



Food Concerns Brexit

Omnibus Research Results
September 2020

In association with

ScotPulse



Introduction

This is the second wave of research in 2020 on the perceived effects of Brexit on food. The online survey was sent to a sample of the ScotPulse panel throughout Scotland. A total of 1002 completed responses were received. Results were weighted to reflect the Scottish adult population.

Fieldwork was carried out from 1st-3rd September 2020. It follows on from a similar survey carried out in January 2020.

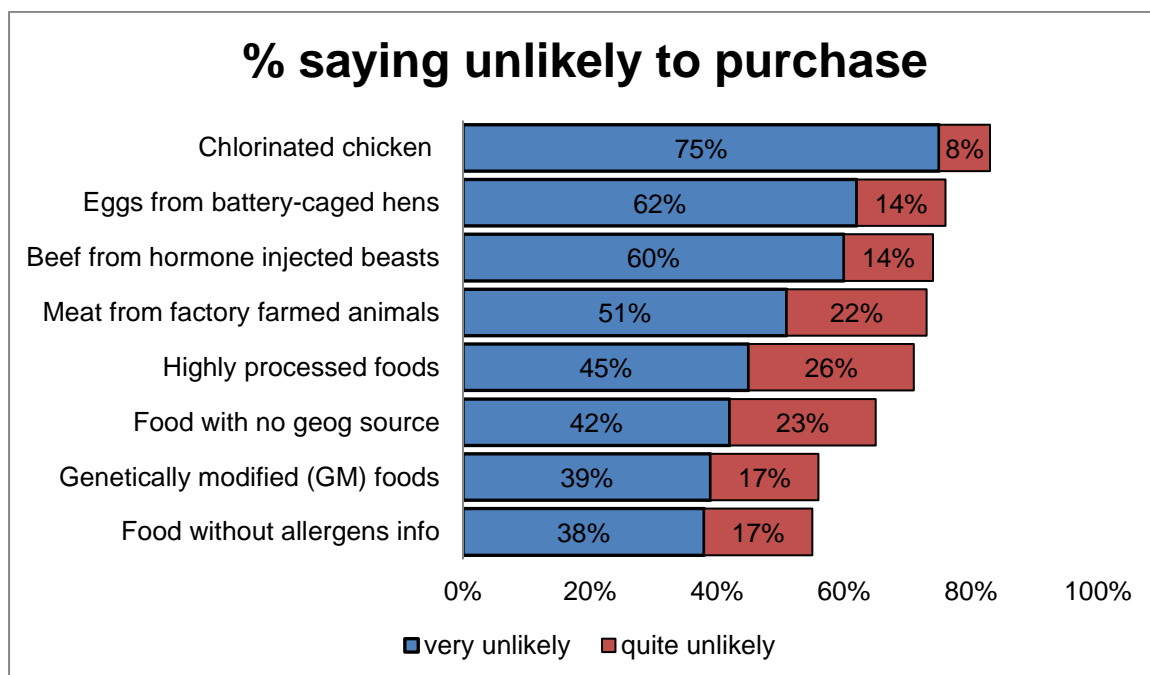
Key findings

- There would appear to be strong opposition to lower standards of food.
- Chlorinated chicken and GM foods are of the greatest concern, followed by lowering animal welfare standards.
- Chlorinated chicken is least likely to be purchased, with 3 out of 4 saying they are very unlikely to purchase it.
- Compared with January, there appears to be a slight hardening of opinion with more saying that they are concerned about potential lower standards, and also less likely to purchase poorer quality foods.
- Consumers say that cheaper prices for inferior products will not tempt them: indeed the opposite is true. Just 1 in 10 said they would be likely to buy GM foods if significantly cheaper; least likely to be purchased even if cheaper is chlorinated chicken.
- Half (56%) do not see any reason why they should stock up on any food items.
- Almost 4 out of 5 (78%) of those who would vote to leave see no reason to stock up compared with 48% of those who would vote to remain.

Likelihood of purchasing

Respondents were asked how likely they were to purchase a variety of foodstuffs:

- Chlorinated chicken (when chicken is washed in chlorine)
- Genetically modified (GM) foods
- Beef from cows that have been injected with hormones
- Food that doesn't say where it's from on the label
- Food that doesn't show what allergens it contains on the label
- Meat from animals that have been intensively, or factory, farmed
- Eggs from battery-caged hens
- Foods with highly processed or artificial ingredients



