

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD**DISCUSSION PAPER**

Background paper for ACMSF meeting, 25th January 2018, Manchester Conference Centre

The Food and You survey Wave 4

1. Food and You is the FSA's flagship social survey of consumers' reported behaviours, attitudes and knowledge relating to food safety and other associated topics. The survey uses a random-probability sampling methodology to provide a robust representation of the UK population (excluding Scotland¹) aged 16 and above living in private households. It is a biennial survey which has taken place since 2010. The most recent wave was conducted in 2016. As a cross-cutting survey, Food and You is an important vehicle for monitoring progress against the Agency's strategic plan.
2. Food and You was conceived in 2008, when the Social Science Research Committee (SSRC) recommended that the FSA should develop a new survey to collect robust quantitative data on the public's reported behaviour, attitudes and knowledge relating to food issues. The introduction of the Food and You survey was further endorsed following the work that ACMSF and SSRC undertook to explore an increase in the incidence of listeriosis amongst those aged over 60.
3. Food and You is a face-to-face survey, with approximately 3,000 interviews conducted at each wave. Samples have been boosted in Wales and Northern Ireland to 500 interviews in Wave 4 to allow for further within country analysis. The overall UK response rate was 53% at Wave 4, similar to that of previous waves, and in line with other similar surveys.
4. The survey covers a number of topics related to food issues. These include (at Wave 4) household information, eating habits, shopping, food safety, food issues, health, healthy eating (in Northern Ireland only) and general demographic information. While efforts have been made to maintain continuity in the questions asked across the waves, the survey has evolved with the changing responsibilities and priorities of the Agency².

¹ Since the formation of Food Standards Scotland in 2015, Scotland has been excluded from the sample for Food and You (Wave 4 onwards).

² For example, when the first wave of the survey was developed in 2009, the FSA was responsible for both food safety and nutrition policy. Accordingly, the first wave of the survey asked questions relating to both these topics across the UK. In 2010 responsibility for nutrition policy was transferred to the Department of Health and the Welsh Government in England and Wales respectively, but remained

5. Wave 4 headline findings for the UK were published as an Official Statistic in March 2017, followed by individual country findings for Wales and Northern Ireland in April 2017. All findings (from the UK overall and individual countries) were reported under the headings: Shopping, cooking and eating; Food safety in the home; Eating outside the home; Food poisoning; and Food production and the food system. The Northern Ireland report also covers Healthy eating, as the FSA is responsible for nutrition policy here.
6. The UK headline findings from Wave 4 of Food and You can be found at the following link: <https://www.food.gov.uk/science/research-reports/ssresearch/foodandyou#toc-7>. The presentation accompanying this paper will provide an overview of some of the key findings.
7. In order to realise further potential of the Food and You data, secondary data analysis has been commissioned to gain further insight and understanding than that revealed with initial data analysis. Previous secondary analysis of Waves 1 and 2 led to the development of a composite measure of reported food safety behaviour – the Index of Recommended Practice (IRP). The IRP comprises 10 food safety behaviours which cover the ‘4 Cs’³ and date labelling, using 16 questions from the food safety module of Food and You.
8. A further secondary analysis project on Waves 1-3 data has led to five papers. These included:
 - a. the development of a typology on food safety activities
 - b. a paper exploring the relationship between well-being and food safety
 - c. a paper exploring the food safety behaviours among vulnerable groups
 - d. a paper exploring links between food affordability and food safety, and
 - e. the use of food hygiene rating schemes over time
9. Secondary analysis on Wave 4 is ongoing, but two papers have been published on the practices of people with food hypersensitivities, and engagement with labelling to inform the Caloriewise scheme, respectively.
10. Wave 5 fieldwork will be run this year, with the report due to be published in 2019.

the responsibility of the FSA in Scotland and Northern Ireland. The second and third waves of the survey therefore included an additional question module on healthy eating in Scotland and Northern Ireland, and in the fourth wave, solely Northern Ireland, which was not asked of respondents in England and Wales. Additional changes in Wave 4 include the addition of a module of questions on Food Provenance which are co-funded by DEFRA.

³ Cooking, chilling, cleaning, and avoiding cross-contamination

11. Further detail on Food and You, including links to published reports, can be found at the following link: www.food.gov.uk/food-and-you

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