For example, it asks respondents what they consider important when buying food, or deciding where to eat out and whether they have made any changes to their diet (e.g. reduced meat consumption) or food shopping behaviour (e.g. buying locally produced food) for health or sustainability reasons. These insights are primarily used by the FSA's strategy team to measure the FSA's progress towards its vision of 'food is healthier and more sustainable'.

As the FSA's remit in Northern Ireland also covers nutrition, respondents living in Northern Ireland are also asked additional questions for example on the consumption of foods high in fat, salt and sugar, and whether they use food

supplements. These questions are used by FSA's policy team to inform and monitor interventions targeting healthy eating in Northern Ireland.

All these questions span different modules within the survey and are currently reported separately.

<sup>1</sup> This question would only apply to England, Wales and Northern Ireland as Scotland uses a different scheme.

## **Further analysis**

We could take a more holistic approach to analysing and reporting questions covering health and sustainability. This could help us to understand:

- a) The extent to which consumers' understanding of the environmental impacts associated with food production and consumption influence their food purchasing and dietary behaviours
- b) What demographic groups are most associated with health-conscious food shopping and dietary behaviours
- c) The extent to which food security status and household income affect consumers' behaviour related to healthy and sustainable diets

## **Discussion**

Members are asked to consider:

1. What analytical techniques or methods could we use to deliver more meaningful insights from Food and You 2 on the three topics discussed in this paper (food safety, food hypersensitivities and healthy and sustainable diets)? Do you have any examples you can share where this type of analysis has been used?
2. Are you aware of any existing insights or data sources on these topics that could inform our analyses (e.g. potential drivers/barriers or moderators/mediators)?

## **Annex**

### **Annex A - Topics covered in Food and You 2**

Module

Topics

Trust in FSA and the food system

- Confidence in food safety & authenticity
- Confidence in food supply chain & actors
- Awareness and trust in FSA
- Confidence in FSA
- Concerns about UK food vs food from outside UK (safety & authenticity)

Food safety behaviour

- Cooking – e.g. defrosting, leftovers, pink meat, frozen fruit & veg
- Cross-contamination – e.g. washing chicken, chopping board use
- Cleaning – e.g. hand washing
- Chilling – e.g. fridge temperature
- Use-by dates

Food hypersensitivities

- Prevalence (hypersensitivity type, foods, diagnosis, severity)
- Reactions
- Confidence in food labels
- Confidence buying loose food - by location
- Confidence in information when eating out - by information type (verbally / in writing) and location
- Precautionary allergy labelling

Eating out and the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS)

- Where people eat out
- Ordering food online
- What people consider when eating out
- Awareness, use and attitudes towards FHRS

Food shopping & labelling

- Checking information on labels
- Country of origin, animal welfare & environmental impact

Healthy & sustainable diets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food-related changes for health reasons</li> <li>• Food-related changes for environmental reasons</li> <li>• Supplements (NI only)</li> <li>• Health promotions (NI only)</li> <li>• Consumption of HFSS food (NI only)</li> </ul>
Food insecurity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measure of food security (USDA)</li> <li>• Food bank use and frequency</li> <li>• Social supermarket use</li> </ul>

## **Annex B - Socio-demographic variables**

- Age
- Gender
- Number of adults and children in household
- Age of children in household
- Dietary preferences (vegetarian, pescatarian, vegan etc.)
- Working status
- Ethnicity
- Whether have a long-term health condition
- Household income
- NS-SEC

## **Annex C - Food and You 2 fieldwork dates**

### **Wave Fieldwork dates**

1	29 July to 6 October 2020
2	20 November 2020 to 21 January 2021
3	28 April to 25 June 2021
4	18 October 2021 to 10 January 2022
5	26 April 2022 to 24 July 2022
6	12 October 2022 to 10 January 2023
7	28 April to 10 July 2023
8	12 October 2023 to 8 January 2024
9	24 April 2024 to 1 July 2024