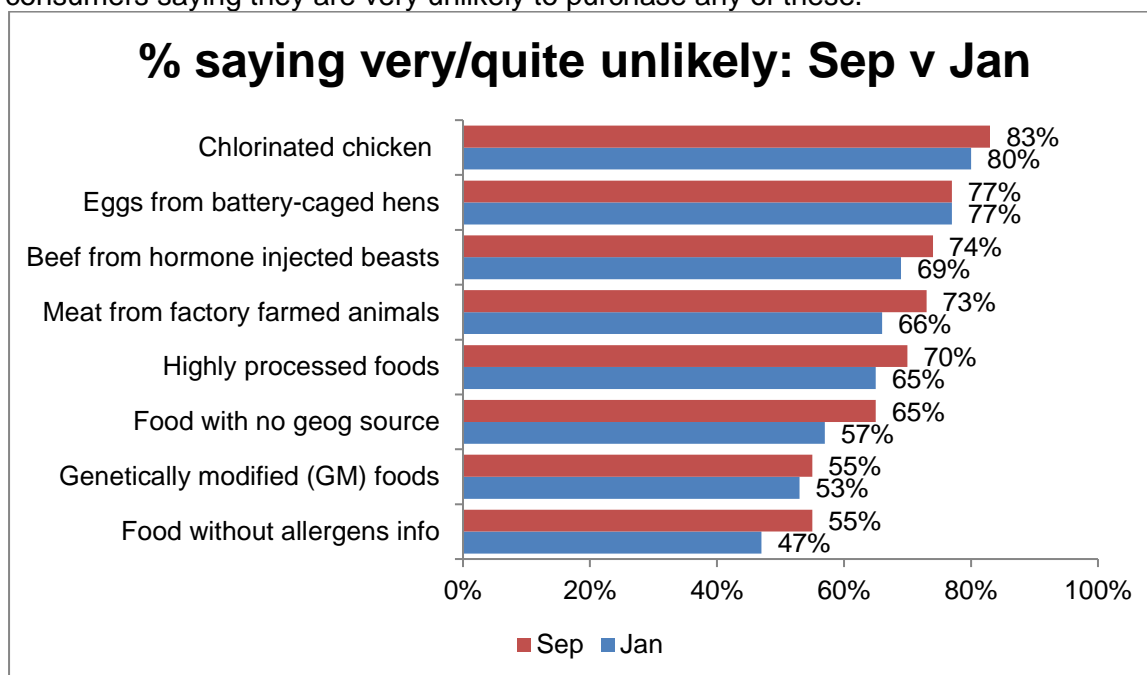
More than half of respondents said that it was unlikely that they would purchase any of the specified foodstuffs.

Least likely purchase is chlorinated chicken, with three out of four saying that they are very unlikely to purchase this.

Looking more in-depth at likelihood of purchase, under 35s are less likely than average to say that they won't buy hormone injected meat, unknown geographic source foods or highly processed foods; however they are more likely to say they wouldn't purchase food without allergens information.

Overall men appear to be less concerned about their food provenance and contents.

Comparing results with those in January 2020, there is a move in all cases towards consumers saying they are very unlikely to purchase any of these.



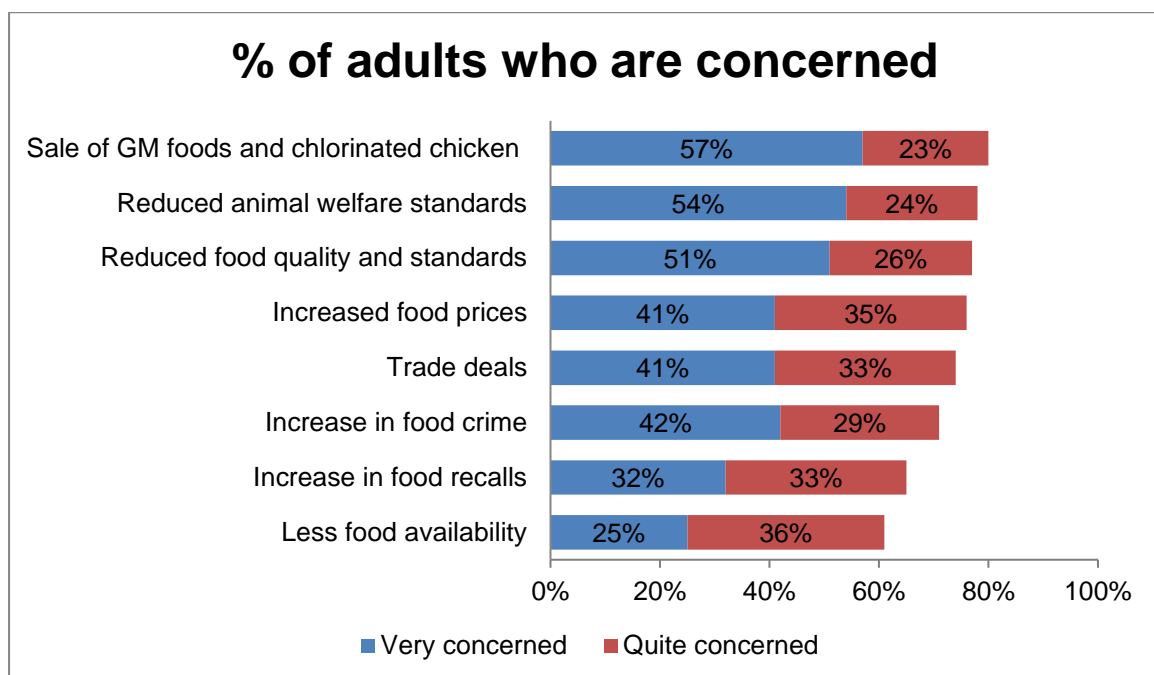
%age point shift September v January 2020

	Very unlikely
Food with no geographic source	+9
Highly processed foods	+8
Food without allergens info	+7
Chlorinated chicken	+7
Meat from factory farmed animals	+7
Beef from hormone injected beasts	+7
Genetically modified (GM) foods	+3
Chlorinated chicken	+2
Eggs from battery-caged hens	-2

Issues of concern to consumers

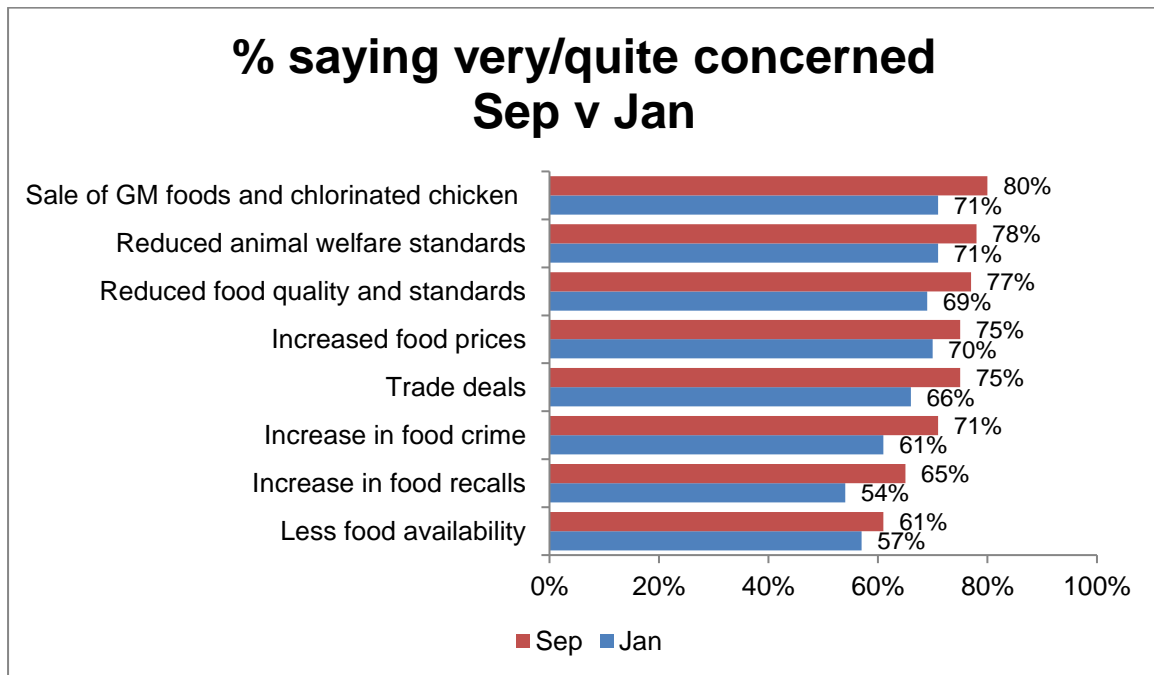
Respondents were asked how concerned they were about a number of issues.

- Less of the foods I buy being available in shops
- An increase in food crime (e.g. food not being what it says it is on the label)
- Increased food prices
- A reduction in food quality and standards
- A reduction in animal welfare standards
- An increase in food being recalled because of food safety or labelling issues
- Trade deals with other non-EU countries which could have different approaches and laws related to food safety and standards
- Products like genetically modified foods and chlorinated chicken being sold in Scotland



Consumers are most concerned about potential reductions in standards of both animal welfare and food quality, with the possibility of GM foods and chlorinated chicken being available in Scotland as the top concern, with over half saying that they would be very concerned about these issues.