10 9 October 2024 to 7 February 2025

11 22 May 2025 to 11 August 2025

## **Annex D - Food safety questions (Wave 11)**

### **Attitudes towards food safety and regulation**

- How confident are you that...[the food you buy is safe to eat / The information on food labels is accurate (e.g. ingredients, nutritional information, country of origin)]? [Very confident / Fairly confident / Not very confident / Not at all confident / It varies / Don't know]
- How confident are you in the food supply chain? That is all the processes involved in bringing food to your table. [Very confident / Fairly confident / Not very confident / Not at all confident / It varies / Don't know]
- How confident are you that...[Farmers / Slaughterhouses and dairies / Food manufacturers e.g. factories / Shops and supermarkets / Restaurants / Takeaways / Online ordering and delivery companies e.g. Just Eat, Deliveroo and Uber Eats etc.]) in the UK ensure the food you buy is safe to eat? [Very confident / Fairly confident / Not very confident / Not at all confident / It varies / Don't know]
- How much, if anything, do you know about the Food Standards Agency, also known as the FSA? [I know a lot about the FSA and what it does / I know a little about the FSA and what it does / I've heard of the FSA but know nothing about it / I hadn't heard of the FSA until I was contacted to take part in this survey / I've never heard of the FSA]
- How confident are you that the Government Agency responsible for food safety in England, Wales and Northern Ireland...[Can be relied upon to protect the public from food-related risks (such as food poisoning or allergic reactions from food) / Is committed to communicating openly with the public about food-related risks / Takes appropriate action if a food-related risk is identified]? [Very confident / Fairly confident / Not very confident / Not at all confident / It varies / Don't know]
- How much do you trust or distrust the Food Standards Agency to do its job? That is to make sure that food is safe and what it says it is. [I trust it a lot / I trust it / I neither trust nor distrust it / I distrust it / I distrust it a lot / Don't know]
- Thinking about food in the UK today, how concerned, if at all, do you feel about each of the following topics: [Food produced in the UK being safe and hygienic / Food from outside the UK being safe and hygienic / Food produced

in the UK being what it says it is / Food from outside the UK being what it says it is] [Highly concerned / Somewhat concerned / Not very concerned / Not at all concerned / Don't know]

## **Food safety knowledge and behaviour**

### **Cooking**

- How often, if at all, do you cook food until it is steaming hot and cooked all the way through? [Always / Most of the time / About half the time / Occasionally / Never / Don't know]
- When reheating food, how do you know when it is ready to eat? [List of options given]
- • How many times would you consider reheating food after it was cooked for the first time? [Not at all / Once / Twice / More than twice / Don't know]
- How often, if at all, do you do the following...eat [chicken or turkey / duck / wild game e.g rabbit, boar, deer, pheasant or venison / beef burgers / sausages / whole cuts of pork or pork chops] when the meat is pink or has pink or red juices? [Always / Most of the time / About half the time / Occasionally / Never / I don't eat that type of meat / Don't know]
- When preparing frozen vegetables or frozen fruit, how often do you follow instructions on the packaging? [Always / Most of the time / About half the time / Occasionally / Never / I do not use frozen vegetables or frozen fruit / Don't know]
- Typically, how do you defrost frozen meat or fish? [List of actions given] • Generally, what do you do with any leftovers following a meal? [List of actions given]
- Typically, how soon after cooking do you put any leftovers in the fridge or freezer? [Straight away / Within 1 hour of cooking / 1-2 hours after cooking / More than 2 hours after cooking / Don't know]
- When is the latest you would consume any leftovers stored in the fridge? [The same day / Within 1-2 days / Within 3-5 days / More than 5 days later / It varies too much / Don't know]

### **Cross-contamination**

- Typically, how do you use chopping boards when preparing a meal with raw meat? [List of actions given]
- How often, if at all, do you wash raw chicken? [Always / Most of the time / About half the time / Occasionally / Never / Don't know]

## Cleaning

- How often, if at all, do you wash raw fruit and vegetables before eating them? [Always / Most of the time / About half the time / Occasionally / Never / Don't know / It varies too much to say]
- When you are at home, how often, if at all, do you...[Wash your hands before starting to prepare or cook food / Wash your hands immediately after handling raw meat, poultry or fish / Wash your hands before eating]? [Always / Most of the time / About half the time / Occasionally / Never / Don't know / I don't cook meat, poultry or fish]

## Chilling

- Do you, or anyone else in your household, ever check your fridge temperature? [Yes / No / Don't know / I don't need to – it has an alarm if it is too hot or cold / I don't have a fridge]
- How often, if at all, do you or someone else in your household check the temperature of the fridge? [At least daily / 2-3 times a week / Once a week / Less than once a week but more than once a month / Once a month / Four times a year / Once or twice a year / Less often/never / Don't know]
- What do you think the temperature inside your fridge should be? [Range of temperatures given]

## Use-by dates

- When shopping for food, how often, if at all, do you check [use-by dates / best before dates]? [Always / Most of the time / About half the time / Occasionally / Never / Don't know]
- Which of these shows when food is no longer safe to eat? [Use-by date / Best before date / Sell by date / Display until date / It depends / All of these / None of these / Don't know]
- When, if at all, is the latest you would eat or drink the following items after their use-by date... [Raw meat (such as beef, lamb or pork) or raw poultry / Cooked meats / Smoked fish / Shellfish / Any other fish / Bagged salad / Cheese / Milk / Yoghurt]? [1- 2 days after the use-by date / 3-4 days after the use-by date / 5-6 days after the use-by date / 1-2 weeks after the use-by date / More than 2 weeks after the use-by date / I don't eat / drink this [food] after the use-by date / Don't know/ I don't ever check the use-by date of this / Not applicable - I never eat/drink this]
- Some foods have an instruction to eat the food within a few days of opening on the label (e.g., "consume within 3 days of opening"). How often, if at all,

do you follow instructions on food packaging which tells you how long food should be stored once opened? [Always / Most of the time / About half the time / Occasionally / Never / Don't know]

- How do you tell whether it is safe to eat or cook with... [Raw meat (like beef, lamb, pork) or poultry / Milk and yoghurt / Cheese / Eggs / Fish excluding shellfish / Bagged salad]? [How it looks / How it smells / How it tastes / Use-by date / Best before date / Following the instructions on the packaging / If it doesn't float in water (for eggs only) I don't eat /cook with [insert food]]

## **Annex E - Food hypersensitivities questions (Wave 11)**

### **Prevalence, reactions & diagnosis**

- Do you suffer from a bad or unpleasant physical reaction after consuming certain foods, or avoid certain foods because of the bad or unpleasant physical reaction they might cause? [Yes / No / Don't know / Prefer not say]
- Do you experience a bad or unpleasant physical reaction to any of the following foods? [List of 14 allergens given]
- How would you best describe your problem with [insert food]? [Food allergy / Food intolerance / Coeliac disease / Don't know]
- How did you find out about your problem with [insert food]? [Types of diagnosis given]
- How would you describe your bad or unpleasant physical reaction? [Mild / Moderate / Severe / Don't know]
- In the last 12 months, have you experienced any bad or unpleasant physical reactions after consuming certain foods? [Yes / No / Can't remember]
- In the last 12 months, approximately how many times have you experienced a bad or unpleasant physical reaction after consuming certain foods? [Once / Twice / Between 3 and 10 times / More than 10 times / Don't know]
- Thinking about the last time you experienced a bad or unpleasant physical reaction after consuming food, what do you think caused the reaction? [List of different categories of food given]

### **Shopping and labelling**

- When shopping for food, do you consider the dietary requirements of yourself or someone else in your household who may experience bad or unpleasant physical reactions to foods? [Yes / No / Don't know / Prefer not to say]

- When shopping for food, how often, if at all, do you check the allergen information? [Always / Most of the time / About half the time / Occasionally / Never / Don't know]
- How confident are you that the information provided on food labels allows you to identify foods that will cause you or another member of your household a bad or unpleasant physical reaction? [Very confident / Fairly confident / Not very confident / Not at all confident / It varies from place to place / Don't know]
- When buying food that is sold loose (e.g., at a bakery or deli counter), how confident are you that you can identify foods that will cause you or another member of your household a bad or unpleasant physical reaction? Consider food sold loose from the following sources... [List of different types of stores given]
- If you saw a label on a food product that stated 'this product may contain [insert food]', which might cause you a bad or unpleasant physical reaction, how likely would you be to still buy it? [Very likely / Fairly likely / Not very likely / Not at all likely / It depends on the product / It varies from place to place / Don't know]