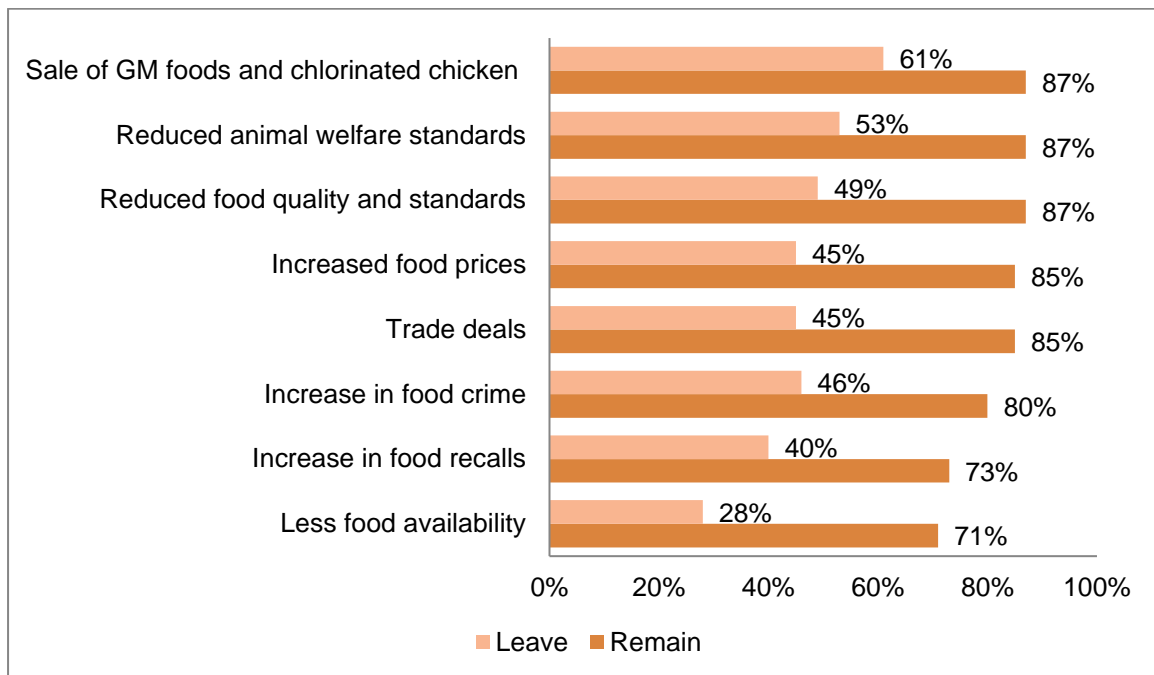
Comparison with January results shows that concern has increased in all cases:



%age point shift September v January 2020

	% saying very concerned
Sale of GM foods and chlorinated chicken	+13
Reduced food quality and standards	+10
Increase in food crime	+ 9
Reduced animal welfare standards	+ 8
Trade deals	+ 4
Increase in food recalls	+ 4
Less food availability	+ 3
Increased food prices	+ 3

Variation by leave v remain voters:

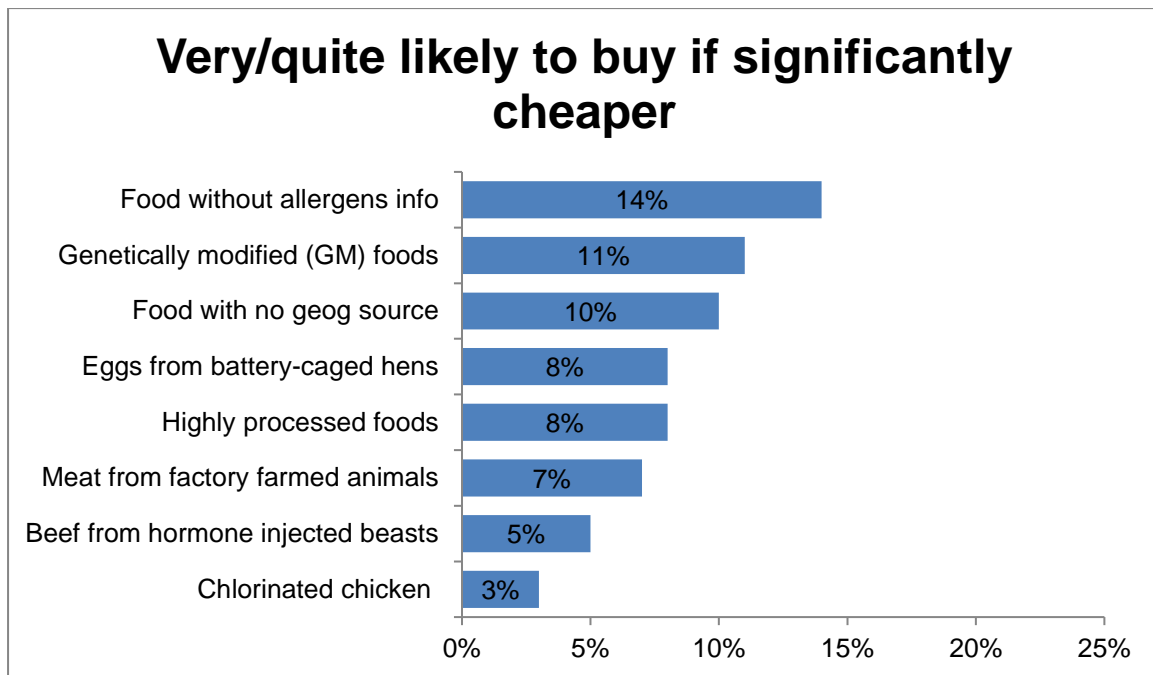


There is a marked difference between the views of those who would vote to remain in the EU and those who would vote to leave.

Post Brexit, is price an issue?

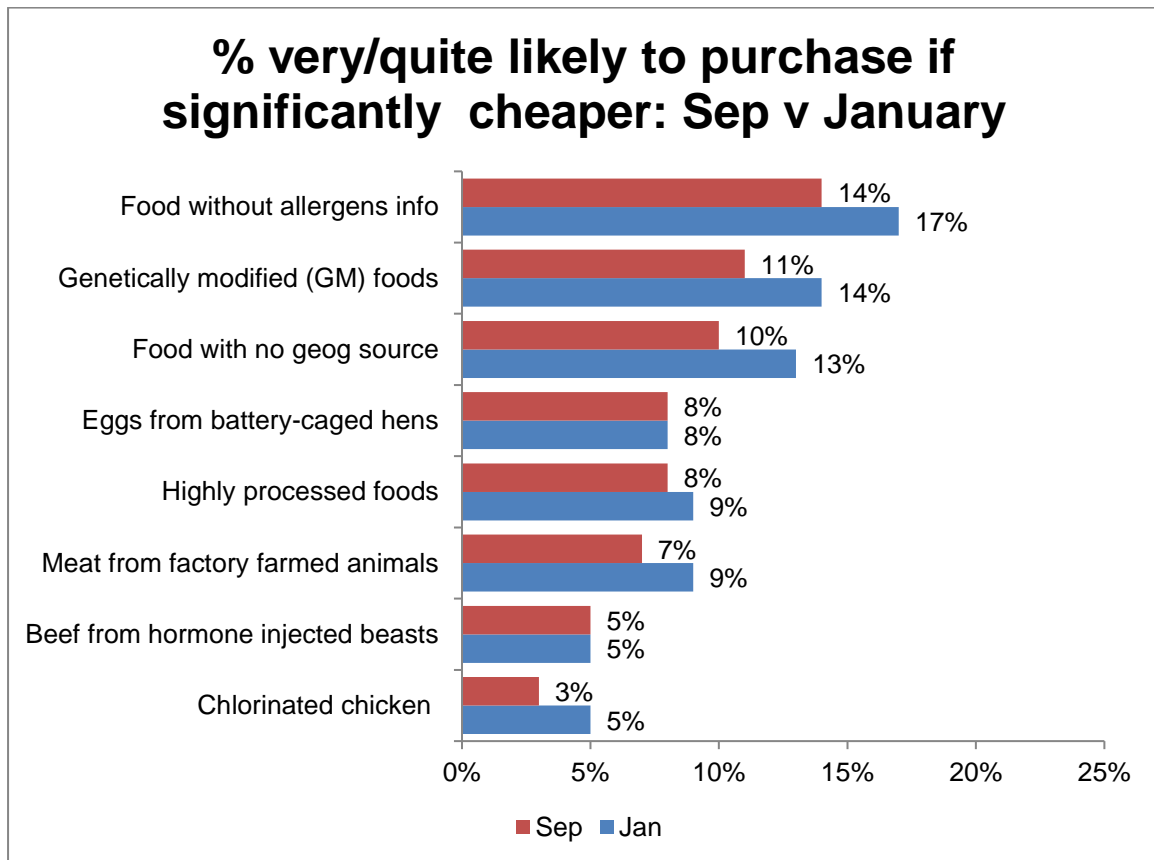
After Brexit, if the prices of the following foods were significantly cheaper than those you usually buy how likely would you be to buy them?

- Chlorinated chicken (when chicken is washed in chlorine)
- Genetically modified (GM) foods
- Beef from cows that have been injected with hormones
- Food that doesn't say where it's from on the label
- Food that doesn't show what allergens it contains on the label
- Meat from animals that have been intensively, or factory, farmed
- Eggs from battery-caged hens
- Foods with highly processed or artificial ingredients