## **Eating out**

- When eating out or buying food to take out, how often, if at all, is the information you need to help you identify food that might cause you a bad or unpleasant physical reaction readily available? [Always / Most of the time / About half the time / Occasionally / Never / Don't know]
- How comfortable do you feel asking a member of staff for more information about food that might cause you a bad or unpleasant physical reaction? [Very comfortable / Fairly comfortable / Not very comfortable / Not at all comfortable / It varies for place to place / Don't know]
- How confident are you that the information provided will allow you to identify and avoid food that might cause you a bad or unpleasant physical reaction... [when the information is provided in writing / when the information is provided verbally by a member of staff]? [Very confident / Fairly confident / Not very confident / Not at all confident / It varies from place to place / Don't know]
- How confident are you that the information provided will allow you to identify and avoid food that might cause you a bad or unpleasant physical reaction when eating food...? [List of outlets given] [Very confident / Fairly confident / Not very confident / Not at all confident / It varies from place to place / Don't know]

- When you order food and drink online and you look for information that allows you to identify food that might cause you or another member of your household a bad or unpleasant physical reaction, how often, if at all, is this information easy to find? [Always / Most of the time / About half the time / Occasionally / Never / I order food online but do not look for allergy information / I don't order food and drink online / Don't know]

## **Annex F - Health and sustainability questions (Wave 11)**

### **Health**

- When shopping for food, how often, if at all, do you check the nutritional information (e.g., calories, fat, sugar, salt)? [Always / Most of the time / About half the time / Occasionally / Never / Don't know]
- Generally, when you eat out, what do you consider when deciding where to go? [Options include 'Whether information about calories is provided' and 'Whether healthier options are available']
- Generally, when ordering food from takeaways (either directly from a takeaway shop or restaurant or from an online food delivery company like Just Eat, Uber Eats or Deliveroo) what do you consider when deciding where to order from? [Options include 'Whether information about calories is provided' and 'Whether healthier options are available']
- Thinking about the food that you eat, which, if any, of the following changes have you made in the last 12 months for health reasons? [List of actions given]
- What is most important to you when you are choosing which foods to buy? [Options include 'healthiness' and 'ingredients']

### **Northern Ireland only**

- What types of promotions, if any, did you use when shopping for food and drinks in the last two weeks? [List of types of promotions given]
- Which of the following reasons apply to why you have [promotions that give you more items / offers that give you the item at a lower price / promotions that give you more items and offers that give you the item at a lower price]? [List of reasons given]
- In the last two weeks, which of the following did you buy on impulse because they were on price promotion? [List of types of foods given]
- How often do you eat.... [list of different foods provided] [Every day / Most days / 2-3 times a week / About once a month / Less than once a month /

Never / Can't remember]

- Are you currently taking any vitamin and/or mineral supplements (i.e. vitamins and minerals in a concentrated form like tablets, capsules, tonics)? [ Yes / No]
- What vitamin and/or mineral supplements do you take? [Lists of supplements given]
- How often do you take vitamin and/or mineral supplements? [Every day / Most days / About once a week / Several times a month / About once a month / Once or a few times over the past year / Can't remember]
- Have you been advised by a medical professional (e.g. a GP or dietician) to take these vitamin and/or mineral supplements? [Yes / No / Don't know or prefer not to say]
- What do you take vitamin and/or mineral supplements for? [List of reasons given]
- Thinking about breakfast, lunch and dinner separately, at the moment, how often, if at all, do you eat out or buy food to take out for [Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner]? Several times a week / About once a week / About 2-3 times a month / About once a month / Less than once a month / Never / Can't remember

## **Sustainability**

- When shopping for food, how often, if at all, do you check the country of origin? [Always / Most of the time / About half the time / Occasionally / Never / Don't know]
- Thinking about the food that you eat, which, if any, of the following changes have you made in the last 12 months for sustainability reasons? [List of actions given]
- What is most important to you when you are choosing which foods to buy? [Options include 'country of origin and 'that it is ethical']
- When purchasing food, how often do you do the following? Check for information on environmental impact [Always / Most of the time / About half the time / Occasionally / Never / Don't know]
- What do you think contributes most to the environmental impact of food? [List of options given]