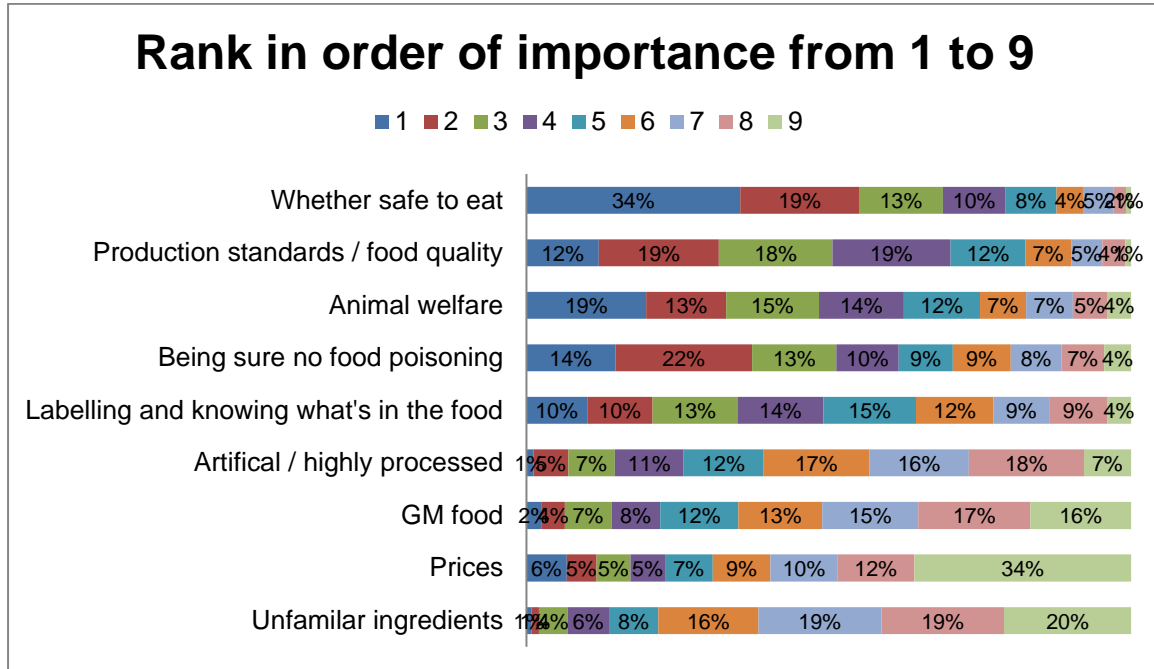
Few respondents indicated a likelihood to buy any of the listed types of food, if significantly cheaper post Brexit. Purchase of cheap chlorinated chicken or hormone injected beef was considered particularly unlikely.

Compared to January, likelihood of purchase if products are significantly cheaper having either decreased or remains the same.



Key issues for non EU imported food

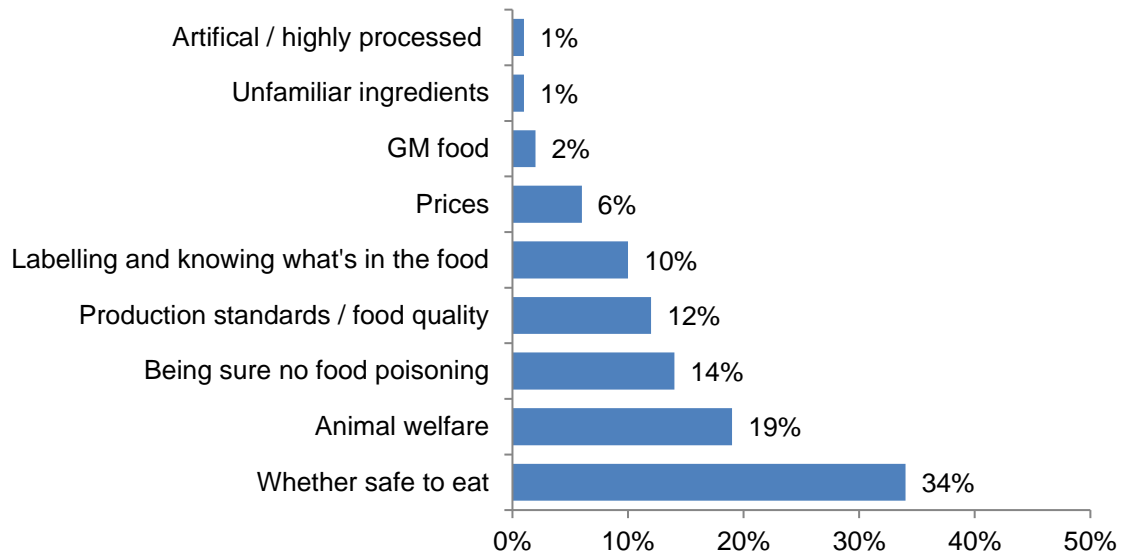
How important might the following be to you when buying food imported from countries outside the EU after Brexit? Please rank in order of importance where 1 is most important and 9 is least important.



Food safety and quality were the top ranked in terms of importance when buying imported food from non-EU countries. Animal welfare and food poisoning were also considered particularly important.

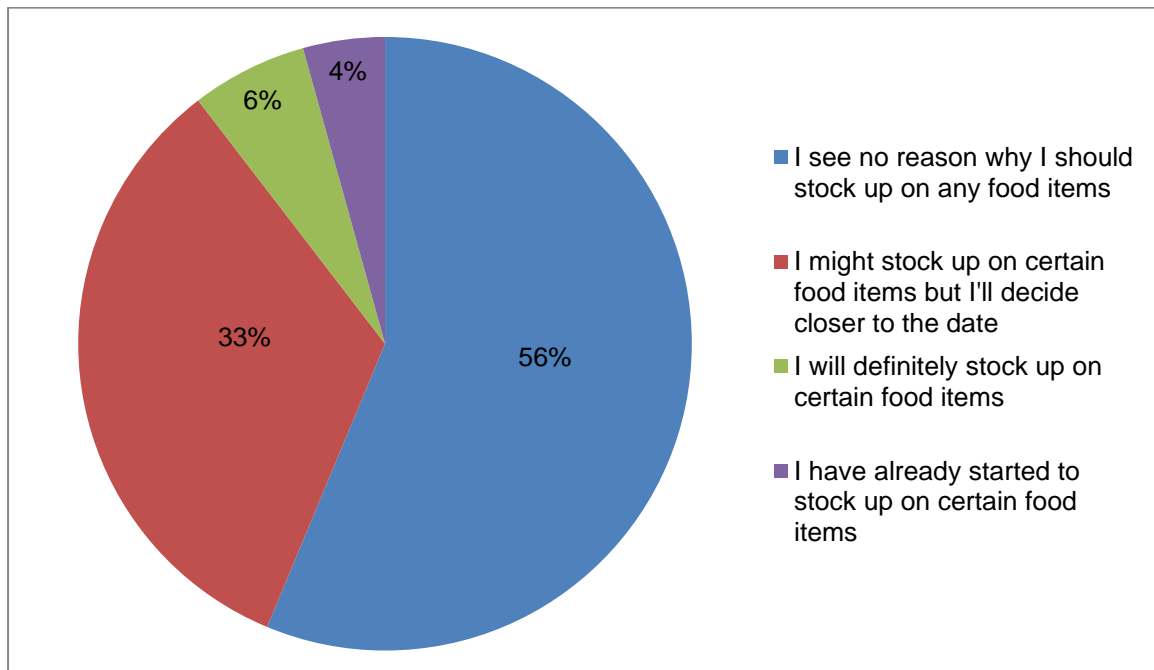
This is very similar to the results in January.

% ranking each in No1 position



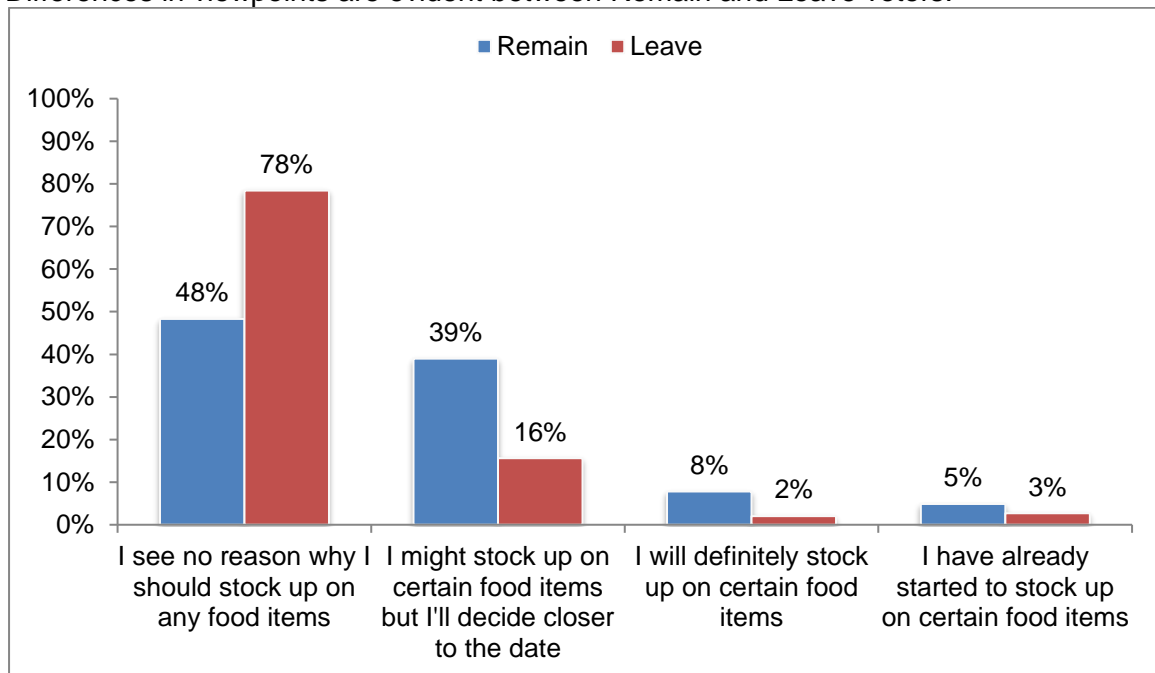
Stockpiling

Do you think you will stockpile certain foods in advance of Brexit?



Over half (56%) see no reason to stock up on any food items, whilst a further third (33%) say they might but will decide closer to the date. Less than 1 in 20 have already started to stock up.

Differences in viewpoints are evident between Remain and Leave voters:



Almost 8 in 10 Leave voters do not believe stockpiling is necessary compared with just under half of Remain voters.

Appendix 1

Sample details

	count	%
Total	1002	100%
Male	459	46%
Female	543	54%
Age bands		
under 35	153	15%
35-44	138	14%
45-54	231	23%
55-64	156	16%
65+	324	32%
Area		
W Central	418	42%
E Central	300	30%

North	280	28%
Household size		
1 person	182	18%
2 person	461	46%
3 person	192	19%
4+ person	167	17%
Presence of children		
No children	819	82%
With children	183	18%
social grade		
ABC1	579	58%
C2DE	423	42%

Results weighted to reflect the Scottish population by gender and age.

Fieldwork dates

1-3 September 2020

Appendix 2

Questionnaire

Q1 How likely is it that you would buy the following foods? RANDOMISE LIST

- Very likely / quite likely / neither likely nor unlikely / quite unlikely / very unlikely / unsure

- Chlorinated chicken (when chicken is washed in chlorine) [include N/A option]
- Genetically modified (GM) foods
- Beef from cows that have been injected with hormones [include N/A option]
- Food that doesn't say where it's from on the label
- Food that doesn't show what allergens it contains on the label
- Meat from animals that have been intensively, or factory, farmed [include N/A option]
- Eggs from battery-caged hens [include N/A option]
- Foods with highly processed or artificial ingredients

Q2 If a referendum on whether the UK should leave or remain in the EU was held tomorrow, how would you vote? - This question was included for further analysis purposes only. The results of this question have not been reported.

- to remain in the EU
- to leave the EU
- I wouldn't vote
- Prefer not to say

Q3 How concerned are you about the following happening after Brexit? RANDOMISE LIST

- Very concerned / quite concerned / neither concerned nor unconcerned / not very concerned / not at all concerned / unsure

- Less of the foods I buy being available in shops
- An increase in food crime (e.g. food not being what it says it is on the label)
- Increased food prices
- A reduction in food quality and standards
- A reduction in animal welfare standards
- An increase in food being recalled because of food safety or labelling issues
- Trade deals with other non-EU countries which could have different approaches and laws related to food safety and standards
- Products like genetically modified foods and chlorinated chicken being sold in Scotland

Q4: Thinking about after Brexit has happened, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? RANDOMISE LIST

- Agree strongly / agree / neither agree nor disagree / disagree / disagree strongly / unsure

- a) I will still buy the same foods I always have, even if they are more expensive than imported foods
- b) New trade deals on food with countries outside the EU are a good thing for Scotland
- c) Changes in the standards of foods I buy do not worry me
- d) I would happily accept a reduced quality and standard of my usual food items if it meant I pay less for them
- e) Food fraud isn't something I will be any more likely to come across than now
- f) I wouldn't buy imported foods if doing so impacted farmers and food producers in Scotland
- g) I'm worried about the economic impact new trade deals might have on farmers and food businesses in Scotland

h) I do not tend to worry about which country the food I eat comes from

Q5 After Brexit, if the prices of the following foods were significantly cheaper than those you usually buy; how likely would you be to buy them: RANDOMISE LIST

- Very likely / quite likely / neither likely nor unlikely / quite unlikely / very unlikely / unsure

- Chlorinated chicken (when chicken is washed in chlorine) **[include N/A option]**
- Genetically modified (GM) foods
- Beef from cows that have been injected with hormones **[include N/A option]**
- Food that doesn't say where it's from on the label
- Food that doesn't show what allergens it contains on the label
- Meat from animals that have been intensively farmed **[include N/A option]**
- Eggs from battery-caged hens **[include N/A option]**
- Foods with highly processed or artificial ingredients

Q6 How important might the following be to you when buying food imported from countries outside the EU after Brexit? Please rank in order of importance where 1 is most important and 9 is least important. RANDOMISE LIST

- Animal welfare
- Ingredients you're not familiar with
- Production standards and food quality
- Prices
- Labelling and knowing what's in the food you're buying
- Artificial or highly processed ingredients
- Whether it's safe to eat or not
- Being sure it wouldn't give you food poisoning
- Genetically modified foods

Q7 Do you think you will stockpile certain foods in advance of Brexit?

- I see no reason why I should stock up on any food items
- I might stock up on certain food items, but I'll decide closer to the date
- I will definitely stock up on certain food items
- I have already started to stock up on certain food items